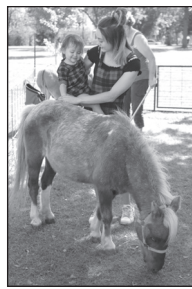


## Dangerous driving

The Minnesota Safety Council has issued a dangerous driving alert. P. 2



## Applefest

Fun was had by all at the annual St. Anne's event on Sunday. P. 3

## Cross Country

Three Giants on the boys team celebrated personal bests at Norwood last week. P. 7



# The Henderson Independent

Serving Henderson and the Minnesota River area since 1856!

Thursday, September 23, 2021 - VOL. 150 - NO. 38 • Henderson, MN 56044 (ISP 240020) • 10 pages in 1 section • \$1.00

Henderson City Council

## Council confronted with community water woes

By Beth Cornish  
Independent staff

Orange, brown and smelly... those words have been used frequently over the last year or so to describe Henderson's tap water, and were the kindest words used at the beginning of the council meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 15 when a group of Maple Ridge residents ap-

peared to vent their displeasure about their current water quality.

A number of the residents indicated they have had continuing issues, even with a home water softener, but the quality bottomed out after a recent hydrant flushing up on the hill.

On hand to attempt to explain the current situation were both City Water Supervisor James Kroehler and Chris Knutson

from Short Elliot Hendrikson. Kroehler explained that the way the city water is treated, chemicals are added to try to attach the iron and manganese molecules that are so abundant in Henderson's water. Unfortunately this forms particles that settle out into nooks and crannies in the supply lines, and when something causes a large discharge of water, those particles are propelled into the water supply and come out at

homes.

SEH has had a mobile water treatment plant in place in Henderson recently to assess the water quality and experiment with ways to improve the end product, ranging from the current chemical regime up to water filtration.

Knutson gave a very preliminary verbal report that the expert found Henderson's water to be imminently treatable, but to get the sparkling clear

result that residents would prefer is going to require a treatment plant downstream from the water supply and prior to home distribution.

SEH plans to meet with the city council to discuss their findings in detail, and the city will then schedule an informational meeting where residents will be able to ask questions but not voice opinions. An open forum for discussion and debate will be planned for

sometime after the informational meeting.

### PROJECT UPDATES

Council member Steve Sellner gave a satisfactory status report on the Mill Street reconstruction project. He further reported that Boehne Construction will next fix some frost boils on Maple Ridge Drive, the alley behind the post office, a portion of North 7th Street and a small area next to the Fire Department.

## Mike Nunan joins Henderson Police force

By Rachel Miller  
Editor

As of Aug. 1, Mike Nunan, 27, officially joined the Henderson Police Department as an officer. Although he was initially hired as a part-time officer, his employment was switched to full time following the approval by the Henderson City Council on Aug. 18.

Nunan grew up in a small community outside of San Jose, CA, and formed a love of swimming from an early age. He was able to continue that passion and competed as a NCAA athlete at the University of Minnesota, and graduated with a communications degree in 2017.

From there, Nunan went on to get his Associate's degree in criminal justice from Hennepin Technical College, and spent three-and-a-half years as a reserve officer in Minneapolis before coming to Henderson.

"I wanted something that was not boring and with the opportunity to help people in crisis," Nunan said.

Although the crime volume is higher in the Twin Cities metro area, Nunan was frustrated with the non-supportive attitude toward the police.

By comparison, he said the reception he has received in Henderson has been awesome and welcoming.

"Everyone is waving at you when you are downtown," Nunan said, adding that the people he has spoken with support law en-



PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

Mike Nunan is now serving Henderson as a full-time police officer, following the city council approval in August.

forcement.

One of his favorite things about being a police officer is the ability to solve a problem multiple different ways, and having the discretion to handle a situation as he sees fit. For example, Nunan shared how during a

OFFICER NUNAN  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

LSH School District



PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

School board members and LSH administrators were on hand to present referendum information and field questions from community members last Wednesday. The school district is hosting a series of community meetings at Hilltop and Park Elementary schools through Oct. 6. A second meeting was held Sept. 22 at Hilltop, and there will be another Hilltop meeting Sept. 29 and one final one at Park on Oct. 6. Both start at 6 p.m.

## Community meetings held for building referendum outreach

By Rachel Miller  
Editor

In about six weeks, Le Sueur and Henderson residents will be asked to vote on a \$50 million building referendum, and \$7

million fieldhouse option, that if passed will chart a new path for the Le Sueur-Henderson School District for decades to come.

The harsh reality is the district needs a referendum to pass, as there are too many

problems to fix at Le Sueur's Park Elementary School, and that isn't just coming from school staff.

Superintendent Jim Wag-

REFERNDUM

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## Thursday storm blows through, bringing damage with it



PHOTO BY JIM CHRISTIANSON

A tornado ripped through the corn field on the Scott Churchill farm property in Henderson Township, flattening the corn in a similar manner to a crop circle.

By Rachel Miller  
Editor

Minnesota was ravaged by a severe thunderstorm last Thursday, Sept. 16, which brought with it at least three tornadoes, high winds and damaged many trees, resulting in one death.

Wind speeds were clocked north of 50 mph, with New Ulm reporting wind speeds of 61 mph. In Dakota County, Doppler radar showed ground level wind speeds between 70 and 90 mph.

Statewide, tens of thousands of people were without power, as Xcel Energy reported 51,000 customers were without power by 7 a.m. Friday, Sept. 17.

Tornadoes were confirmed in Apple Valley, Burnsville and Savage, and another tornado touched down just outside Henderson.

Marie Retka, who rents the Scott Churchill farm in Henderson Township, northwest of Le Sueur, reported that a tornado hit the property. The tornado cut a path through the corn field, and flattened the corn almost like a crop circle,

Retka said.

In Henderson, a huge branch was ripped off a tree in Allanson's Park, knocking over part of the retaining wall.

