

THE EMPIRE THEATRE COMPANY AND ALERUS FINANCIAL PRESENT

the HOLIDAY show

Nov. 26-27 & Dec. 2-4 at 7 pm
Nov. 28 & Dec. 5 at 2 pm

www.empireartscenter.com | 701-746-5500

Grand Forks Herald

UNLOCK DIGITAL AT GRANDFORKSHERALD.COM/ACTIVATE **WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2021**

Santa Claus Girls launch 2021 drive

Once again, volunteers help brighten Christmas for Grand Cities children in need

By Pamela Knudson
Grand Forks Herald

The local Santa Claus Girls organization, which distributes Christmas gifts for children in need in the Grand Cities, has set a \$40,000 fundraising goal for this year.

Support from the community and various organizations is critical to its success, said Carol Schneweis, treasurer for Santa Claus Girls.

In 2020, more than 1,250 children, ages 12 and younger, received a package from Santa Claus Girls, Schneweis said. Each package contained a hat, gloves, socks, an age-appropriate toy and book, crayons and coloring book, along with a toothbrush and toothpaste, she said.

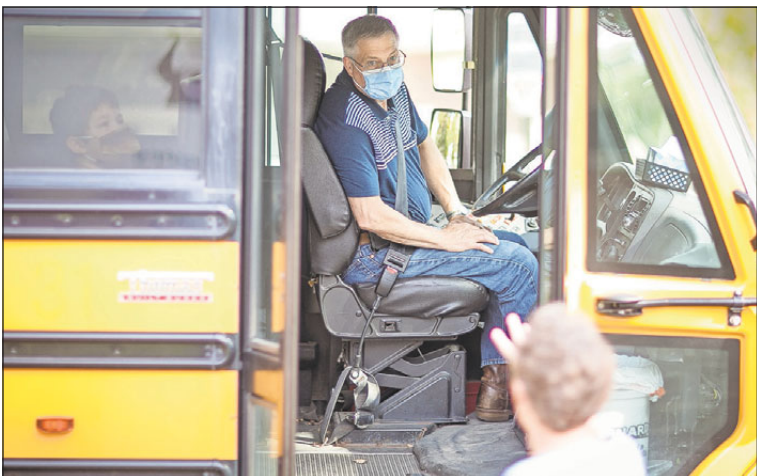
In addition, each family receives a small bag of candy, wrapping paper and tape, and a coupon for a free large pizza.

Community support for this project has been “phenomenal,” especially last year, Schneweis said. “While technically the packages come from the Santa Claus Girls, it is the community-wide effort that makes it possible.”

A year ago, the Santa Claus Girls were unsure whether there would be a distribution day, she said.

SANTA: Page A3

New transit plan could mean changes



Eric Hylden / Grand Forks Herald

Dale Bergman, director of the city's transportation division, stops at Viking Elementary School in Grand Forks on Sept. 30. Bergman is filling in during the bus driver shortage

More on-demand busing, new transfer hub being considered.

By Joe Bowen
Grand Forks Herald

Grand Forks and East Grand Forks administrators are working on a new long-term public transit plan that could be complicated by a deluge of federal infrastructure funding.

Cities Area Transit staff on both sides of the Red River are working on a 10-year plan outlining the financials, routes, equipment and other facets of the cities' shared public transportation system. It's a document each city

needs to have on file to receive federal transit funding.

For now, that means a series of preliminary surveys – of drivers, of riders, staff and the public at large – to inform the new plan, but administrators are already considering new transit strategies they could adopt in the Grand Cities.

That could mean on-demand “micro transit” options in the style of “CAT”'s existing dial-a-ride service.

“There is a need for transit in certain areas, but it's not where you want to run a bus constantly for four hours driving around (and) you get

TRANSIT: Page A4



Eric Hylden / Grand Forks Herald

Lions Club volunteer Clair Zirnhelt stands next to one of the “Christmas in the Park” displays at Lincoln Park. The annual event runs Nov. 26 through Dec. 31, with proceeds donated to local charities.

‘Christmas in the Park’

Lions’ clubs’ annual display of lights opens Friday

By Pamela Knudson
Grand Forks Herald

In 2020, more than 3,500 vehicles toured “Christmas in the Park” in Grand Forks, resulting in almost double the usual revenue

earned for the event.

It likely was due to the pandemic, which had kept people indoors for so long, said Clair Zirnhelt, coordinator of this year's event. Driving through Lincoln Park is a safe way to

take in holiday cheer with family, while avoiding close-contact situations that can come in big crowds.

Could 2021 see a similar turnout? Zirnhelt isn't sure, but he's hopeful.

