

The Albert Lea Tribune office will be closed Friday, December 24th and Friday, December 31st. Expect early deadlines for advertising and obituaries.

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SPORTS

A new coach is at the helm of Albert Lea girls basketball

INSIDE

Albert Lea pool tournament raises money for Mayo Hospice

OPINION

Guest column: COVID-19 is here for the holidays

Albert Lea Tribune Weekend

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POLICE: MAN ALLEGEDLY LIGHTS WOMAN ON FIRE



Albert Lea firefighters battle a house fire at 116 W. Seventh St. Wednesday morning. One person was injured after a man reportedly threw accelerant on her and then lit her on fire. She was taken to the hospital in an ambulance. SARAH STULTZ/ALBERT LEA TRIBUNE

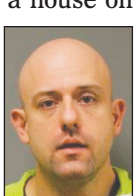
House catches fire, is declared a total loss

By Sarah Stultz
sarah.stultz@albertleatribune.com

An Albert Lea man was charged in Freeborn County District Court Wednesday afternoon with lighting a woman on fire inside a house on Seventh Street.

When first responders arrived at the house, at 116 W. Seventh St., heavy fire could be seen and dark smoke billowed out of the windows from the first and second floors.

The woman was taken by ambulance to the emergency room at Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea and was then flown to a burn unit at a Twin



Logan Netzer



See FIRE, Page A9

Firefighters help guide hose into the house on Seventh Street.

County could receive up to \$770K in opioid case

By Sarah Stultz
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Freeborn County is expected to receive part of a \$26 billion multi-state settlement in what the county's attorney on Tuesday called a "historic resolution" involving the opioid epidemic.

David Walker during the Tuesday Board of Commissioners meeting said the county retained outside counsel and engaged in the lawsuit with over 3,700 other plaintiffs across the nation in 2017 against opioid manufacturers and distributors, and a settlement is before these entities across the country now involving four of the total 22 defendants who were a part of the lawsuit.

The four that are part of the settlement are distributors AmerisourceBergen Corp., McKesson Corp., Cardinal Health Inc., and manufacturer Johnson & Johnson. The remaining defendants have

See OPIOID, Page A8

Council approves 3.5% levy increase

By Sarah Stultz
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The Albert Lea City Council last week approved an overall 3.5% increase in the tax levy for 2022.

The \$6.94 million total levy includes a general fund levy increase of \$239,000 compared to 2021 and a slight decrease in the debt service levy of about \$4,300.

The overall increase is down from the preliminary 9.98% tax levy increase approved earlier this fall.

It includes a general fund levy of \$5.065 million and a debt levy of \$1.876 million.

See COUNCIL, Page A8

Rock 'n' Roll tribute show to highlight music history

By Alex Guerrero
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If you enjoy music, history or music history, you won't want to miss "A Rock 'n' Roll Tribute — From Elvis to the Beatles!" by the Neverly Brothers Thursday at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center.

"I put the band together," said Kevin Giragosian, who plays guitar, harmonica and sings, referring to the three-piece band with Kegham Giragosian (drummer, vocalist) and Mike Bradburn (upright bass, background vocalist).

If you go

What: "A Rock 'n' Roll Tribute — From Elvis to the Beatles!"
When: 7 p.m. Thursday
Where: Marion Ross Performing Arts Center
Cost: \$25

The band, put together in 2003, was created in part by Kevin Giragosian's love for music, particularly the Everly Brothers and the British music invasion of the early 1960s.

See SHOW, Page A9

St. John's CEO retiring after 16 years in A.L.

By Sarah Stultz
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After 16 years as CEO and administrator at St. John's Lutheran Community, Scot Spates is retiring at the beginning of January to begin a new chapter of life.

When Spates started in his position in May 2005, there was only the original campus of St. John's Lutheran Community off of Minnesota Highway 13. But through the years, he, along with dedicated board members and other staff, helped transform the senior care organization's footprint in Albert Lea and usher in a second campus off of

Fountain Lake.

Spates said at first when he arrived, there were plans to remodel the original site, but with the cost nearing \$8 million to \$10 million, the thought came up why not build new.

In 2009, the board started strategic planning. That process identified assisted living services as something St. John's needed to offer, and they also discovered they needed to start looking at a different model where all people would have their own rooms and bathrooms, instead of having shared rooms with shared bathrooms.

He said the board decided it

See RETIRE, Page A8



Scot Spates started as CEO of St. John's Lutheran Community in 2005. He will retire in the beginning of January. SARAH STULTZ/ALBERT LEA TRIBUNE

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"Don't be afraid," he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great JOY to all people."
The Savior — yes, the Messiah, the Lord — has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!
~ Luke 2:10-11 ~

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