A large branch was also

STORM DAMAGE

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



## COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 cases are up, and deaths increased 80 percent in the past week. P. 4

## Shrek opens Friday

Le Sueur-Henderson theatre students will be putting on three performances of Shrek this weekend. P. 7



## Titans Swimming

Titans make history at Section 1A meet with best team finish and Ella Schmiesing advancing to state. P. 8



# The Henderson Independent

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Le Sueur-Henderson School Board

## One school district, one school

### LS-H is full steam ahead to put one building to the test

By Rachel Miller  
Editor

Le Sueur-Henderson voters were warned: if the referendum that would demolish and build a new K-3 school and refurbish Hilltop Elementary fails, the school district will move ahead and put a single PreK-12th grade building in Le Sueur to the vote.

On Monday, the board made good on that promise, as they were all in support of moving forward with a new referendum to demolish Le Sueur's Park Elementary School, and construct a brand new elementary school onto the existing Middle/High School in Le Sueur.

The cost of the new referendum is not yet known, but will be lower than the \$50 million referendum that failed on Nov. 2. Not refurbishing Hilltop will lower the cost, and the district is mulling over whether to remove the high school's Career and Technical Education expansion from the project and instead put that as a separate second question, similar to the fieldhouse option the last time around.

If the referendum passes, Hilltop Elementary students will be bussed to Le Sueur when construction of the new school is complete, and Hilltop will be empty for either new development or possibly another school use.

One option Superintendent Jim Wagner raised was using Hilltop as an Alternative Learning Center. Right now, Wagner said other area school districts are sending their students to Mankato, and Le Sueur-Henderson could potentially gain those students and the state aid that follows them.

As an added bonus, Wagner said the existing setup (open school layout) is optimal for an Alternative Learning Center, and the district could set it up without additional spending.

"We are trying to provide everything for all of our students, and right now we are not," Wagner said. "Whether we like it or not, the model we have across the state and across the country accommodates 85-90 percent of the student body. Some kids don't learn in a square room, and if we want to provide service to all of our kids, that gives us the chance to

do so."

Tuck questioned whether residents would still think that is wasting money on Hilltop, to which Wagner replied, "Are those kids a waste of money? They deserve to have that."

Replacing Park Elementary School is something the school district desperately needs. The building, which was built in the 1930s and expanded in the 50s, has aging equipment that makes learning difficult, from failing boilers to an outdated electrical load, a needed roof replacement, and continual water damage to the gym floor.

The boilers are undersized for the school, and board member Gretchen Rehm shared how her daughter had to take the MCA tests while wearing a winter jacket due to how cold her classroom was.

"How do you expect her to do well on her MCAs, which is going against another student in the state in a normal classroom that is a normal temperature,"

WATER CONCERNS  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

The LS-H School Board on Monday decided to move forward with a one-building referendum. Above, Kraus-Anderson Senior Project Manager Jason Peterson and Director of Project Planning and Development Gary Benson were present to gather information and offer insight. School board member Brian Sorenson also shared how he was disappointed with how the vote went in Henderson and did not see any viable way to save Hilltop.

VETERANS DAY 2021

## Lessons from the veterans

By Beth Cornish  
Independent staff

On Veterans Day this year, local schools provided fanfare and thanks to our veterans. The day began school at the Le Sueur-Henderson Middle School/High School when the members of the Le Sueur American Legion Post 55 presented the colors, before joining Le Sueur VFW Post 4297 and the Sibley American Legion Post 74 in the audience.

The LS-H Concert Choir, under the direction of Zachary Kubasta, performed an outstanding a cappella rendition of the Star Spangled Banner, then boarded a bus to perform at Park Elementary.

The LS-H Concert Band performed the Armed Forces Salute, a medley of the songs for each of the five branches of our military: Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Marines before Dean of Students Jeff Christ read a list of LS-H alumni currently serving our country, a reminder of the sterling example of honor, patriotism and sacrifice made by those close to home. Keegan Straub finished off the program with a reading of the poem "In Flanders Field."

Later that morning, young students at Hilltop shared a program of patriotic music and messages, with the LS-H



PHOTO BY BETH CORNISH

From the left, Madalynn Seaver, Adrian Villanueva, Robert Riemann and Gavin Renstrom each read about patriotism during the Veterans Day program at Hilltop Elementary in Henderson.

Concert Choir providing another stirring rendition of the national anthem. Three of the veterans demonstrated the proper way to fold the American flag before a short presentation explained how each part of the flag has meaning.

The 13 stripes represent the original 13 colonies at the time of the Revolutionary War; the blue field is for the sky above our land; the 50 white stars are

for each state in the union; the red is for heart and the white is for purity. As the veterans prepared to leave, one of the classes filed back in to present a hand-written/drawn note of appreciation for each veteran.

Last but not least, the Minnesota New Country School in Henderson hosted another program in the afternoon.

SPEAKER AND HIS  
MESSAGE

Commander Shannon Frost introduced Sam Gore, a two-tour Iraqi War veteran, who shared with the assembly at LS-H MS/HH and again at MNCS how and why he decided to join the Army. He was a junior in high school when 9/11 occurred and it

VETERANS DAY  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Henderson City Council

## City considers new water treatment plant

By Beth Cornish  
Independent staff

Surprisingly, after the number of complaints of discolored and smelly water around town, only half a dozen residents attended the special city council meeting on Monday, Nov. 15, to hear the results of the pilot water study.

Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc. performed a study of Henderson's water using their custom-built portable water plant over a two-week period earlier this fall. There is some good news as no contaminants such as radon or E. coli were found in their city's water.

The EPA standard is 0.30 mg/L for iron and 0.05 mg/L for manganese. Both of these elements are considered nuisance or aesthetic issues as iron and manganese don't cause any health issues, but they can result in a metallic taste, an orange or brown color, staining and clogging of fixtures.

### TESTING PROCESS

The city's water supply was sampled prior to treatment and then run through a number of scenarios using chemicals, aeration, detention and filtration. The raw water at both wells exceeded the recommended standard for iron with an average of 1.97 mg/L at Well 1 (more

than six times the standard) and 1.24 (more than twice the recommendation) at Well 2. Raw water at Well 1 was at the EPA standard for manganese of 0.05, but Well 2 had an average reading of 0.15, three times the recommended amount.

