



Rachel Rynda of Montgomery, Minnesota, named Princess Kay of the Milky Way. **A3.**

Cards tamed by Tigers. B1.

WILLMAR, MINN.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2022

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Photos by Macy Moore / West Central Tribune

Lexi Nygaard tours rows and rows of vibrant flowers Wednesday while taking part in a field-to-vase workshop at Rustic Designs Flower Farm near Belgrade.

FIELDS OF FLOWERS

Rustic Designs holds final flower-arranging workshop of the summer

By Macy Moore
West Central Tribune

Belgrade
Late afternoon sunlight reflected off of a vibrant field of flowers — both big and small — at Rustic Designs Flower Farm near Belgrade on Wednesday evening as owner Mary Solbreken held her final field-to-vase workshop of the summer season.

Solbreken, who opened the flower farm in 2011, said the workshop has been a staple event for most of the time she has been operating her business.

“People like the experience of going out and doing something new with their friends,” she said. “Flowers bring happiness and it’s a fun event.”

Attendees first take an in-depth tour led by Solbreken,



Rustic Designs Flower Farm owner Mary Solbreken explains various flowers on her farm that are ready to be cut. She led the final session of her field-to-vase workshop Wednesday.

who shows which flowers are ripe for cutting. For this final workshop, however,

she explained that anything on the expansive flower farm was available for

attendees’ vases. Inside, she showed her students, a group of 15 enthusiastic

women, the ins-and-outs of flower

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Scott Jensen stands by his comparison

GOP gov nominee compared COVID measures to Nazi Germany

By Alex Derosier
West Central Tribune

ST. PAUL — Minnesota Republican gubernatorial nominee Scott Jensen is standing by his comparison of restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 to Germany’s path to Nazism.



Jensen

At an April event held by an anti-COVID restriction group Mask Off MN, Jensen drew parallels between pandemic restrictions and the rise of Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. The candidate’s comments were initially reported by the online news source TC Jewfolk on Monday, Aug. 22.

In a video posted to Facebook on Tuesday, Aug. 23, Jensen remained firm in the face of criticism from political opponents and Jewish advocacy groups, remarking: “This is how I think, and you don’t get to be my thought police person.” The same day he also defended his remarks at a Minnesota candidate forum held by the Republican Jewish Coalition in Minneapolis.

Kristallnacht, or Night of the Broken Glass, was a night of violence against Jews and vandalism of Jewish-owned businesses and synagogues across Germany that was a prelude to the Holocaust, which led to the annihilation of 6 million European Jews.

In a Wednesday statement, Democratic-Farmer-Labor Gov. Tim Walz’s reelection campaign condemned Jensen for standing by his comments.

“Scott Jensen’s refusal to apologize for comparing policies he disagrees with to the Holocaust is as outrageous as it is unsurprising,” said Walz campaign manager Nichole Johnson. “Dangerous and divisive rhetoric have defined Scott Jensen’s campaign for governor. His decision to triple down on these remarks is appalling.”

In a Twitter post earlier this week, Jewish Community Action board director David Brauer questioned the Republican Jewish Coalition on its

COMPARISON: Page A2



Macy Moore / West Central Tribune file photo

Graduates fill the stage of the Willmar Education & Arts Center during the Willmar Area Learning Center’s senior graduation ceremony May 19 in this file photo. The ALC in Willmar will receive extra services next year, alongside 102 other high schools with 4 year graduation rates below 67%. The ALC’s graduation rates do improve over time, since its students are allowed to continue attending until they are 21.

2 area elementary schools, Willmar ALC are set to receive state aid

By Linda Vanderwerf
West Central Tribune

WILLMAR — Two schools in Willmar and one in Renville will receive extra services from the state in the coming year, based on students’ performance on statewide assessments.

The list of schools receiving said services, released Thursday by the Minnesota Department of Education, includes Roosevelt Elementary in Willmar, Renville County West Elementary and Willmar’s Area Learning Center. The department also released an updated Minnesota Report Card, providing information about every district and school in the state.



Mueller



Thomas

The state has identified schools needing extra help based on statewide testing in 2019 and 2022.

Test scores from the pandemic years were given less weight in the calculations.

Fewer students took the tests in those years, and that could result in results that are artificially higher or lower, Education Commissioner Heather Mueller said in a conference call with reporters Thursday morning.

The state’s Collaborative Minnesota Partnerships to Advance Student Success will provide support to the schools on the list — a

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total of 371 schools and 15 entire school districts.

COMPASS can offer enhanced training for teachers and look at social/emotional or mental health needs in a district.

The two area elementary schools on the state’s list are among 48 schools that will receive comprehensive support for specific **AID:** Page A2