

Reaching Everybody!

Newsleaders

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Town Crier

Tails on Trails to take place Feb. 27

Tails on Trails for dog owners, dog lovers, family and friends will be held from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 27 at Millstream Park, 725 CR 75 W., St. Joseph. Take a walk on the trails while playing "Clue" Covid edition, ride on a dogsled, watch Solid Results trainers work their dogs, talk with Sgt. Hoffman about police K9 units, visit Rescues about adopting a dog or cat, try some "Doga" (bring your yoga gear), take a photo with your pup, learn about agility training, purchase doggie treats from Brayden's Pawfect treats and visit with Petsmart about what they have to offer. Come enjoy the outdoors!

Sartell Summer Baseball registration now open

The 2022 Summer Sartell Baseball Registration is open. Please go to SartellBaseball.com to register. Find more information by following us on Facebook.

Assist with TriCAP's free tax program!

Tax volunteers are needed to assist with TriCAP's free tax-prep program. Volunteers will enable them to provide accessible tax services that put 100 percent of refunds into taxpayers' pockets, often helping them meet basic needs and save for the future. This experience is rewarding and you will gain lots of practical knowledge. You will be working with local professionals as well as building a great resume. Training is provided and volunteers become IRS-tax certified. They are looking for volunteers in all capacities for their sites. Visit www.tricap.org to learn more. Contact the Tax Program Manager at tricaptaxes@tricap.org or 320-251-1612.

Central MN Arts grant deadline is March 31

The Central Minnesota Community Foundation has opened its annual Central Minnesota Arts Grant round. The purpose of the grant is to support small- to medium-sized arts organizations that make arts more accessible to area residents. The application deadline is March 31.

Focus areas include visual art and performing arts, including dance, music and drama. Eligible organizations must be 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, schools or governmental entities. For more information about the grant round and specific criteria for each grant round, visit www.communitygiving.org/grants.

INSERT:
Minnesota Street Market

Educational job needs crippling across state

by Hayley Olson
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Across the nation we are seeing a shortage of educators; teachers, paraprofessionals, nurses, teacher's aids, social workers, counselors, food staff, bus drivers and more.

When school started in September of 2021, there was a major district in Minnesota that started the year with more than 100 openings. The number of openings in districts across the state has continued to fluctuate.

Around the St. Cloud metro area, there are districts and buildings in dire need of staff, who are calling on retired teachers and community members to step in. Sartell-St. Stephen school district has 30 staff vacancies, Sauk Rapids-Rice has 35 staff vacancies, Little Falls has 11 openings and the St. Cloud school district currently has more than 100 staff vacancies. In these vacancies there is a need even at Kennedy Community School where they are seeking a paraprofessional.

Speaking with staff from districts in the area, it's evident how much of an impact the staffing shortage has on teachers, kids and schools. Staff who are not based in

classrooms are being pulled from their jobs to teach in classrooms, sometimes for the entire day.

Due to this, students who need intervention, social work minutes

or time with support staff are not getting what they need. One educator from the St. Cloud school district called it chaotic.

Jobs • page 6



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Whoodle enjoys pup cup

Caleb Schneider, 15, of Sartell, serves Amy Brinkerhoff's whoodle, a wheaten terrier-poodle mix named Duke, a cup of whipped cream Jan. 31 from the drive-through window. Brinkerhoff is also of Sartell. Second Street Coffeehouse owner Meghan Kelsey says, "Our staff loves it when dogs visit our drive through!" See article on page 5.

'Grandpa Kevin' loves Pine Meadow students, teachers

by Dennis Dalman
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After five years of volunteering as a "Foster Grandparent" at Pine Meadow Elementary School in Sartell, Kevin McCarthy is loved by the students, who call him "Grandpa Kevin," and he loves them all (and the

teachers) just as much.

During an interview with the Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader, McCarthy, 74, who lives in St. Joseph, offered big bouquets of praise.

"I just love it," he said. "The kids love it when they get to come and talk to me. They just love to talk with me. I'm

amazed how much those kids learn even in the first grade. They are almost always happy and everybody's always in a good mood. I treat them like my own kids. Each kid is completely different. Like snowflakes, no two are exactly alike."

The students, he said, seem to thrive on the one-on-one con-

tacts they have with "Grandpa McCarthy" – the kind of contact busy teachers cannot always provide.

In McCarthy's opinion, teachers are overworked and underpaid.

"All the work they do – most people have no idea," he said.

Grandpa • page 6



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Slip, slidin' away

Jenn Shellinger, of Sartell, pulls a small train of children across the ice on Brian's Lake Jan. 30. They are (center) her son Nathan Shellinger, 1 1/2, and friend Drew Percuoco, 5, also of Sartell.

Next year's school calendar set

by Mike Knaak
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Students and parents in the Sartell-St. Stephen school district who like to plan ahead can start marking up their calendars. The school board at its Jan. 24 meeting approved the calendar for the 2022-23 school year and approved a provisional calendar for 2023-24.

Next fall, school will start on Tuesday, Sept. 6, for sixth- and ninth-graders. Prekindergarten through grade five will have open houses and conferences. On Wednesday, Sept. 7, remaining middle school and high school stu-

dents will report. Sept. 7 will be another prekindergarten through grade five open house and conference day. Thursday, Sept. 8, will be the first day of school for prekindergarten through grade five.

The last day of class will be Friday, June 2, 2023. In between there will be 170 class days and 9.5 days set aside for professional development.

Spring break will be Monday-Friday, March 27-31, 2023. Seniors will graduate on Saturday, June 3. If needed, weather-related makeup days will be Monday, Jan. 16, for the first semester and

School • page 3