The first test step added chlorine to the water, then aeration was used to aid in the removal process. Step three was to hold the samples and the final step was filtration using a choice of substrates to trap the solids created from the chemical process.

### TEST RESULTS

The results after testing showed a great improvement. Water treated with chlorine and filtered with greensand came in at an average of 0.049 mg/L for iron (six times less than the standard) and 0.046 with the addition of aeration. Manganese levels improved to 0.016 for greensand and 0.015

CITY COUNCIL  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



# PUBLIC NOTICES

**STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF SIBLEY  
DISTRICT COURT  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
PROBATE DIVISION  
Court File No.: 72-PR-21-42  
NOTICE OF INFORMAL  
PROBATE OF WILL AND  
INFORMAL APPOINTMENT  
OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

**In Re: Estate of Avis A. Gray,  
Decedent**

Notice is given that an Application for Informal Probate of Will and Informal Appointment of Personal Representative was filed with the Registrar, along with a Will dated April 28, 2020. The Registrar accepted the application and appointed Karla J. Gray, whose address is 317 South 4th Street, P.O. Box 244, Henderson, Minnesota 56044, to serve as the personal representative of the decedent's estate.

Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Any objection to the appointment of the personal representative must be filed with the Court, and any properly filed objection will be heard by the Court after notice is provided to interested persons of the date of hearing on the objection.

Unless objections are filed, and unless the Court orders otherwise, the personal representative has the full power to administer the estate, including, after thirty (30) days from the issuance of letters testamentary, the power to sell, encumber, lease, or distribute any interest in real estate owned by the decedent.

Notice is further given that, subject to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-801, all creditors having claims against the decedent's estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court within four (4) months after the date of this notice or the claims will be barred.

Dated: November 8, 2021

**Karen V. Messner,  
Registrar  
Douglas G. Nelson (MN#  
77707)  
Nelson & Jones, Ltd.  
511 Main Street  
P.O. Box 65  
Henderson, Minnesota 56044  
Telephone: (507) 248-3245  
Facsimile: (507) 248-3201  
Attorney for Personal  
Representative**

Published in the *Henderson Independent* on Thursdays, November 11 and 18, 2021.

**CITY OF HENDERSON  
NOTICE OF BUILDINGS  
AND GROUNDS  
MAINTENANCE BIDS**  
The City of Henderson will be taking proposals to clean/maintain the Henderson Community Building and Grounds (not including lawn mowing).

Submit to City of Henderson  
PO Box 433  
Henderson, MN 56044  
chenderson165@mchsi.com  
507-248-3234  
or place in drop box  
Due no later than 5:00 PM  
Monday, November 29, 2021

Include references and information to be included on 1099.

**Lon Berberich  
City Administrator**  
Published in the *Henderson Independent* on Thursdays, November 11 and 18, 2021.

**\*IMPORTANT PROPERTY  
TAX HOMESTEAD NOTICE\***

This will affect your 2022 property taxes and eligibility for Property Tax Refund.

**Have you purchased or moved into a property in the past year?**

Contact your County Assessor to file a homestead application if you or a qualifying relative occupy the property as a homestead on or before December 31, 2021.

**What is a qualifying relative?**

For unoccupied agricultural property, a qualifying relative includes the child, grandchild, sibling, or parent of the owner or owner's spouse.

For occupied agricultural or residential property, a qualifying relative also includes the owner's uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece.

**When do I apply?**

You must apply on or before December 31, 2021.

Once homestead is granted, annual applications are not necessary unless they are requested by the County Assessor.

Contact the assessor by December 31, 2021 if the use of the property you own or occupy as a qualifying relative has changed during the past year.

If you sell, move, or for any reason no longer qualify for the homestead classification, you are required to notify the County Assessor within 30 days of the change in homestead status.

**Sibley County Assessor's Office  
(507) 237-4078**

Published in the *Henderson Independent* and *Galaxy* on Thursdays, November 4, 11 and 18, 2021.

**COUNTY OF SIBLEY  
REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD  
PROCEEDINGS  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26,  
2021**

The Sibley County Board of Commissioners convened in the Commissioners' Board Room in the City of Gaylord, MN on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 9:00 AM pursuant to notice given as required by law. Members of the board present:

- District 1 Commissioner Bobbie Harder
- District 2 Commissioner Christian Lilienthal
- District 3 Commissioner Peter Koch
- District 4 Commissioner Joy Cohrs
- District 5 Commissioner Steve Saxton

**2. Pledge of Allegiance  
3. Approve the Agenda and any Agenda Additions or Corrections**

A. Motion to approve the agenda by Commissioner Cohrs, second by Commissioner Koch with unanimous approval.

**4. Consent Agenda**

Motion made by Commissioner Koch, second by Commissioner Cohrs with unanimous approval.

A. Resolution #2021-45 Request approval of resolution of Public Sale of Tax-Forfeited Land and set the date of the public sale for Tuesday November 23, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Board Room in the Sibley County Courthouse.

B. Approve the list of tax forfeited property for public sale

C. Approve the terms for the sale of tax forfeited land for public sale

D. Set date and time of the CD 4 Public Hearing - Robert A. Fischer Petition for Partial Abandonment

E. Approve the SSTS Lien Loan subordination agreement and authorize board chair and county administrator to sign it.

F. Investment Report as of September 30, 2021

G. Receive information on the attached EFT Report covering October 5, 2021 through October 20, 2021 (as required per M.S. 471.38 and County Resolution).

H. Approve Regular Board Proceedings of October 12, 2021

I. Approve Claims as submitted

**5. SMIF Presentation**

A. Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation SMIF will present on service delivery in Sibley County  
Alissa Oeltjenbruns, representing the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, presented an update to the Sibley Board of Commissioners which included grants, loans and programming for early childhood, community and

economic development.

