

So, who cares about primary elections?

With lively State Senate, Otter Tail County board primary elections; voters will be paying attention to Aug. 9 results

By Louis Hoglund

The message for Election Year 2022? Don't "yawn" your way through the August primary election—there are important decisions at the primary level this year.

Historically, primary election turnout is dismal—compared to the November general election. There's usually a good reason for the poor turnout: There's rarely a local or area primary race of interest to voters.

But the August 9 primary election this year is commanding our attention, especially in Otter Tail County.

Two Republicans are running for the newly-drawn State Senate District 9 seat. One-term State House legislator **Jordan Rasmusson**, endorsed earlier this year by the Republican party, is being challenged by **Nathan Miller**, a hobby farmer, certified boiler operator, and political newcomer.

Based on the action—and reaction—along summer parade routes, the Miller-Rasmusson primary election could inspire a record primary turnout in this area.

Miller is the guy in the red-white-blue shirt, western hat, and the handgun on his hip. The Miller crew and large squad of volunteers joined in group prayer sessions prior to the Erhard July 4th parade, and Miller's Christian faith is front and center in his campaign.

Meanwhile, Rasmusson was elected to the House in 2020, but in his short time in office, he's gained a reputation for effectively representing the interests of his district—which includes Pelican Rapids, Fergus Falls, and much of the Otter Tail lakes area.

Very likely, Rasmusson would have been happy serving the area for another term in the State House—but State Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen retired. Combined with re-districting, which created an immense State Senate 9 district, from the lakes area to the North Dakota border, it was logical that Rasmusson would step up and run for State Senate.

A shoo-in during a "normal" political climate, Rasmusson instead finds himself challenged within his own party. While Miller has not, to our knowledge, publicly touted President Donald Trump connections, his campaign can be described as "Trump-inspired" and supported by a large contingent of volunteers of the "Trump populist" mold.

Both opponents have hit the campaign trail hard and fast—fully aware that making it through the August 9 primary is the prize.

Whoever wins will face **Democrat Cornell Walker** in the November general election. While Senate District 9 is mostly Republican territory, Walker's resume is intriguing for many voters. The fact that Walker is about twice the age of either of the Republicans may, or may not, gather him a few votes.

DFL-endorsed Walker is an Army veteran with a law degree, and 40 years of experience as a trial lawyer and mediator. Walker fashions himself as a bipartisan problem solver.

With regional Republicans having a few problems of their own, culminating in an aggressive primary campaign ahead of August 9—a November general election victory could be more problematic than Republicans imagined.



On the run at the Pelican Rapids parade July 9, State Senate District 9 candidate Jordan Rasmusson, who was endorsed by the Republican Party.



Greeting young constituents at the July 9 Pelican Rapids parade, Nathan Miller—a Republican challenging Rasmusson in the State Senate primary.



Above, depending on who wins the August 9 Republican primary election, Nathan Miller or Jordan Rasmusson, he will continue on to the November general election to face Democrat Cornell Walker for the State Senate District 9 seat in the Minnesota Legislature.

• For a complete Sample Ballot from Otter Tail County auditor's office, turn to public notices section, pages 12-14.

From My VIEW POINT

by Louis Hoglund, Managing Editor



Five-way race will face voters as they consider next Otter Tail commissioner

Five candidates are running for the Otter Tail County board District 2 seat, adding a local dose of intrigue for the August 9 primary.

The two top vote-getters will continue on in the November general election.

Wayne Johnson is the incumbent, facing a primary challenge from **David Helgeson**, McDonald Lake area; **Jeffrey Mark Gontarek**, who is making his second run for Otter Tail County board; **Tammy S. Ziegler**, a Star Lake Township board member; and **Dean E. Anderson**, a rural resident south of Pelican Rapids.

The Pelican Rapids Press plans to have profiles of each of the five candidates in the coming weeks.

If voters aren't sure of their district, refer to the accompanying map. Otter Tail District 2 includes the townships of Scambler, Dunn, Candor, Dora, Lida, Pelican, Norwegian Grove, Trondhjem, Erhard's Grove, Maplewood, Star Lake, Oscar, Elizabeth, Friberg, Carlisle, and Fergus Falls. Cities within District 2 include Elizabeth, Erhard, Pelican Rapids, and Vergas.

• Otter Tail County District 2 is in border at right



Arson fires reported in 1972, car collides with man mowing lawn in 1997

100 years ago, July 19, 2022

• State Teachers' Examinations

State Teachers' examinations will be held in the Fergus Falls High School building July 24, 25, and 26. The second grade subjects are offered on Monday and Tuesday, the 24th and 25th, and the first grade subjects on Wednesday, the 26th.

All sessions begin at 8:00 A.M. Bring to this examination all credits that may be accepted towards a teacher's certificate. All teachers expecting to teach the coming year and whose certificates expire August 1, 1922, must make an application for renewal or exchange at this time. All beginning candidates who have not had the required professional training must pass the examination in all second grade subjects unless covered by a standardized credit from a Minnesota State Teachers College or an acceptable High School Board credit.

Write the County Superintendent for a program of examinations if desired, and any other questions concerning teachers' certificates will be cheerfully answered. — Antoinette Henderson, County Superintendent of Schools

75 years ago, July 17, 1947

• Breckenridge Wins Legion Tournament

Breckenridge was victorious in the sub-district American Legion Junior baseball tournament held here last Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. They defeated Pelican Rapids in the final game by a score of 9 to 6. Breckenridge will play in the district meet at Detroit Lakes Friday and Saturday of this week.

