

LAKES AREA REVIEW

Wrestlers take 2nd at KLN Invite

Wildcats at home vs.
Kimball Jan. 12 at MS gym

See Sports, pages 7-8



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Around the Lakes

NL fire sculpture featured on PPT's Postcards

NEW LONDON – New London's Fire Sculpture will be one of the featured stories on the season 7 premiere of Pioneer Public Television's *Postcards* program at 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 10. See page 5 for more information.

NL Royalty informational mtg.

NEW LONDON – An informational meeting for all junior girls interested in running for Miss New London will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 11 at the New London Senior Center. Parents are also encouraged to attend. If you are unable to attend the meeting but are interested in running email the New London Royalty Committee at newlondon-royalty@gmail.com.

Red Cross blood drive at AG Church

WILLMAR – American Red Cross blood drive will take place from 1 to 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 11 at Assembly of God Church in Willmar. To make an appointment call 1-800-733-2767 or visit www.redcross-blood.org.

Tuesday's Table at Evangelical

NEW LONDON – Tuesday's Table, a free community meal, will be served from 6 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12 at Evangelical Covenant Church in New London. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend.

Family mental ill- ness support group

WILLMAR – National Alliance on Mental Illness support group for families who have a relative with a mental illness meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Willmar Public Library. The support group helps families develop better coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. For more information call (320) 444-4860.

Coffee and cookies at Vegdahl's

SPICER – Vegdahl's Hardware will be serving free coffee and cookies from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16 to thank their customers for their patronage over the last 55 years.

Inserts

Teals Market
Inserts may cover all or some of the total *Review* circulation as requested by the business placing the insert.

Ice boat regatta on Green Lake Perfect ice conditions bring sailors to Spicer



Photos by Dori Moudry

Ice boat sailors take off from the starting line on Green Lake during the IDNIYRA Western Regional Championships Sunday. The regatta was Jan. 2-3. There was about 4 inches of clear (not snow covered) ice on the lake.

By Dori Moudry
Editor

Ideal ice and wind conditions, extremely rare during this El Niño winter, brought 71 ice boat racers from all over the U.S. to Green Lake this past weekend for the 2016 International DN Ice Yacht Racing Association (IDNIYRA) 2016 Western Regional Championships.

"There is no other regatta quality ice in North America," Deb Whitehorse, executive secretary for IDNIYRA, said during competition Sunday.

Although ice-in on Green Lake had just occurred Dec. 27, five days prior to the regatta, there was about 4 inches of ice out on Green Lake by last Saturday.

A disconcerting, but fascinating, quality of the ice on Green early during this season is, possibly because it froze between snow events, it is/was so clear in some locations on the west side, including off of Saulsbury Beach, that the bottom of the lake can clearly be seen for several feet out from shore.

Off of the DNR access by Skyline Drive, the lake



Hal Bowman of Cary, N.C. pulls his ice boat up to the starting line during the IDNIYRA Western Regional Championship competition on Green Lake Sunday, Jan. 3. Bowman is North Carolina's only ice boat racer.

Regatta
Continued on page 2

Spicer OKs sewer, water rate hikes for '16

By Dori Moudry
Editor

The Spicer city council unanimously approved a 7 percent increase to its water rates, except for the base fee for residential water, and a 5 percent increase to its sewer rates for 2016.

The council voted during its meeting Tuesday night on the motion to increase the water and sewer rates beginning with the January 2016 billing, which will appear on February invoices.

The base fee for commercial water will increase from \$43.25 to \$46.30. The base fee for residential water will remain the same as 2015 at \$23.25.

The per 1,000 gallons usage rate for water will go up from \$2.55 to \$2.75. The per 1,000 gallons usage rate for lawn meters will increase from \$3 to \$3.20.

The base fee for commercial sewer will go up from \$49.25 to \$51.70. The base fee for residential sewer will increase from \$31.25 to \$32.80.

The per 1,000 gallons usage rate for sewer will go up from \$8.24 to \$8.65.

