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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2026
VOL. 23 NO. 21 www.readthecitizen.com \$1.50



BEST OF CONTEST: Winners and finalists revealed **SEE SPECIAL SECTION INSIDE**



PHOTOS BY SHANNON GRANHOLM | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

The main questions the city of Hugo will have to consider while updating its next comprehensive plan are “What is rural?” and “Do residents want to preserve that feel?” Going into 2027, some key things for residents to keep an eye on are the Frenchman Village concept plan, the city-owned Egg Lake property, and various developments like Watercrest of Hugo and the Otter Lake Road/Elmcrest Avenue extension project in neighboring Lino Lakes.

Hugo weighs growth, rural character in 2050 planning

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

“What is rural?” That is the question that residents, city commissions and the City Council will

have to keep in mind going into the drafting of Hugo’s 2050 Comprehensive Plan. Cities must update their comprehensive plans every 10 years.

“The comprehensive plan that we have in the city guides the city’s vision toward the year 2040. The one that we start next year will guide our vision toward the year 2050,”

Bryan Bear said. “What do you think the city should look like in the year 2050? What should we change? What should

SEE **HUGO IN 2050**, PAGE 8

Hugo Chiropractic earns 3 Best of the Press honors

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

Voters have spoken. The great reputation that Dr. Bill Barrett built for 45 years at Hugo Chiropractic has continued under new ownership.

Hugo Chiropractic rose to the top in not one, not two but three categories for this year’s Readers’ Choice Best of the Press Contest in the Quad and Citizen markets.

The annual contest gives readers the opportunity to recognize the people, businesses and places that define their local experience. From neighborhood restaurants and small businesses to essential service providers, the contest has grown into a reflection of what residents value most in their communities. This year’s contest featured more than 150 categories, covering everything from dining and retail to services, schools and community events.

Owner Dr. Brandyn Christman won best chiropractor, and Hugo Chiropractic won best chiropractic care and best massage therapist. The business previously won best chiropractor, best clinic and best massage therapist and was a finalist for best chiropractic care.

“Dr. Barrett had such a good reputation,” Christman explained. “I think it’s really neat that so many people still put their votes out there. I guess they are still happy.”

Barrett opened the doors to the business in 1978 on the corner of Highway 61 and 147th Street in Hugo. Barrett was recognized as the Good Neighbor of the Year in 2021. In June 2024,

SEE **HUGO CHIROPRACTIC**, PAGE 19

35-home residential development proposed south of Oneka Lake in Hugo

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

Twin Cities Land Development is seeking preliminary plat and planned unit development approval for 35 single-family homes on a 67.4-acre site located directly south of Oneka Lake, to be known as Viridian Shores.

“We are excited to work in your

town again. It’s been a while since we have been here, and I think this one is hopefully kind of simple,” said Ben Schmidt, TCLD president/partner. He noted that Creative Homes out of Woodbury would likely be their builder. (TCLD was last in Hugo for the Adelaide Landing project, which was originally approved in 2017.)

The property, located at 6822

Oneka Lake Blvd. N., is currently zoned Future Urban Service and guided very low density in the 2040 Land Use Plan, which allows one unit per acre. The property is also located at the eastern edge of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area, making it eligible for municipal water and sanitary sewer services.

SEE **VIRIDIAN SHORES**, PAGE 11



CONTRIBUTED

Twin Cities Land Development is proposing 35 single-family homes in a development called Viridian Shores. Pictured above is an example of one of the homes you might find within the development if the City Council grants approval.

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Quick action and teamwork saves Hugo man

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

HUGO — The national average for prehospital survival rates for cardiac arrest is less than 10%.

“In 2025, the Hugo Fire Department responded to 21 cardiac arrests in the city of Hugo with Fairview Ambulance; two of those were saves. That’s an incredible accomplishment,” HFD Fire Chief Jim Compton Jr. said. “Our previous save we had was in 2017, so as you can see, they are few and far between, and we really do try every time and give a patient every opportunity for survival but there’s a lot of factors involved in that.”

Matthew Nuessmeier thanked HFD, along with all its partners, for the actions that saved his dad.

“Thank you very much to the first responders for acting and getting there as quickly as possible,” he said. “My father probably wouldn’t be here to this day. We were very fortunate and are very lucky to still have him here.”

At approximately 7 p.m. on June 28, 2025, Matt and his dad Scott Nuessmeier were walking out of the Hugo American Legion when Scott collapsed and went into sudden cardiac arrest. Matt remembered his CPR training from high school and started providing CPR until Washington County deputies arrived and took over, followed by Fairview paramedics and Hugo firefighters.

After several rounds of CPR and other lifesaving interventions, Scott regained his pulse. Compton noted that throughout the event, an airway was secured, oxygen was given and other advanced life support interventions were administered. Scott was transported to St. John’s Hospital.

The Hugo City Council recently presented 12 lifesaving awards to: Matt, Deputy Joshua Lee, Deputy Ross Peterson, Deputy Isaac Robbins, Paramedic Kevin Heihn, Paramedic Wayne Semenske, Firefighter Chris Bieniek, Lieutenant Bob Bieniek, Deputy Chief David Jensen, Captain Jason Palmquist, Firefighter Emily Pieper and Firefighter Jen Verplaetse. Several of them were also recognized with a lifesaving award from earlier in 2025 (See “Training, teamwork lead to lifesaving rescue in Hugo,” Aug. 11, 2026, The Citizen.)

Life Saving Awards are meant to recognize individuals whose actions have had a profound person on another person’s life.



CONTRIBUTED

The Hugo City Council recently presented 12 lifesaving awards to: (from left) Lieutenant Bob Bieniek, Firefighter Chris Bieniek, Captain Jason Palmquist, Firefighter Jen Verplaetse, Firefighter Emily Pieper, Paramedic Wayne Semenske, Paramedic Kevin Heihn and Deputy Isaac Robbins. Not pictured are Matt Nuessmeier’s wife, Kasie, and mom, Shelli. Also not pictured are Deputy Joshua Lee, Deputy Ross Peterson and Deputy Chief David Jensen.

“Every day first responders answer the call to serve their communities. They train for the unexpected, prepare for the unimaginable and respond without hesitation when somebody’s life is on the line,” Compton said. “(This team’s) professionalism, teamwork and unwavering commitment transformed a moment of crisis into a story of hope. Their actions exemplify the very best of public service: remaining calm under pressure, making critical decisions in seconds, and working together for one shared purpose — to save a life.”

Mayor Tom Weidt thanked everyone for their efforts.

“It’s a great thing to see all of the responders that came and made this happen and brought him back ... saving a life is a big deal,” Weidt said. “Congratulations to everyone that played a part in it and made the effort to volunteer, come out, show up and respond to things like this and make a difference. That’s what it is all about, and it is great when these things go the right way.”

Managing Editor Shannon Granholm can be reached at 651-407-1227 or citizennews@presspubs.com.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING



SHANNON GRANHOLM | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

HOPKINS SCHOOLHOUSE HERITAGE NIGHT
When: 5:30 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: American Legion Post 620, 5383 140th St. N, Hugo
Details: The Hopkins Schoolhouse Heritage Night is an evening dedicated to honoring those individuals and preserving the heritage that continues to guide our communities forward. The event brings together community members, local leaders, historians and supporters to celebrate the people whose actions made a difference. The evening will be full of history, storytelling, fellowship and community spirit. Register online.
Contact: <https://givebutter.com/c/2026-fundraiser-event-yk3vkm>

ONGOING EVENTS

HUGO SENIOR CITIZENS PLAY '500'
When: 12:45 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15 and 29; the 1st, 3rd and 5th Thursday of every month
Where: Rice Lake Centre, 6900 137th St. N.
Details: Games begin at 12:45 p.m. Refreshments and coffee served. All senior citizens from the area invited.
Contact: Jim at 763-639-4756 or allenj4992@gmail.com

CRIBBAGE
When: 1 p.m. Monday, Oct. 26; the 1st and 4th Monday of every month
Where: Rice Lake Centre, 6900 137th St. N., Hugo
Details: Senior citizens from Hugo and surrounding area are invited to an afternoon of cribbage. Coffee and refreshments served. Scheduled on Tuesday this week only.
Contact: Alice at 651-429-4413

CURRENT EVENTS

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
When: Noon-6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14
Where: White Bear Lake United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 1851 Birch St.
Details: Schedule an appointment at 1-800-RED CROSS or redcrossblood.org and enter code WBLUnited.

LUNCH AND LEARN: MASTERING THE ART OF DIGITAL DETOX
When: 12:30-1:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15
Where: Centennial Library, 100 Civic Heights Circle, Circle Pines
Details: Feeling overwhelmed by the constant buzz of your digital life? If so, it's time for a digital detox — a strategic cleanse to reclaim your mental space and well-being. Nickie Welsh from Social Club Simple will help you with practical strategies for setting boundaries, managing notifications and curating a mindful online experience with ease. Registration is required at business.centennialareachamber.com/quad-area-community-calendar.
Contact: 763-786-9672 or president@centennialareachamber.com.

FALL PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS
When: 4-6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15
Where: Lendt's Pumpkin Patch, 6903 Wyoming Trail, Wyoming
Details: Join professional photographer Don Tredinnick as you photograph the pumpkins, fall colors and displays at the patch. Spend time capturing everything from close-ups to environmental images. Dress appropriately and bring a camera that allows for manual settings. Register at isd12.arux.app/search/all-programs by searching “Fall Photography.”
Contact: 763-792-6100

PARENT'S NIGHT OUT
When: 5-8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16
Where: St. Stephen Lutheran Church, 1965 East

County Road E., White Bear Lake
Details: Childcare for children ages 2-9, with fun activities and a meal. Registration required.
Contact: 651-777-1107 or office@ststephen.org

MINNESOTA JAZZ CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
When: 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16
Where: Hanifl Performing Arts Center, 4941 Long Avenue, White Bear Lake
Details: All-new show “Celebrating Crooners & Divas,” featuring Rat Pack and big band favorites.
Contact: lakeshoreplayers.org/2627-concert-series

BOO BASH
When: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17
Where: Festival Foods, 14775 Victor Hugo Blvd. N., Hugo
Details: Our annual Boo Bash is back. There will be live music from the Teddy Bear Band, a coloring contest, games and trick-or-treating in-store. Costumes are welcome. Kids will get a pumpkin while supplies last.
Contact: 651-762-3618 or social@festivalfoods.net

WATER'S EDGE FALL CRAFT SALE
When: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17
Where: Water's Edge Community Center, 15290 Farnham Ave. N, Hugo
Details: Get a jump start on your holiday shopping; there will be a variety of fall crafts made by your neighbors.
Contact: Toddj@hoaliving.com or 651-253-0867

WALK AND RUN FOR THE APPLES
When: 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 17
Where: Pine Tree Apple Orchard, 450 Apple Orchard Road, Dellwood
Details: Five mile walk/run on the trails through the apple orchard, strawberry fields and pumpkin patch. Proceeds of the race fund scholarships for high school students in the Strive Scholarship program.
Contact: whitebearrotary.org

PUMPKIN POP-UP
When: 12-3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17
Where: T and Nae Flower Farm, 15815 Elmcrest Ave. N., Hugo
Details: Stop by the farm to grab your pumpkins, gourds, flowers (either dried or fresh, until first frost) and other fall decor.
Contact: 651-707-2063 or tandnaellc@gmail.com

LADIES OF THE LAKE QUILTING SHOW
When: 12-4 p.m. Oct. 17 - 18, and 24 - 25
Where: Pine Tree Apple Orchard, 450 Apple Orchard Road, Dellwood
Details: This display of quilts is made by members of a local guild.
Contact: pinetreeappleorchard.com

'UP, UP, AND AWAY'
When: 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18
Where: Hanifl Performing Arts Center, 4941 Long Avenue, White Bear Lake
Details: Hit-filled musical journey through the unforgettable sounds that defined a generation, celebrating the golden era of AM radio and the smooth sounds of yacht rock.
Contact: lakeshoreplayers.org/2627-concert-series

NATURE RESTORATION VOLUNTEERING
When: 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: Wargo Nature Center, 7701 Main St., Lino Lakes
Details: Volunteer opportunity to help restore the landscap around the nature center, including invasive species management, seed collection and dispersal, and general clean-up. Drop-ins welcome.