In the first game, Pelican was defeated by Perham 9 to 7, but this game was forfeited on account of Perham having three players over the age limit. In the second game, Pelican played New York Mills and easily won 19 to 8.

50 years ago, July 20, 1972

• Man Overcome by Smoke in Fire Saturday at His Home

A Pelican Lake man was hospitalized here for smoke inhalation after fire damaged his home early Saturday.

Bill Eggermont, who lives near Goslee Beach on Pelican Lake, was hospitalized at the Pelican Valley Health Center after he was overcome by smoke while attempting to confine a fire that broke out in his home at about 4 a.m. Saturday. He has since been released from the hospital.

The fire apparently started at an electrical outlet in the kitchen of the home and spread into the wall. Eggermont was awakened by the smoke and roused his wife and family to clear the house. He went back into the house, however, using a garden hose to confine the fire until the volunteer fire department arrived at the scene.

Eggermont was administered oxygen by firemen, but when he did not respond, he was taken to the hospital by Ted Hornbacher, Fargo, who lives nearby at the lake. Hornbacher owns the home in which the Eggermont family lives.

Fire Department spokesmen said that damage was confined mainly to the one wall in the kitchen. The house had been re-wired and remodeled last year, a fireman reported.

• Arson Blamed in Two Fires

Arson is suspected in the burning of two abandoned farmhouses in the past few days, according to the Pelican Rapids Fire Chief Rex Crews.

The two houses that burned were within a few hundred yards of each other and were located between the northeast end of Pelican Lake and Highway 59. The fire department here was called at about 1:45 a.m. Saturday for the first fire and at about 10:30 p.m. Monday for the second.

The building that burned Saturday morning was of frame construction. The old house that burned Monday night was of log construction. According to one of the fire department members, the Audubon fire department had been at the scene earlier Monday and had confined the fire, leaving the logs to burn. The Pelican Rapids department was called later when someone noticed it still burning.

The property is reportedly owned by Howard Olson, but this was still being verified by the department.

Chief Rex Crews reported Tuesday that a state fire marshal has been contacted to investigate the fires.

25 years ago, July 23, 1997

• Car Strikes, Kills Man Mowing Lawn

A Pelican Lake resident mowing his lawn was killed Monday morning when struck by a car.

According to the Otter Tail County Sheriff's Office, Curtis Thomson, age 43, was cutting grass at his home on County Road 9 at the west end of Pelican Lake at about 11:30 a.m. when he was hit by a car driven by William Newton, 79, of Lake Park, whose home is at Lake Ida.

A preliminary investigation indicates that Newton's car

Looking BACK

by Paul Gubrud, Columnist



left the roadway, killing Thomson on impact.

Newton was taken by ambulance to the Pelican Valley Clinic and released.

The sheriff's office and the Minnesota Highway Patrol are continuing their investigation.

• Art in Park Filled to Capacity

Sherin and Peterson Memorial Parks in Pelican Rapids will be filled with 200 vendors for Saturday's "Art in the Park" event.

Starting out many years ago as a sidewalk art show, the day now features one of the area's largest selections of art and craft items. Music, entertainment, and a variety of food stands provide other attractions to the thousands who attend.

The show and sale opens at 10 a.m. Saturday and continues until 5.

Art in the Park is sponsored by the Pelican Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce.

• Vandals Throw Rocks Through Windows

For the second week in a row, vandals have broken out windows with rocks.

This past weekend, the damage was at Strand Ace Hardware and the Tastee Freez.

At Strand's, rocks were thrown through the plate-glass windows at the rear entrance to the downtown store. At the Tastee Freez, located on North Broadway, a large front window was smashed, as were a back door and windows.

Earlier, rocks were used to break windows at the Legion Club, the old locker plant building, and the Senior Citizen Center.

Police also report that nine illegals were removed during a "Sweep" at West Central Turkeys, Inc. Those removed, said to have had forged documents, were taken to Fergus Falls and will be returned to Mexico.

A chase Friday ended with the arrest of a 17-year-old motorcycle driver. Police attempted to stop the youth at North Broadway and Eighth Avenue, but the youth took off on Highway 59 north, hitting speeds of 90 to 100 mph. The youth turned onto a low-maintenance road east of Prairie Lake and eventually lost control of the cycle on a curve. He fled the scene on foot but was later apprehended.

Jeff & Julie Meyer, Publishers
 Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 to 5:00;
 Wednesday & Friday, 9:00 to 1:00
 Phone: 218-863-1421 • Fax 218-863-1423

e-mail: press@pelicanrapidspress.com
 Advertising Deadline: Friday
 Online Version: www.pelicanrapidspress.com

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 Available upon request.

MINNESOTA NEWS PAPER ASSOCIATION
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THE PRESS
 PELICAN RAPIDS, MINNESOTA

(USPS 424-960)
 The Press, published weekly by The Press,
 29 West Main, Pelican Rapids, MN 56572. Periodicals
 postage paid at Pelican Rapids, MN 56572-9998.

POSTMASTER:
 Please send address changes to
 The Press, P.O. Box 632,
 Pelican Rapids, MN 56572.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
 All subscriptions are payable in advance:
 \$50 per year, in Pelican Rapids area,
 postoffice addresses in Otter Tail County, and to Rothsay, Bamesville,
 Hawley, Lake Park, Audubon and Detroit Lakes.
 All other Minnesota addresses, \$52 per year.
 All other U.S. addresses, \$54 per year.
 NON-REFUNDABLE

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 Pelican Rapids, MN 56572.
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