



The Globe

No. 63
dglobe.com

Mailed ballots trickling in for Tuesday's primary



Tim Middagh/The Globe

Worthington City Clerk Mindy Eggers feeds test ballots into a voting machine Thursday at the Nobles County Government Center.

By Julie Buntjer
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WORTHINGTON — Tuesday is Primary Election Day in Minnesota, but with few local races for voters to consider, early voting has been light in Nobles County, according to Auditor-Treasurer Joyce Jacobs and Deputy Auditor Cathy Roos.

With 18 of the county's 20 townships — along with the cities of Bigelow, Brewster, Dundee, Ellsworth, Kinbrae and Wilmont — voting by mail, Roos said 3,821 ballots were mailed out to voters in advance of the Aug. 11 primary. That number also reflects requests for absentee ballots.

As of Wednesday, the auditor-treasurer's office had received 937 ballots for processing.

"We've had a number of requests for absentee ballots,

but those are for both the primary and the general (election)," Jacobs said, adding that walk-in traffic for early primary voting has been slow.

For the primary, area voters will select their choice for one U.S. Senate seat. Depending on their Minnesota Senate or House district, they may have a choice in those races as well.

While people who reside in mail ballot precincts are encouraged to get their completed ballots in the mail as soon as possible, their ballot must be postmarked by Aug. 11. This is a change from previous elections, when mail ballots had to arrive in the auditor-treasurer's office by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Jacobs said due to the COVID-19 pandemic and concerns about slower mail service, the office will accept ballots within two days after the election — but only if the envelope is post-

marked on or prior to Aug. 11. As a result of this change, a second reporting of results will be made within 48 hours of Tuesday's poll closure.

"If there is a close race, that could make a difference," Jacobs said. "We feel the post office here locally does a nice job — we rarely receive ballots after the date if people have mailed them in a timely fashion.

"If people want accurate results, the best thing to do is get their ballot in on time so their vote is reflected on Aug. 11," she added.

People are welcome to vote early at the auditor-treasurer's office. There are special hours from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. today (Saturday), with the Government Center open from 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday for early voting as well.

PRIMARY: Page 6



Photos by Tim Middagh/The Globe

4-H members socially distance from each other in the show ring Thursday as a judge inspects a large-bred New Zealand rabbit. To check out videos of the Achievement Days shows that took place throughout this week, visit <https://www.dglobe.com/incoming/6601258-Nobles-County-4-H-Showcase>.



Julie Buntjer/The Globe

This May 2019 file photo shows biologists from Wenck Associates inserting a radio frequency tag into an adult carp captured from Lake Okabena.

More carp to get radio tags in Lake Okabena

Tracking to continue in hopes of a winter seining of roughfish

By Julie Buntjer
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WORTHINGTON — During their Tuesday afternoon meeting via Zoom, Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District managers authorized up to \$15,000 for additional radio tagging of carp in Lake Okabena.

Wenck Associates, an environmental consulting and engineering firm with offices in Minnesota, has worked with the watershed district in recent years on a project to tag and track carp movement in the Worthington lake. The data is being collected to learn where the carp congregate in hopes of doing a wintertime seining and removal of the rough fish.

In early May 2019, biologists with Wenck surgically implanted radio tags in 15 Lake Okabena carp. The carp have been tracked via radio frequency since then, with the goal of doing an early 2020 seining event.

When tracking data showed the carp didn't congregate as anticipated last winter, the seining wasn't done. Now, there's concern the battery life of the radio tags won't last into the next winter.

"The batteries may run out before we have a chance to do seining," OOWD Administrator

CARP: Page 4

THE SHOWS MUST GO ON



FOR VIDEO, SEE
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Karen and Trent Dykstra from the Elk Tip Toppers 4-H club work together to get a reluctant calf into the show ring Wednesday during the 2020 4-H Nobles County Achievement Days Dairy Show.

District 518 pushes school start date to Sept. 8

By Leah Ward
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WORTHINGTON — The District 518 school board voted Thursday morning to move the start of the 2020-2021 school year to Sept. 8, nine days later than originally planned.

The unanimous decision was made in an effort to give district staff more time to work out the details of this year's learning plan. New teachers will still report August 17, all other teachers August 24 and paraprofessionals August 31.

The board also had a lengthy discussion about some of the finer points of how learning will work in the coming school year. While the

year will begin using a hybrid model of instruction, several elements are still being developed.

Superintendent John Landgaard explained that the finalized plan will be released to the public on August 14. So far, it has been decided that Prairie Elementary students will be assigned to attend school either Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday, and middle school and high school students will be assigned one of those days. Wednesdays will be reserved for "intervention days," where students can get extra help and meet with their teachers, and staff can do additional cleaning in the school buildings.

Limiting factors

A major limiting factor is transportation, Landgaard noted. The state says that buses can only have 50% capacity, which means the district can only transport about 1,100 students (out of 3,200 in the district) in a single bus route.

Board member Adam Blume asked if the district could ask parents to drive their kids to schools — if the biggest issue is transportation — and thus allow more students to be in the classroom. He pointed out that the Adrian school district has chosen to have 100% of elementary students

DISTRICT: Page 8

WEATHER

MOSTLY CLOUDY

HIGH 86°
LOW 69°



INDEX

Classifieds	11
Diversions	5
Markets	4
Sports	9
Weather	2