“The Lions hope that

many residents will take time to drive through these displays,” he said. “There can never be too much Christmas cheer, and a drive-through ‘Christmas in the Park’ will

PARK: Page A4

Feeling thankful that news has a place in the future

A recent “news” item – and yes, the apostrophes and italics are intentionally added – adequately makes the case for the future of local newspapers, their responsibilities and, to an extent, even their future.

A report circulating online announced some terrible fate of a local newsmaker. Users of a social media app unashamedly circulated the rumor on Nov. 2. They even said the Herald had written a story that

confirmed it.

The whole thing was completely and unequivocally untrue.

As the rumor grew, we stepped in and reported the truth: There was no tragedy, nor was there a Herald report that supposedly confirmed it.

Meanwhile, another example of a newspaper's role emerged just a few days later. On Saturday, Nov. 6, the Herald reported that Grand Forks has been selected as the location of a massive project that will begin to take shape in the coming year. As described to us by Economic Development Corp. President and CEO Keith Lund,

WENZEL: Page A3

Get the newspaper format you love EVERY DAY.

Open your phone or tablet's camera and point it at the code below any time after 6 a.m. each day to access that day's print replica.

SCAN ME

Available even on days your print paper is not delivered!

ng
/E.



KORRIE WENZEL
Publisher

Serving Great Pizza Since 1990!

(701) 746-POPS 7677

YOU CAN NOW ORDER ONLINE AT POPOLINOSPIZZA.COM

FOR PICKUP OR DELIVERY

ANY REGULAR PRICED LARGE PIZZA

\$3 OFF

Must mention coupon when ordering. Not valid with other offers or online. EXPIRES 12/31/21

FOR PICKUP OR DELIVERY

TWO LARGE 1 TOPPING Pizzas

\$9.99 /Pizza

Must mention coupon when ordering. Not valid with other offers or online. EXPIRES 12/31/21

SANTA

From Page A1

“With COVID restriction, increased costs and questions as to whether or not people would volunteer during a pandemic, we pondered our future,” she said. “Our fears were unfounded, as not only were we able to distribute the packages, but we set a new record for the number of children served, the number of volunteers (more than 75) and in our monetary campaign goals through donations and grants from the community.”

The Santa Claus Girls are very grateful for “the people who show up in deed or donation to make it happen,” Schneweis said.

This year, the package distribution day is Dec. 17, but the preparation goes on for the entire year, she said.

HOW TO GIVE TO SANTA CLAUS GIRLS

Donations may be mailed to:
Santa Claus Girls
1726 S. Washington St., #81
Grand Forks, N.D. 58201

HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Go to www.Santaclausgirls.com
For more information, contact Carol Schneweis at (701) 739-5480

The “Santa Shoppers,” Julie and Jennifer Ekberg, scour stores for the best buys on toys, hats and gloves, all the while keeping an in-depth inventory to ensure there are enough items in stock to meet the requested need of every child, regardless of age or gender.

Other individuals, companies and organizations provide support by hosting toy drives. The BJ Armani Cabaret raises money and purchases toys for the children. Badger Dental donates all the tooth-

brushes. Deek’s Pizza donates coupons for a large pizza for each family, and Dusterhoff Family Stores company helps with the candy purchase. Acme Rents, Hope Church and Whalen’s Moving and Storage also provide important support.

Volunteers from several companies, including American Crystal Sugar and Community Contractors, are actively involved in preparing for and serving on distribution day.

Behind the scenes, six Santa Claus Girls board



Contributed

Working for the Santa Claus Girls at the Grand Cities Mall, volunteers help sort and pack gifts that will be bagged and delivered to Grand Cities families in need

members spend hours planning, counting and sorting items throughout the year, Schneweis said.

The Engelstad Foundation supports operating costs so all donations from the community can go directly to the children, and a 2020 grant from the Myra Founda-

tion is used to purchase many items for children, she said.

Schneweis, who has been involved in Santa Claus Girls since 2000, is the group’s liaison with schools, churches and social services units, helping to identify families in need. She also helps with the mar-

athon task of coordinating volunteers for package pick-up by families at the Grand Cities Mall.

As an organization, Santa Claus Girls’ history dates back to 1916, when the group was founded by Grand Forks Herald employees who decided to brighten Christmas for children in need.

The group operated out of the Grand Forks Herald’s downtown building until it was sold to the city a few years ago.

“We have adjusted well to our new location in the Grand Cities Mall, with assistance from Hope Church and the community,” Schneweis said. “Our mission is to provide Christmas support to families in need who live in Grand Forks or East Grand Forks.”

