

Pandemic ain't over til its over... So the time to pitch in is now

The fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic will haunt us for years to come—in ways that aren't immediately obvious.

The "main street" impacts may be subtle, but be aware—life as we knew it will change, unless we recognize it and step up.

Civic groups, veterans organizations, area churches, the local Chamber of Commerce are all facing various behind-the-scenes challenges in clawing back from a year of relative dormancy.

This became evident last week when the **Pelican Rapids Masons** honored Dr. Owen Thompson with the Hiram Award (details in this edition of the Press.)

While the event was a celebration, there was an ominous back story.

"We're hanging in there," said Mason Bill Osborn, noting that there are 25 solid members in the Lodge. But there were at least double that number for most of the Lodge's history.

The **Pelican Lions** and **Jaycees** have dissolved, noted Osborn. Though the pandemic isn't necessarily a direct cause, COVID is having an impact on community civic organizations and institutions.

"Every Mason Lodge in the state has been having issues," said David Dumorceaux, a district Mason officer who spoke at the meeting April 7.

"It's tough for any organization in the world today," said Dr. Thompson. And it isn't just the pandemic.

Our concept of civic engagement and "free time," coupled with the intrusive distraction of the internet, has distanced us from local commitment.

A related issue to all this: When fundraising is down, civic organizations can't do all the good things, like scholarships, civic beatification, food shelf donations, and other local projects.

Following are just a few random notes on the topic; and a few constructive actions we can take to support the community.

- The future of Pelican Fest and its parade have been in jeopardy, even before the pandemic. Thankfully, the **Stetz family** stepped up to coordinate the parade. Meanwhile, **Audrey Wifall** will be reviving the Christmas 2021 lighted horse parade, which was cancelled in 2020. Your local **Chamber of Commerce** needs members, both businesses and individual memberships—and a bunch of volunteers.

- We're thrilled that the VFW has stepped forward to host several **Pelican Fest** activities at the Club June 26. Also, the **Gala committee**, which supports the Pelican schools, will be jumping on board by hosting the popular bean bag toss tourney.

- The **Pelican Rotary Club** is trying to bounce back, with a return of the half-century turkey barbecue tradition on Pelican Fest. Also, the airport Fly-In breakfast. Rotary would love more members—and volunteers willing to pitch in. Rotary is advocating "advance tickets" to the **turkey feed**, in part to structure for COVID precautions and also to plan logistics. Call the Pelican Rapids Press, or Minnesota National Bank, or Pelican Drug, when advance turkey tickets are available.

From My VIEW POINT



by Louis Hoglund,
 Managing Editor

- Though we've lost the Pelican Lions, the **Dunvilla Lions** are stable and active. Remember the Dunvilla Lions and their fundraising activities as we crawl out of this pandemic mess.

- The **Pelican American Legion** isn't a group with a steady revenue stream, and the pandemic cut them off almost completely. Still, Legionnaires managed to find \$1,000 for the **Pelican swimming pool campaign**. Remember the Legion: Attend a game, and donate to the baseball program.

- The **Pelican VFW**, with overhead costs that never end, as a local club facility, has been hit hard. Stop by the club. Have dinner, and a few refreshments. We don't advocate gambling, typically, but maybe buy a few recreational pull-tab tickets. We might note here that, in spite of the pandemic, Post 5252 donated nearly \$6,000 to civic and charitable projects in 2020.

- Spring is here, with Memorial Day coming soon. Those **"Buddy Poppies"** are a great way to support disabled veterans. Pick up a few poppies, pin them on your jacket. Attend the Pelican **Memorial Day program**, and consider a donation if they pass the hat.

- Don't forget your **church**. Heaven knows—they're hurting, and doing the Lord's work has been a struggle of Biblical proportions during the pandemic.

- Hey, the non-profit, charitable **"Pass It On" thrift store** is now open, with limited hours. They have all kinds of stuff you need, and stuff you really don't need—but what the heck.