The council increased the city's water and sewer rates to catch up with costs related to operations and maintenance (O & M) and depreciation.

At 2015 rates, Spicer's 2016 budget for its water fund shows a loss of \$102,747 in unfunded O & M and depreciation. To fully fund depreciation, Spicer would need to increase its commercial base fee for water by 9 percent and its per 1,000 gallon usage for water by 110 percent.

At 2015 rates, the city's 2016 budget for its sewer fund shows a loss of \$50,509 in unfunded O & M and depreciation. To fully fund depreciation, Spicer would need to increase its commercial base fee for sewer by 22 percent, its residential base fee by 7.25 percent and its per 1,000 gallon usage rate by 15 percent.

The Spicer city council began to look at water and sewer rate hikes in earnest during its Dec. 1 meeting. At that meeting, City Administrator Leslie Valiant said, "As

long as I've been here, we haven't covered depreciation."

Each year, the city's auditor tells the council it must increase water and sewer rates to keep up with costs related to O & M and depreciation.

Before approving the motion to increase the water and sewer rates by 7 percent and 5 percent, respectively, the council debated whether to have Valiant crunch the numbers to see how the increases would affect Spicer's biggest commercial users. Valiant named Teal's Market and Zorbaz on Green Lake as two of its biggest water users.

In the end, the council decided to go ahead and make the tough decision Tuesday night, its third examination of water and sewer rates during regular council meetings.

"It's no consolation, but we're not on our own with this," Mayor Denny Baker said. "A lot of cities are looking at the same thing. Water used to be almost free. It's not anymore. We don't really have a choice."

Councilwoman Shelly Munyon asked that the council re-examine the water and sewer funds in six months after the 2016 rates go into effect "to see if we're gaining and how much of a difference it's making."

In November, Kandiyohi County approved a 3 percent increase in 2016 to the per 1,000 gallons usage rate for water and sewer customers of the Green Lake Sanitary Sewer and Water District (GLSSWD).

GLSSWD is owned and operated by Kandiyohi County and provides water and sewer services to New London, Spicer and Green Lake. It provides sewer services only to Lake Florida, Diamond Lake, George Lake, Henderson Lake, Nest Lake and the city of Kandiyohi.

In other city of Spicer news:

• Spicer has had eight people apply for activities director for the Dethlefs Senior Center, City Administrator Leslie

Rate hikes
Continued on page 2

Spicer hires firm to study switch to LEDs

At its Tuesday night meeting, the Spicer city council approved paying Apex Engineering Group \$3,500 for a directed engineering study to look at the value of switching its lights, particularly street lights, over to LEDs.

Seth Degeest, engineer with Apex, said LEDs are most cost effective when used in situations where lights are on for extended periods of time. Degeest said Apex will look at the city's street lights, but also at the lights it uses in buildings to see if switching them to LEDs would save the city money over time.

Apex is one of the engineering firms involved in creating Kandiyohi County's leachate treatment system at the county landfill. The treat-

ment system is the only one of its kind in North America.

Similar to the agreement reached with Kandiyohi County, Apex guarantees the project will pay for itself over a period of 20 years and that the city will have no capital costs.

"We guarantee the performance and we guarantee the price," Degeest said.

He estimates the entire project cost at \$300,000. If Spicer were to bond for that amount, Degeest estimated it would save \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year in energy costs by switching to LEDs.

"If it's more of a car loan-type (financing), there still

LEDs
Continued on page 2

Sparkling, frost-covered shelter



Photo by Dori Moudry

Small songbirds, possibly sparrows or chickadees, shelter in a hoar frost-covered shrub in front of Crow's Nest Tree Service in Spicer.



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Rate hikes

Continued from page 1

Valiant said. The city's personnel committee soon will be interviewing applicants.