Contact: anokacountyparks.com

CANDY CRAWL
When: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: Railroad Park, 4749 Washington Square, White Bear Lake
Details: Trick or treat your favorite downtown businesses. Costumes encouraged.
Contact: downtownwhitebearlake.com

WARGO FALL FESTIVAL
When: 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: Wargo Nature Center, 7701 Main St., Lino Lakes
Details: Community event with cider from the press, pioneer games, and self-guided nature activities.
Contact: anokacountyparks.com

SCARE IN WHITE BEAR
When: 6-7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct 24
Where: West Park, Memorial Beach, 4958 Lake Ave., White Bear Lake
Details: Torch-lit 5K and fun run along the lake, decorations, spooky photo booth, and kid-friendly trick or treating. Costumes encouraged. Registration information online.
Contact: mmraces.com/scare-in-white-bear

TRICK OR TREAT AT GAMMELGARDEN
When: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: Gammelgarden Museum, 20880 Olinda Trail N., Scandia
Details: Children can test-drive their costumes and go door to door to each of the historic buildings. Halloween crafts and photo opportunities.
Contact: gammelgardenmuseum.org/event/trick-or-treat-2026

PULL UP PICTURES
When: 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: The Outskirts, 15201 Running Aces Blvd., Columbus
Details: enjoy a triple movie feature with “Goosebumps,” “Hocus Pocus” and “The House with a Clock in it's Walls” outside under the stars. Tickets online.
Contact: www.theoutskirtsmn.com

ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB
When: 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 25
Where: Rice Lake Elementary School, 575 Birch St., Lino Lakes
Details: Hike paved trails and neighborhood streets.
Contact: stpaulhike.com

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
When: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27
Where: Best Western Plus White Bear Country Inn, 4940 Highway 61
Details: Sponsored by the Rotary Club of White Bear Lake. Call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: WBL Rotary to schedule an appointment.

FAT TIRE BIKING
When: 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28
Where: Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve, 7373 Main St., Lino Lakes
Details: Instruction followed by a ride on the single track trails. Registration required.
Contact: anokacountyparks.com

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*The LORD is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1*

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Best of the Press

Congratulations to the Best of the Press Readers' Choice winners and finalists. The special winners' section is inserted in this week's paper. The section will also be posted on our website soon.



Publisher's View
Carter Johnson

Once again, we are excited to host the winners and finalists with a special gathering to celebrate their achievements and contributions to our community later this month. As always, please support all of our local businesses and share a great big congratulations to the Best of the Press Readers' Choice winners and finalists.

It's your duty
With elections coming up quickly I'm delighted that our papers have created a comprehensive,

informative Voters' Guide, available in print and online. As you go to the polls, we believe these guides will give you some basic knowledge of the candidates to help you make your decision about who to vote for. With early voting taking place, we wanted to make sure we published the candidate profiles early. There is an additional condensed version of the Voters' Guide in this week's issue.

It's always been frustrating for me to walk into the voting booth and be taken off guard with what's on the ballot. This year there's a Minnesota constitutional amendment. This one's tricky because some would say it's changing the historical intentions of the Permanent School Fund. It is seeking more funding now and could hurt future interest the schools rely on.

It's sad to once again see the rage and anger that comes from political season. Please do your part and get out and vote. It's easy and vital. It matters because you're helping set the tone of the future. Remember that voting is a right that many people in this world don't have. Whether you agree with the direction our state or nation is headed, we need to be grateful for the opportunity to chart our course through the process of voting.

Please mark your calendar for Nov. 3 to get out and vote. Above is a QR code that will link you to the local paper's Voters' Guide.



Scan QR Code to view the voters' guide

Carter Johnson is publisher of Press Publications.

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Election season is here: Be an informed voter

Absentee voting by mail and in person began Sep. 18; early voting in person starts on Oct. 16, and election day is Nov. 3. Do you have your voting plan for this year's mid-term elections?

Every eligible voter should be able to participate in the 2026 elections with confidence: able to register, find factual information, cast a ballot without unnecessary barriers, and trust that the election system will work for them.

Across the country, here in the White Bear Lake area, the League of Women Voters is helping people register, understand what

is on their ballot, protect their freedom to vote, and turn out in every election. We work with voters, election officials, partners and our state and local League network so every eligible voter can participate and every ballot counts.

Are you registered to vote? If you have moved, changed your name, or haven't voted in more than four years, is your registration up to date? Do you know how, when and where you want to vote? Have you planned your ballot and

researched candidates so that you know who they are and what issues they support? Are you aware of the Constitutional Amendment that is on your ballot this election? Do you know your rights as a voter? Are you concerned about the integrity of the elections? Are you an informed voter?

In Minnesota, answers to these questions can be found from two trusted sources: the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State (mnvotes.org) and the League of Women Voters (lwvmn.org), where you will find "How to vote in Minnesota." The League gives voters factual, nonpartisan information about candidates, ballot measures, voting options, deadlines and rights so voters can make informed decisions with confidence.

Want to know what's on your ballot? Visit mnvotes.gov, the website for the Office of the Secretary of State. Enter your address and you'll be able to view a sample ballot, which you can print out, review and even take with you to the voting booth. Want to know more about individual candidates? Local Leagues host candidate forums to provide the public with an opportunity to hear candidates discuss issues that are important to voters. On our website, lwv-wb-la.org, you will find recordings of 20 forums hosted by our White Bear Lake area League: state legislative races; school board races;

and mayoral and city council races throughout the area. VOTE411, an online voter guide managed by the League, is also a valuable tool to compare information about candidates, as is the Voters' Guide published by your local newspaper.

This year, Minnesota voters are being asked to consider a Constitutional amendment to increase funding to school districts. Familiarize yourself with that amendment and be prepared to vote yes or no. Leaving the question unmarked is counted as a no vote. Washington County voters also will be voting on a ballot issue related to preservation of water quality, wildlife habitat, and natural areas.

Voting is one of the most powerful ways people can shape their communities. Check or update your registration; preview your ballot and compare candidate information; decide when, where and how you will vote; know your voting rights; cast your ballot. And don't forget to thank and support election workers who make voting possible.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization with a mission to empower voters and defend democracy. To learn how to vote in Minnesota, visit lwvmn.org/voting-elections/how-vote-mn.

Jackie Reis is the president of the League of Women's Voters of White Bear Lake Area.

THE CITIZEN | ELECTION LETTER GUIDELINES

- Election season is considered to be when filing first begins until the day of the election.
- Limited to 350 words. Paid letters running longer will be charged \$10 per 30 words after that.
- Letters are free unless endorsing a candidate, party or question on the ballot. Endorsement letters will have a \$50 fee. Please call 651-407-1200 to arrange payment by credit card or mail a check payable to Press Publications to 4779 Bloom Ave, White Bear Lake, MN, 55110. Endorsement letters are labeled, "paid letter."
- Letters for or against a candidate will qualify as paid letters.
- Submissions must include a full name, address and phone number for verification.
- Letter-writers must live, work or have another connection to Press Publications coverage area.
- Letters are meant to express opinions. If letter-writers include facts, they must attribute those facts to a reputable source.
- Due to space limitations, letters that don't address local issues are not guaranteed publication.
- Repeat unpaid letters by the same writer about the same subject matter will not be published. Repeat paid endorsement letters will be published as space permits.
- Four weeks (or issues) must pass between publication of unpaid letters from the same writer. Exceptions may be made for rebuttal letters at the editor's discretion.
- Submissions containing libelous or derogatory statements will not be published.
- Letters by campaign managers or candidates designed to champion the candidate's position on a specific issue will be accepted as paid letters.
- Letters reprinted as part of letter-writing campaigns are paid letters.
- All letters are subject to editing.
- We reserve the right to not publish any letter.
- The deadline to submit a letter is 5 p.m. Wednesday the week prior to publication.
- The last batch of letters to be printed before the Nov. 3 election will be printed in the Oct. 29 issue and must be received by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 21.
- To submit a letter, email news@presspubs.com or mail/deliver it to Press Publications.



P.O. Box 393
Hugo, MN 55038
www.ReadTheCitizen.com

Distributed and mailed
bi-weekly in:

Hugo • Centerville • Lino Lakes



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Circulation.....	651-407-1234
Classified/Obits	651-407-1250
Production.....	651-407-1253
FAX	651-429-1242

Published bi-weekly/Tuesdays
by Press Publications, Inc.
4779 Bloom Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Mailed Subscription Rate:
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A safer crossing

Anoka County Highway Department and the city of Centerville are in the process of installing a safe crossing from the city’s trail system in the location of 6849 Centerville Road.

This crossing has seen two crashes with people not paying attention to vehicles stopping for pedestrians or pedestrians trying to cross the road. The project will have lighted stop signs allowing pedestrians to safely cross in the future. A job well done!

Thomas D. Wilharber
Centerville

WBLAS enrollment is down - Taxpayers deserve answers

At the Sept. 14 White Bear Lake School Board meeting, the district reported enrollment of 8,327 students—475 fewer than in 2020 and 2,673 below the 11,000 projected during the 2019 \$326 million bond referendum. Based on the district’s reported \$17,665 in funding per pupil, that gap represents roughly \$47 million annually. As the community faces growing affordability concerns, taxpayers deserve a clear explanation for the continued enrollment decline and a concrete plan to address the resulting funding shortfalls.

District officials have cited declining birthrates and, more recently, “Metro Surge” and ICE activity as possible causes. Because enrollment began falling years earlier, however, those explanations cannot account for the full trend. Residents need a clear, evidence-based analysis of why families are choosing alternatives to WBLAS.

The district should publish the percentage of school-age children living within its boundaries who attend WBLAS, show how that share has changed over time, and report how many students attend other public, charter or private schools or are homeschooled. It should also determine and disclose why families are making those choices.

Enrollment drives state funding and directly affects the burden on local taxpayers. The board should explain the decline, publish a measurable plan to

address it and align spending with the number of students served. Taxpayers deserve transparent findings, specific actions and responsible budgeting that reflects actual enrollment.

Elizabeth Roberts-Crowe
Hugo

PAID LETTER
Rebecca Waxse has the experience to serve

Voters in Minnesota’s Tenth Judicial District will elect a new judge to an open seat this fall. I support Rebecca A. Waxse because of her experience and her stated commitment to fairness, integrity and respect.

Rebecca has nearly 20 years of experience in Minnesota courtrooms as both a public defender and private attorney. Her work has included criminal, juvenile, child-protection and family-law matters. She has represented individuals in more than 10,000 cases and has extensive experience with contested hearings, motions, court trials, jury trials and sentencings.

That range of experience is important because district courts handle matters that can profoundly affect people’s lives. Rebecca has represented clients from many backgrounds, often during difficult moments. Her experience has required her to listen closely, prepare thoroughly, recognize that every case is unique and treat people with dignity even when the issues are difficult or the parties disagree.

Rebecca has said that a judge must faithfully apply the law, remain impartial, keep an open mind and decide each case on its facts. She also believes people should understand what is happening in the courtroom and that, when appropriate, procedures, rulings and expectations should be explained in plain language.

As an Assistant Washington County Attorney, I understand the importance of judges who come to the bench with substantial courtroom experience and an understanding of the responsibilities of a district court judge. Rebecca brings extensive courtroom experience to this open-seat election.

I support Rebecca Waxse for judge in Minnesota’s Tenth Judicial District.

Wade A. Kish
Assistant Washington County Attorney

School board that welcomes scrutiny

WBLAS School Board Member Dan Skaar has been working hard for us, and it hasn’t been easy. The board has consistently dismissed Mr. Skaar’s motions, blocking his agenda requests, interrupting his comments and showing open hostility toward a duly elected representative. It’s been so obvious and appalling that Alpha News did a story on the board’s conduct (Jenna Gloeb, 9-21-2026). They even tried to censure him: The White Bear Lake school board voted to censure conservative board member Dan Skaar after he criticized Superintendent Wayne Kazmierczak. “What’s happening now is retaliation against a board member who refused to sit quietly while those in charge operate the district like their own private club,” Skaar said during a meeting this week as he was repeatedly cut off by other board members. (Alpha News, 5-2–2026)

Mr. Skaar’s efforts to ask questions, seek accountability and ensure that public voices are heard are not disruptive; they are essential to responsible oversight. Yet those basic duties have too often been met with resistance from the board majority, creating an environment where dissent appears to be punished rather than respected. Outside observers, including a University of Minnesota legal expert and a KSTP reporter, also noted in a June 12 report that the censure lacked substantive merit.

Taxpayers deserve a School Board that welcomes scrutiny, respects differing viewpoints, conducts itself professionally and does not use policy to silence the free-speech rights of board members. The retaliatory tone of this censure raises serious concerns about transparency, leadership and the superintendent’s commitment to serving the public rather than protecting internal interests.

Our community deserves better than predetermined outcomes and punitive politics. We deserve a superintendent and board that listens, engages respectfully and operates with integrity.

Laurie Carlson
White Bear Lake

WEEKLY WAG

Rio is a young, 6-month old German Shepherd mix with a wonderful personality, a big heart and a playful spirit. Rio is described as a total sweetheart who loves all people and kids.

Rio is smart and learns quickly, especially when a treat reward is involved. He enjoys playing with his toys and playing fetch. He is adventurous and affectionate. He is leash trained, house trained and crate trained. Rio always enjoys going for a walk or going on an adventure — as long as he’s out with his people.

Rio is still learning his social skills with other dogs. He isn’t an aggressor; instead, he becomes a little afraid and skittish, and he leans on his people for reassurance. Slow, patient, easy introductions to other dogs — where he can become comfortable at his own pace — are best. The good news is, Rio is still a puppy and has plenty of time to learn. He is looking for a loving, patient forever home and family as well as reassurance that the world isn’t a scary place.

If you are interested in learning more about Rio or adopting him, please fill out an application at www.ruffstartrescue.org. Once your application is received, Ruff Start Rescue will contact you as soon as possible.



