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## A grieving mother finds strength to move forward after son's life is abruptly taken from her

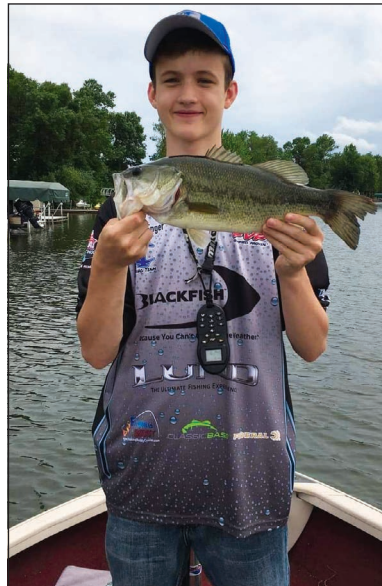
by **Nikki Hallman**

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Benefit to be held March 4 in Nicholas Enger's honor to raise reward money for information on shooting

Nicholas Enger will not get the chance to graduate high school, start a career or start a family, as his life was taken too soon.

"Our little Blue Jacket preschooler will not walk the aisle with his class this year, 2022," said Enger's mother, Amanda Bolz, on



Nicholas Enger pictured with a bass he caught fishing. Photo submitted

Enger's GoFundMe page.

Enger was shot and killed by a stray bullet on June 5, 2021, in Minneapolis, while watching street races with some of his friends. The shooter is still at large.

"They were all just innocent bystanders. Nicholas had only been there a few minutes," Bolz said.

Bolz is seeking justice for her son whose life was taken at just 17-years-old. Enger attended Cambridge-Isanti High School and was set to graduate in the spring of 2022.

"I've always liked the saying, 'it takes a village to raise a child.' I just never even thought about it taking a village to bury a child," Bolz said.

The idea to host a benefit came after Bolz realized how beneficial it would be to honor Enger and others.

"We thought this is one way we can kind of celebrate his life and raise money for a good cause," Bolz said.

The benefit will take place from 3-11 p.m. on Friday, March 4, at the Pinewood Event Center, 33262 Palm St. NW, Cambridge.

Another teen, 19-year-old Vanessa Jensen, was killed during the street races the same night in a different area of Minneapolis. Bolz said this benefit would not only celebrate her sweet and car-

See **ENGER** on page 9

## Commercial, residential growth highlighted during Cambridge State of the City address

by **Rachel Kytonen**

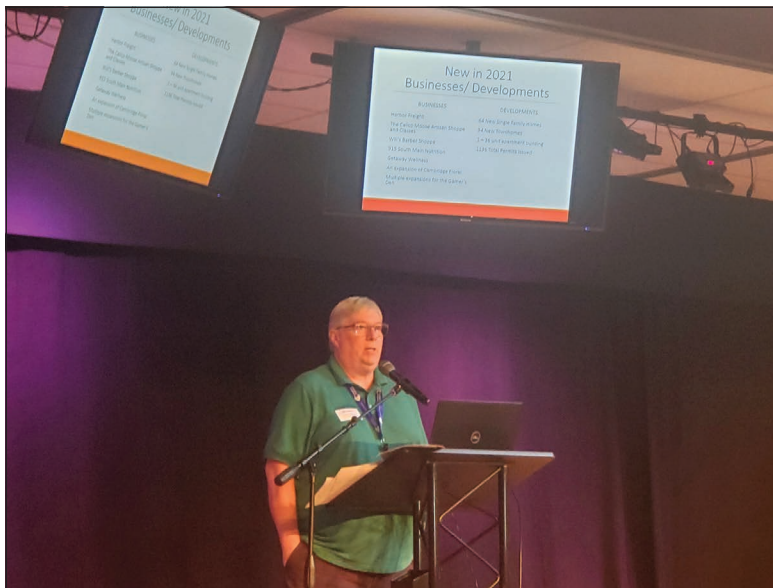
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The announcement of Taco Bell coming to the city, as well as an update on commercial and residential growth, were highlighted during the annual Cambridge State of the City address.

