

First Day of Autumn
SEPTEMBER 23

Moose Lake STAR GAZETTE

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Thursday, September 19, 2019 ★ No. 38

Star 132 years ★ Gazette 124 years

Phone: (218) 485-4406 ★ \$1

The education results are in But what can we actually learn from them?

Bethany Helwig

The results of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and alternate assessment Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAs) for the 2018-2019 school year have been released to the public. According to the Minnesota Department of Education, these “state tests help districts measure student progress towards Minnesota’s academic standards and also meet federal and state legislative requirements.” While most students take the MCA, students who receive special education services and meet eligibility requirements may take the alternate assessment MTAs instead.

• 2019 MCA results
Continued on page 8.



Moose Lake PTA President, Laura Sieben (right), answers questions from a parent at the PTA sponsored Open House at the Moose Lake School. Photo by Byron Kuster

Moose Lake sets preliminary tax levy

Lois E. Johnson

The Moose Lake City Council set the preliminary levy at a 2 percent increase at the meeting of the council on Wednesday, Sept. 11.

City Administrator Tim Peterson explained that he recommended that the levy be 0 percent but did point out that the final levy will be set in December. He added that the preliminary levy could be set higher and then set at the lower amount in December, if no other expenses came up.

The Truth in Taxation hearing, where city property taxpayers can come to speak with the council about the taxes, was set for Wednesday, Dec. 11, at 6 p.m. at the council chambers.

Peterson also spoke about the special assessment policy. He had assembled information about a new plan for the city to raise revenue to pay for assessments for utility projects.

He presented a handout that listed the amount that the electrical rates could be increased and the resulting revenue.

“For residential users, the increase would be 1 to 1.5 percent or \$11 annually,” he said. “Larger amounts would come from users, such as Mercy Hospital, the old school, MSOP, DOC, and churches.”

The chart showed that, if the rate was increased by .0055, it would result in \$32,025.79 in additional revenue. If the rate was raised by .0065, it would result in \$48,705.89 in increased revenue. If the rate were raised by .0065, it would result in \$65,385.99 in increased revenue.

“In my mind, this is a better option than increasing property taxes to pay assessments,” said Peterson. “It is like the gas franchise fee. We probably would raise the rates by .0055, not by .006.”

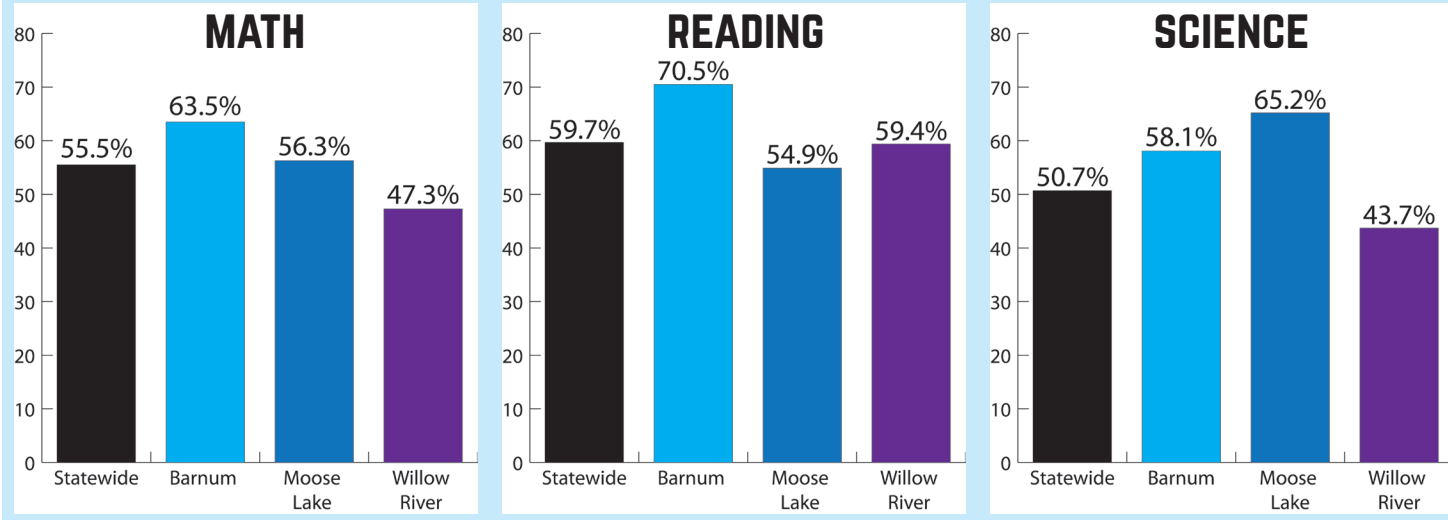
The rate increases will be brought back for discussion at the Oct. 9 meeting of the city council.

There was also discussion about a lodging tax.

• Moose Lake City Council
Continued on page 2.