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HUGO BITS AND PIECES

- The city has received an unmodified, or clean, opinion on its financial statements for the 2025 audit. Jason Miller, of CohnReznick, recently presented the audit findings to the City Council, which accepted the report. There were no findings of noncompliance with state statute. Miller pointed out that the city has a “very healthy balance” in reserve funds, ensuring that it can handle unforeseen circumstances.
- The city of Hugo has a policy in place that requires the city to reserve at least 50% of the following year’s budgeted expenditures. For 2025, the city’s reserve was at 71%. Miller pointed out that that the reserve level exceeds the state auditor’s recommendation of at least 35 to 50%. The full 2025 audit report will be available on the city’s website at ci.hugo.mn.us.
- Ducks Unlimited Roseville Chapter 209 has applied for a lawful gambling exempt permit to hold a bingo and raffles at an event on Oct. 25 at Sal’s Restaurant and Bar. The permit will be issued by the Minnesota Gambling Control Board, following the council’s approval.
- The city of Hugo must review and update its comprehensive plan as required by

the “decennial” review provision of Minnesota Statute § 473.864, subd.2. The Metropolitan Council adopted need-based eligibility criteria in order to award local planning assistance grant funds. The purpose of the grant is to help grantees review and update their comprehensive plans. The city has applied for a \$40,000 grant.

- The Washington County Star Trail Association (the local chapter is Hugo Knight Riders) has applied for approval of a premises permit to conduct lawful gambling at Sal’s Restaurant and Bar, located at 12010 Keystone Ave. City Administrator Bryan Bear said that the new owner of Sal’s, Katie Sell, has provided the Bayport Legion the required 30-day notice for termination of its lease.
- The council, which acts as the Board of Canvass, has scheduled its canvass meeting for 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 10. The council also scheduled the fifth annual Santa Party and Tree Lighting for 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the Peder Pedersen Pavilion. The tree lighting will happen at 6:30 p.m.

The next City Council meeting will be at 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 19, at City Hall.

Shannon Granholm

POLICE REPORTS

The Washington County Sheriff's Office reported the following calls for service in Hugo:

- A resident in the 6000 block of 145th Circle N. reported his yard decorations vandalized at 1:31 a.m. Aug. 23.
- A resident in the 13000 block of Europa Court N. reported his ex-girlfriend for breaking his glasses at 3:30 a.m. Aug. 23. The caller simply wanted the incident documented.
- Residents in the 15000 block of Enfield Avenue N. reported juveniles for egging their residence at 10:32 p.m. Aug. 23. When Washington County Sheriff's Office deputies arrived on scene, they discovered no damage to the house but saw eggshells on the roof. Although deputies checked the area and viewed surveillance video of the juveniles involved, the youths weren't located.
- Deputies initiated a traffic stop at 11:06 p.m. Aug. 23 on Farnham Avenue N. and Oneka Parkway N. on a vehicle stopped for an unreasonable amount of time at a stop sign. Deputies conducted field sobriety testing and arrested the driver for DWI, as well as on an outstanding warrant.
- A juvenile in the 4000 block of Heritage Parkway at 2:30 p.m. Aug. 24 reported an attempted theft of an electric scooter that had occurred in Anoka County.
- Deputies conducted a warrant arrest at 3:15 p.m. Aug. 24 in the 16000 block of Elmcrest Avenue N.
- Road rage was reported on 130th Street N. and Flay Road N. at 7:01 p.m. Aug. 24, after the suspect vehicle was operating dangerously and throwing items at the juvenile complainant's vehicle. After vehicle information was retrieved, the driver was determined to be another juvenile. Deputies met the juveniles along with their parents, who advised deputies they would handle the situation.
- Theft perpetrated by juveniles was reported at 2:32 p.m. Aug. 25 in the 14000 block of Victor Hugo Blvd. N.
- Residents in the 14000 block of Geneva Way N. at 3:38 p.m. Aug. 25 reported a retaliation of a previous toilet papering incident. The suspect egged the complainant's lawn mower in retaliation for being TP'd earlier. The vandal also put an egg in the mower's gas tank.

• Parents in the 14000 block of Garden Way N. at 6:07 p.m. Aug. 25 called for a deputy assist by asking the rhetorical "what's a parent to do?" when a juvenile child decides to leave in a vehicle against the parent's wishes. Deputies advised the complainants that the common-sense thing to do would be to take away the car keys.

- A vehicle received a citation on the windshield at 10:28 p.m. Aug. 25 in the 13000 block of Fondant Trail N. for illegal parking. Another vehicle was cited at 2:03 a.m. Aug. 26 in the 15000 block of Granada Avenue N. for a wrong way parking violation.
- An adult male was taken into custody on warrants at 3:00 p.m. Aug. 26 in the 13000 block of Europa Trail Way N., after deputies were dispatched out following a civil incident.
- After deputies responded to a report of an

- open door at Hugo City Hall in the 14000 block of Fitzgerald Avenue N. at 7:29 p.m. Aug. 26, they discovered a city meeting in progress and quietly left the scene.
- Theft from the Speedway gas station in the 14000 block of Forest Blvd. N. was reported at 7:55 p.m. Aug. 26.
- Residents in the 12000 block of Foxhill Avenue N. at 10:29 p.m. Aug. 26 reported a specific juvenile as the perpetrator of a toilet papering incident in which the complainant's yard was littered with toilet paper. The complainant wanted deputies to contact the juvenile to advise the youth accordingly.
- A motorist presenting only a Mexican identification card was cited at 2:24 a.m. Aug. 27 on Forest Blvd. N. at 140th Street N. for failing to present a valid driver's license, following a traffic stop for speeding.

• A child screaming for help reported at 9:33 a.m. Aug. 28 from the 16000 block of Jeffrey Avenue N. turned out to be a child yelling because he was upset that he couldn't go to the State Fair.

- Parents in the 5000 block of French Drive at 3:34 p.m. Aug. 28 called for a deputy assist after reporting a disturbing video received on their child's TikTok account. Deputies advised the parents to take their child off social media.
- Residents in the 5000 block of 149th Street N. at 9:30 a.m. Aug. 28 reported their neighbor's mail for sitting on the porch for days and them not seeing the neighbor. Deputies tried to call the absent homeowner, left many messages and even went to the house only to find it locked. But they had no reason to breach the door. Later that afternoon, the homeowner contacted deputies from outside the country to inquire about all the urgency and to say all was well.
- Washington County Sheriff's Office deputies retrieved a wallet reported found in the 14000 block of Fitzgerald Avenue N. at 6:36 a.m. Aug. 30. They returned it to the owner's residence.
- A resident in the 15000 block of Glenbrook Avenue N. at 10:36 a.m. Aug. 30 reported his neighbor harassing him and posed a few questions about his legal rights. Deputies advised the complainant to check into taking out a harassment restraining order.

• Residents near 159th Street N. and Farnham Avenue N. reported juveniles for toilet papering their residence at 1:24 a.m. Aug. 31. Deputies found the juveniles toilet papering the residence and advised them to clean up their mess.

- A suspicious vehicle reported parked in front of a residence in the 15000 block of Goodview Avenue N. at 12:42 p.m. Aug. 31 turned out to belong to the next-door neighbor, after deputies conducted their computer database check of license plate lists.
- A motorist near 170th Street N. and Henna Avenue N. reported the vehicle behind him for stalking him at 3:19 p.m. Aug. 31. Deputies found the suspect vehicle and conducted

a traffic stop. Its juvenile female driver was given a verbal warning.

- Deputies conducted two traffic stops on Aug. 31 for undisclosed violations and cited the drivers in both incidents. The drivers were pulled over at 6:09 p.m. in the 5000 block of 137th Street N. and at 6:47 p.m. on Farnham Avenue N. and Falk Drive N.
- In the Case of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, a dog and a pig were reported at large at 6:29 p.m. and again at 7:48 p.m. Sept. 1 in the 16000 block of Jeffrey Avenue N. The caller simply wanted the occurrence documented.
- A motorist on 170th Street N. and Elmcrest Avenue N. was cited at 9:54 p.m. Sept. 1 for failure to provide proof of insurance.
- Theft from motor vehicle was reported overnight Sept. 1-2 after tools and clothing were stolen from the back of a pickup truck parked in the 4000 block of Rosemary Way.
- A business in the 15000 block of Forest Blvd. N. at 4:06 p.m. Sept. 2 reported finding possible live military ordnance.
- Deputies conducted a traffic stop at 5:11 p.m. Sept. 3 on 170th Street N. and Ingersoll Avenue N. and cited the driver for speeding. They conducted two more traffic stops to cite drivers for undisclosed offenses, first at 8:35 a.m. Sept 4 on Forest Blvd. N. and 147th Street N. and the second at 2:32 p.m. Sept. 4 in the 14000 block of Forest Blvd. N.
- Deputies answered a phone call from a responsible citizen in the 12000 block of Falcon Avenue N. at 9:55 a.m. Sept. 4 who was wondering how to safely dispose of flares.
- A resident in the 13000 block of Europa Court at 3:14 p.m. Sept. 4 reported his brother for taking money out of his wallet.
- Extra patrols were offered after a resident in the 4000 block of 158th Street N. at 12:44 a.m. Sept. 6 reported her house toilet-papered and egged. Deputies suggested to the caller that perhaps the whole thing was the result of a senior prank, as the complainant had a child who is a senior in high school.
- A suspicious woman who gets dropped off at the park in the 15000 block of Goodview Avenue N. every day was reported at 4:09 p.m. Sept. 6 for this habit. Furthermore, she was always picked up by the same vehicle each day. When deputies spoke with the suspicious female, they learned that she comes to the park every day to sit with her dog while her husband meets with his mother. No further law enforcement action was needed.

• Three suspicious juveniles were reported at 6:15 p.m. Sept. 6 for being in a port-a-potty in the 4000 block of Heritage Parkway N. Deputies arrived on scene, found the males and learned that the youths were riding e-bikes and scooters. Deputies later spoke with their parents, who advised them that if the kids had another encounter with law enforcement, they would get rid of the e-bike and scooter.

Loretta Harding

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BRIEF

Hwy. 97 project nearing completion

The Hwy. 97 reconstruction project in Forest Lake remains on schedule for completion and reopening in early November, weather permitting. Hwy. 97 remains closed between Everton Avenue and Hwy. 61 while crews finish paving and other work. Motorists should continue to follow posted detours and expect occasional delays near paving operations.

The project is the second and final year of improvements between I-35 and Hwy. 61. Work includes roadway resurfacing, a single-lane round-

about at Fenway Avenue, a multiuse trail, medians and new turn lanes. The first phase, between Hornsby Street and Everton Avenue, was completed in 2025.

Drivers are encouraged to check 511 for current travel information, allow extra time and use caution in work zones. Work schedules are subject to weather and other conditions.

For more information, visit www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/hwy97-forestlake/index.html.

NEWS BRIEF

Press Publications seeking part-time copy-editor, writer

Press Publications in White Bear Lake is seeking a detail-oriented copy editor/writer with strong grammar, proof reading, editing and writing skills. Must be knowledgeable and familiar with AP style and able to produce clean, accurate, engaging copy on deadline. Part-time, flexible hours. In office Mondays and Fridays, remote other days. Pay range \$16 - \$19. Send resume to whitebearnews@presspubs.com.

Hugo man found guilty of premeditated murder

A Hugo man who beat his 68-year-old mother to death in their home in September 2024 has been found guilty of first-degree premeditated murder, Washington County Attorney Kevin Magnuson recently announced.

Trevor Joseph Wunderlich, 47, was found guilty by Washington County District Judge Siv Mjanger following a bench trial. Judge Mjanger found Wunderlich guilty on all three counts: first-degree premeditated murder, first-degree murder while committing domestic abuse with a past pattern of domestic abuse, and second-degree intentional murder. First-degree premeditated murder carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison without the possibility of release. Wunderlich remains in custody without bail until sentencing, which is set for 1 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18.

For years before her death, Charlene Wunderlich documented her son's abuse in her daily planners, in photographs of her injuries, and in text messages begging him to stop. In her findings, Judge Mjanger called that evidence "overwhelming proof" that Wunderlich had abused his mother "on countless occasions."

At 5:54 p.m. on Sept. 16, 2024, Washington County 911 received a call from the Wunderlich home and dog kennel on Ingersoll Avenue in Hugo. Struggling to speak, Charlene told the dispatcher she had been beaten up and begged for help to arrive before he came back. She repeatedly said she was going to die and could not breathe. Toward the end of the call, her son could be heard shouting and swearing at her.

When sheriff's deputies arrived, they found Wunderlich sitting on a kitchen chair, looming over his mother as she lay on the floor. He exclaimed, "Seriously, Mom, I'm going to jail!" and fled down the stairs. Charlene was

covered in bruises, and her hair was strewn across the kitchen floor; she told deputies her son had been ripping it out. Despite emergency efforts, she died that evening at Regions Hospital.

Wunderlich was found the next day hiding in a camper on a nearby property in Hugo. While being taken to jail, he claimed his mother was fine when he left, and said, "She couldn't have died from the injuries I gave her."

