

TODAY'S OBITUARIES

Gordon Miller

Stephen Murphy

MORE ONLINE




Photo gallery: Lebanon explosion

As they watched a huge mushroom cloud rise over the seaport capital, many who felt the massive explosion in Beirut on Tuesday thought it was a nuclear detonation.

Others described the popping and bursting of fireworks and a raging fire that spread to another building, triggering the blast felt miles away.

The explosion collapsed balconies, shattered windows and ripped bricks from buildings, killing at least 70 people and injuring more than 3,000.

A gallery of photos curated by Associated Press photographers captures the horror, devastation and reach of the explosion.

View the photos at mankatofreepress.com/multimedia

LOTTERY

Tuesday's Daily 3

8-2-5

Monday's Gopher 5

1-11-29-41-42

Saturday's Powerball

6-25-36-43-48 and 24

Saturday's Lotto America

12-21-29-40-44 and 6

Tuesday's Northstar Cash

2-5-15-16-27

Tuesday's Mega Millions

2-22-30-42-62 and 20

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Cloudy

High around 70. Low in the low 60s. Rain possible tonight.



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Mankato, Minnesota

CHANGE-UP

Prep football, volleyball moved to spring



Pat Christman

Mankato East football player Deondre Thomas leaps during a drill Monday at the school's track. The Minnesota State High School League voted to move the football and volleyball seasons to spring.

Other fall sports to have modifications

By Kevin Dudley
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After nearly five months without competition, Minnesota high school sports are coming back. But the football and volleyball seasons will be moved to spring.

Boys and girls soccer, girls tennis, boys and girls cross country and girls swimming and diving were each approved to begin practice Aug. 17 as scheduled, but with restrictions on length of season and competition dates because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Minnesota State High School League board of directors reached a decision for fall sports at a meeting Tuesday morning. Decisions came one at a time after the board discussed each sport.

And after several hours of discussion and debate, the direction was clear. As of now, every sport will get a chance to compete.

"I think the people that were making those decisions had a tough job to do," Mankato Loyola activities director John Landkamer said. "The goal of the state high school league all along was to make sure that all of the kids got to play their sports this year, and I think they accomplished that today."

While all sports seasons are on,



Pole vaulters line up while practicing their approaches Monday at Mankato East High School.

Sports, Page A7

Things will be different for the high school sports that were cleared for fall play.

each sport will have shorter seasons and fewer competitions. Football and volleyball will see the most drastic changes. To accommodate a move to a spring season for those sports, the high school league is poised to add a fourth season that would begin in mid-March and finish in mid-May.

Football and volleyball would be played during this time, while traditional spring sports would

be played in a two-month season between mid-May and mid-July.

The proposed football season will include six games with no scrimmages. Postseason plans will be determined at a later date, as will be the case with every sport.

"It gives all the sports an opportunity to have kids participate in the sports that they normally do," Landkamer said. "Do I have to go out for track or do I have to go out for football? ... It doesn't put that tough decision on those kids."

Boys and girls soccer, girls tennis, boys and girls cross country, and

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Three districts going hybrid

St. Peter, JWP, Waseca lay out tentative plans

By Kristine Goodrich
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Some area school districts are announcing tentative plans for a hybrid of remote and in-person learning in the fall.

The Waseca and Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton districts have announced plans for a hybrid approach that varies by grade level. St. Peter Public Schools is preparing to start off with all students attending in person part time.

Last week Gov. Tim Walz announced decisions about which format to use at public schools this fall will be left up to each school's leaders. The state recommended the decisions should be based in large part on the prevalence of COVID-19 in county or counties the district serves. Districts were provided a rubric of infection rates and suggested in-person, hybrid or remote learning scenarios.

Districts can wait until one week before the start of their school year to make a decision.

The leaders of Mankato Area Public Schools and many others in the region have said they expect to make announcements in mid or late August.

Some districts are already announcing plans — with disclaimers the plans could change if there is a substantial shift in the COVID-19 infection rate within district boundaries.

The St. Peter School Board heard an administrative recommendation

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Nicollet County tops region's daily virus case counts

State's hospitalization, intensive care use continues to rise

The Free Press and MPR News

MANKATO — Blue Earth and Nicollet counties were among seven counties in the region with new COVID-19 cases Tuesday.

South-central Minnesota had 22 total new cases in the Minnesota Department of Health's latest update. Brown and Martin counties were the only ones in the region without new cases.

Tuesday was one of the rare days when Blue Earth County — the most populous in south-central Minnesota — didn't lead the region in new COVID cases.

Nicollet County's nine new cases were the most, followed by Blue Earth County's seven. The other counties had two new cases or fewer.

The full list of new cases in the region includes:

Nicollet County — Nine

Blue Earth County — Seven

Waseca County — Two

Le Sueur County — One

Watonwan County — One

Sibley County — One

Faribault County — One

Statewide, Minnesota's COVID-19 hospitalizations continue to

Minnesota Public Radio News can be heard in Mankato on 90.5 FM or at MPRnews.org.

head the wrong way, with counts of people currently hospitalized and needing intensive care rising to levels not seen in six weeks.

The health department Tuesday reported 328 people still hospitalized with 159 of those needing an ICU bed. The ICU total is at its highest point since June 25.

Non-ICU hospitalizations also rose from 149 on Monday to 169.

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