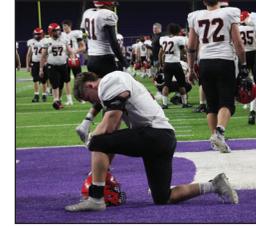


## Retirement

Minnetonka Schools Superintendent Dennis Peterson will retire at the end of the school year.

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## Eagles end

It was the end of the road for the Eagles after a 35-3 loss to Maple Grove at state semifinals Nov. 18.

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Thursday, Nov. 25, 2021

# Minnetonka Middle School West celebrates National Blue Ribbon title

By KRISTEN MILLER  
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Minnetonka Middle School West hosted a celebration assembly Nov. 16 to recognize its 2021 National Blue Ribbon School designation by the U.S. Department of Education, which was announced in September.

"We are so excited to take this opportunity to pause and recognize the incredible achievements of receiving the U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School Award. ... And I know that we rarely take the time to stop and celebrate our hard work and accomplishments. So today, we are going to do just that," said Minnetonka Middle School West Principal Freya Schirmacher during the ceremony.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF MINNETONKA SCHOOLS)  
Eighth-grader Isabelle Gensmer gives remarks to her fellow classmates during the school celebration assembly Nov. 16.

The school was among 325 schools recognized nationally as Blue Ribbon Schools, including six schools in Minnesota. The recognition is based on a

school's overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. School Board Chair Chris Vitali congratulated

the teachers, staff and students, as well as principal Schirmacher, former principal Paula Hoff and

See **Blue**, Page 6

## Glen Lake Optimists give back to their community with one tree at a time

### Annual Christmas tree lot will open Friday, Nov. 26

By KRISTEN MILLER  
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For more than 70 years, a Minnetonka service organization has been providing families with holiday cheer through a Christmas tree lot, all while giving back to local youth.

Since its founding in 1950, members of the Glen Lake Optimist Club have volunteered their time to serve youth in and around Minnetonka.

"It's a great group of people," said President Wade Wessels, who joined the club four years ago. "I love that all the money stays in the community."

All of the club's fundraising is guided by two main principles: It must help youth and the money must stay local to the Hopkins/Minnetonka area.

One of the club's major fundraisers is its Christmas tree lot at 5240 Glenview Drive.

The lot features an assortment of trees, including Balsam and Fraiser firs, along with holiday wreaths.

The lot opens 9 a.m. to

See **Optimist**, Page 6

# Residents advised to remain vigilant with rise in property crimes

By KRISTEN MILLER  
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While much has been made about the rise of crime in Minneapolis, it's a trend that seems to be bleeding into the suburbs, particularly with property-related crimes like vehicle thefts and burglaries.

It's an increase police depart-

ments in the suburbs have seen over the past two years, though Minnetonka Police Chief Boerboom said he doesn't attribute the pandemic as the main driver of it.

"I think a big part of it is that criminals are more emboldened," said Boerboom, noting that criminals feel they can get away with crime lately.

While person-to-person crimes

in Minnetonka have remained relatively flat, there has been a sizeable increase in property crimes.

Since 2019, there has been a significant increase in car thefts in Minnetonka, according to recent data.

This year alone, there have been 330 theft from vehicles, a number that data analysts project will be 369 by year's end, making it a 96%

increase from 2019.

Home burglaries are also projected to be 60% higher than three years ago, with 111 burglaries reported thus far, compared to 84 in 2019.

Stolen vehicles are also on the rise - 96 thus far, with 100 cars projected by year's end making it a 44% increase from 2019.

Boerboom also sees crime

trickling out of the city limits and into the suburbs.

"What's happening in Minneapolis is all of our problems," he said, as criminals move around and don't acknowledge boundaries.

This further became evident

See **Crime**, Page 3

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