Also at its meeting Tuesday night, the council unanimously approved the preliminary plat for "New Age Resort Addition" for the Hampton Inn. The 52-room hotel will be located where the Bell Tower Plaza currently is located on Lake Avenue North. The council also ap-

proved vacating 55 feet of Harriet Street west of Lake Avenue North. This portion of Harriet Street is part of what is now the Bell Tower Plaza lot.

Council approval of the requests from developer TPI Hospitality was made on recommendation from Spicer's Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission's public hearing has been continued from its Dec. 16 meet-

ing to Jan. 20 to consider conditional use permits for building a hotel in a B1-central business district and within a shoreland management area.

The council will be considering the final plat for the Hampton Inn when the developer's agreement is in order, City Administrator Leslie Valiant said.

LEDs

Continued from page 1

would be \$15,000 per year in savings," he said.

St. Cloud is in the midst of its own project to switch street lights and other lights used by that city of 67,000 to LEDs. It's possible Spicer could piggyback its fixture purchase onto St. Cloud's purchase of 2,500 fixtures and save money that way, too, Degeest said.

"For street lighting alone, Spicer currently pays \$1,400 a month, \$16,800 a year.

"With LEDs, you can cut that in half," Degeest said.

"It's an ideal time," Mayor Denny Baker said. "We're coming into the (Lake Avenue North) street project. We've got an opportunity to do something for the city that will be long-lasting."

Rep. Baker running for re-election in 2016

After many conversations with friends, family and supporters, Rep. Dave Baker (R-Willmar) announced Wednesday his intention to run for re-election for the Minnesota House of Representatives District 17B.

"It has been the honor of my life and an incredible journey to serve my Kandiyohi County friends and neighbors in Saint Paul," Baker said. "I have learned so much about so



Rep. Dave Baker

many things attending hundreds of meetings in our community and in St. Paul, and want to put that experience to work for you for another term."

Baker was sworn in for his first term one year ago on Jan. 6. He was elected by his first-term peers to serve as assistant majority leader, and was appointed by House Speaker Kurt Daudt (R-Crown) to serve as vice chair of the House Job Growth and Energy Affordability Committee.

"I am proud of what we accomplished this past year on a bipartisan basis, and I am confident much more will be done in 2016," he said.

NL looking at location for public library, possibly on Main Street

Will be part of larger talk on new city building

By Dori Moudry Editor

The city of New London is looking at finding a new home for the public library, possibly on Main Street.

Ria Newhouse, head librarian for the Spicer and New London libraries, was at Wednesday night's city council meeting to discuss potential new locations for the library. The New London library currently is in the lower level of the Dr. Dan Eckmann dental office at 15 Ash St. S.

The Ash Street location has stairs leading down to the library and is not handicap accessible. It also is small, at 1,800 square feet. Pioneerland prefers cities where its member libraries are rent or own a space of at least 2,500 square feet for their library, Newhouse said.

Representatives from the city and from the Pioneerland Library System recently toured a space in the former Big Store building, currently owned by Keith and Kim Olson and home to Ali J Boutique, Lake Region Home Health and Inspirations/Angels & Ivy.

City Administrator Trudie Guptill also discussed a potential location at the former hardware store building with owner Keith Palmquist of Heritage Exteriors and Restoration. Both the former hardware store location and the former Big Store location would have entrances off of Main Street.

The city would be looking at a five-to-10 year lease for the library space.

"It might be three times as expensive, but it would be five-to-six times better," Mayor Bill Gossman said of finding the New London library a more accessible, visible home.

Newhouse said library usage will increase with a more accessible, visible location.

"I think it would be so different, like night and day," she said. "Accessibility is such a big issue."

Because of the small space, programming also is limited, she said.

"I just applied for a grant to get Lego kits for New London and Spicer," Newhouse said. "That kind of programming is

hard to do (at New London) because there is no space."

New London currently spends \$7,500 a year (\$625 a month/35 cents per square foot) to rent the Ash Street space for the library. In the old Big Store space, rental would cost \$20,400 (82 cents per square foot) a year for a five-year lease or \$19,200 (78 cents per square foot) a year for a 10 year lease.