- While you're downtown, or at any **Pelican lakes area business**, spend a few bucks—locally. Remember that \$1,400 check you received from Uncle Sam? That money is intended to bolster the economy. Well, if it all goes to Amazon and Walmart, it isn't helping local and regional economies.

- Supporting Pelican's **multicultural** and ethnically diverse community is as simple as attending the June 18-19 **"Friendship Festival."** The event is a joint venture with the Glacial Minnesota Woman Organization, which has several special events to celebrate the 90th year since the discovery of **"Minnesota Woman."**

- The grumpy old men at the **Pelican Rapids Pool Hall** are back in session. The non-profit hall is another piece of the community "jigsaw puzzle." You don't need to be a pool hustler to buy a cup of coffee at the pool hall. Just don't ask for cream or sugar, because the guys probably haven't gotten around to stocking it yet.

We won't shake the COVID curse until civic groups, churches, businesses bounce back in 2021

Tax increases unnecessary, especially amid vast state surplus, says area Republican lawmaker

By Rep. Jordan Rasmusson
 Republican-Fergus Falls
 Minnesota State House

We are nearing the final month of the 2021 session and work on establishing a new two-year state budget is about to get serious.

The House and Senate majorities and the governor all have put forward budget proposals and it is time to bridge gaps and find agreement before the Legislature's May 17 date to adjourn. This work will take place with the backdrop of Minnesota's \$1.6 billion surplus – which is a \$4.2 billion surplus when federal relief dollars are taken into account – and overflowing state reserves.

It maybe comes as no surprise that disparities in tax proposals appear to be the largest divides to conquer. House Democrats are looking to raise taxes and fees by more than \$2.5 billion in just their tax bill (\$1 billion) and transportation bill (\$1.5 billion over four years) alone.

Notably, the House Democrat tax increases include several proposals that did not receive a single committee hearing and have not even been mentioned during the first two-thirds of this session. This includes a gas tax increase (\$363 million over four years) by linking Minnesota's gas tax to the Highway Construction Cost Index. This would result in an automatic annual gas tax increase. It also features a half-percent increase in the metro sales tax to fund light rail and other transit (\$916 million over four years).

On top of that, House Democrats propose a motor vehicle sales tax increase (\$120 million over four years) and a registration tax increase (\$149 million over four years) through changes to vehicle depreciation schedules.

While "tax the rich" has been a mantra often repeated by Democrats in St. Paul, these tax increases would hit middle- and lower-income earners at a time tax increases of any kind are unnecessary.

The House Democrat tax increases also include a new fifth-tier income tax of 11.15 percent, which would give Minnesota the second-highest top income tax rate in the country. This would be detrimental to job and wage growth in Minnesota and put our border communities at an even further disadvantage compared with surrounding states.

House Democrats also propose capping relief from state taxes on federal Paycheck Protection Program loans, meaning many businesses will still be taxed on forgiven PPP loans that were used to pay employees and keep their doors open during a difficult year.

It is concerning the House majority would show such little restraint or respect for the taxpayers of Minnesota by looking to take another \$2.5 billion of their hard-earned dollars, especially at a time many are struggling to regain their financial footing and the state is flush with cash.

I oppose these tax increases and will be working with my Senate Republican colleagues to protect Minnesota taxpayers.

Boe's dairy introduced pasteurized milk to Pelican Rapids in 1946

100 years ago, April 14, 1921

- **Carl J. Johnson Given Prison Sentence**
 Carl J. Johnson, who ran the old Carlson farm southeast of town for a couple of years has been sentenced to from one to five years in the penitentiary for forgery.

Last fall he was obliged to vacate the farm and had an auction sale to dispose of his personal property. It developed after he had left that there was a certain note held in one of the banks given by him and having the name of J.G. Johnson, a prominent farmer just south of town as surety. The latter Johnson said he never signed the note and the name had been forged. The county authorities were placed on Carl J's track and he was located at Erie, near Thief River Falls a short time ago and brought to Fergus Falls. He plead guilty and received his sentence the other day.

