



Montgomery

Messenger

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Fire destroys home

Residents unharmed, but pet perishes

Wade Young

Montgomery Messenger

Two residents in Montgomery escaped an early-morning fire on Wednesday, Jan. 6, but sadly, a pet dog did not.

The fire broke out at the two-story, single-family home at 201 Boulevard Ave. NE. The Montgomery Fire Department responded to the scene just before 1 a.m. When

Fire Chief Kenny Pavek arrived, he found the house fully engulfed in flames, and the police officers with owner Mitchell Dappen and his roommate, Sean Passe safely outside.

It was at that time, Pavek called the New Prague Fire Department for mutual aid.

“Firefighters had to fight the fire mainly from the outside of the structure due to the



Wade Young Photos



A jet of water blasts from the Montgomery Fire Department’s ladder truck at a fire at 201 Boulevard Ave. NE in Montgomery last week.

Montgomery and New Prague firefighters work to put out a fire early Wednesday morning, January 6 at 201 Boulevard Ave. NE in Montgomery.

conditions inside,” he said. “This makes it much more difficult to control the fire and get at hot spots, but the fire was under control within a few hours. New Prague cleared around 3:45 a.m. The Montgomery crew remained on scene until 6:30 a.m. fully extinguishing the fire.”

Dappen has owned the property for almost five years. He was about to go to bed that night when he noticed a smell when the furnace kicked on.

“I decided to check it out.

I put on my clothes and headed downstairs to see where the smell was coming from. That’s when I saw the fire in my office, in the SE corner on main floor,” he explained.

Dappen tried to put out the fire with a bucket on the counter in the kitchen, but the blaze quickly got out of control.

“I checked back near my office and the fire was out the door within 15 seconds or so,” he said.

He started screaming for his roommate, Sean Passe to

wake up and get out of the house.

“We both made it out only moments before the flames were at the back door,” Dappen said.

He believes an old laptop he was using for work caused the fire, however it is being investigated by the Minnesota State Fire Marshall and the Montgomery Police Department.

“The laptop was completely dead when I put it on the charger a few hours earlier,

Fire to 4



Photo courtesy of TCU Schools

TCU Montgomery Fourth Grade Teacher Jared Van Dorpe had a classroom full of students on Monday when school districts were allowed to return its youngest learners back in the classroom.

Titans return to classroom

Wade Young

Montgomery Messenger

Tri-City United elementary schools were full of students on Monday, Jan. 11.

Not since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic began in mid-March, 2020, have the schools had full

classrooms.

Following guidance from Governor Tim Walz’s Safe Learning Plan, TCU schools laid out its plans for a return to in-person learning for elementary students in pre-k to grade six.

In communication from the district, those students, along with special education students in grades 7 to 12 returned to the classrooms after learning remotely, which had been changed from the hybrid model used at the start of the school year.

Older students will see a change as well. Starting on Thursday, Jan. 21, regular students in grades 7 to 12 will return to the hybrid model used before the distance learning model last fall.

Superintendent Lonnie Seifert said, “Families will

need to review the details of our plan to determine what instruction model they feel is best for their student(s). I would ask that if you are considering a learning model change to full-time distance learning that you have a conversation with the principal of your child(ren)’s building prior to making a final decision.”

Based on advice from Le Sueur Public Health, Seifert said the TCU District will continue to use only a 14-day quarantine period for individuals identified as close contacts.

Seifert added the district continues to track case information for staff and request that families share confirmed cases of TCU students with school nurse Amanda Sladek at asladek@tcu2905.us.

It’s a girl!

Lynden James is New Year’s Baby

Lisa Ingebrand

Montgomery Messenger

Montgomery’s New Year’s Baby arrived just seven days into 2021 at Mayo Clinic Health System in New Prague. Little Lynden James, a girl, claimed the honor. She is the daughter of Peter Clark and Madisen Ziebell of Montgomery.

Lynden is the couple’s second child. Her big sister, Eden, will be two years old in February.

Peter and Madisen met while studying at Mankato State University in 2017. He was pursuing a degree in Construction Management. She was working towards a Business Management degree.

The couple welcomed their first child just a couple months before Peter’s graduation and began their life together in an apartment in Mankato. Later, they moved into a townhome in St. Peter where they lived for a year.

In May 2020, the family relocated to Montgomery.

“We were looking to buy a home instead of renting and stumbled across a house we liked here after looking at many, many houses,” Peter explained. “We like the smaller town feeling.”

Shortly after they moved into their new home, the couple found out Madisen was pregnant with their second child.

Madisen describes her pregnancy with Lynden as



Photos courtesy of Peter Clark

Montgomery residents Peter Clark and Madisen Ziebell’s daughter, Lynden James Clark, is Montgomery’s 2021 New Year’s Baby! Lynden was born at 6:19 a.m. on Thursday, January 7, at Mayo Clinic Health System in New Prague, weighing 8 pounds, 11 ounces and is 21-inches long. Lynden’s big sister, Eden, who will be turning 2 in February, was excited to welcome her home.

“good,” but admits there was concern regarding COVID-19.

“Right away I had hopes that by the time I had this baby, it (the pandemic) would be done, but that didn’t happen. We actually all got COVID the first week of September,” she shared. “I got sick and was monitored for a few days. My oxygen levels were low a couple of days, but after I got over it I almost felt bet-

ter about things since we’d have some immunity for the birth.”

About a week before Christmas, Madisen started having contractions and her mom threw out the idea of the new family member being a New Year’s Baby.

Baby to 10



Positive COVID-19 cases

County	Total	Deaths
Le Sueur	2,058	15
Rice	5,891	64
Scott	11,703	93
Waseca	1,868	15
State	438,867	5,724

Information from Minnesota Department of Health 1-12-2021

Happy New Year

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Two Worship Services
Sundays at 8:45 AM & 10:45 AM

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