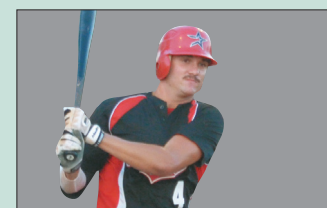


\$1.00

MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2020



Stars win again.
See page 1B.

Voters have options for Aug. 11
primary election.
See page 2A.

NEWS BRIEFS

COVID-19: U.S. at a Glance*

As of Aug. 2, 2020

Total cases: 4,542,579
Total deaths: 152,870

Jurisdictions reporting cases: 55 (50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Northern Marianas, and US Virgin Islands.)

*Data released on Aug. 2 include both confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to CDC or tested at CDC since January 21.

Minnesota at a Glance

As of Aug. 2, 2020

Positive 55,947
Deaths: 1,614

In this Area As of Aug. 2, 2020

Pope County: 39
Douglas County: 129
Grant County: 39
Swift County: 52
Stevens County: 15
Stearns County: 2,817

Approximate number of patients tested: 1,054,962. Numbers are cumulative since Jan. 20, 2020.

The Minnesota Department of Health website: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/mdh.html and CDC's Coronavirus Disease website: cdc.gov are the best places to get the most accurate information.

Mobile Food Drop is set for Aug. 11

The Pope County Mobile Food Drop is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 11 from 12-2 p.m. at Glenwood United Parish, 10 17th Ave NW, Glenwood. Participants are reminded that pre-registration is required by Aug. 10.

OBITUARIES

Earl Hodsdon
89, Glenwood
Julie A. Pochardt
77, Lake Lida
Lorraine V. Hoium
94, Moorhead
Marie A. Smith
89, Annandale
Mary (Teeda) Swedenburg Larsen
86, Rawlins, Wyo.

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Monday
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Tuesday-Thursday
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Friday
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Pope County SWCD completes project to improve lake water quality

By Celeste Rapp
news@pctrbune.com

Erosion into Lake Minnewaska is a problem the Pope County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has been looking to solve for many years now.

As a part of the Lake Minnewaska project, the SWCD with the help of Erickson Excavating built an earthen berm on Dean Paulson's property approximately one mile south of Lake Minnewaska. "We built an earthen berm that's anywhere from five to eight feet high and then we have a concrete riser pipe that outlets with a 30-inch metal culvert to handle the majority of the rain events and fix the gully," Ross Reiffenberger explained. Reiffenberger is a West Central Technical Service Area engineer who designed the project. He also works for the Stearns County SWCD. A rock and vegetated concrete mat lined spillway were also included in the project to handle larger water flow.

"This is a project that we've worked on for a long time," said Pope County SWCD manager Holly Kovarik. Kovarik said that the SWCD has been discussing the Paulson site since at least 2011 when erosion on the property was initially recognized. The project was identified in the Pope County Water Plan that was developed in 2013. The Water Plan lists erosion and sediment control as a priority and states, "As an agricultural county, soils are one of Pope County's most valuable natural resources. The loss of soils through both wind and water erosion not only negatively affects the ability to raise crops, erosion and sedimentation also negatively affects the quality of water resources."

The creek located on Paulson's property is called Hackberry Creek and the project on that land was done specifically to improve water quality downstream in Lake Minnewaska. Reiffenberger said that there was approximately 100-tons of sediment that was flowing into Lake Minnewaska annually due to the erosion in Hackberry Creek.

With the project now completed, water flow after rainfall is being metered through a pipe in-



Holly Kovarik, Pope County SWCD Manager, and Ross Reiffenberger, project engineer standing near the completed project site. More photos can be found on Page 8B.

stead of flushing directly into the lake. "We've slowed down the flow enough so that it's not going to actively erode here or even downstream. There was active cutting in the channel prior to putting this in, so it should have more long-term effects," stated Reiffenberger.

Kovarik said, "We have a lot of projects we've been working on in the subwatershed to the lake. This is the third grant specific to the Minnewaska project area that we've been working on with several different landowner projects throughout the two sub watersheds contributing to Minnewaska." The Hackberry Creek project is a part of a larger project to improve the water quality of Lake Minnewaska.

