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St. Cloud Times

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2020 | SCTIMES.COM

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29-vehicle crash on I-94 ignites in flames



Crews remove vehicles and debris from the scene of a multi-vehicle accident and multiple fires Thursday on the westbound lane of Interstate 94 near Monticello. Initial reports from the Minnesota State Patrol said about 30 vehicles were involved. PHOTOS BY DAVE SCHWARZ/ST. CLOUD TIMES

Nine people taken to nearby hospital with minor injuries

Erik Newland St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

MONTICELLO – A 29-vehicle pile-up Thursday morning closed both sides of Interstate Highway 94 near Monticello and sent up a plume of black smoke as a fire spread and vehicles burned.

Nine people were taken to a nearby hospital with apparently minor injuries, according to the Minnesota State Patrol. The driver of the semi truck that caught fire, with the fire later spreading to other vehicles, is OK, according to a tweet from State Patrol Sgt. Jesse Grabow.

The crash occurred in the westbound lanes of I-94 near Monticello just before 9:15 a.m. Thursday, according to the patrol. Westbound I-94 remained closed Thursday afternoon between Wright County Road 19 and Minnesota Highway 25 as crews worked to remove the



Burned-out vehicles remain at the scene of a multi-vehicle accident and multiple fires Thursday.

See **CRASH**, Page 4A

St. Cloud incumbents look to difficult work ahead

Jenny Berg St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

ST. CLOUD – Despite a strong slate of challengers in many St. Cloud area races, most incumbents were able to hold on to their seats to serve another term.

Three incumbents on St. Cloud City Council were re-elected, as were three incumbents on St. Cloud school board.

The fourth candidate elected to school board was Scott Andreasen, who has run in the last three elections and is a member of multiple school board and district committees.

Another familiar face is St. Cloud Mayor Dave Kleis, who was re-elected to serve his fifth term after defeating challenger Steven Schiller with more than 63% of the vote.

The totals reflect results from the Minnesota Secretary of State as of Tuesday afternoon, when counts include absentee ballots postmarked by Election Day and received by Nov. 10.

The results are being reviewed and approved by local canvassing boards this week. The state canvassing board will then meet Nov. 24 to certify the results.

Elected candidates shared gratitude and excitement for the support showed by voters, as well as pragmatism about the challenges ahead.

“We had some significant economic challenges as a result of COVID-19 and, of course, our focus will be to weather that financial storm in a way that doesn’t add a burden to folks who are already burdened financially,” Kleis said.

Revenue from many of the city’s enterprise budgets — including the parking system, River’s Edge Convention Center and Municipal Athletic Complex — are significantly down due to the pandemic, Kleis said.

“No one’s booking it ... there’s so much uncertainty,” he said of the convention center.

Kleis said city administration is looking at different ways of doing

See **INCUMBENTS**, Page 2A

Tri-county area hits record high for new COVID-19 cases

Erik Newland St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Stearns, Benton and Sherburne counties all reported record high one-day counts of new COVID-19 cases as the virus continues to surge throughout the state Thursday, according to a report from the Minnesota Department of Health.

Stearns County reported a record 346 new cases Thursday, Benton County reported 106 and Sherburne County reported 279, according to the report.

Five of 39 new deaths due to COVID-19 reported Thursday were in the

tri-county area, according to the report. Three more people in Benton County between 70 and 99 years old died, and two people in Stearns County, one over 100 and another between 35 and 39, died.

Sherburne County did not report any new deaths to the disease Thursday.

Since the start of the pandemic, Stearns County has reported 8,862 cases and 68 deaths, Benton County has reported 1,767 cases and 26 deaths and Sherburne County has reported 3,405 cases and 30 deaths, according to the health department.

School buildings that have had more

than five people with confirmed COVID-19 cases inside are listed in the department of health reports on Thursdays. There is not necessarily ongoing transmission in these buildings, according to the health department.

In the tri-county area, these schools were added to the list Thursday:

- Mississippi Heights Elementary, Sauk Rapids
 - Westwood Elementary, Zimmerman
 - Zimmerman High School, Zimmerman
 - Sartell Middle School, Sartell
- Other area schools remaining on the

list are:

- Albany Area High School, Albany
- Albany Elementary, Albany
- Holdingford Secondary, Holdingford
- Melrose Secondary, Melrose
- ROCORI High School, Cold Spring
- Sauk Centre Secondary, Sauk Centre

School buildings that have not reported a confirmed COVID-19 case inside the building in 28 days will be removed from the list, according to the health department.

See **COVID-19**, Page 4A

USA TODAY

Pentagon: Joint Chiefs chairman adamant military not to be made political. **7A**

Football roundup

Tech, Apollo lose in final regular season games. **Sports, 1C**

Weather

High 32 | Low 26°
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