Ramsey County Medical Examiner Dr. Butch Huston counted at least 80 distinct bruises on Charlene's body, ranging from several days old to a few hours before her death, along with rib fractures of varying ages and a fractured sternum. The beating sheared the muscles of her back away from her rib cage, leaving her unable to breathe.

From 2016 until days before her death, Charlene recorded the abuse in her daily planners alongside kennel appointments and birthday reminders, often with the shorthand "TBMU," which the court found meant "Trevor Beat Me Up." Her son Chris found the planners in plastic totes while cleaning out her home after her death. Investigators also recovered photos from her phone documenting her bruises and injuries, including photos taken the day she died.

Her messages also warned of what was coming. "You are going to kill someone. Probably me," she wrote to him in April 2023. A month later, she wrote, "You are going to kill me some day if you don't do something to help yourself get better."

Witnesses who visited or lived on the property testified to seeing Wunderlich hit, punch and threaten his mother over several years, including a longtime friend

who saw him punch her in the face "like a guy." The court also found credible two of Wunderlich's former partners, who testified that he had assaulted them.

Judge Mjanger also found that the killing was planned. Wunderlich stood to inherit property and a life insurance payout upon his mother's death, had directed her to make him the beneficiary of her properties, and needed money for a balloon payment on a Silver Bay land purchase due Sept. 29, 2024. The day before the killing, he texted his mother demanding that she arrange for her real estate to pass to him when she died. "This was no rash and impulsive act; this was an act that was planned over time," Judge Mjanger wrote.

"Charlene Wunderlich spent years living in fear of her own son, and she made sure the truth would not die with her. She wrote it down, she photographed her injuries, and she warned him that he would kill her one day," County Attorney Kevin Magnuson said. "Domestic abuse cases are among the hardest we prosecute, particularly when the victim cannot take the stand. Here, Charlene's own words, along with autopsy images of her injuries, spoke for her in the courtroom and helped hold her son accountable for years of abuse and, ultimately, her death. Our office remains committed to seeking justice for victims of domestic and elder abuse, and to supporting and uplifting those victims and their families."

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or elder abuse, help is available 24/7 through the Day One Crisis Line at 866-223-1111.

Washington County Attorney's Office

Unfunded mandates, public safety costs boost county levy

BY LOGAN GION
STAFF WRITER

Anoka County's 2027 preliminary tax levy is \$216,238,679, an increase of 7.95% from 2026. At its Sept. 22 meeting, the county Board of Commissioners passed a motion adopting the preliminary tax levy by a vote of 5-1. Commissioner Julie Braastad dissented and Commissioner Jeff Reinert was not present. According to statute, this figure may be lowered for when the final tax levy is approved later this year but may not increase.

Additionally, the county passed a \$600,000 preliminary public safety levy, which will fund a new data system. All six board members passed the public safety preliminary levy.

"The 2027 preliminary budget and levy reflects our continued commitment toward long-term financial planning. We look to maintain service levels, and we're responsive to significant legislative and operational mandates," County Administrator Jim Dickinson said. "Our departments ... have developed budgets in alignment with county board strategic priorities with a focus on sustainability and efficient resource allocations."

During a presentation at the meeting, Senior Budget Manager Yvonne Kirkeide not only showed the proposed tax levy amounts for 2027 but also displayed bud-

get increase predictions for the next five years (See Five-year budget projection chart.) Commissioner Mandy Meisner said she appreciated the information, saying, "Keep in mind, it is fluid — but approaching (the budget) in this manner absolutely helps us to remain stable, rather than these peaks and valleys."

During his presentation, Dickinson noted that one of the challenges when crafting the preliminary tax levy numbers was funding impacts from the federal H.R. 1 Act, or One Big Beautiful Bill Act. While he noted the county is prepared, he believes it is a matter for the state.

"We're not going to ... inflate our budget to accomplish a state responsibility," he said.

Public safety costs

Dickinson explained that because the county's emergency call center and sheriff's office operate around the clock, many employees are being paid overtime and work long shifts for consecutive days.

"(It) is not good from a perspective of, one, being able to retain the employees, and (two), paying from a liability perspective of having people in place in these 24/7 operations," Dickinson said.

The Minnesota Paid Leave Act and the Earned Safe and Sick Time program before that, Dickinson noted, also increase

overtime requests from public safety departments.

"All these different programs, which sound good on paper at the state, really have significant impacts for our 24/7 operations. As we look ahead, there will probably be some legislative initiatives to mitigate some of that, because I don't think that was taken into consideration," he said. "With 24/7 operations, if someone calls, you really don't have much choice except to go to OT."

He continued, saying that increased staffing will minimize overtime costs in the future and increase retention in places like the sheriff's office and the jail, where recruitment is difficult.

"Once we get them, we need to keep them," Dickinson said.

Dickinson said that the attorney's office also needs more staff because the county is growing and needs to handle the increased workload. The attorney's office also occasionally advises the county regarding contracts, so increased staff will lead to stronger attention to details.

Both the sheriff's and attorney's offices, Dickinson said, are also dealing with increased data requests from the public.

"Having data available for those who ask is a good thing. It's really been a popular thing. With AI (artificial intelligence), these requests have become very detailed," said Dickinson. "(It's) to the

point, I don't think people know what they're asking when they submit some of those things. That has a significant impact in the sheriff's office, which then has a correlation of impact in the attorney's office."

Separately, Dickinson explained that the \$600,000 preliminary public safety levy, a separate item from the property tax levy, will pay for a public safety data system.

"The public safety data system is how police and fire share information," explained Anoka County Attorney Brad Johnson. "When they log on to their computers, and they're trying to talk to one another, that's how it's used."

Board comments

After the budget presentation, Commissioner Mike Gamache thanked the staff for their work and added that inflation was also a factor for the increased tax levy.

"We all know what the gas prices are, and we've all seen the diesel prices. If you can only imagine the equipment we have at the county, that affects us a great deal. We understand that, and we're dealing with that. We're not going to kick the can down the road," he said.

Meisner also thanked county staff,

SEE COUNTY LEVY, PAGE 15

PUBLIC SAFETY BRIEF

Emergency crews battle fire amid strong winds in Hugo

At approximately 2:50 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10, the Hugo Fire Department was dispatched to a fire in the 15900 block of Jeffery Ave. N. When fire units arrived on scene, they found an outbuilding, multiple cars and a large tree on fire.

Due to strong winds and the proximity of the fire to the home, the side of the home also started on fire. Water was shuttled in to fight the fire with tenders from surrounding fire departments. Although the outbuilding and cars were a total loss, the home was saved sustaining minor damage.

Firefighters remained on scene for several hours and there were no reported injuries. Assistance was received from Forest Lake, Scandia, Stillwater, Mahtomedi, White Bear



HUGO FIRE | CONTRIBUTED

Lake, Lino Lakes and Spring Lake Park/Blaine/Mounds View fire departments, along with the Washington County Sheriff's Office, and Fairview Ambulance.

The fire remains under investigation.



NORTH METRO FIRE BUFF | CONTRIBUTED

Fire crews from multiple agencies battle a fire on Jeffrey Avenue in Hugo.

HUGO IN 2050: Should the city be rural, suburban or something in between?

FROM PAGE 1

we do better? What should we keep the same?”

Bear explained the city often hears from residents as development applications come in but perhaps the best time to have their voices heard is during the drafting of the comp plan. That is because if a developer submits a project that meets the guidelines that were set out in the comprehensive plan, the city should approve the project.

One example of resident feedback shaping the future of a property is the proposal for Viridian Shores, a development with 35 single-family homes proposed on an approximately 67-acre site located directly south of Oneka Lake.

A project was proposed on the property approximately 20 years ago that proposed higher density housing. It would have extended the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and allowed the development to connect to city utilities. The city denied that project after receiving resistance from the neighborhood and a compromise was reached within the comprehensive plan to extend the MUSA boundary to the edge of the property, but lower the density. So now instead of three units per acre, fewer than one unit per acre is now proposed. (See full story in this week’s issue.)

“When you hear rural character, what does rural character mean?” Bear asked. “When we have a development proposed, and if it’s on a field ... that field will be removed and replaced with housing, and we’ll hear the comment that it’s ruining our rural character. Well, the city’s comprehensive plan says that that property is going to develop. Landowners in the area have an influence and can decide to sell land. The question is, who can they sell it to, and what can the buyer do with that property? Those will be discussions in front of us as we start to prepare our comprehensive plan.”

Bear shared several examples of what “rural” Hugo can look like: large-lot residential, agricultural fields and farms, or businesses like a game farm, shooting range, wedding barn and winery.

Going forward, the city could consider encouraging or discouraging those uses depending on what it decides in its comp plan discussions and ordinances indicates could be tweaked. According to the city’s 2040 plan, much of rural Hugo is



SHANNON GRANHOLM | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

City Administrator Bryan Bear narrates the annual citywide bus tour each year.

expected to stay rural Hugo, likely even into the next plan, as it is located outside of the MUSA.

“The question is, will it develop in a suburban way ever, or will it be never?” Bear asked.

An important factor to keep in mind for Hugo and all the cities in the northeast metro is water supply, which will likely be impacted by the White Bear Lake lawsuit. The Legislature has directed the formation of a work group to develop solutions and is scheduled to report back to the legislature in June 2027.

“That doesn’t mean that the solution will happen. It has to be agreed to. We’ll bring this to the city councils in every city in that northeast metro. It will be brought to the Legislature. And guess what? All of the solutions are very, very expensive, and so there’ll be a lot of discussions and wrangling about what will happen for White Bear Lake, and what will happen to the regional water supply of the northeast metro,” Bear said. “If there is no more water supply for the northeast metro, the economic growth of the entire quadrant of the northeast metro will stall. You cannot grow the economy. You cannot attract businesses. You cannot grow at all unless you have a viable water system. That’s the significance of the discussion that we are having.”

Another important factor to keep in mind is that the city of Hugo is required

2026 STOPS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. New Life Church | Road extension |
| 2. Kwik Trip | 14. Arbor West Apartments |
| 3. Oneka Fields Apartments | 15. Stormwater reuse |
| 4. The Shores of Oneka Lake | 16. Beautification |
| 5. The Shores of Oneka Lake 4th Addition | 17. Frenchman Village |
| 6. Oneka Lake Reserve | 18. The Dance Unit |
| 7. Viridian Shores | 19. Watercrest of Hugo |
| 8. The Shores of Oneka Lake North | 20. Liberty Classical Academy |
| 9. Hopkins Schoolhouse | 21. Hardwood Creek Regional Trail extension |
| 10. 165th Street Alternative Urban Areawide Review | 22. Fable Hill Streets |
| 11. Frog Hollow Park | 23. Bald Eagle Industrial Park streets |
| 12. Heritage Parkway | 24. City-owned property downtown |
| 13. Elmcrest Avenue/Otter Lake | |

to meet certain guidelines imposed by the Metropolitan Council. According to the Met Council, if the city of Hugo fully develops, including rural Hugo, the city could reach a population of 102,000 by 2050. Bear says that number

40,000. Currently, the city’s population is approximately 18,000.

Managing Editor Shannon Granholm can be reached at 651-407-1227 or citizen-news@presspubs.com.



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20th annual: Highlights from 2026 Hugo bus tour

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

Each year, it is a tradition for Hugo’s elected officials, commission members, residents, city staff and school representatives to board a bus for a two-hour tour around the city to learn about what has transpired over the last year and what they might see in the future. Here are some of the highlights:

2. Kwik Trip



SHANNON GRANHOLM | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

Kwik Trip’s 917th store and 500th car wash location is now open in Hugo. The new store, located at 5950 159th St. N., comes 19 years after the other Kwik Trip location in Hugo opened its doors at 14730 Victor Hugo Blvd. During the store’s grand opening, Kwik Trip donated \$1,000 to the Hugo Fire Department and \$1,000 to the Washington County Sheriff’s Office.

6. Oneka Lake Reserve

DRW Property Investments LLC plans to build 50 townhome units on 6.7 acres located north of 150th Street North across from Generation Avenue North. The property was previously approved in 2007 for a townhome development known as Oneka Lake Townhomes. The project was not constructed due to the economic recession in 2008. A second project for the property was previously approved in 2021 and placed the property into a planned unit development, but this project was also not constructed. Construction is planned to start in 2027.

