

Clay County GOP ousts its chair

Hahn says party board ‘attempted a coup d’etat’

Moorhead
The man who’s still calling himself chairman of the Clay County Republican Party is firing back against an “anonymous letter” that led to party officials removing him from his post this week.

Edwin Hahn of Moorhead made what he described as “an urgent call” to Republicans of Clay County, posting the message to his Facebook page and emailing it to local media at 11:55 p.m. Wednesday, March 9.

Referring to himself in the third person, he wrote in the email that “rogue Directors had attempted a coup d’etat against the duly elected Chairman” at a Tuesday meeting and that he’d lost access to the party’s bank account. A coup d’etat is a sometimes illegal removal of a government and its powers.

Hahn did not respond to The Forum’s request for further comment in time for publication of



this story.

The Clay County Republican Party, in a statement sent to The Forum on Thursday, said Hahn was removed due to “numerous ethical violations” as well as “conduct unbecoming” of a person in that position. Asked to describe the alleged violations and conduct, party officials did not respond.

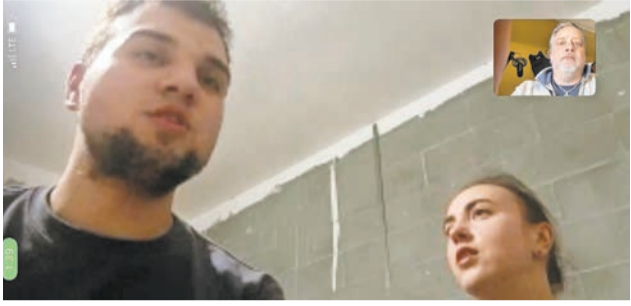
Here is the local party’s statement in its entirety:

“At a meeting held at 7 PM on Tuesday the 8th of March 2022 Edwin Hahn was removed as chairman of the Clay County Republicans due to numerous ethical violations as well as conduct unbecoming for a Republican Party

CHAIR: Page A6



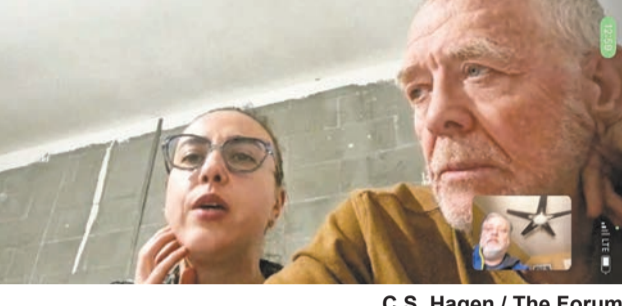
Edwin Hahn. Submitted photo



C.S. Hagen / The Forum
Danylo Gorlaeva, 21, a university student, talks to Forum reporter C.S. Hagen from a basement in Ukraine. He is helping his family and North Dakota native Jim Bueling provide food for soldiers in Ukraine.



C.S. Hagen / The Forum
North Dakota native Jim Bueling in his current basement home in the city of Vymnitsa, Ukraine.



C.S. Hagen / The Forum
North Dakota native Jim Bueling and his close friend, Maryna Gorlaeva, born in Crimea, talk to Forum reporter C.S. Hagen from a friend’s basement outside of Kiev, Ukraine, where they are living to escape war in and around Kyiv.



Contributed / Maryna Gorlaeva
North Dakota native Jim Bueling and his close friend, Maryna Gorlaeva, before the Russian invasion began.

‘PEOPLE WILL NEVER GIVE UP’

ND expat survives Russian invasion in Kiev, aids soldiers from rural hideout

By C.S. Hagen
The Forum

Vymnitsa, Ukraine
For more than a week after Russia first targeted military bases around Kyiv and elsewhere, Jim Bueling and his close friend Maryna Gorlaeva hid from missiles and bombs.

All around them houses like theirs were destroyed. To the north, three of their employees were left without homes.

But for Bueling, 76, born in Sheldon, North Dakota, his house in an



upscale neighborhood in north Kyiv was his home. Still an American citizen with a home in West Fargo, Ukraine has also been his home for nearly 30 years. He doesn’t want to leave.

Gorlaeva will not leave, she said.

“Then, at 5 o’clock in the morning, we heard the bomb,” said Gorlaeva, who was born in Crimea. She met Bueling through his

company, Bueling Inc., a farming and precision instrument company registered in Fargo and Ukraine.

“But it was no surprise,” Bueling said. “No, it was surprise, and you hear ‘boom boom,’ and friends started calling us: ‘Maryna, you better get out of here because it is war,’” Gorlaeva said.

“South, west, north every military base was bombed (at) the same time. It started then, and our neighbors started calling and (Russian President Vladimir) Putin was speaking, talking about a special operation,” she said. “It was a bad

UKRAINE: Page A8

Public defenders vote to go on strike

Minnesota public defense attorneys, staff authorize strike for first time

By Alex Derosier
The Forum

MINNEAPOLIS — The union representing public defenders across the state of Minnesota overwhelmingly voted Thursday, March 10, to

authorize a strike.

More than 650 lawyers and legal support staff with the Teamsters Local 320 have been negotiating a contract with the state’s Board of Public Defense for the past six months. The union rejected the board’s “last best and final” offer Thursday, saying it failed to address extreme caseloads, high turnover,

low morale, and pay inequities.

The dispute now goes to the state Bureau of Mediation Services. If the parties don’t reach an agreement within 10 days a strike will begin. It would be the first time in Minnesota’s history that the attorneys, paralegals, investigators, and other public defense staff would go on strike.

“Caseloads are incred-

ibly high in public defense,” said Local 320 Secretary-Treasurer and Principal Officer Brian Aldes, who explained that part time public defenders average 500 hours a year more than they are contracted to perform. A January survey by the Local 320 found that 70% of attorneys working as

STRIKE: Page A4



Clint Austin / caustin@duluthnews.com
Tables for the prosecution and defense have been placed in the jury box of a fourth-floor courtroom at the St. Louis County Courthouse in Duluth.

INSIDE TODAY’S FORUM



BUSINESS: Pizza Ranch ups its game by adding arcades.
PAGE A7

Business	A7
Classifieds	C1-2
Puzzles	C1
Comics	B7
Life	B5-6
Opinion	A5
Sports	B1-4
Weather	B8

Today’s weather

7°
-12°

Partly sunny
Details, B8

North Dakota to tone down COVID-19 response

By Jeremy Turley
The Forum

BISMARCK — North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum announced Thursday, March 10, the state will pull back on its response to the COVID-19 pandemic as infection numbers fall.

Going forward, the state will treat COVID-19 as an endemic disease, meaning the virus is still present but the case count is more stable, Burgum said in a news release.

The North Dakota National Guard’s support of COVID-19 testing and vaccination operations will end March



North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum.

17. Burgum activated the National Guard to help with the pandemic response two years ago. Starting next week,

the state Department of Health will begin reporting COVID-19 infection data weekly instead of daily.

Burgum said the emergence of COVID-19 treatment and prevention options allows North Dakota to take a new approach to pandemic response.

“As we prepare to shift into a new phase and learn to live with this virus, we have resources and tools that were not available two years ago,” the Republican governor said. “Research, vaccines, monoclonal antibodies, antivirals and at-home test kits have changed what we know about the virus and how we respond in our communities.”

However, State Health Officer Dr. Nizar Wehbi

RESPONSE: Page A6