It is stated that Johnson absconded with some of the money belonging to the Swedish Church (Central Lutheran) also.

- **Serious Charge**

Harold Lowell was taken to Fergus Falls Sunday to answer to the charge of burglarizing Carr & Poss' store. The store had been broken into on three or four occasions this

spring and a small amount of money taken from the cash register. A watchman was placed in the store, but as long as he was there nothing happened. Early Friday morning the watchman went home and the store was broken into sometime between five o'clock and daylight. An electric bell was then placed in Logan Bros. store adjoining which would give the alarm when the fellow broke open the door in the Carr & Poss store and Doc Logan and Henry Hanson were to be on the lookout.

Late Saturday night the bell gave the alarm and the gentlemen could see the fellow operating in the store as he had a flashlight. They entered and ordered him to surrender and the man was found to be Harold Lowell, a young man 19 years of age.

He had his pockets full of flavoring extracts. He was kept in custody until Sunday afternoon and was then taken to Fergus and his hearing took place there Tuesday. He was bound over to the district court, but it is understood he has decided to plead guilty and will receive his sentence as soon as Judge Parsons returns home.

(Author's note: The Carr & Poss General Store was located at the SW corner of Broadway and Mill St. by the

Looking BACK

by Paul Gubrud,
 Columnist



spotlights. Today the property is occupied by Brown Eyed Susan's Floral.)

75 years ago, April 18, 1946

- **At Last – Pasteurized Milk for Pelican Rapids**
 We now have our pasteurization plant ready for operation and will start pasteurizing our milk today for delivery on Friday. Sanitation, cleanliness, and quality are the main features of this new plant, 12c per quart. – Boe's Dairy

50 years ago, April 15, 1971

- **Seifert Named Outstanding Athlete**
 Avery Seifert, son of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Seifert of Pelican Rapids, is one of six seniors at Concordia College to be named "Outstanding Athletes of America". The award is made in behalf of the athlete's athletic achievement and scholarship.

Seifert was co-captain of the Concordia football team and is majoring in biology. He will be entering medical school later this year.

Pelican Rapids Press Kicked Off 100th Year in 1996; still hitting weekly deadlines

25 years ago, April 10, 1996

With this issue, the Pelican Rapids Press kicks off its 100th year, heading for its centennial in April of 1997.

The first issue of the Press hit the streets of Pelican Rapids on April 9, 1897. The startup proved to be a shaky one, however, and Mr. C. Cranston, the first publisher, didn't hang around for long. In fact, the first four publishers didn't stick with it.

Because of the rapid turnover in owners during the first 10 years or so, much of the period remains a void in the newspaper's "morgue" of back issues.

It wasn't until 1906 that the Press became more stable, but of course it took a few years to prove the point. E. L. Peterson became the publisher on December 6, 1906 and expressed confidence when he published his first issue by writing, "I wish to say that I am here to stay, and that I shall use my best efforts to give the people of Pelican Rapids a paper they will feel like supporting."

Years later, it became clear that he meant what he said. "E.L." remained publisher for over 50 years, finally relinquishing the post to his son, Ellis who by that time had already spent 30 years in his apprenticeship.

Ellis remained as publisher until 1972, when two of his sons, Gary and Richard, representing the third generation of ownership, became co-publishers.

"It gets in your blood" is the usual explanation offered when someone asks what is the attraction of community journalism.

While immediate gratification is rare, a sense of accomplishments can be felt by looking back through old issues, realizing after the fact that, "You know, we did a pretty good job on that particular story."

E.L. Peterson, original publisher of the Pelican Rapids Press—who became known for delivering papers in wagon. The city park, next to St. Leonard's Church, is named after Peterson.



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