7. Viridian Shores

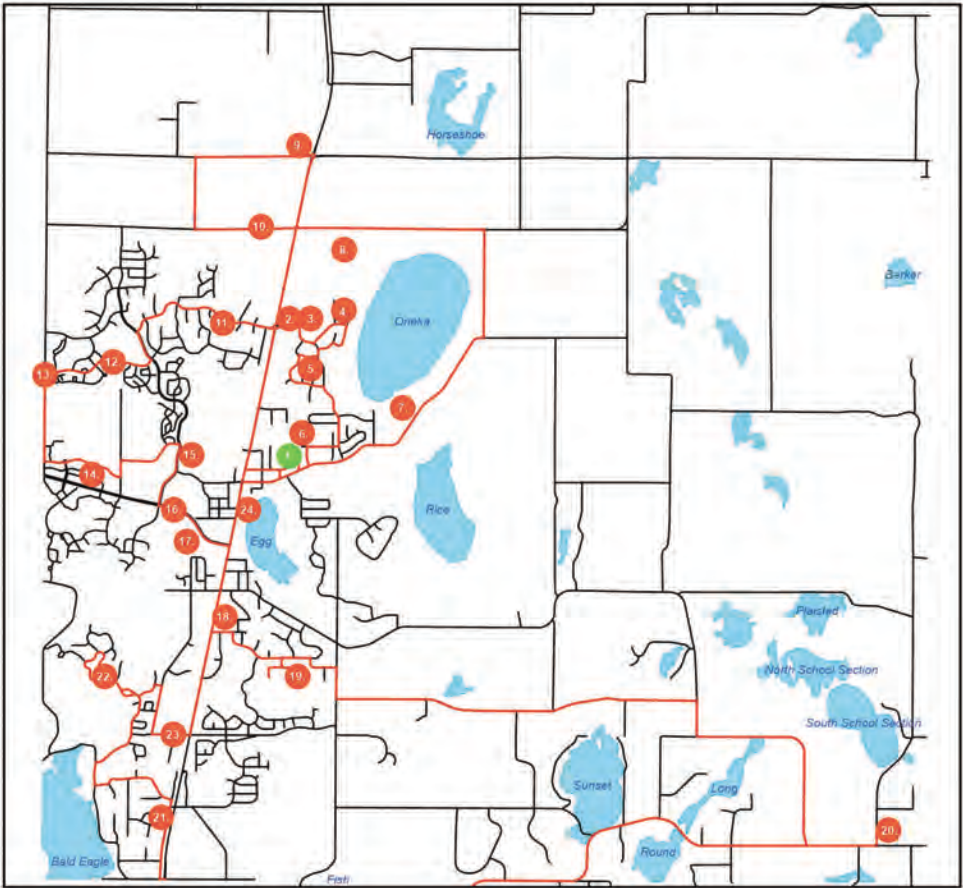
Twin Cities Land Development has received preliminary plat and planned unit development approval for 35 single-family homes on a 67.4-acre site located directly south of Oneka Lake to be known as Viridian Shores. The property is located at 6822 Oneka Lake Blvd. N.

8. The Shores of Oneka Lake North



SHANNON GRANHOLM | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

The City Council has approved a comprehensive plan amendment, preliminary plat and planned unit development for the residential and commercial development known as The Shores of Oneka Lake North. The site is located on approximately 246 acres north of the existing Shores of Oneka Lake development. The project will include 408 residential lots, 145 townhomes and a 180-unit apartment building. The housing types are proposed to be a combination of single-family homes, villa homes, townhomes and apartments. The plat also includes commercial lots for future commercial development near the new Kwik Trip along 159th Street. M/I Homes will develop the residential units and Fenway Land Company will develop the future apartment and townhome developments.



City Wide Bus Tour October 3, 2026

- Depart at 10:00am
1. New Life Church
 2. Kwik Trip
 3. Oneka Fields Apartments
 4. The Shores of Oneka Lake
 5. The Shores of Oneka Lake 4th Add.
 6. Oneka Lake Reserve
 7. Viridian Shores
 8. The Shores of Oneka Lake North
 9. Hopkins Schoolhouse
 10. 165th Street AUAR
 11. Frog Hollow Park
 12. Heritage Parkway
 13. Elmcrest Avenue / Otter Lake Road Extension
 14. Arbor West Apartments
 15. Stormwater Reuse
 16. Beautification
 17. Frenchman Village
 18. The Dance Unit
 19. Watercrest of Hugo
 20. Liberty Classical Academy
 21. Hardwood Creek Regional Trail Extension
 22. Fable Hill Streets
 23. Bald Eagle Industrial Park Streets
 24. City-Owned Property Downtown
- Return approx. Noon to New Life Church

Map Created by the City of Hugo - October 2026

CITY OF HUGO | CONTRIBUTED

The 2026 citywide bus tour featured 24 stops and included parks, street projects, developments, schools, businesses, stormwater reuse projects and more.

11. Frog Hollow Park



CONTRIBUTED

Before the snow flies, the city will replace the playground equipment and wood fiber surfacing at Frog Hollow Park. The Parks Commission held a neighborhood meeting and gathered input on proposals from four playground designers. The Parks Commission recommended the Play It Creations proposal, as it included more challenging features to interest older kids, including net climbers and looped play options. Play It Creations is located in Hugo and offers unique and artistic playground equipment made with glass-fiber-reinforced concrete.

13. Elmcrest Avenue/Otter Lake Road extension

Work has begun on the Elmcrest Avenue/Otter Lake Road extension project, which is led by the city of Lino Lakes. The project will extend Rosemary Way to connect with Otter Lake Road and extend Otter Lake Road north, ultimately creating a connection to Heritage Parkway N. in Hugo. Work on the south end of the project is anticipated to be completed in 2026; the remainder of the project will continue in 2027, as weather permits.

14. Arbor West Apartments

Arbor West Apartments, an 89-unit apartment building located next to Festival Foods, officially opened its doors to residents this summer. The project was fully leased by its opening and creates a blend between commercial and residential uses, allowing apartment residents to walk to neighboring businesses. The parks commission will hold a neighborhood meeting to discuss future plans, including the naming of the nearby park, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4, at the Peder Pedersen Pavilion.

15. Stormwater reuse

The city of Hugo has been a leader in using stormwater for irrigation in

the state of Minnesota. Its very first project was Oneka Ridge Golf Course in 2014. The city has 11 existing stormwater reuse systems in the city, and there are two additional reuse projects (The Shores of Oneka Lake North and Oneka Lake Reserve) that have received council approval. On average, the city saves approximately 100 million gallons of drinking water each year.

17. Frenchman Village



CONTRIBUTED

Marvin LaValle has sold his property and signed a contract with Maplewood Development Inc. to develop “Frenchman Village” on the property located south of Frenchman Road/County Road 8 and west of Highway 61. So far, the city has only seen a concept plan for the 97-acre property, which shows 140 single-family homes, 150 townhomes and various commercial spaces totaling 95,000 square feet. The plan also includes a 4-acre public park, off-street trails and a private clubhouse and pool. Commercial spaces will likely be located near Oneka Parkway and the corner of Highway 61. Plans also show the extension of Fenway Boulevard from the Bald Eagle Industrial Park north to Frenchman Road/County Road 8.

18. The Dance Unit

The Dance Unit, currently located at 14643 Mercantile Drive in Victor Gardens South Village, has plans to expand into a new building. Mo-

torists driving along Highway 61 likely recently noticed trees being removed from the site to make way for the 9,088-square-foot commercial building, located at 13845 Forest Blvd. N. next to TKG Automotive. City staff say they are not sure when construction will start, as they are currently reviewing plans and the applicants are working through some items.

22. Fable Hill Streets



SHANNON GRANHOLM | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

The city of Hugo is hopeful it can secure nearly \$1.15 million from state bridge funds for the reconstruction of two bridges in 2027 — the Fable Hills bridge and the Forest Road bridge. The streets would be redone at the same time as the bridge. If the city is not successful in receiving bridge funding for the Fable Hills bridge, the 2027-2031 capital improvement plan will be revised; instead, another project would likely be swapped in for 2027. Karin Housley attended the bus tour and mentioned that the Legislature doesn’t have a bonding bill next year, but the year after that the city of Hugo should have no problem getting the requested bridge funds.

24. City-owned property downtown

The city’s Economic Development Authority continues to market the vacant city-owned property downtown across from City Hall. The 4.3-acre property has over 650 feet of lakeshore frontage. The city would like to see a mixed-use development with a restaurant/entertainment use as well as commercial, boutique retail, office and housing. At its next meeting Oct. 20, the EDA will review three proposals for the site, everything from retail, to restaurants, to housing of various types to a hotel.

Cougar gridders (5-1) thump Roseville 44-21

BY BRUCE STRAND
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

Centennial erupted for a 29-point second quarter, including 80- and 92-yard plays, on the way to a 44-21 win over Roseville Area there Friday evening. The Cougars are 5-1 and ranked No. 5.

The Cougars led 8-0 after one quarter on quarterback Jack Wiste's eight-yard touchdown and a two-point run by Wesley Kukkonen.

Scoring in the second quarter were Carter Radziwill on a two-

yard run and Kukkonen on a six-yard run before Samson Skudlarek broke away for an 80-yard TD in his lone carry and Nolan Larson capped it with a kick return from 92 yards.

The Cougars led 37-7 at the half and made it 44-7 in the third period on Radziwill's 30-yard run. Keaton Prigge kicked four extra points, and Kukkonen twice ran for two-pointers.

Roseville Area (2-4) got touchdown runs by Jordan Smith and Caio Skjon and a pass from Westin Harrison to Skjon.

Centennial will host Blaine (5-1) on Wednesday, 7 p.m.



JON NAMYST | CONTRIBUTED

Sam Skudlarek (middle) celebrates his 80-yard touchdown with Brett Pullman (15) and Wesley Kukkonen (10).

COUGAR BRIEFS

VOLLEYBALL

In a busy week of road matches, Centennial (18-7) beat Cambridge-Isanti 25-22, 25-14, 25-20 Monday and Coon Rapids 25-10, 25-11, 25-14 on Tuesday, then won two of five at the Twin Cities Challenge on Friday/Saturday in Burnsville. The Cougars beat Bethlehem Academy 25-11, 25-14 and LeSueur-Henderson 25-18, 20-25, 15-10, lost to West Fargo Sheyenne 21-25, 10-25, to Holy Angels 21-25, 25-20, 12-15; and to Eastview 25-17, 19-25, 13-15.

BOYS SOCCER

Centennial (3-7-3) defeated Rogers 3-1 and lost to Coon Rapids 2-0 last week, finishing NWSC play with a 3-7-3 record. The Cougars (3-9-3 overall) are seeded sixth and will play at Duluth East on Tuesday in Section 7AAA

Bruce Strand

Visit www.press-pubs.com/quad/sports/ for more sports briefs.

Bear boys finish 3rd in SEC soccer

White Bear Lake boys soccer capped a strong bounce-back conference season with a 2-1 win over Stillwater and 3-2 loss to Cretin-Derham Hall last week to finish third.

East Ridge was 9-0, CDH 7-2, the Bears 6-3 and Stillwater 5-3-1 for the top four among 10 teams. The Bears had virtually the same lineup last year that went 0-4-5 in conference.

"Third place is our best finish in 15 years," said coach Taelynn Gittins. "The team goal at the start of the season

was to host a section game and we are doing that. The guys are really excited."

Against Stillwater, Ike Barghini and Jose Chung found the net, each assisted by Diego Rios, while goalie Logan Metzger stopped 10 of 11 shots. Mason Voeller notched both goals against CDH.

The No. 3 seed Bears hosted Stillwater on Tuesday in Section 4AAA. The winner meets St. Paul Central or Tartan on Thursday.

Bruce Strand



BRUCE STRAND | CONTRIBUTED

Jose Chung "heads" a pass against Cretin-Derham Hall.

Cougar swimmers 3rd in section, get at-large entry to state

Centennial placed third of eight teams in the Section 7 true-team swim and dive meet at Blaine on Saturday, and because the top two teams declined to compete in the state meet, Centennial will go as an at-large entry.

Top four teams were Blaine 1378, Duluth East 1226, Centennial 1180.5 and Forest Lake 1043.5.

Cougar leaders were Sophia Nguyen, second in both the 50 (25.62) and 100 (56.11) sprints; Amelia Pole, third in breaststroke (1:11.96) and fourth in medley (2:29.89); and Lydia Hydukovich,

third in backstroke (1:04.02) and fourth in butterfly (1:05.79).

Cordelia Schultz was fourth in diving (298.75), Emily Quade seventh in breaststroke (1:16.66), and Claire Mantz eighth in the 500 (6:01). Top relay finish was fourth by the 400 team of Hydukovich, Lucy Foster, Madeline Uelman and Nguyen (3:58.01).

The state meet will be Saturday at the University of Minnesota.

Bruce Strand



ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Nolan Larson
Cougar Football

Along with his stellar defensive play from the safety position, Nolan Larson has returned kicks for touchdowns in two straight games for No. 5 ranked Centennial. The 6-foot-2, 178-pound senior took a punt 56 yards down the left sideline to open the scoring in a 41-0 win over Rogers, then sped 92 yards down the right sideline on a kickoff during a 44-21 win over Roseville. Larson is the deep man on a rugged defense that has allowed just five touchdowns in six games while the starters play. "He is as athletic and physical as any safety I have ever coached," said Cougar coach Michael Diggins. "We use him in a lot of ways on our defense because of his skill sets."



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VIRIDIAN SHORES: City Council will consider residential development near Oneka Lake

FROM PAGE 1

An HOA is also proposed.

Associate Planner Max Gort said that there are approximately 35.65 acres of buildable area within the site. The lots are proposed to be clustered in the north-west corner of the property, creating a net density of 1 unit per acre across the whole site. The development is proposed to have access from Oneka Lake Boulevard. Two streets are planned within the development as well as a gravel trail along the shores of Oneka Lake, a paved trail along Oneka Lake Boulevard and a sidewalk along “Street A” to connect to the trails.