**6. Mary Karl, DOC**

A. Accept the Quarter 3 2021 Sentence to Service (STS) report from Department of Corrections

Randy Schumacher, Crew Leader for Sentence to Service, presented an update to the Sibley County Board of Commissioners that included work performed and hours served.

**7. Klea Rettmann, PHHS Director**

A. Reinstate a pay increase of \$1.28 per hour from Community Health Worker (CHW) to Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) for up to 10 hours per week to help administer COVID-19 Vaccine during clinics on behalf of Sibley County Public Health starting 10/16/2021 through the end of 2021.

Within Public Health and Human Services (PHHS), there are only 6 eligible staff that can vaccinate and PHHS needs more assistance for the Booster vaccination. Klea Rettmann, PHHS Director, requested a pay increase to utilize a Community Health Worker (CHS) as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) for vaccine administration, throughout 2021. Motion made by Commissioner Lilienthal, second by Commissioner Saxton with unanimous approval.

**8. Tim Becker, County Engineer**

A. Approve concurrence of the proposed changes to the FEMA floodplain map along the Rush River for the TH 93 project. Authorize Planning & Zoning or Public Works to sign bottom of page 2 of overview and concurrence form, Community Concurrence Section.

Tim Becker, Public Works Director, requests the Sibley County Board of Commissioners approve concurrence of the proposed changes to the FEMA floodplain map along the Rush River for the TH 93 project to then be submitted to the agencies involved. MnDOT is working with the landowners which are impacted by the proposed changes. Motion made by Commissioner Saxton, second by Commissioner Lilienthal with unanimous approval.

B. Approve final payment for Contract CP 1307- 2021 Microsurfacing Project to Asphalt Surface Technologies Corp. (St. Cloud, MN).

Tim Becker, Public Works Director, requests the Sibley County Board of Commissioners authorize final payment for micro-surfacing project on CSAH 4 to Asphalt Surface Technologies for the completion of County Projects (CP) 1307-2021 in the amount of \$262,414.58. Motion made by Commissioner Cohrs, second by Commissioner Koch with unanimous approval.

C. Resolution #2021-46 Approve Resolution to Support Ap-

plication for Regional Designation and future funding of the Henderson Scenic Byway Trail

Tim Becker, Public Works Director, requests the Sibley County Board of Commissioners support the application for regional trail designation and possible future funding for an off-roadway bike/pedestrian trail along CSAH 6. Sibley County would partner with the Henderson Scenic Byway Regional Trail task force in applying for the designation and possible funding. Motion made by Commissioner Harder, second by Commissioner Saxton and adopted with unanimous approval.

**9. County Business**

1. Resolution #2021-47 Set 2022 Elected Official Salary

The Sibley County Board of Commissioners voted on the 2022 Elected Officials' Annual Salaries and is set forth as follows:  
County Auditor/Treasurer:

\$ 95,826

County Recorder: \$ 88,192

County Sheriff: \$ 119,184

Motion made by Commissioner Cohrs, second by Commissioner Koch and adopted with unanimous approval.

B. Resolution #2021-48 Motion to set the Sibley County Board of Commissioner's Salary for 2022

Sibley County Board of Commissioners voted to increase Commissioner's wages by 2% and set the 2022 annual salary of a Sibley County Commissioner to \$ 35,037.38. Motion made by Commissioner Lilienthal, second by Commissioner Cohrs and was adopted 4-1, Commissioner Harder.

**10. Closed Board Session**

A. Motion to move into Closed Session for Real Property Negotiation for Purchase of Real Property PID 32.0621.010 and PID 32.0621.000

The Sibley County Board of Commissioners voted to close the board meeting to the public at 9:46 a.m. Motion made by Commissioner Lilienthal, second by Commissioner Koch with unanimous approval.

B. Motion to re-open from Closed Session for Real Property Negotiation for Purchase of Real Property PID 32.0621.010 and PID 32.0621.000

The Sibley County Board of Commissioners voted to open the session to the public at 10:35 a.m. Motion made by Commissioner Cohrs, second by Commissioner Koch and adopted with unanimous approval.

**11. Commissioners' Committee Reports**

Commissioners provided reports on their board activities since the last meeting.

A. Commissioner Koch

B. Commissioner Lilienthal

C. Commissioner Harder

D. Commissioner Saxton

E. Commissioner Cohrs

**12. Clearing of Calendars**

A. October 26, 2021 Board of Commissioners Workshop follows regular meeting - Sibley County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room

B. October 29, 2021 AMC Fall District Meeting 8:00 AM- Golden Bubble, Wells MN

C. November 03, 2021 Redetermination Landowner Meeting 1PM & 5PM - Sibley County Courthouse, Meeting Room "A" Basement (Harder)

D. November 9, 2021 Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting 9:00 AM - Sibley County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room

E. November 09, 2021 JD1(SN) 1:30 PM - Sibley County Courthouse, Basement (Lilienthal, Koch, & Saxton)

F. November 09, 2021 JD7(SRN) 2:00 PM Sibley County Courthouse, Basement (Cohrs, Saxton)

G. November 09, 2021 JD 2 (SC), JD 21 (CS), JD 22 (CS), JD 24 (CS) 2:30 PM Sibley County Courthouse, Basement Meeting Room, (Harder, Lilienthal & Cohrs)

H. November 11, 2021 Sibley County Government Offices Closed in Observance of Veteran's Day

I. November 16, 2021 Redetermination Hearing CD40, 55, 56, 58, 61 & 67 9AM - Sibley County Courthouse, Meeting Room "A" Basement (All)

J. November 23, 2021 Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting 9:00 AM - Sibley County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room

K. November 23, 2021 Board of Commissioners Workshop follows regular meeting - Sibley County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room

L. November 25 & 26, 2021 Sibley County Government Offices Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving

M. December 6th to 8th, 2021 Association of Minnesota Counties Annual Conference - Bloomington MN, Double Tree Hotel

N. December 13, 2021 Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting 5:00 PM - Sibley County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room

O. December 13, 2021 Truth in Taxation Hearing 6:00 PM - Sibley County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room

**13. Adjournment**

A. Motion to Adjourn made by Commissioner Harder, second by Commissioner Koch with unanimous approval.

**Attest:**  
**John Glisczynski,  
County Administrator  
Bobbie Harder,  
Board Chair**

Published in the *Henderson Independent* on Thursday, November 18, 2021.

