

HOCKEY AWARDS

Five Ponies net All-SEC honors. Story on page B1

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In the know

SPORTS

The MSHSL announced that spring sports and activities will remain suspended until at least May 4, following direction from Minnesota Governor Tim Walz.

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Two-time individual state diving champion Josiah Fick is chosen the Most Valuable Athlete for the Stillwater boys swimming and diving team.

Page B1

Stillwater graduate Parker Smith earns All-American honors as a member of the St. Olaf College men's alpine ski team.

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INSIDE



History — Brent Peterson features the smoke shops of Stillwater in his weekly history column.

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Your Voice — New columnist Louisa Westrop gives readers advice on what to do while staying home.

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Entertainment — To serve the community, to help ease the strain of isolation, the Zephyr Theatre has launched Share Your Tales of the Times, a community project.

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Helping others — Community Thread is matching volunteers to people in the Stillwater Area School District who are requesting assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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FROM THE GAZETTE FILES

March 24, 1920 — A fire damaged a warehouse at the Twin City Forge and Foundry this week, causing \$175,000 in damage.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Legals — Keep up on the latest notices in your area.

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Local church assists others during pandemic

BY KEVIN OTT
THE GAZETTE

Staff and members of Watermark Church in Stillwater are coming up with unique ways to serve the community during this period of distancing.

On March 16, the church paid for free coffee for medical personnel from Tin Bins and Daily Grind in downtown Stillwater. Medical staff who went to either coffee shop and showed their medical ID received a free cup, no strings attached.

Jarvis Glanzer, pastor at Watermark Church, said that they plan to offer free coffee again in

the near future.

"Most of us stay at home while these people are running towards the action," Glanzer said. "We want to be a blessing to them as much as we can."

Volunteers at the church also began a delivery service for Joseph's Restaurant, called "Watermark delivers," where volunteers deliver food for the restaurant for free. It was a popular service when it launched the previous weekend, so Watermark is doing it again this weekend.

"It's been a fun way to serve and be a blessing to our community while also adding value to a business that serves the commu-

nity," Glanzer added. "Any way we can serve those who serve is a big deal for us."

It's not just church staff who have come up with these ideas, Glanzer said, but members of the church. A woman who attends Watermark heard that seniors in area nursing homes are getting lonely due to the isolation from the coronavirus. She decided to write and collect letters from other church members with positive messages and prayers to send to local nursing homes.

The Young Adults ministry at Watermark, and other members of the congregation, are also assisting those in need by delivering

groceries, food and other supplies to those who need to stay sheltered in place.

Glanzer said that as long as delivery and other services are allowed in Minnesota during the pandemic, the church will continue to serve the community.

"We love this city," he said. "Whatever we can do to serve others and be a blessing, that's where we want to be."

To keep up with when and how Watermark Church is serving others, visit the church's Facebook page. Those who wish to serve or ask for help can send an email to watermark@stillwatermark.com.

'STAY HOME'

Gov. Walz orders Minnesota to stay home 2 weeks to slow COVID-19

BY STEVE KARNOWSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

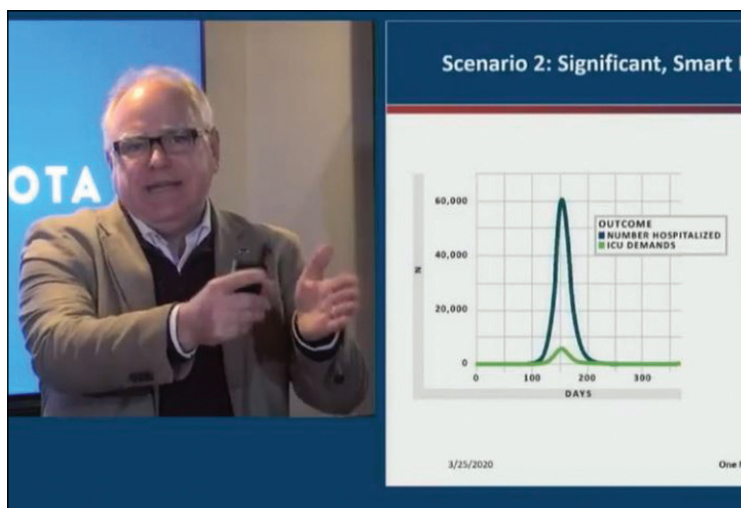
BY ALICIA LEBENS
THE GAZETTE

Gov. Tim Walz on Wednesday ordered Minnesota residents to stay at home for two weeks except for essential needs in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and prevent the coronavirus from overwhelming the state's health care system.

The governor's "stay-at-home" order begins at midnight Friday and runs through April 10. He said the restrictions were critical to allow the state to protect its most vulnerable people and give time to build up the state's capacity to handle a flood of infections.