“Use of PUD allows developer zoning ordinance flexibility in exchange for a higher quality and more sensitive development,” Gort explained.

TCLD has requested flexibility to deviate slightly from the large lot single-family residential (R-1) zoning district and shoreland overlay district, including:

- A minimum lot size of 15,000 feet, whereas 20,000 square feet is required.
- A minimum lot width of 100 feet, whereas 150 feet is required.
- A front yard setback of 25 feet, whereas 30 feet is required.
- A maximum impervious surface area of 35% within lots, whereas a maximum of 25% is required. (Although some individual lots have an impervious surface coverage of 35%, the overall development is under the 25% requirement.)

Gort explained that in exchange for the PUD flexibility, the developer has agreed to:

- Construct a sidewalk constructing the two trails along Street A.
- Cluster the lots to maintain open space throughout the property.
- Exceed the setback requirements by not having any lots directly connected to Oneka Lake.

- Exceed the landscaping ordinance standards.
- Utilize a stormwater reuse system for irrigation.

“Generally, staff is comfortable with the flexibility that the developer is asking for, but we have a couple of recommendations for changes,” Gort said. He explained that the TCLD’s narrative in its application requests a minimum lot size of 14,000 square feet, but the actual plans indicate a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet. City staff also requested the developer construct an additional sidewalk along Street B to create an internal pedestrian loop.

Planning Commissioner Steve Address said he was supportive of the additional sidewalk along Street B. “In my development, there are no sidewalks. It’s not taking your life into your own hands (to walk in the streets), but it would be so much better if there were direct paths or sidewalks to the parks or any areas you want to go.”

Resident input

Resident Jan Raster said the proposal to include a trail concerns her. “Just hearing the word ‘trail’ scares the heck out of me. We don’t want it coming across our property,” she said.

Her husband, Tom Raster, added that he had some concerns related to when the lake level is high due to flooding area properties. He shared that a few years ago, the water level was high and caused area basements to flood.

“At that time, the landowner refused to let the city open up the outlet and lower the lake a bit because it might affect his duck ponds,” He explained. “I’m really concerned if we have the same issue here, are we going to have a future date where Oneka Lake is going to be out of control

again? I’d feel much more comfortable if the city indicated in its approval, that the city would be in control of the outlet from Oneka Lake.”

Planning Commission Member Phil Klein noted that he lives on the north end of the lake and had previously experienced flooding due to high water levels. “That is one thing I think as a city we should take a look at that, make certain that it is able to flow because that is a huge problem,” Klein said. “When things get backed up, it is soaking wet. It’s like a sponge.”

Community Development Director Rachel Juba said she was not aware of the outlet on Oneka Lake but would talk to the city engineer and public works staff to learn more, and if an easement was necessary, that could be done.

Resident Mark Miron said the proposed trail is proposed to stop right in front of his property and requested that there be adequate signage to alert trail users that they are entering private property. Miron also requested a survey to mark property lines prior to construction and that the developer be mindful of a big enough setback for trees, so they don’t infringe upon his active agriculture fields.

Schmidt said they would make sure to plant trees far enough onto their property to not affect adjacent property owners, and they would also make sure to have proper signage at the trail’s end. “I’m a big believer in private property rights, and we don’t want any of our people or private citizens walking on someone else’s property,” he said. He noted they did have a survey done as far as property lines go, and he would be happy to meet with adjacent property owners to make sure they all agree on where those pins are.

Resident Darren Wood wanted to know how the project would affect the homes



CONTRIBUTED

The property, located at 6822 Oneka Lake Blvd. N., is currently zoned Future Urban Service and guided very low density in the 2040 Land Use Plan, which allows one unit per acre.

on Greene Avenue, and if it would change how those properties are zoned. Juba explained that properties along Greene Avenue would remain in the same zoning and land use areas.

The Planning Commission recommended the City Council approve the preliminary plat and PUD. Because the development proposal is within the shoreland overlay district, the Minnesota DNR had to review the PUD request, which it approved. The City Council will consider both items at a future meeting.

Depending on weather this winter, and pending council approval, Schmidt said they would like to grade the site this winter and start utilities and streets in the spring.



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Arts and CULTURE

2026

EMERGING ARTIST: FENGSHIQI “MIA” TIAN

BY LOGAN GION
STAFF WRITER

White Bear Lake Area High School senior Fengshiqi “Mia” Tian is planning to go to college for nursing, yet she finds doing ceramic art personally healing.

“Art is my free time, where I find a place to calm down and create my own thing,” Tian said. “It’s helping my focus skills. Also, when I get the ceramic back, I feel happy and calm. I think that helps too.”

Ceramics has also helped Tian feel healthier when she’s not at school. “It has let me not think about my phone. When I go home, I say, ‘How am I going to do this project? Should I make this (piece) tomorrow?’” Tian has been do-



CONTRIBUTED
Fengshiqi “Mia” Tian aims to combine traditional ceramic techniques with modern glaze aesthetics.

ing ceramics for two years, so she feels like her artistic voice is still developing. Going forward, she wants to use ceram-

ics to explore her heritage. Tian was born in Hebei, a province in northeast China that surrounds Beijing and borders the Yellow Sea. “China has a lot of cool ceramics, like teacups. I want time to make those things,” said Tian. “I want to put things that relate to my culture into my project ... learn the old ways and honor my ancestors.” She then wants to personalize those traditional techniques with modern surface design. “I want to try all the glazing skills, like dipping or coloring. I want a cool design.” While Tian may find ceramics calming, the art form can be challenging. As every ceramicist knows, a project can be nearly finished, then suddenly crack. Alternatively, something an artist measured correctly on

the pottery wheel can warp once it’s in the kiln. “Yeah, that happens a lot,” Tian laughed. “We had a teacup project this year. I made a cap, but the cap was not stable ... I was like, ‘Oh, my God, it’s going to crash now.’ So I used another (piece of) clay to repair the missing piece.” Tian’s art teacher, Jennifer Latuff, added, “A big thing about ceramics is learning how to recover quickly, being okay with starting over and building up some tough skin as you’re working.” Tian said that she has applied that lesson into the other parts of her life. “Never be scared if you do something wrong in the culture — because you always can repair,” Tian said.

SWEENEY TODD COMES TO LIFE ON STAGE

ERIK SUCHY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Be afraid, Century College theatre lovers. A new, macabre production of the hilarious kind is on its way for you to see.

“Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street” will make its premiere at 7 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 30, at Century College. The musical, penned by renowned playwright Stephen Sondheim, follows a wrongly imprisoned barber who returns to Victorian-era London under the name Sweeney Todd, seeking revenge against his accusers. In the process, he forms a partnership with local pie maker Mrs. Lovett, who turns his victims into meat pies.

Paul Aberasturi, the college’s theatre program and degree coordinator, said Sweeney Todd was perfect for the department to stage, owing to its “large and thriving” size. “Sweeney Todd is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, musicals ever written. It’s brilliantly constructed, and filled with every emotion from horror to comedy to social consciousness to lots of laughter and shock. It has every element in it.”

The cast and crew involve 32 people, including performers with professional singing experience at the Minnesota Opera and actors within the college’s theatre department. Zach Winkler will play Sweeney Todd, and Nancy Jo Goettl will play Mrs. Lovett. Ella Josephson

and Tom Kerstetter will play Johanna, Todd’s daughter, and Anthony Hope, her love interest, respectively. Mark Sweigert will play Judge Turpin, the corrupt judge responsible for Todd’s imprisonment.

Aberasturi noted that the singing in Sweeney Todd is notably challenging, as it requires a higher standard of vocal quality and musicianship than most musicals otherwise demand. Around 140 actors auditioned for a part in the musical, a process Aberasturi said helped the department identify the “quality sounds” needed to bring the lyrics and music to life.

“Sweeney Todd has a classical sound to the vocals, which helps, as some of our cast members have significant opera background. It aids in singing and performing, unlike many other pop musicals, which don’t demand the same level of vocal quality. Even the ensemble is singing five-part harmonies, which is quite challenging throughout the two-and-a-half-hour musical. I’m looking for versatility, and I think we found those individuals in our cast.”

Despite the musical’s grim subject matter and violence, Aberasturi said the department intentionally chose not to tone down the story. Instead, he said he saw its content as a reflection of London during the Industrial Revolution, the era in which the musical is set.

“During this time, the owners were making all the money based on the workers who



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED
Theatre Program/Degree Coordinator Paul Aberasturi called the play “one of the greatest musicals ever written,” filled with “every emotion from horror to comedy to social consciousness.”



The Century College theatre department will officially premiere “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street” on Friday, Oct. 30.

were frequently in unsanitary and unsafe conditions. It’s really a commentary on these common workers becoming ‘meat’ to make money for a wealthy few. It’s one of the things Sweeney Todd is so upset about because of the injustice done to him.” Once Sweeney Todd opens, Aberasturi said he hopes viewers leave feeling a range of emotions that’ll satisfy their love of horror and comedy. “I hope they leave with a smile on their face, and their emotions run the gamut from joy to horror to shock and back to joy again. I also hope they recog-

nize this need for humanity, that no matter what status we are in society, everybody matters. We all have to work together because we’re all in this world together. I think it’s something Sweeney Todd is able to communicate in this wonderful, unique way.” For a full list of performances of Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street, visit the Century College theatre department website at www.tinyurl.com/55efy72y.

CALENDAR

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE 2026 MASQUE
When: 5-10 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
Where: Hanifl Performing Arts Center, 4941 Long Ave., White Bear Lake
Details: The Masque is Children’s Performing Arts’ annual fundraiser, supporting the educational and leadership programs of CPA. This year’s theme is “Yacht Rock: An Evening of Smooth Sounds and Coastal Glam.” Dressing for the theme is admired but not required. Visit childrensperformingartsmn.org/2026-masque for tickets and more details.
Contact: masque@childrensperformingartsmn.org

UPCOMING CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS
All events take place at Hanifl Performing Arts Center, 4941 Long Ave., White Bear Lake. To register, visit childrensperformingartsmn.org/classes-workshops.

SATURDAY LATE NIGHT ACTOR’S STUDIO GRADES: 6-12
Dates: 6-9 p.m. Saturdays Nov. 21, Dec. 12 and Jan. 23
Details: Students will come together for socializing and pizza, then break into groups to work on scenes assigned to them. At the end of the night, all students will get to perform for each other.
SATURDAY MORNING DROP-IN GRADES: K-2
Dates: 9:30-11:30 a.m. Saturdays, Nov. 14, Dec. 5 and Jan. 16
Details: Classes focus on creative play and fostering imagination. Each week, students will read books, play games, do crafts and create characters. November’s theme is “Unicorn-topia!”

CONDENSED

VOTERS' GUIDE 2026

MINNESOTA SENATE DISTRICT 33
(ELECT 1)

Karin Housley (R)

City of residence: Stillwater
Occupation: Real estate agent
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Serving as board chair of the Mississippi River Parkway Coalition and as a member of the Great Lakes Commission, where I actively protect and preserve our state's precious waterways.
- Co-founder of Greater Stillwater Power of 100 Women, raising over \$100,000 for local charities in three years.
- Republican lead on the Capital Investment Committee, securing critical state funding for local infrastructure, roads, bridges, and clean drinking water across our district, including White Bear Lake, Mahtomedi, Dellwood and Willernie.



Nat Smith (DFL)

City of residence: Stillwater
Occupation: Attorney
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Washington County Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee
- Stillwater Human Rights Commission
- Community advocate for fraud prevention and whistleblower protections

I'm a Stillwater resident, husband, father, and attorney who has spent my career fighting fraud and protecting whistleblowers. I grew up in Minnesota, attended the University of Minnesota and William Mitchell College of Law, and built my legal career around holding bad actors accountable. I serve on the Washington County Community Development Block Grant Citizen Advisory Committee and the Stillwater Human Rights Commission.



MINNESOTA SENATE DISTRICT 36
(ELECT 1)

Heather Gustafson (DFL)

City of residence: Vadnais Heights
Occupation: Minnesota State Senator, District 36
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Chair, Legislative Inspector General Advisory Commission
- Vice chair, Senate Education Finance Committee
- Vice chair, Senate State and Local Government Committee



Heidi Heino (R)

City of residence: Centerville
Occupation: Associate director of partnership development and small-business owner
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Member, Minnesota Task Force on Priority Admissions to State-Operated Treatment Programs
- President, Fellowship of Extraordinary Women, Twin Cities Chapter
- Volunteer, Eagle Brook Church One-on-One Care Team for eight years



MINNESOTA HOUSE DISTRICT 33A
(ELECT 1)

Angela Thompson (DFL)

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Social worker / ICWA guardian ad litem
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Liaison to the WBLAS American Indian Parent Advisory Committee
- Vice chair White Bear Lake School Board
- Director, Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District School Board



Stacey Stout (R)

City of residence: Mahtomedi
Occupation: AVP government relations
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Mahtomedi School Board ISD 832 2016-2026, four years as chair
- Northeast Metro School Board ISD 916 2025-2026
- Mahtomedi Finance Commission 2015-2018



ANOKA COUNTY SHERIFF (ELECT 1)

CANDIDATE BRAD WISE DID NOT RESPOND

ANOKA COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3 (ELECT 1)

Jeff Reinert

City of residence: Lino Lakes for over 50 years.
Occupation: County commissioner. I'm a business owner, currently an advisor in the biotech space and am Commander of Post 566 American Legion SAL in Lino Lakes.
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- I've served our area for 20-plus years in public office, including as mayor of Lino Lakes.
- Lead Centerville Lake treatment efforts, finding outside funding for \$980,000 of the \$1.1 million cost.
- Lead the effort to purchase and install fencing around the Lino Lakes juvenile detention center, protecting nearby neighborhoods from runaways.