**CITY COUNCIL**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

with aeration.

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS  
AND COMMENTS**

**“How long would a plant last?”**

Answer: at least 40-50 years and once the building is in place, updates to the system would be fairly easy.

**“What if everyone in town put in a good water softener?”**

Answer: If you don't remove

the contaminants at the front end of the process, the buildup of rust will continue and eventually cause bigger problems to the city-wide water system.

**“How long will it take before the plant is online and before our water is cleared up?”**

Answer: The process will take four to five years from the decision to proceed including time for design, funding and building. It can take up to a year before all the residue is out of the system.

**“What if we flushed the**

**hydrants more often?”**

Answer: That would mainly remove the treatment chemicals from the system and increase the city's contribution to the sanitary sewer treatment process at an increased cost.

According to James Kroeher, the city's water expert, about 80 percent of the residue is removed each time the city flushes the hydrants, but it builds up again over the six month gap. More frequent flushing would not only increase the chemical requirements but would also stir up

even more residue and possibly make the situation worse.

**“Would it be helpful to change the configuration of the water system up on Maple Ridge as it is currently a closed loop?”**

Answer: That should probably be addressed in the design process for the new system.

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
AND COST ESTIMATE**

SEH suggests building a new water treatment plant for an expected flow rate of 250 gallon/minute at an estimated cost of \$5.65 million. Flushing

the system to remove residues and replacing the few remaining cast iron 4" mains should also be pursued.

Another consideration to bear in mind is that SEH was testing only for current standards. A treatment plant would allow for easier process updates as standards change in the future.

**NEXT STEP**

The Henderson City Council will decide whether to move forward with a new plant. Then they will explore funding options. The good news is

that there are many programs available including grants, low-interest long-term loans and bonding bills. According to Chris Knutson from SEH, the USDA Rural Development program will probably be the best source for a lot of the funding. Their approval process requires such steps as design and cost analysis, calculations based on Henderson's average household income and what our sources might be available. The end result will probably be a combination of grants and 40-year low interest loans.



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**Lucky 11 Winners:**

**Week 1: Christopher Johnson  
and  
Janet Boese**



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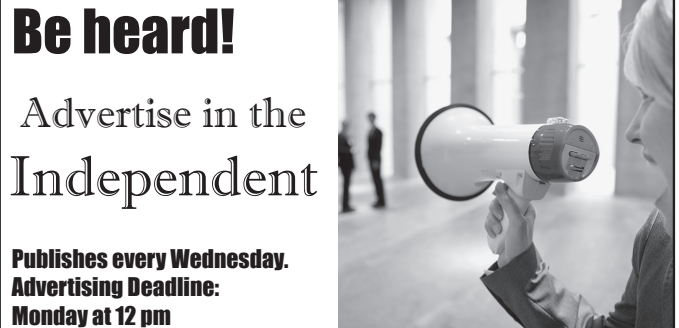
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## International nod

Henderson's Ladies Tourist Club received international acclaim for its bloodmobile efforts. P. 3



## Girls Basketball

The Giants girls basketball team closed the regular season with a big win on Monday night. P. 10

## Food drive begins

The Sibley County FoodShare receives extra support for donations made Feb. 28 through April 10. P. 7



# The Henderson Independent

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Thursday, Feb. 24, 2022 - VOL. 151 - NO. 8 • Henderson, MN 56044 (ISP 240020) • 10 pages in 1 section • \$1.00

## Many hands hope to bring Henderson trail to fruition

By Beth Cornish  
Independent Staff

The Henderson Scenic Byway Regional Trail Master Plan leadership team hosted a special meeting at the Henderson Public Library on Tuesday, Feb. 15. Present from the team were Mayor Keith Swenson, Councilwoman Amy Hardel, Danielle Buesgens, Denny Graham and Terry Bovee with Doug Thomas and Jeff Steinborn leading the presentation. Also in attendance were County Commissioner Bobbie Harder, Sibley County Public Works Director Tim Becker, and City Administrator Lon Berberich.

Thomas gave a short presentation naming local volunteers and supporting agencies to date. The trail cost is estimated at \$1.5 million, which is a bargain since the trail will be built in conjunction with the flood mitigation work on County Road 6, aka Scenic Byway. The county work includes

design and easements, which would be prohibitively expensive if the trail was proceeding on its own.

The first step in the process is getting regional trail designation. This application form has been submitted and the group anticipates a high rating from the application. This accompanies the master plan that is due by April 1 for a funding recommendation to be placed in the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission's request on or before July 31 for 2023 funding from the legislature. To qualify for this funding the trail must be 10 miles long and as it is only eight miles from Henderson to County Road 5, connections to High Island and Rush River Parks will be considered as phase two of the plan.