Knudson is a features reporter at the Herald. Call her at (701) 780-1107, (800) 477-6572 ext.1107 or email pknudson@gfherald.com.

WENZEL

From Page A1

the agribusiness plant – owned by China-based Fufeng Group – will be the “largest single private capital investment in the region’s history.”

The announcement of the project was one thing. But in the days following that breaking news, the Herald put its resources to work to try to find exactly how that project will affect Greater Grand Forks and its residents. We’re still writing about the impact, weeks later.

The new project announcement and the false rumor on social media both occurred in a matter of a few days, and they sum up why newspapers are still here. The first

showed that news gained through social media can sometimes be questionable at best, patently false at worst. The second was big news that probably will be a landmark event for the entire community. We reported it, and we continue to explain how that news will affect us all.

We know our role is to report the news, good and bad, but in a truthful and trustworthy way. And we know that it’s also our responsibility to break the good news just as quickly as we break the bad. In the process, it’s evitable we will make mistakes, but our intent is good, unlike those who knowingly spread rumors on social media.

Thursday is Thanksgiving, a day when most Americans

will gather with friends and families to express gratitude and appreciation for all of the good things in their lives. Here at the Herald, we’re appreciative, too – of you, the loyal customers who have stuck with us throughout so many changes.

Eighteen months ago, as the coronavirus pandemic struck, we wondered what our own future would look like, especially as so many of the businesses with whom we work were struggling to keep their own doors open.

Newspapers were changing even before the pandemic, cutting print days, reducing page counts and so forth. These decisions, quite unpopular with many customers, were based solely on the economics of our business.

With so many traditional big advertisers – Kmart, Macy’s, Shopko and a host of others – closing in town, it was inevitable that we must break from a decades-old business model and adapt to another for our own future. Exacerbating the problem was a rising cost of printing, along with a constantly increasing number of readers who prefer

to get their news online, rather than in a traditional printed newspaper.

So we made changes. We cut print days, erected a paywall on our website and opted to only deliver print editions through the mail.

Those changes have given us stability. And after a decline during those difficult times, we actually have been increasing our circulation numbers in

recent months.

We’re here for the future. And it’s been awhile since anyone mentioned “newspapers” and “future” in the same sentence.

And it’s because of you, the customers who may not like all all of our decisions and who may not even like us all the time, yet realize that local news – newspapers, TV and radio – still matters.



Confidence isn’t about knowing exactly what your day’s going to bring.

It’s about knowing you’re ready to handle it.

Let’s see what we can do together.
Talk to a Bremer banker today.

BREMER
BANK

bremer.com

© 2021 Bremer Financial Corporation. All rights reserved. Bremer and Bremer Bank are registered service marks of Bremer Financial Corporation.

“Best Liquor Store in the Red River Valley” by the Readers of the Fargo Forum

Twice Named “One of America’s 10 Best” – Beverage Dynamics Magazine

“Best Liquor Store” by the Readers of the Grand Forks Herald

FARGO & GRAND FORKS, ND
100% EMPLOYEE OWNED

The PENNY Sale

On Now

NOVEMBER 4 TO DECEMBER 1, 2021

THE PENNY SALE IS NOW
FOUR WEEKS LONG TO GIVE YOU MORE
TIME TO SHOP AND SAVE!

NOW - NO PENNIES NEEDED!

JUST ONE LOW PRICE ON OVER 200 WINES.

SOME SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED, SELECTION
MAY VARY BY LOCATION.

VISIT HAPPY-HARRYS.COM TO SEE OUR
ADDITIONAL WINE, BEER AND LIQUOR SPECIALS...
MORE THAN 500 ITEMS ON SALE!

2051 32ND AVENUE SOUTH
GRAND FORKS

HRS: MON-SAT: 8AM TO 11PM
SUNDAY: 11AM TO 10PM

2702 GATEWAY DRIVE
GRAND FORKS

HRS: MON-SAT: 8AM TO 11PM
SUNDAY: 11AM TO 10PM

4001 53RD AVENUE SOUTH
FARGO

HRS: MON-SAT: 8AM TO 11PM
SUNDAY: 11AM TO 10PM

1125 19TH AVENUE NORTH
FARGO

HRS: MON-SAT: 8AM TO 11PM
SUNDAY: 11AM TO 8PM

1621 45TH STREET SW
FARGO

HRS: MON-SAT: 8AM TO 11PM
SUNDAY: 11AM TO 10PM

WWW.HAPPY-HARRYS.COM

PLEASE USE OUR PRODUCTS IN MODERATION