Melissa "Mel" Lawlis

City of residence: Lino Lakes
Occupation: Over 27 years with Anoka County Human Services, serving families and vulnerable residents through program support, casework and community services.
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Centerville Lions Club (2020–present); President, 2024–2026, leading service projects, fundraising and community outreach.
- Homeowners association board member (2005–present); President for over 10 years, overseeing neighborhood governance and long-term planning.
- Centennial Youth Hockey Association Golf Tournament Chair, two years.



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF (ELECT 1)

Brian Mueller

City of residence: Lake Elmo
Occupation: Chief of Police for the city of Stillwater for almost six years. Previously spent 23 years at the Washington County Sheriff's Office.
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Youth hockey coach - Stillwater Area Hockey Association
- Board member - Canvas Health
- Board member - United Way Washington County East



Jeremy Bolen

City of residence: Cottage Grove
Occupation: Commander of Administration and Executive Officer to the Undersheriff, Ramsey County Sheriff's Office
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Grant manager and agency liaison-Ramsey County Sheriff's Foundation
- Team captain, communications Officer, and trustee-Law Enforcement United-Virginia Division
- Volunteer youth basketball and youth recreation soccer coach-Cottage Grove



WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2 (ELECT 1)

Stan Karwoski

City of residence: Oakdale
Occupation: Retired, Graco Inc. – 38 year career in product development
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Elected – Currently Washington County Commissioner, District 2; past Oakdale Mayor and City Council Member
- Education – Volunteer service on the Century College Foundation Board and Metro State Foundation Board.
- Commissioner service – Workforce Development Board; Transportation Advisory Board; Washington County Park and Open Space Commission; Minnesota Inter-County Association Board - past President; East Metro Strong Board - Co-Chair; Greater MSP Board; Century Avenue Coalition; and several Local Chambers of Commerce.



CANDIDATE EDISON VIZUETE DID NOT RESPOND

CENTERVILLE MAYOR (ELECT 1)

Nancy N. Golden

City of residence: Centerville
Occupation: Medical sales
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Elected Mayor of Centerville in 2024





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CENTERVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEMBER
AT LARGE (ELECT 2)

Anita Rios

City of residence: Centerville
Occupation: Talent management consultant
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Centerville council member
- Centerville's Economic Development Authority
- Empowering Small Minnesota Communities Advisory Committee



CANDIDATE LINDA M. BROUSSARD
DID NOT RESPOND

SPECIAL ELECTION FOR CENTERVILLE CITY
COUNCIL MEMBER AT LARGE (ELECT 1)

Kale Haluptzok

City of residence: Centerville
Occupation: Small Business Owner
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Parks & Recreation — Liaison
- Economic Development Authority — board member
- Coaching youth soccer and hockey



HUGO MAYOR
(ELECT 1)

Tom Weidt

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Sales manager
List 3 most recent civic involvement roles: Hugo Mayor 2012-present. Hugo City Council 2008-2012. Hugo Planning Commission 2004-2008



HUGO CITY COUNCIL WARD 1
(ELECT 1)

Becky Petryk

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Talent management consultant.
List 3 most recent civic involvement roles: Incumbent Ward 1 Hugo City Council. Transportation Advisory Board MET Council. Youth Athletics: Former board member of the WBL Fastpitch Association and WBL Girls Hockey Director



Mark Koll

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Retired. Previous occupations: owner/ operator of Neighborguy Handyman and the Hugo Fire Department.
List 3 most recent civic involvement roles: Retired after 20 years on the Hugo Fire Department.



HUGO CITY COUNCIL WARD 3
(ELECT 1)

David Strub

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Retired, last employed as a quality manager
List 3 most recent civic involvement roles: Incumbent Hugo City Council for Ward 3. Previous to City Council I was on the Hugo Parks, Rec and Open Space Commission. Appointed member on the Met Council Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee



CENTENNIAL SCHOOL BOARD
(ELECT 3)

Gloria Murphy

City of residence: Lexington
Occupation: Senior patient access specialist in the medical technology industry, and small-business co-owner
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Centennial ISD 12 school board member
- Director of Centennial Area Education Foundation
- City of Lexington planning and zoning commissioner, and parks board member



Jessica Schwinn

City of residence: Centerville
Occupation: Educator
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Founded and run Centennial Area Mutual Aid Network
- Treasurer, Centennial ISD 12 School Board
- District Systems Accountability committee member



Joe Ackerman

City of residence: Lexington
Occupation: Chief engineer of critical operations U.S. Bank, St. Paul
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Volunteering for Centennial Elementary Parent Organization (CEPO) for 2.5 years
- Attend regular city council meetings and applying for board positions (unsuccessful)
- Heading up Lovell Road safety improvements in Anoka County (neighborhood collective)



Laura Gannon

City of residence: Circle Pines
Occupation: Senior principal product security engineer, and small-business owner
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- SD36 DFL outreach and inclusion officer (2023-2026)
- Volunteer door guard at Don Julio's following Operation Metro raid
- Girl Scout Troop Leader, Troop 27519



CENTENNIAL SCHOOL BOARD
(ELECT 3)

Tom Knisely

City of residence: Blaine
Occupation: Media relations coordinator, Three Rivers Park District
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Chair, Centennial School Board
- Director, Intermediate 916 School Board
- Past president, Centennial High School Baseball Boosters



MAHTOMEDI SCHOOL BOARD
(ELECT 3)

Allyson Sellwood

City of residence: Mahtomedi
Occupation: Strategic Initiatives Consultant, Hennepin County
List three most recent civic involvement roles:
In recent years, my civic life has focused on kids, starting with my own, ages 8, 6, and 4. I volunteer in their classrooms and with PTO events throughout the year. I'm a fixture at their sports and activities, and I've helped organize and manage our young Zephyr teams.



Erica Engelbert-Hensel

City of residence: Willernie
Occupation: Advanced practice esthetician
List three most recent civic involvement roles:
I have volunteered on the Maple Tree Childcare fundraising committee for the past three years.



Jenny Peterson

City of residence: Mahtomedi
Occupation: Teacher since 2000 in Stillwater
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Founder and leader of OHA and Middle School Cribbage Clubs
- Founder of Annual Mahtomedi Kids' Triathlon since 2020
- Co-chair to improve outdoor city ice rinks



Ryan Domin

City of residence: Grant
Occupation: Enterprise technology executive
List three most recent civic involvement roles:
For the past four years, my primary civic involvement has been serving on the Mahtomedi School Board, where I currently serve as treasurer and on the Finance, Facilities and Calendar committees, as well as liaison to the MSHSL. I've also had the privilege of coaching all three of my daughters in youth soccer.



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WHITE BEAR LAKE SCHOOL BOARD
(ELECT 4)

Amanda McFarlane

City of residence: Vadnais Heights
Occupation: Senior business analyst
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Chairperson Vadnais Heights Park, Recreation and Trails Commission
- Ramsey County election judge
- Volunteer at White Bear Lake Area Educational Foundation's The Closet



Amy Puschinsky

City of residence: White Bear Lake
Occupation: Financial operations analyst
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Chair, Matoska International Elementary PTO (2024-present)
- Volunteer for Clare Housing supporting staff and tenants in South Minneapolis
- Volunteer supporting immigrant families through the Bear Solidarity Network



Bob Krominga

City of residence: White Bear Lake
Occupation: Sales Representative
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Organized VFW Buddy Poppy Program
- Instructed area Cub Scout Packs on American flag etiquette
- Participated in Veterans Suicide Awareness Walk



WHITE BEAR LAKE SCHOOL BOARD
(ELECT 4)

Chris Streiff Oji

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Principal. I've served Minnesota students for over 30 years as a teacher, principal, district administrator and regional director.
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- School Board Member - White Bear Lake Area Schools
- Regional director, Collaborative Minnesota Partnerships to Advance Student Success (COMPASS) - Supported 53 school districts and 110 charter schools with systems-level continuous improvement efforts.
- Task Force - EngageMN: Statewide alliance working to accelerate student-centered learning in Minnesota.



Colleen Berquist

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: Employer and Individual Operations Management – UnitedHealthcare; Real estate agent; small business owner
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Candidate for White Bear Lake Area School Board
- Community advocate for transparency and public engagement in the White Bear Lake Area School District
- Local community member and small business owner



WHITE BEAR LAKE SCHOOL BOARD
(ELECT 4)

Dan Arcand

City of residence: Hugo
Occupation: President, Oneka Ridge Golf Course
List three most recent civic involvement roles:
My commitment to service began with my 20 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. Several years of my service included the education and development of young Marines. Both in service and after, I partnered with charities to support wounded veterans and individuals battling PTSD. Now, as president of Oneka Ridge Golf Course, I continue supporting our community. We host fundraisers for civic groups.



Melissa Roberts

City of residence: White Bear Lake
Occupation: Assistant controller
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- PACER Center Parent & Community Engagement Participant
- Industrial Wastewater & Environmental Stewardship Community Contributor
- Public Works Community Support & Volunteer Involvement



Ryan Vernosh

City of Residence: White Bear Lake
Occupation: Elementary School Principal
List three most recent civic involvement roles:

- Governor's appointee to the Professional Educator Licensing Board
- Coordinating support for immigrant families
- Board member for the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless



VOTING LOCATIONS

Hugo
Hugo Ward 1 -Precinct 1: Hugo Fire Station, 5323 140th St N, Hugo

Hugo Ward 1-Precint 2: Hugo City Hall,14669 Fitzgerald Ave. N, Hugo

Hugo Ward 1-Precint 3: Peder Pedersen Pavilion, 5224 Upper 146th St. N, Hugo

Hugo Ward 2-Precint 4: New Life Church,

Hugo, 6000 148th St, Hugo, MN 55038

Hugo Ward 3-Precint 5: Hugo Public Works Building. 8220 140th St. N, Hugo

Hugo Ward 3-Precint 6: Rice Lake Centre, 6900 137th St. N, Hugo

Centerville
Church of St. Genevieve's Community Parish Center, 6995 Centerville Road, Centerville,

COUNTY LEVY: ‘Higher than most of us would like’

FROM PAGE 7

noting that county employee salaries and benefits are included in the budget. “This is the one time of year we can put action behind words like, ‘We really value our staff.’”

Commission Chair Scott Schulte said, “This is my 26th annual budget — 12 at the city level, 14 at the county — I can say it doesn’t get any easier.”

He, too, praised staff efforts.

“I don’t take any pleasure in a 7.9% levy other than knowing what it could have been,” Schulte said, “but for the work of not just the finance team, but everybody that worked in every division to come up with ... a tighter budget and a better presentation than any of the 26 years I’ve ever been a part of. Not easy — 7.9% is higher than most of us would like, but a lot lower than some neighboring counties.”

Commissioner John Heinrich said the budget was “responsible.”

“I really feel like the administration have gone through the departments with a fine-tooth comb,” said Heinrich, adding that he believes roughly half of the tax levy increase “can be laid at the feet of our state Legislature and federal government.”

Commissioner Julie Jeppson agreed with Heinrich. “Sometimes keeping a promise is expensive,” said Jeppson. “Sometimes, what looks inefficient on a spreadsheet is just the cost of serving someone who otherwise

would be very easy to leave behind. As county government, as public service, we cannot leave anyone behind. We can’t do it legally, and I can’t do it (conscientiously).”

Relieving taxpayer burden, Jeppson noted, may be within the state Legislature’s ability.

“I have heard over and over again that (our property tax system) is one of the most complex in the country. If we want to really reduce our levy ... let’s make the system more efficient, rather than continually putting it on the backs of counties and taxpayers,” said Jeppson.

While explaining her reasons for voting no on the preliminary tax levy, Braastad mentioned concerns that new staffing positions are creating too much governmental growth.

“Yes, you can say some are justified. There’s a lot of unfunded mandates that have been pushed down to the county level,” Braastad said. “We all have to face the people who show up in truth in taxation — Social Security doesn’t keep up, they’re being priced out of their homes — and that’s real. Taxes are impacting those on a fixed income. I’m hoping we can reduce this between now and then.”

The Anoka County Board of Commissioners will hold a public meeting at 6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 30, at 2100 Third Ave. N., Room 705, Anoka. For more information, visit anokacountymn.gov or call 763-324-4000.