The per square foot rental at the old hardware store building is 75 cents per square foot, but the city would be responsible for installing ceilings, floors and walls. However some of the installation work may be negotiable if the city goes with a multi-year lease, Guptill said.

The per square foot rental rate for New London is between 60 cents and 70 cents per square foot, according to estimates from New London Real Estate, she said.

The future of the library will be part of a larger discussion of New London's long-range capital improvement

NL council
Continued on page 3

Regatta

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bottom could clearly be seen to 18 feet, according to one ice angler.

It was up to Mike Miller of Wayzata, IDNIYRA Western Regional commodore, to find regatta quality ice for the Western Regional Championships. He had selected the first weekend of January for the regatta because he knew many racers would have Jan. 1 free to travel. Miller was looking for new, clean ice, meaning no snow on top.

"We used Green Lake three years ago and loved the venue due to the large lake, hotel, Zorbas and Legion within walking distance," he said. "This year was going to be a challenge due to the warm December. No lakes were frozen in Wisconsin, so my phone scouting started Sunday, Dec. 27. My area was limited to any large lake north of the Twin Cities that did not have snow on it.

"By noon on Monday, I had two choices up north, but neither was perfect. I then heard from Paul Larson of Spicer. He has a recreational



Photo by Dori Moudry

Although the skills required are similar, ice boats reach speeds of 50-60 mph compared to 10-20 mph sailboats on the water during warm weather months.

model of a DN. He said the west half of Green just froze and looks great. Ben, of Mel's Sport Shop, agreed to walk out on the ice to verify the thickness. He reported almost 3.5 inches of black ice as far as he could see. He also sent me two photos. Later in the day, another DN sailor who works in Willmar walked the ice and verified the thickness.

"Another DN racer, Tom Meyer, and I then drove out to Green Lake on Tuesday (Dec. 29), confirmed the thickness and scouted the entire west half. We sailed slowly, drilling numerous holes and measured over 4 inches of ice. Based on that, I made the decision at 4 p.m. to use Green Lake for the weekend regatta."

The 71 ice boat racers were divided into two fleets based on their racing experience. The Gold fleet was won by Matt Struble of San Diego, Calif. Originally from Michigan, Struble is a three-time world champion and finished a perfect first place in all seven races during the Western Regional Championships.

"The Silver Fleet was much closer with Dave Elms of Madison, Wis. edging out 18-year-old Frankie Hearn, also of Madison," Miller said.

Participants ranged in age from 16 to 78 and came from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Montana, even from as far away as North Carolina.

The DN is the most numerous, popular ice boat in the world, Whitehorse said.

According to iceboat.org, an ice boat is a hull attached to a perpendicular cross piece called a runner plank. Three skates, or runners, are attached to the boat, one on each end of the plank and at the fore end of the hull. Ice boats are strictly wind powered and need relatively snow-free ice to sail.

Oddly enough, the DN is named after the Detroit News, newspaper, Miller said. "In the mid-1930s, the newspaper's hobby shop hosted a group of sailors who designed and built an ice boat similar to today's design. They called it a DN. In the mid-1950s, the DN organized into a formal group, in-

cluding racing rules and strict one-design requirements."

During the warm weather months, Miller races a J22 keelboat with the Wayzata Yacht Club and a E scow with the Minnetonka Yacht Club.

"The DN racing requires similar skills but it goes 60 mph vs. the summer boats on water going from 10-20 mph. It is also a one-man boat so there's no one else to blame for a crew mistake!"

Miller lives on Lake Minnetonka and, before taking up the ice boating, had seen a few ice boats out on that lake. "About 10 years ago I decided to get a starter DN, and raced it three days after purchase. I was hooked."

Although there probably won't be anymore organized races on Green Lake again this season, mainly due to snow cover and the abundance of ice fishing houses later this winter, this past week, ice boaters from out-of-state did stop by Green Lake to enjoy the ice.

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