Also to be applied for are competitive grants for local and regional trails, both limited to \$250,000 with applications due by the end of this March. Private groups such as the Schmidt Foundation and Cem-



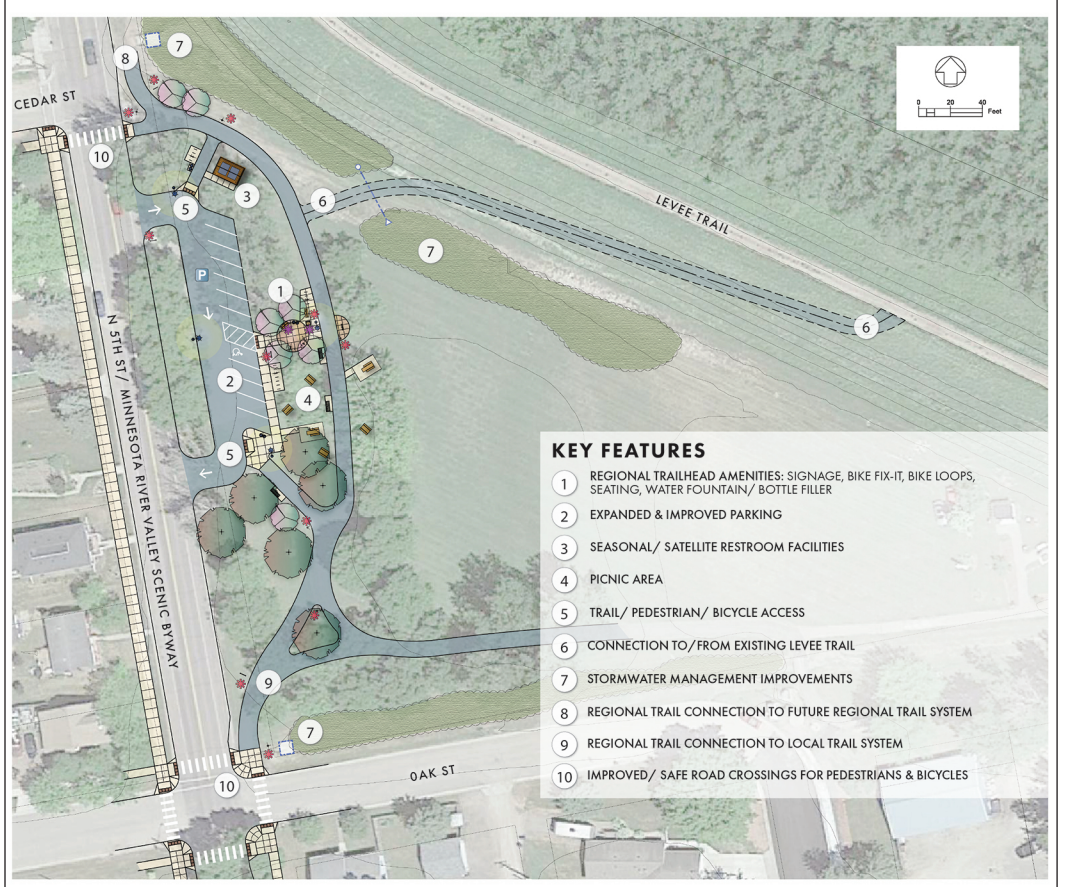
Scan the above QR code to link to the community survey for the project.

stone Corporation will also be approached for funding.

The master plan consists of 28 parts that range from site characteristics to public health values to tourism opportunities to funding streams, planning and metrics. Volunteers from both Le Sueur and Henderson, and from groups such as the Ney Nature Center, the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, Henderson Feathers, Jessenland Township and the DNR are already in-

TRAILHEAD  
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### REGIONAL TRAILHEAD OVERALL CONCEPT



#### KEY FEATURES

- 1 REGIONAL TRAILHEAD AMENITIES: SIGNAGE, BIKE FIX-IT, BIKE LOOPS, SEATING, WATER FOUNTAIN/ BOTTLE FILLER
- 2 EXPANDED & IMPROVED PARKING
- 3 SEASONAL/ SATTELITE RESTROOM FACILITIES
- 4 PICNIC AREA
- 5 TRAIL/ PEDESTRIAN/ BICYCLE ACCESS
- 6 CONNECTION TO/ FROM EXISTING LEVEE TRAIL
- 7 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS
- 8 REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTION TO FUTURE REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM
- 9 REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTION TO LOCAL TRAIL SYSTEM
- 10 IMPROVED/ SAFE ROAD CROSSINGS FOR PEDESTRIANS & BICYCLES

The proposed trail would include a regional trailhead just off N. 5th Street, between Cedar and Oak streets.



PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

ATSR Vice-President Dave Maroney presented modern educational learning environments to board members on Tuesday night, which could include modular furniture, adaptive classrooms, natural light and various ways to integrate technology.

### Le Sueur-Henderson School Board

## Board narrows down options for second crack at a referendum

By Rachel Miller  
Editor

ATSR Vice-President Dave Maroney presented some possible new learning environments to Le Sueur-Henderson School Board members during a work session on Tuesday night.

Today's learning environments go beyond the normal desk, chair and teacher's desk in classrooms. Many schools take advantage of agile and flexible learning spaces to enhance learning. Things like

garage doors that open to the outdoors, moveable furniture, technology spaces, and tables of varying heights can allow students and staff to work together or individually, let in more natural light and encourage problem-solving and teamwork.

As Maroney showed images from projects ATSR worked on, like nearby Tri-City United and Marshall, it did prompt board member Kelsey Schwartz to ponder if such things were within the school district's budget. Maroney responded that is something that

still needs to be examined as they figure out what the best answer for the district is.

However, one fact that board member Gretchen Rehm pointed out is that no matter which direction you head in, most surrounding school districts are offering 21st Century learning and classrooms like TCU.

"It is St. Peter, it is Cleveland, it is Belle Plaine, it is TCU, New Prague, Waconia, Sibley East...I could go on and on...even some of the old

SCHOOL BOARD  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

### Henderson City Council

## City water project will require phased-in rate increases

By Beth Cornish  
Independent staff

Henderson residents will be seeing their water rates increase over the next several years, due to funding requirements associated with the city-wide water project.

As part of the Wednesday, Feb. 16 Henderson City Council meeting, Henderson City Administrator Lon Berberich shared that in order to fund the water project, the city needs to secure part of the money through USDA grants.

In order to be eligible for those grants, the user rates must be 1.5 percent of the Median Household Income from 2019, which for Henderson was \$70,673. This means that by January 2026 the annual base rate for water would be \$1,060 per year, or \$88.35 per month.