Quick links:

- View the elections home at mn-votes.gov
- Register to vote or update your registration at mnvotes.gov/register
- Request an absentee ballot at mnvotes.gov/absentee
- View a sample ballot at mnvotes.gov/myballot

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SERVICE DIRECTORY

CALENDAR BRIEF

Good Life invites trick or treaters for Halloween

Trick or treaters are invited to Good Life Assisted Living and Memory Care from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31. Good Life is located at 5260 127th St. N in Hugo. For questions, call Activity Director Melissa at 651-426-1335.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES BRIEFS

Add your voice to the conservation conversation

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is recruiting new members to serve on several key advisory groups related to natural resource management. The DNR has a long tradition of working closely with advisory groups as it manages natural resources across Minnesota. With their diverse membership, advisory group members share a wide range of important perspectives and experiences.

The advisory groups for which the DNR is seeking applicants include:

- Catfish Fisheries Work Group
- Esocid (i.e., northern pike and muskie) Fisheries Work Group
- Panfish Fisheries Work Group
- Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee
- Lake of the Woods Fisheries Input Group
- Natural Heritage Advisory Committee
- Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee
- Recruit, Retain, Reactivate Advisory Council
- Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Committee

“Public input is essential to ensuring DNR’s work reflects the experiences, needs and aspirations of the people we serve,” said DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen. “In alignment with our mission to work with Minnesotans, I encourage anyone who is passionate about the outdoors and wants to make a difference to consider one of the advisory committees that helps shape DNR decisions.”

The DNR aims for each advisory group to include people from a diverse mix of backgrounds, perspectives, locations and experiences to lend a breadth of knowledge and insight to the groups. Those interested in serving on any of the following advisory groups can learn more about deadlines and how to apply on the DNR website at <https://engage.dnr.state.mn.us/advisory-group-appointment-opportunities>.

Buy hunting licenses early

All hunters this year should plan to buy their license early to avoid the potential for any last-minute delays while getting a license. The Minnesota DNR launched a new electronic license system in June. The new system is functioning well, but it is a bit

different, and users may find their first transaction takes a little more time as they acclimate. In addition, some individuals who had multiple records in the old system will require customer assistance from the DNR License Center to transfer their history and establish their account in the new system. For these reasons, hunters are encouraged to leave plenty of time for their license purchase.

There are three ways to buy a license (mobile app, online or in person from a license agent) and three ways to carry it (paper, PDF or stored in the app). Customers can access the new system online at mndnr.gov/buyalicense or by searching “Minnesota DNR Licensing” in the Apple or Google app stores.

If buying a license in person, hunters should check that the place where they want to buy it is selling them this year. Hunters can find in-person locations online at mndnr.gov/licenses/agents-map.html.

Fall turkey and pheasant seasons begin soon

Minnesota upland bird hunters have two seasons to look forward to: fall turkey and pheasant. Fall turkey hunting season is now underway through Sunday, Nov. 1, offering hunters a challenge and another way to experience the outdoors. Hunters are allowed to take one turkey of either sex during the fall season. Fall turkey hunters may use a crossbow, bow or shotgun afield. More information is available online at mndnr.gov/hunting/turkey.

Pheasant season is Saturday, Oct. 10, through Sunday, Jan. 3, 2027. Pheasant hunting offers both hearty exercise and the reward of excellent table fare, with the chance to get out in the tall grass, often with dogs, and enjoy the outdoors, especially in southern, central and western Minnesota. More information, including this year’s pheasant hunting prospects map, is available online at mndnr.gov/hunting/pheasant.

Waterfowl hunting open

The hunting season for ducks, coots and mergansers in the central reason runs Oct. 10 through Nov. 29. Hunting for geese runs Oct. 10 through Dec. 30. For more information, visit www.dnr.state.mn.us/hunting/waterfowl/index.html.

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HUGO CHIROPRACTIC: Continues longstanding legacy with 3 Readers' Choice wins

FROM PAGE 1

Christman took over ownership.

Christman is originally from Superior, Wisconsin, before his parents relocated to Rice Lake, Wisconsin. While playing basketball in high school, he started to experience shooting pain down his leg and his coach recommended he try a chiropractor.

“Up until that point, my parents and I weren't really keen on chiropractic, and it was never really in the picture,” Christman recalled. “I went in and found it was a great experience; he was one of the good ones.”

He knew he wanted to go into the medical field, but after that experience he honed in on chiropractic.

Christman attended the University of Wisconsin – Stout as well as the University of Minnesota – Duluth. During his time there he was on both the basketball and track teams. After graduation, he attended Northwestern Health Sciences University for his doctorate in chiropractic and graduated in 2021.

“I always had the end goal of owning my own place,” Christman explained.

He was working for a company that had a few locations in the Twin Cities and was gearing up to run their next location. He knew he wanted to practice in the north metro, close to where his wife Carly is from — Lino Lakes — but the company wanted him to be in a different part of the metro.

He reached out to a couple of brokers to see what was out there in this area, but there was nothing at the time. Fast-forward a few years and one of those brokers, who happened to be working with Barrett, reached out to see if Christman was interested in taking over Hugo Chiropractic.

“Dr. Barrett was very particular about what he was looking for, his style and the way he wanted things to be run. He wanted it to be a similar feel for all of his patients,” Christman explained. “He had a phenomenal reputation. He wasn’t just trying to sell it for money ... it was his baby.”

Perhaps one of the reasons Hugo Chiropractic rose to the top in so many categories is because of the no-pressure environment. “A lot of patients are vocal about expressing their gratitude. They are happy that there is no pressure. They feel like they can get in when they need it,” he said. “If something is recommended, they feel like they can trust it. They don’t get pushed over and over.”

Christman says he loves the job because every day is different, and he enjoys getting to meet so many people in the community.

“Sometimes you are people’s last hope. They just need to try something, nothing else has worked, and other times you’re the first one to notice something that seems off,” Christman said. “You sometimes help people really, early on with something serious.”

For Christman, the recognition is a reminder that he is carrying on a legacy while building relationships of his own. As Hugo Chiropractic continues under new ownership, the three Readers’ Choice awards



Hugo Chiropractic won best chiropractor, best chiropractic care and best massage therapist. Pictured are massage therapist Jessica Vaudrin and Dr. Brandyn Christman.

suggest that the trust Barrett spent decades earning remains strong.

Managing Editor Shannon Granholm can be reached at 651-407-1227 or citizennews@presspubs.com.

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Centerville keeps levy increase to single digits

BY LORETTA HARDING
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The city of Centerville bucked the current budgetary trend for 2027 with a levy increase for next year of 5.8%. This is not the double-digit increase experienced in most municipalities throughout the Twin Cities.

Finance Director Bruce DeJong recently presented the 2027 preliminary budget and general fund levy at \$3.7 million, an increase of \$200,961, or 5.8%, over 2026.

The \$3.7 million budget is made up of the debt service levy of \$208,440 and the general fund levy of \$3.5 million. Council unanimously adopted and set the preliminary 2027 budget and levy (3-0; Mayor Nancy Golden and Council Member Linda Broussard-Vickers were absent).

Proposed expenditures will increase by \$203,931, while expected revenues are expected to decrease by \$17,400. This results in a deficit of \$221,331 – the levy amount needed to balance the budget.

Expenditure increases are driven primarily by increases in wages and benefits of \$39,900; compre-

hensive plan update costs of \$40,000; police and fire contract increases totaling \$82,571, and other expenditure changes.

Meanwhile, the challenge every year is that non-property tax revenue sources are small and don't increase with inflation, DeJong said. "We had a budgeted transfer of \$25,000 into the general fund for 2026, but none for 2027," he said.

City staff had held three meetings in previous months and were working on a slightly lower budget and levy. However staff reevaluated its inflationary expectations to reflect the rise of inflation and the Federal Reserve's increase in discount rates, DeJong said. Since inflation was running higher than 4%, the city took that into account and added \$13,900 to its total expenditures.

"We still kept the levy increase at lower than 6%," DeJong said. The increase the city settled on would allow Centerville to "provide services our citizens expect in an appropriate and fiscally responsible way," he said.

The adopted preliminary levy amount has approximately three months before it is finalized by council,

which can decrease the levy but may not increase it.

Many cities' financial departments set their preliminary budgets to have a little wiggle room while waiting for more financial data from their home counties to become known before the final budget is written in gold come December.

Staff did not yet have sufficient information to calculate the effect the tax levies would have on homeowners. Anoka County will spend the next three months taking the city's preliminary budget and levy figures and combining them with levies from all the other taxing jurisdictions such as the county, the school district and the watershed district. These numbers will all be on the property tax notices that come out in mid-November while the city receives market value impact figures, DeJong said.

The city will hold the truth in taxation public hearing at the Dec. 10 regular council meeting at 6:30 p.m. to allow citizens to provide input about the 2027 budget and levy.

Loretta Harding is a contributing writer for Press Publications. She can be reached at news@presspubs.com.

CENTERVILLE TIDBITS

- At its pre-meeting work session, council discussed a stormwater drainage grant program application to install a French drain at 1820 Laramie Lane to remedy backyard drainage issues. Following the discussion, council approved the grant application with a slight adjustment to the original grant amount of \$1,622.50, which will come from the stormwater fund.
- Last month, council heard a presentation from Tina Bronson, the new executive director of Alexandra House, who presented updates to the work performed by her organization. In recognition of the work done by Alexandra House, Centerville adopted a resolution designating October 2026 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. For many years, the city has shown support for Alexandra House Inc. for its services, as well as other national organizations that assist people during their time of need.
- Southern Rail at 7082 Centerville Road will carry on as usual after council granted the annual renewal of the establishment's 2 a.m. liquor license for owners, JV Summit Corporation.
- More fun in Centerville will continue as council approved a temporary gambling permit for the Church of St. Genevieve at 7087 Goiffon Road for its third annual Turkey Bingo, scheduled for Nov. 15.
- Finance Director Bruce DeJong sounded the heads up to utility payers that the city will discontinue using payment services from its current on-line payment network. Starting in early November, the city will contract with a new financial software manager, BS&A, to better streamline its bill-paying service for residents. City Administrator Athanasia Lewis said the city will provide information and instructions for residents starting immediately, and will continue to do so before the utility bills are sent out in November. The city has a plan for people who miss their first payments during this transition and will closely monitor late utility payments on a case-by-case basis.
- In her city administrator's report, Lewis noted that Centerville and Anoka County are collaborating to create a safe crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross Centerville Road. The pedestrian improvements will be installed across Centerville Road where the city trail runs from Dupre Road to the Anoka County Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve. Construction is expected to be completed by Oct. 30.
- Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3. Election Day voting for Centerville residents is from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at St. Genevieve's Church Community Parish Center, 6995 Centerville Road. The city will be providing early direct ballot voting at City Hall. Call City Hall at 651-429-3232 to learn the available hours for voting.
- The fifth annual Halloween Trunk or Treat/Touch a Truck event is scheduled from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Oct. 31 in the Centerville Elementary School parking lot, 1721 Westview Street. This event is in conjunction with the Centennial School Community Education's Halloween Hustle 5K. Anyone interested in participating in this activity can register at <https://isd12.arux.ap/course/6526/fall-2026/halloween-hustle-5K>. To receive a long-sleeved T-shirt, register before Oct. 18. Anyone interested in promoting their business by hosting a booth at Trunk or Treat may register at <https://tinyurl.com/484zr6b2>.

Loretta Harding

PUBLIC NOTICES - PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF HUGO
NOTICE OF TESTING OF DS200 VOTING EQUIPMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Hugo will conduct a public accuracy test of the DS200 ballot scanner voting equipment at Hugo City Hall on Thursday, October 22, 2026, at 10 a.m. in preparation for the General Election to be held on November 3, 2026.

Michele Lindau, City Clerk
Published one time in The Citizen on October 15, 2026.

CITY OF HUGO
HUGO CITY COUNCIL
CANVASSING BOARD

The Hugo City Council will meet as the Canvassing Board on Tuesday, November 10, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Hugo City Hall to certify the results of the November 3, 2026, General Election. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

Michele Lindau, City Clerk
Published one time in The Citizen on October 15, 2026.

CITY OF HUGO
PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Hugo has scheduled the annual Santa Party for Wednesday, December 9, 2026, from 5-7 p.m. at the Peder Pedersen Pavilion. The tree lighting ceremony will be at 6:30 pm.

Published one time in The Citizen on October 15, 2026.

CITY OF HUGO, MINNESOTA
PUBLIC NOTICE OF ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Election will be held in the City of Hugo, Minnesota, on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, at the polling locations listed below for the purpose of voting for candidates of the offices specified below. The polls for said election will be open at 7:00 AM and will remain open until closing at 8:00 PM.

CITY OFFICES

- Mayor
- City Council, Ward 1
- City Council, Ward 3

The polling places are as follows:

Precinct Name	Voting Location
Hugo W1-P1	Hugo Fire Station 5323 140th St N, Hugo, MN 55038
Hugo W1-P2	Hugo City Hall 14669 Fitzgerald Ave N, Hugo, MN 55038
Hugo W2-P3	Peder Pedersen Pavilion 5224 Upper 146th St N, Hugo, MN 55038
Hugo W2-P4	New Life Church, Hugo 6000 148th St, Hugo, MN 55038
Hugo W3-P5	Hugo Public Works Building 8220 140th St N, Hugo, MN 55038
Hugo W3-P6	Rice Lake Centre 6900 137th St N, Hugo, MN 55038

Published two times in The Citizen on October 1 and 15, 2026.

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