The SWCD has been monitoring tributaries and ways that drainage enters the lake. Kovarik said that this project was more complicated because it is on a public water. A total of six different permits were required for the project at Hackberry Creek to be obtained. This was a complex site.

Paulson said that he noticed the damage that was being done

with the creek and that he wanted to find a way to fix it. He has worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the past and now with the Pope SWCD on this erosion problem and he was on the Lake Association board for many years, so he understood the effects the erosion had on the area. "It involved the Army Corp of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Soil and Water, Pope County Land and Resource Management Office, and the Farm Service Agency," said Paulson about the Hackberry Creek project.

Pope County Commissioner for District 3, Paul Gerde, "worked very hard and diligently to keep pursuing this because the ball had been dropped because of the project complexity and Holly from the SWCD kept on picking up the ball and running with it," Paulson stated. Paulson went on to say that he thinks the entire community will benefit from the outcomes of the project because there will be cleaner water draining into the lake.

The actual installation of the

berm, riser and culvert took approximately four to five weeks to complete. Some of the project was completed last fall, but due to rainfall, most of the project was finished this spring.

Kovarik hopes that the SWCD can continue doing projects such as the Hackberry Creek project. "We do have other projects in the works, but I hope that if landowners have erosion or resource concerns that they give our office a call. That's where it starts, that initial conversation," Kovarik shared a thank you to all involved in getting this project accomplished.

This project was funded by the Clean Water Fund as a part of the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment and the Glacial Lakes Environmental Trust Fund. To learn more about the Clean Water Fund visit www.legacy.mn.gov/clean-water-fund.

To contact the Pope County SWCD about a potential project or for any questions, call 320-634-5327.

Habitat House relocated to Starbuck

Another Pope County family will soon move into a new home thanks to the Prairie Lakes Chapter of Habitat for Humanity, Minnewaska Area School students and instructors and a host of other private contractors and volunteers.

Jacqueline Hill and her two daughters will be moving into the new home that was built on Minnewaska Area School property with help from the MAHS building trades program that involved more than 40 MAHS students who worked on the house.

The students were assisted by MAHS building trades instructors, Steve Entzi and Jason Weber, along with a number of local

construction professionals that provided expertise in plumbing, electricity, and other skills.

The house was moved last Thursday from the school to a vacant lot in on 4th Street in Starbuck where it was place a foundation and will be finished in place, according to Dick Dreher, president of the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. The lot was made possible through the Pope County Housing and Redevelopment Authority with Economic Development powers (HRA/EDA). The lot was a tax-forfeited property that will now go back on the city's tax rolls.

The Habitat for Humanity

house was a community project, according to Dreher, utilizing private contractors, who volunteered their expertise, volunteer labor from Habitat for Humanity board members and volunteers, and students and instructors for Minnewaska Area Schools.

He new owner of the house, Jacqueline Hill, is employed as a department head at Cub Foods in Alexandria.

Background on school involvement

The idea for resurrecting the building trades program at Minnewaska Area High School was the brainchild of Principal Cory Larson, who had experience with

the same program while he was in Sauk Centre's school system. He approached the local Habitat for Humanity Chapter about the idea of partnering with the school district and the community to build a habitat house with school students gaining experience in the building trade.

This was a win-win for the school, the students and the community," Larson said when the project began last fall. Typically, a building trades program at the high school level can be very expensive because of the financial commitment and uncertainty of selling the house at the end of the school year. The partnership

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Pope County SWCD completes project to improve lake water quality



Contributed photos



Counterclockwise from above: a picture of the completed project was taken by Erickson Excavating; an overview of the entire project area, taken by Erickson Excavating; comparison pictures of how the land looked in 2013, the erosion that took place by 2018 and 2019, and the improvement after project completion in 2020; Dean Paulson, landowner, stands at the project site in late July, after project construction was completed; Paulson, left, and Ross Reiffenberger, West Central Technical Servicer Area engineer, look on at the finished project.



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