In order to cover that increase with as little consumer sticker shock as possible, the increase will phase in gradually. The council voted in favor of raising the water base rate by \$15 per month beginning January 2023, then an additional \$15 in 2024 and 2025, culminating with a \$17 increase in 2026. This increase makes Henderson eligible for up to \$4 million in grants to

reduce the total project cost to between \$5-6 million, rather than up to \$10 million. In 2026 there would also be a \$2 per month increase in the sewer base rate to meet program requirements.

The great news for local residents is about the levy. Henderson's levy for 2022 is only five percent more than 2021 and only 6.9 percent higher than 2019, while most neighboring communities had much bigger increases, including Le Sueur where the 2022 levy went up by 17.4 percent, over three times Henderson's increase.

The best news regards the city's long-term debt situation as it affects the city tax levy. A few of the city's bond funds will be paid off during 2022 and 2023, so there will be money available to shore up the permanent improvement fund as recommended by the city's outside auditors without increasing the levy, and the levy will not need to increase across the rest of the decade. This puts Henderson in a very good position for taking on another piece of long-term debt in a few years with a minimal, if any increase to the taxpayers.

### FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT

There was good news on the flood mitigation front as Rachel Pichelmann from

Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. was on hand to provide an update on the Highway 93 and levee reconstruction project. The right-of-way acquisitions are about 60% complete and will hopefully advance even more after a meeting with MnDOT, tentatively scheduled for next week. Discussions with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are proceeding pretty much according to plan.

### ALLANSON'S PARK

Chris Knutson from SEH brought a proposal for a landscape architect to develop a concept layout for Allanson's Park to include such items as the reconfiguration of campsites and traffic flow, accessibility improvements, and trail/sidewalk connections.

This would be an addendum to the existing Trail Master Plan contract. Berberich and Mayor Keith Swenson gave a quick overview of the status of the biking/hiking/snowmobile trail to run along County Road 6 (see above story).

COUNCIL  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



## This and That with Al **Batt**

# There are no clouds in real mashed potatoes

### ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I'm reading a book on how to do magic tricks. I could make this coffee pot disappear.

I'd like to see you do that.

OK, close your eyes. Abracadabra! Amscray!

It's still there.

I said, "Close your eyes."

### DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Deep thoughts occur as I drive past his drive. February can be a bumpy road, but the interiors of automobiles warm when parked in the sunlight. That's great. We had a lot of great things when I was a boy, but we didn't know it. Pretty good was our great. It's pretty good to see the red veins of spring, especially on south-facing slopes where the red colors of shrubs brighten and become more vibrant at this time of the year. Deer find the twigs of the red-osier dogwood fine eating. The plants (also known as red-twig dogwood or red-brush) are eye-catching. The yellow/gold outer branches of weeping willows are enhanced chromatically. Both species want to be the first pickle out of the jar.

### THERE ARE NO CLOUDS IN REAL MASHED POTATOES

When I was a mere child, seeing a spotlight was exciting. My hometown didn't have one then. It doesn't have one now. Landmarks have disappeared with time and tornadoes. There are places that look as if they should have a tree because they once had a tree. I miss the pre-GPS days when I could say things like, "And if you get to the hardware store, you've turned the wrong way."

I used to do a TV show, occasionally from the wonderful Village Inn. Viewers asked about the sign "Real mashed potatoes" on that eatery's wall. Those real mashed potatoes, made from real potatoes instead of fake potatoes, satisfied many appetites. They were powerful good and not the least bit lumpy. I wished I was an opossum so I could sink 50 teeth in the mashed taters.

Clouds come and clouds go. We are lucky when we find something that makes us happy. The Village Inn's real mashed potatoes did that for me.

A woman used to visit me regularly. I liked her. I pretty

much like everyone, but hasten to add, I haven't met everyone. She was a good woman, but she had her ways. We all have our ways. That's why we hear things like "That's just Al being Al." I was fortunate enough to have graduated with one of her daughters. I won't flatter myself into thinking the woman stopped by to see me. She visited because I let her use my copy machine. It's good for a man to know his place. I leaned in and listened when she talked about her friend she loved. I loved her friend, too. Her friend was my mother-in-law. We are lucky when we find people who make us happy.

### I'VE LEARNED

The best tip for driving in bad weather is don't.

If you ask a genie from a toaster for three wishes, you'll get toast.

Don't let your kids make fun of your limited digital skills. You're the one who taught them how to use silverware.

If I get up earlier, I can take a longer nap.

### NATURE NOTES

The Old Farmer's Almanac said winter's back breaks around the middle of February. I hope winter wasn't listening. The calendar hurries through everything and as a South African might say, "Ja well no fine," used to indicate reluctant acceptance.

I have window feeders that are great for birds and for folks prone to stir-craziness. They adhere to the window via suction cups. The window needs to be clean and it helps the suction if the glass is warm. Spread vegetable oil lightly on the suction cup rims to enhance adherence.

I have a heated birdbath, a recycled dog food dish. Birds can use snow and ice as a source of water, but it expends precious energy to convert it into water. Heated birdbaths don't create warm water, but keep it from freezing. If you don't have a heated birdbath, you could offer fresh water in the early morning and right before dark. Those are popular times when birds want water.

A ring-necked pheasant rooster found something to crow about. Roosters crow throughout the year. I understand that. I've had many gigs canceled by Covid, but I've been fortunate to speak virtually at birding celebrations in Alabama, Colorado, Connecti-



PHOTO BY AL BATT

The coyote is sometimes called a brush wolf or prairie wolf. I think there's one guy who calls it an American jackal. Both the ki-oat-ee and ki-oat pronunciations are correct and vary with the region you find yourself. Be prepared to be corrected by someone who feels superior. Its scientific name is *Canis latrans* and is called a song dog by some of its admirers.

cut, Alaska, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, Wisconsin, South Dakota, etc. recently. Those were important because roosters need to crow.

### MEETING ADJOURNED

"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else."