2019 RESULTS OF MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS (MCAs)

The number for each school district represents the percentage of students deemed proficient in the tested subject.



Potential for further housing development in Sturgeon Lake

Bethany Helwig

The regular meeting of the Sturgeon Lake City Council on September 12 began with an interesting proposal brought forward by Tanner Kranz, a developer who recently purchased 13 acres of land in the city. Mr. Kranz has worked with Blackbox Container Studios, a company that builds homes out of shipping containers, and he wanted to begin his own devel-

opment of the same sort in Sturgeon Lake.

Mr. Kranz explained that what he builds is “a traditional home with a different shell.” The shipping container is given a thin layer of spray foam, steel studs are put in, and windows are pressure-fitted.

He approached the council to find out what sort of housing was needed or wanted in the area, such as elderly housing

or assisted living, and what sort of building codes he needed to meet. Mr. Kranz doesn’t have any official plans laid out as of yet. At the council’s suggestion, he agreed to return to the next regular meeting with more information to present.

City employee Scott Helfman informed the council that

• Sturgeon Lake
Continued on page 2.

Moose Lake School Board updates priorities and goals



Photo by Lois Johnson

Lois E. Johnson

The Moose Lake School Board discussed updating the Strategic Goals for the next three to five years at a special meeting of the board on Tuesday, Sept. 10.

The categories for goals are: Student Learning and Achievement, Finance, Culture and Climate, and Build Community Relations and School and Community Pride.

The first goal was that Moose Lake Community School be a

leader in learning and achievement.

There was a question about what it means to students to transfer to a college, and how many students are involved with earning college credits while in high school.

“I was thinking that we could contact some vocational schools,” said Board Member Jerry Pederson. “What does it mean for kids to transfer into college?”

There was also discussion

about vocational classes in high school that could give students the opportunity to learn about the different trades as possible future careers.

Superintendent Robert Indihar said that there may be funds available from the Northeast Service Cooperative for vocational programs. It was suggested that the Willow River and Barnum School Districts be contacted about the vocational

• Moose Lake School Board
Continued on page 2.

Fatality in vehicle accident

Press Release

On September 16th at approximately 3:48 PM Pine County dispatch received a 911 call reporting a vehicle in the Kettle River near the city of Willow River. The caller indicated people in the water and that someone was still believed to be inside the vehicle. Law enforcement as well as fire and EMS were dispatched to the scene. A staging area was set up at a “day use” area off Willow Street.

First arriving deputies were able to confirm that the driver and one passenger were able to get out of the vehicle after it went into the river. One passenger was still unaccounted for and believed to still be in the vehicle. A dive team from the Stacy/Lent Fire Department was called for

and responded to the scene.

Dive team members were able to locate the submerged vehicle in about 14 feet of water. The unaccounted for passenger was recovered from the vehicle shortly after 6:00 PM. The driver and first passenger were not transported to the hospital. The driver, a 43 year old male, was subsequently arrested and booked on a preliminary charge of criminal vehicular operation. Formal charges may come after review of the reports by the Pine County Attorney. The first passenger who was able to get out of the water was a 48 year old male. The deceased was a 47 year old male. All of the occupants were from the Pine County area.

The vehicle, a Ford Escape, was recovered from the water.

The deceased male was transported to the Midwest Medical Examiner’s Office for autopsy. No names are being released at this time pending notification of family and the autopsy.

The following agencies assisted in the incident: Pine County Sheriff’s Office, Willow River Fire Dept., Sturgeon Lake Fire Department, Moose Lake Fire Department, Stacy/Lent Fire Department Dive Team, Moose Lake Police Department, Minnesota State Patrol, Mercy Ambulance, Essentia Ambulance, and Deep Rock Towing and Recovery.

This case is considered an active investigation still at this time and additional information may be released at a later time. ■

INDEX

News Page 2
School/Sports Page 3
Comment Page 4
Local News Page 5
Public Notices Page 6
Classifieds Page 7
News Page 8

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STAR GAZING

Events are printed in the Star Gazing column as a service to our readers and are published as space permits. Free events are given priority. If there is a charge for the event, a paid ad is required.

Potluck

Everyone is welcome to a potluck at the Barnum Senior Center on Thursday, September 19, at noon. Dishes, silverware and beverages provided. Bring your favorite dish to share.

Class of 1958 Reunion

The Moose Lake Class of 1958 reunion will be held at Gampers on September 21 at 12:30 p.m. If you have

• Star Gazing
Continued on page 7.



Autumn Gala @ Doc's
JOIN US FOR THE MERCY FOUNDATION'S AUTUMN GALA ON OCTOBER 12 AT DOC'S SPORTS BAR & GRILL!
The Mercy Foundation to the rescue...raising funds to help purchase a new ambulance for Mercy Hospital.
MAKE YOUR RESERVATION BY OCTOBER 1 - 218.485.5586. ALL ARE WELCOME!