

HENDERSON INDEPENDENT

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Below the fold

The LS-H Facilities Task Force received a shock at all of the issues plaguing Park Elementary School.

Don't forget to set your clocks back — Daylight Savings Time ends at 2 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 3!



Nesbit battles to sixth at state

LS-H's Greta Nesbit went 2-2 at state, falling in the consolation championship. P. 14

FALL COLORS CONTEST



Stevie Nytes was selected as the winner of the Henderson Independent's Fall Colors contest. He took this natural fall beauty shot along Henderson's Fort Road.

Henderson crowd gathers to make Highway 93 appeal

By Rachel Miller
Editor

A crowd of approximately 100 local residents were at the Henderson Road-Haus by 12:30 p.m. Tuesday,

Oct. 22 to show members of the Senate Capital Investment Committee that there is strong desire and support to make Highway 93 a 10-ton road and bring it out of

HIGHWAY 93
CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Henderson's David Tesch asked Senate members how they choose which projects to allocate state funding for.

Recycling, Part 3

Al Christensen talks about the difficult decisions facing recycling. P. 4

Ladies Night Out returns

The Ladies Night Out/Santa's Helpers Toy Drive is returning this Friday, with many local businesses participating. P. 7

Changing seasons

Fall is truly here, and so are the big pumpkins! P. 8

Giants volleyball

The LS-H volleyball team opened its subsection tournament with a win over Fairmont. P. 15

Cross Country

The Giants don't have any state qualifiers this year, but the girls' team placed sixth out of 19 teams in the section meet, and were just three points out of fifth place. P. 15

LS-H Facilities Task Force

Is Park Elementary School worth saving?

School tour shines light on numerous health and safety concerns

By Rachel Miller
Editor

The tour of Park Elementary School in Le Sueur was a sobering and eye-opening experience for the 18 members of the Le Sueur-Henderson Facilities Task Force who met on Tuesday, Oct. 22, and it had some members wondering, "Is Park Elementary really worth saving? Just what is the return on investment in the long run?"

The issues the task force members witnessed up close varied from perhaps just unpleasant to

those that could be life-threatening.

The art room at Park Elementary School in Le Sueur shares an

TASK FORCE
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Park Elementary School Principal Christine McDonald led task force members on a tour of the school on Oct. 22. Last year, a pipe burst and caused the gym floor to bow, making part of the gym unusable for about two months.

PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER



HIGHWAY 93

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the 100-year flood plain.

Senate members visited at Cementstone and did a driving tour of Scenic Byway 6 before arriving at the RoadHaus, and completed their Henderson tour with a driving tour of Highway 93.

The assembled crowd was the largest turnout Senate members had seen so far on this year's state-wide bonding tour.

Henderson Mayor Paul Menne gave a similar presentation to the one he gave to the Minnesota House's Capital Investment Committee on the MSU-Mankato campus on Oct. 9.

When Highways 19, 93 and County Road 6 are all flooded, the economic impact to businesses and residents totals approximately \$93,000 a day.

That is hard enough on an "average flood event" that closes roads for approximately three weeks, but the flooding this past spring lasted more than twice as long.

So far in 2019, flooding has closed roads for 62 days.

Fixing Highway 93 to bring it out of the 100-year flood plain and

making it a 10-ton road would cost approximately \$16.5 million, with \$14 million from the state and MnDOT picking up the rest since they have been planning to resurface that road in 2022. The project would also include replacement of the Rush River Creek Bridge.

Menne also informed the Senate that fixing Highway 93 would impact about four times as many vehicle traffic compared to Scenic Byway 6.

With a consolidated school district with schools in both Le Sueur and Henderson, and mutual aid and emergency services nearby in Le Sueur, Menne stressed that fixing Highway 93 was not just convenient for residents, but a public safety issue as well.

Sibley County Engineer Tim Becker also addressed Senate members, and told them that when all three roads are closed due to flooding, it impacts residents and businesses to the tune of approximately 232,000 extra miles every day.

"That is a lot of extra miles," Becker said.

Becker said the county also has plans to resurface Scenic Byway 6 to the tune of about \$2 million, but

added that it "does not make sense to resurface roads that flood two to three times a year."

LS-H School Board Chair Brigid Tuck spoke to the educational impacts that flooding has on the district's learners. During this past spring's flooding event, Tuck informed Senate members that the district had 40-50 school days that were shortened by 30 minutes each day due to increased travel time due to road closures.

"We are losing serious educational time, and it is not OK to lose that much time," Tuck said.

Tuck added that the business community suffers as well, which then impacts the property taxes that support the LS-H School District.

"We stand with the Henderson business community to get solutions. It is really important to us as a district and we feel passionately about it," Tuck said.

LS-H isn't the only school district impacted. Henderson is also home to Minnesota New Country School, which has an elementary school building and middle/high school building.

MNCS staff member Jim Wartman informed Senate members

that their school students come from all over the area, including Belle Plaine, St. Peter and Mankato, to name just a few cities.

"A lot of them are on the bus for an hour during flooding time, so it teaches resilience because we did not have a drop in attendance," Wartman said.

Henderson should have some sort of answer soon. The Senate

will be back in session from February to May of 2020, and both the House and Senate should be releasing their transportation bonding bill during that time.

Henderson residents are hoping that the bill will include funding for Highway 93. If it doesn't, maybe Henderson's next new business will be gondola service.



PHOTOS BY RACHEL MILLER

The Henderson RoadHaus Event Center was packed by 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 22, with an estimated 100 people attending to show Senate members just how important it is to them to fund flood mitigation efforts. At the time of the meeting, the crowd assembled was the largest one greeting Senate members on their bus tour across Minnesota.



Mayor Paul Menne delivers his flood presentation to Senate members, and informs them the cost to residents is approximately \$93,000 a day when Highways 19, 93 and Scenic Byway 6 are simultaneously closed due to flooding.



Jim Wartman of Minnesota New Country School talks about the impact closed roads have on their students, who come from all over the area, from Mankato, St. Peter, Belle Plaine and even further north.

HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL

Thursday, Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m.

Henderson RoadHaus Event Center

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