— Charles Dickens

### NATURALLY

Boreas, the god of the north wind in Greek mythology, was working hard. I spotted a coyote. Coyotes are intermediate in size between foxes and wolves. In Minnesota, coyotes average 30 pounds (ranging 20-50) and stand about 18 inches high at the shoulders. Coyotes are comparable in size to a medium-sized dog breed such as a border collie. They appear larger than that due to their heavy fur coat in winter. They're gray/brown and resemble a small German shepherd dog in appearance. Coyotes in Minnesota are loners, except when families are raising pups. Their primary foods are rabbits and mice.

On a warm, late-winter day, look at the base of a tree and see if you can spot jumping pepper flakes. These springtails are called snow fleas.

Look for deer sheds anytime the snow melts. As winter makes a slow slide into spring, listen for birds heralding the oncoming seasonal changes. February can be a bumpy road, but I'm picking up good vibrations. Love is in the air—the air

of increasing daylength. The smell of skunk wafts on the wind. Woodpeckers are drumming frequently. Their feathered brethren — cardinals, starlings, chickadees, house finches, nuthatches and blue jays make sounds of spring.

The black-capped chickadee's whistled fee-bee song sounds like "spring's here" to me. Cardinals can sing anytime of the year but vocalize with increasing gusto now. The male white-breasted nuthatches sing a rapid, nasal "what-what-what." The jays make a squeaky pump handle call and starlings mingle chatter, gurgles, rattles, trills, warbles and whistles. House finches sing a long, jumbled warbling of short notes. The birds call for us to walk, at least to a window.

I pulled into a fast-food parking lot. The lot was mostly empty spaces, so I stopped to return a phone call. The automobile stable was being visited by starlings, house sparrows and crows. Those birds love fast-food parking lots because humans are messy. I saw a crow dragging a large slice of pizza as another watched, likely offering constructive criticism. "Lift with your legs." A crow will eat a pizza even if it hasn't been run over by a car.

### Q&A

"Do pileated woodpeckers eat wood?"

They work with wood, so they might accidentally ingest

sawdust just as any other skilled carpenter might. They forage in dead trees, stumps and fallen logs, making impressive rectangular excavations deep into the wood in search of the tunnels of carpenter ants.

The pileated woodpecker's primary food is carpenter ants (which have a nutty taste), supplemented by other ants, wood-boring beetle larvae, termites, flies, spruce budworms, caterpillars, cockroaches, grasshoppers, wild fruits (including those of poison ivy) and nuts. Various studies have found ants make up 40 to 97% of an individual's diet. Occasionally, pileated woodpeckers visit backyard bird feeders for seeds or suet.

"Why do cardinals visit the feeders so early and so late in the day?"

They are less conspicuous then, which is especially important for the brightly colored male. There are fewer predators and less competition. Most cardinals coming to feeders are locals and have short flights to and from roosts. And the dim lighting makes for romantic dining. Cardinals are one of the birds that can handle striped sunflower seeds and their thick shells with ease.

Marian Bahl of Faribault wrote, "There were 21 ravenous doves at my feeders today. Made another trip to the feed

and seed store. Do they mate for life? I always see an odd number lately. I feel bad for #21. Is there an eharmony.com for birdies?"

Mating pairs are monogamous for a breeding season and might get together in succeeding breeding seasons, which means they may mate for life. Their lives are short and a mourning dove finds a new partner if its mate is lost. Number 21 should remain hopeful.

"How far do eagles migrate?"

Bald eagles are short- to medium-distance migrants that may move only as far as they need to find food. Bald eagles are found primarily along major rivers, lakes and other open water, but can be seen feeding on a dead deer in the middle of a farm field and anywhere else where food is served. They feed on fish and carrion, but will also eat large birds, mammals (muskrats and hares are favorites) reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans and occasionally dine on garbage (who doesn't?).

### THANKS FOR STOPPING BY

"He that plants trees loves others besides himself."

—Thomas Fuller

"They know enough who know how to learn."

—Henry Adams

Do good.

### TRAILHEAD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

involved on many levels with the master plan but there is always room for more helping hands. If you have an interest in vol-

unteering, please contact Doug Thomas at doughtomas3738@gmail.com or Jeff Steinborn at jsteinborn@mac.com.

The accompanying drawing on page 1 is the current concept for the trailhead to replace the

existing parking lot off North Fifth Street at the west end of Bender Park, including connections to existing trails, information kiosks, restroom facilities, bike fix-it stations, drinking water, parking and seating as

well as a picnic area and safer road crossings at both Cedar and Oak Streets.

Be sure to scan the QR code with your smart phone so you can take the community survey.

### COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### POLICE MONTHLY REPORT

Although both Chief Dmitri Ikonitski and Officer Michael Nunan spent time on the sick list over the last month, the department handled 94 calls for service, conducted three

criminal investigations and issued four traffic citations for speeding and driving with a revoked license after 16 traffic stops. Arrests were made for gross misdemeanor DUI, felony possession of dangerous controlled substance and disorderly conduct.

### HELP FOR BUSINESSES

Bryan Stading from the

Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation gave a short presentation to the council last week. He announced the RCEF has partnered with Sibley County to provide economic development assistance to all seven cities in the county. To begin with, the company will provide packets to the Henderson Chamber of Com-

merce and the two banks so that current and potential business owners can learn about the services RCEF can assist with, ranging from needs and goals assessment to help with business, sales and marketing plans, all the way to succession planning. A few of our local businesses have already gotten help from RCEF.

## Henderson Library hosts Vietnam War program

It lasted 10,000 days, cost the nation 56,000 lives, 300,000 wounded, 1,200 missing in action, and \$141 billion. It sparked riots and protests at home and ended without a victory. It left Americans divided in their feelings about the United States' role in Southeast Asia and the world.

Learn all about the social, economic and military aspects of the Vietnam War, going back to its beginning from French involvement in Indochina to the entry of the United States fight-

ing on the Asian continent a century later. This program presented by Arn Kind, historian, takes place Monday, March 14 at 6 p.m. in the lower level of the Henderson Library, 110 S. 6th Street. Free and open to the public.

This program is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant provided by the Traverse des Sioux Library Cooperative, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Have a news tip or story idea? Call us at 507-248-3223