The State of the City was held during the Feb. 16 North 65 Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon at First Baptist Church in Cambridge and led by Cambridge Mayor Jim Godfrey.

Godfrey explained during the summer and early fall of 2021, the city council and staff engaged in a strategic planning initiative and also came up with a city mission statement.

"The purpose was to discuss our short term and long term



Cambridge Mayor Jim Godfrey highlighted commercial and residential growth during the annual State of the City address held at First Baptist Church in Cambridge on Feb. 16 as part of the North 65 Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon.

Photo by Rachel Kytonen

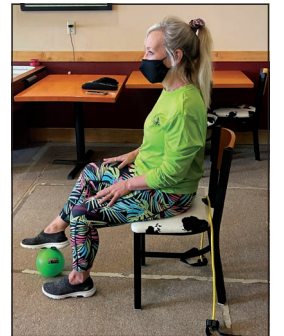
goals for the city, but also to have staff understand what the action steps are to have this vision come to be," Godfrey said. "We're using the initiative as a guiding star, and with this we have an excellent blueprint to continue our success now over the next two to four years and beyond."

Godfrey highlighted the core strategies within the strategic plan that include:

- Encourage and facilitate the revitalization and restoration of a vibrant downtown.
- Deliver exceptional public services.
- Connect opportunities to facilitate thriving commercial and industrial sectors.
- Be responsible in managing

See **CAMBRIDGE** on page 12

### SENIOR FITNESS



#### Fitness for seniors

A free fitness class for those 55-plus is being offered every Monday and Wednesday in Rush City.

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### SPORTS



#### State meet

Cambridge-Isanti's Abby Kryzer (above) and other local gymnasts compete at the State Tournament.

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### EDUCATION

#### Energy savings

The North Branch School District recently celebrated the receipt of a \$28,000 rebate check through Xcel Energy in energy savings due to a boiler replacement at Sunrise River School.

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# ENGER

*Continued from front*

ing son's life, but it would push others to find the shooters for both teens.

Words could not describe the pain and shock the Bolz's felt after receiving the life changing knock on their door.

"Me and my husband (Dan Bolz) were sleeping and it was a police officer. That the hardest thing in my life. I kind of look at it now as my life before and my life after. It'll never be the same," Bolz said. "You always worry about them getting in a car accident or hitting a deer, but not victim of a homicide. I couldn't wrap my head around it. I was screaming and crying."

Enger's 15-year-old sister, Amber Bolz, couldn't contain her emotions after hearing what happened to her brother who always made sure to protect her.

"She ran away from us screaming and crying. She ran into his room and curled up on his bed and started crying," Bolz said. "He liked to be a protector, even for his sister, he always watched out for her."

Enger's step-brother Anthony Bolz, who was just two months apart in age from Enger, received the news from a friend while he was at work.

The first few days for the family were very difficult. A son, a brother, a cousin, a friend, a nephew, was taken away and the family had to grieve while knowing the truth about his death.

"Honestly a lot of the first few days are kind of a blur, there's a lot I don't remember," Bolz said. "I guess trying to wrap our heads around that this actually happened and be there for each other and start grieving I guess."

A mother doesn't want to assume the worst has happened to her first born son. Maybe it was just a teen being a teen.

"I was thinking he got in trouble for something teenagers do, but I wasn't expecting that news at all," Bolz said.

Losing her child at the hands of someone else became a nightmare for Bolz, especially knowing the shooter is still out there.

"I can't imagine anyone wanting to hurt him let alone kill him. It's hard for me to think there's a person out there that is walking this earth living their life free. In my opinion with no remorse because nobody came forward and how do they sleep at night? Do they ever think about what happened and the consequences of what they did and taking someones life that wasn't theirs to take?," Bolz said.

Enger was trying to enjoy his life as a 17-year-old young man. Being with his friends and around cars was one of his favorite hobbies.

"He was with his friends and even a friend's dad was there. They said there is clear footage he wasn't doing anything he shouldn't. He wasn't doing anything illegal, he wasn't involved in an altercation," Bolz said.

