



Bomb threat forces evacuation at Morris Area

Katie Erdman
Stevens County Times

At approximately 9:30 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 3, the Morris Police Department sent out an alert about an unknown bomb threat at the Morris Area High School. According to Morris Police Chief Reggie Welle, the threat was written on a white board at the school.

Students were immediately evacuated to the Regional Fitness Center nearby and later bussed home. Students walked across the school parking lot and passed the water tower, to reach the RFC through a steady snowfall.

They were then seated on the two gym floors at the RFC and remained with their teacher and class until busses arrived. Parents and guardians were asked to not come to the RFC for their children. The Morris

Fire Department and Morris Police Department blocked off all entry to the area around the school while the threat was checked out. School was cancelled for the remainder of the day.

The Morris Police Department reported late Friday afternoon that the school had been thoroughly searched and cleared. The department was assisted by the Stevens County Sheriff's Office, University of Minnesota Morris Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Minneapolis St. Paul Airport Police, and the Morris Fire Department.

The investigation is ongoing. If anyone has information regarding the event, they are asked to contact the department at 320-208-6500.



Snow falls as students evacuate the Morris Area Elementary School Friday.



First Congregational UCC holds final service in Hancock church building

Katie Erdman
Stevens County Times

First Congregational UCC of Hancock has been a part of the community for 146 years and will continue to be a part of this community in the days ahead. On Dec. 22, 2019, the congregation decommissioned the church building and its contents. The building has been sold to become a private residence.

A group of pioneers felt called to establish a church here on June 29, 1873. Thirty-eight people signed the original constitution. The church was incorporated in the State of Minnesota on January 10, 1878. They started out in the schoolhouse and moved into the first

church building in the spring of 1883, located on the corner of Pearl and Church streets in Hancock. That church building was moved to First and Washington Ave. in 1889.

In 1903, the Congregational Church near Lake Emily was purchased and joined to the back of the church to become a Sunday School room. In 1906, the businessmen of the village of Hancock raised money to purchase a bell for the church.

The first parsonage was purchased in 1882. A more modern parsonage was purchased in 1934, along with land for the church to be moved on to. The church was moved to the current location at the corner of Hancock

Ave. and Fifth street, 10 years later in 1944. There have been many renovations and upgrading of the church over the years.

When the fire whistle blew about supper time on June 26, 1964 it didn't take long before everyone in the community knew that the Congregational Church was on fire. A crowd soon gathered and watched in disbelief as smoke poured out of the roof. The first firemen there removed the organ, pulpit and pulpit chair. The building did not sustain major damage, but everything was water soaked.

First Congregational
Continued on A6



The clergy present at the final service at First Congregational, UCC, in Hancock included (from left) Scott Kheen, representing the UCC Conference, Rev. Don Reigis, former supply pastor, Kathy Hodges, current supply pastor, Rev. Ginger Beck, former supply pastor, Julie McCarty, current supply pastor and Cynthis Huse, former supply pastor. Not pictured is Jon Hall, occasional supply pastor.

First baby of the decade arrives on New Year's Day



Natasha Elena Olivas is the first baby born at the Stevens Community Medical Center in 2020. She arrived at 10:45 a.m. on Jan. 1. Pictured here are her father, Michael Olivas, mother, Ashlyn Stephenson, baby Natasha, attending provider Paige Hardy, CNM APRN and attending nurse Karen Long, LPN. Missing from photo attending nurse Shawna Juvrud, RN.

Katie Erdman
Stevens County Times

The first baby born at Stevens Community Medical Center was not expected to arrive on Jan. 1. Her due date was actually Jan. 9, but Natasha Elena Olivas had other plans. Natasha was born at 10:45 a.m. to become the first baby of the year and also the first baby of the decade for Stevens Community Medical Center.

Natasha weighed 8 pounds and was 20.5 inches long. Her parents are Michael Olivas

and Ashlyn Stephenson, who live near Elbow Lake. She has a half-brother, Logan Olivas, along with several fur siblings including two dogs and four cats.

This was Ashlyn's first delivery and all went really fast. Paige Hardy, CNM APRN, was her attending provider and the delivery nurses were Karen Long, LPN and Shawna Juvrud, RN.

The couple would like to thank the many area businesses who generously donated gifts for the first baby of 2020.