"I'm asking for your patience, your cooperation and your understanding," Walz said in a live video message. "My pledge to you is to use the valuable time you're giving us."

About 78% of Minnesota jobs qualify as essential, and those employees and can still go to work. Everyone will still be allowed to go out for essen-



"My pledge to you is to use the valuable time you're giving us."

— Gov. Tim Walz

tial needs and exercise. Grocery stores, gas stations, liquor stores, child care facilities, news organizations, banks, hardware stores and post offices may remain open. While the governor extended his earlier order closing bars, restaurants and other places of public amusement to May 1, restaurants may continue to offer takeout and delivery service. Public schools, which are closed, will implement distance learning plans beginning Monday

Walz had held off on issuing the order because he wanted to see data and modeling on whether it would make enough of a difference to justify the dis-

ruptions. That modeling showed that increasing residents' social distancing would push the peak of the pandemic in the state back to 14 weeks instead of nine, and delay the peak load on intensive care units from six weeks to 11 weeks.

While the modeling projected that 74,000 Minnesota residents could die if the state did nothing, Walz refused to say on a conference call with reporters what the modeling says about how many people may still die under the new restrictions. But he said there should be a "drastic reduction."

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NEA Big Read events rescheduled for late August

BY KEVIN OTT
THE GAZETTE

With COVID-19 cancelling most large gatherings around the country, ArtReach St. Croix announced that it is "reimagining" the Big Read in the St. Croix Valley.

A mini-Big Read has been scheduled for late August, and will feature several events tied to themes found in this year's Big Read, "Lab Girl" by Hope Jahren.

ArtReach St. Croix will open an exhibit in August titled "Specimens: art, science and the human condition." This exhibit will bring together the work of ceramic sculptor Jenn Angell and the embroidered botanical illustrations of Karen Gustafson.

Angell, a 2017 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, said that her ceramic pieces are self-reflective and preserve emotions and traumas the way a scientist preserves a specimen. The ceramic works are primarily constructed with slabs and coils with sculptural elements added on.

"Clay remembers," Angell said. "It gets stretched, pushed, pulled and scarred. My work is about the heavier side of the human condition and

See Big Read, Page A6

District hires investigation of bus terminal project in Lake Elmo

BY ALICIA LEBENS
THE GAZETTE

During the March 19 meeting, the Stillwater Area School board authorized an investigation into the district's new bus terminal located in Lake Elmo.

"Over the past three months, a mountain of information has come to light related to the bus terminal project on Hudson Road in Lake Elmo," said board chair Sarah Stivland. "Right now, we have more questions than answers, and so it is very appropriate and necessary for us to hire a trusted outside resource to conduct an investigation of this project."

Currently, the district's

bus terminal is not connect to city water or sewer and is not in compliance with its conditional use permit (CUP). The Lake Elmo city council voted Jan. 21 to deny a request by the district for an amendment to its conditional use permit to allow the district to operate its bus service from the building.

The bus terminal is part of the Four Corners 1st Addition plat that was approved by the city council in 2018. A condition of the plat approval was that the developer — who is not the school district — was to construct sanitary sewer and water facilities which would have brought sanitary sewer and water service to the district's property. The developer

was to complete these improvements no later than Oct. 31, 2019. As of the Jan. 21 meeting, construction has not yet commenced.

Stivland said the goal of the investigation is to find out what happened, why it happened and what solutions exist to solve some of the problems. She then made a motion to hire Pamela Harris and the audit firm KDV Bergan to complete this investigation.

In the public meeting packet, the agenda said "A copy of the documentation was provided to board members," and listed a recommended motion.

"I am unsure of what is

See Bus, Page A5

Zephyr Theatre enters delinquent tax payment plan

BY KEVIN OTT
THE GAZETTE

The board of trustees for the Zephyr Theatre have entered a payment plan with Washington County for delinquent taxes from last year for its property on 601 Main St. N.

The plan from the county requires that Zephyr Theatre's owner, Only a Dim Image Productions, pay 20 percent annual installments for five years, including interest, which would equal just over \$61,000. It must also pay current property taxes each year, or else the payment plan will go into default.

County policy states that if the market value of a property exceeds \$1 million, the owner must submit a written request for a payment plan along with a letter of support from the municipality in which the property is located. The Stillwater city council approved a letter of support into the Confession of Judgment payment plan with Washington County during its March 17 meeting.

Bil MacLeslie, managing director at the theatre, said that as a non-profit organization, it relies heavily on support from donors. When the former Zephyr Depot building was purchased in 2016, it required a large amount of capital to renovate and make it an accessible theatre.

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