Enger was not your average teen. Bolz said he showed love for his family even in front of his friends.

"He's always been – I would say for a boy, he's never been embarrassed to show affection to me ya know, give mom a hug



A family photo with Nicholas Enger (far right); his mother Amber Bolz (middle); his step-brother Anthony Bolz (left); and his sister Amber Bolz (bottom).



Nicholas Enger saved his money to purchase his first boat.

or tell me he loved me," Bolz said

Family and teachers described Enger as very outgoing and positive. He was also active, making sure to stay busy with everything he enjoyed.

"He was not a kid that could stay home not doing anything. He was always on the go, always had an idea of something he wanted to do," Bolz said.

Enger was in wrestling, football, t-ball, and was part of the Cambridge-Isanti Anglers club. He loved fishing and even purchased his own boat, Bolz said.

"He was a member of the Blue Jacket Student Anglers Club for a couple years and loved all the club had to offer, especially the bass tournaments. He loved to ice fish up at Lake of the Woods or Red Lake every year with his family," as shared on the family's GoFundMe page.

Not only did Enger have a passion for fishing, but cars were really what he lived for.

"He very simply had a passion for cars and loved anything to do with cars and trucks. Or anything with a motor really," as shared on the family's GoFundMe page. "He loved to work on cars and



Nicholas Enger pictured with his friend Ava Fredrickson. Photos submitted



Nicholas Enger and his step-brother Anthony Bolz are pictured with the ice augers they received for what would be Nicholas' last Christmas.

trucks and was often dragging his dad, Dan, and Uncle Clint, out into the garage to work on his car or truck."

As Enger's graduating class is coming up on their last year of high school, the family has made plans to make sure his life lives on within CIHS.

"We started a scholarship through Dollars for Scholars in his name for \$500 for this year and we want to continue that on, so his name can live on too. We also did Adopt a Highway so we're going to be doing that twice a year," Bolz said.

Bolz mentioned all of their family, from out of town and out of state, came in to support them after receiving the news. But it was Enger's friends that showed a different kind of support.

"I was really worried about Nicholas' friends because it's hard enough being a teenager and going through something like that, but they have been a huge comfort for us. We had sold our house and were moving a week after his funeral and we had a group of boys that helped us move boxes, and they are always visiting his grave. Everyone has been very supportive," Bolz said.

While Enger's family is still coping with the loss of his life, they are adamant



Nicholas Enger working on his first car with his father Dan and his Uncle Clint.

to find the shooter. Bolz said law enforcement is also working hard on the case and makes sure to keep in touch with the family.

What is a difficult part of the investigation is uncovering all the faces that were captured in the many videos that were taken that night.

"It's hard, especially because of COVID and the masks and everyone else wearing hoodies," Bolz said.

While the investigation continues, the Bolz's are doing everything they can to find the one that took Enger from his family. A tipline is currently open for anyone that has information by calling 612-692-8477 or 612-692-TIPS.

### Details on the benefit

Many people have been generous to the Bolz family and donated to the benefit in support of Enger. Bad Jack has donated their music to the benefit as well as Pinewood Event Center who has donated their space.

"So far everyone has been extremely generous," Bolz said.

The benefit will have a silent auction that will include Minnesota Twins and Minnesota Wild tickets, a customized concrete table, six customized fishing rods, bean bag boards and more. There will also be food by Vicky LeFebvre Catering and a cash bar by Liquid Motion. Tickets can purchased at the door for \$10 per person or \$15 per couple.

Bolz mentioned how overwhelming it has been to plan the benefit, but is thankful for the support to the family and for Enger's life.

"Big thank you to everyone that's helped organize it and that has donated this far. I really appreciate everyone's support and willingness to help out," Bolz said.

Bolz said they are still accepting donations for the benefit. For more information or donations, email justicefornicholas17@yahoo.com. You can also make donations to the GoFundMe page at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/justice-for-nicholas-enger>