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GOVERNMENT NONPROFIT—

Electronic Edition
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www.lcsc.org

Moorhead

"A RISING METRO"

"We are a Rising Metro," said the City of Moorhead's Communication Coordinator, Mark Dickerson. "What is a Rising Metro?" you may ask. A "Rising Metro" is a growing city being intentionally designed as a hub of 21st century life. With a population of less than 100,000, rising metros have a stable tax base, at least one institution of higher learning and growing entrepreneurial and art communities.

This description marries well with the current Moorhead infrastructure and development plan completed in 2020. "With a vibrant education and arts community, and park system, Moorhead is a great place to live for families and individuals, young and aging," said Dickerson. Moorhead's park system alone is made up of 46 regional, community, and neighborhood parks, a variety of facilities, and miles of sidewalks and trails. This past Arbor Day, an Edible Forest was developed in MB Johnson park. Around 100 apple, pear, and plum trees and about 25 junberry and

chokeberry shrubs were planted with the purpose of providing a community orchard and educational opportunities for local students.

Moorhead provides a strong Educational system including Moorhead Area Public Schools, Park Christian School, MState, Concordia College, and Minnesota State University Moorhead, all serving area families and the region. Most recently the Moorhead Area Public Schools

purchased the former Sam's Club on 27th Avenue and repurposed it into a Career and Technical Academy. The Academy opened for students the fall 2021. This Academy model of education allows students to discover their passions, explore their options, work toward industry certifications, and

gain real work skills.

Construction around two major railway infrastructure projects have been in the works for some time in Moorhead. These robust improvements will provide many safety and mobility



City of Moorhead's Communication Coordinator, Mark Dickerson

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benefits by removing crossing blockages caused by heavy rail traffic. The first project is the Southeast Main Avenue, 20th/21st project and the next improvement is the 11st Street Railroad Grade Separation Project. Residents commuting to work will be pleased with the reduction in traffic congestion in addition to the added safety for pedestrians and bikers.

With the many growth opportunities the city of Moorhead is experiencing, workforce and employee shortages remain a serious problem for many local businesses. There are shortages in businesses providing personal services, the food service industry, supply chain industries and more. Many employers are implementing creative ways to incentivize employees with flexible schedules, employee perks and sign on bonuses; however, finding the people remains a challenge.

With all the many areas of growth in Moorhead, we would be remiss in not mentioning Moorhead's "Tank of the Year Award." Moorhead's Southside water tower won first place in the national Thnec's "Tank of the Year" contest and will be featured in their annual calendar of tanks. The Moorhead water tower received third place in the people's choice category and won first place in the overall competition.

There are so many reasons people are choosing Moorhead as their hometown. The parks and bike trails, safe communities, schools, the opportunity to work remotely, the arts community and so much more. If you would like to learn more about Moorhead and what it has to offer, you can visit their website at cityofmoorhead.com, or call 218-299-5166. ■

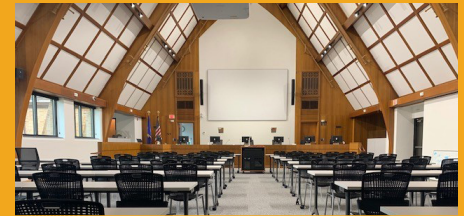
2021 expansions and redevelopment for businesses and housing in Moorhead include:

Business Expansions

- Spaulding Stone
- Thor Investments
- Custom Express Car Wash
- Cash Concrete
- American Crystal Sugar
- Starbucks
- First International Bank
- Emery Apartments

2021 Redevelopment Projects

- Southmoor Plaza
- Days Inn Redevelopment TIF Project
- Midtown Tavern – Reopening of the former Duane's Pizza
- Fairmont Creamery Redevelopment



Douglas County Commissioners Move to New Location

Douglas County Commissioners have a new location for their meetings. The meetings are now held in the Douglas County Administration Building, located at 821 Cedar Street in Alexandria.

The Administration Building also houses the Douglas County License Bureau which is on the main level. Downstairs is the Auditor Treasurer's Office. The County Coordinator's Office and Finance Department also relocated to the new building.

"Please tell your friends and family about the new location," said Douglas County Board Chairman Jerry Rapp. "If you hear folks talking about getting their license or tabs renewed, let them know about the new location, and they will need to park in the lot off Cedar Street."

Board meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 9 a.m. The administration building is open from 8 to 4:30 Monday through Friday. ■

By Julie Anderson



DO YOU HAVE *Safety Sensitive* *Employees?*

By Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

What CDL Drivers should know about using CBD Products

Positive drug tests account for 81% of the total violations reported in the Clearinghouse since January 6, 2020. As of May 1, 2021, marijuana has been detected in over half of all drug tests that have been filed in the Clearinghouse.

It is important for all employees who perform safety-sensitive functions, including CDL drivers, to know:

- The USDOT requires testing for marijuana and not CBD.
- The labeling of many CBD products may be misleading because the products could contain higher levels of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) than what's stated on the product label.
- The USDOT's Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation,

49 CFR Part 40, does not authorize the use of Schedule I drugs, including marijuana, for any reason.

- CBD use is not a legitimate medical explanation for a laboratory-confirmed marijuana positive result. Therefore, Medical Review Officers will verify a drug test confirmed at the appropriate cutoffs as positive, even if an employee claims they only used a CBD product.
- Since the use of CBD products could lead to a positive drug test result, USDOT-regulated CDL drivers should exercise caution when considering whether to use CBD products. ■

Read the USDOT's "CBD Notice" in full on the USDOT website. LCSC Health & Safety also has more information available.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

**DRUG & ALCOHOL
CLEARINGHOUSE**

Have you viewed your Clearinghouse record?

Drug and alcohol program violations incurred by CDL drivers are recorded in the Clearinghouse and associated with the CDL number of the driver who incurred the violation. Annual queries are required to verify CDL holders have no current violations.

Questions? Browse frequently asked questions or contact the Clearinghouse Team.

Do you have safety sensitive employees?

Contact LCSC's Health & Safety Services Manager, Rick Brynildson with questions regarding drug and alcohol pools for safety sensitive employees. rbrynildson@lcsc.org



Lakes Country Service Cooperative Technology Solutions

Lakes Country Service Cooperative's (LCSC) dynamic team of IT professionals provide affordable, high-quality hardware and software solutions for members.

Many local governments and nonprofits find they don't have the internal expertise or resources to effectively manage their IT infrastructure and support the demands of their organization. LCSC offers IT services and support that is affordable with high-quality network, hardware, and software solutions.

Contact us for SOLUTIONS

Serving schools, cities, counties, other governmental agencies, and nonprofit agencies.

- Network Infrastructure Solutions and Installation
- Computer Helpdesk Support
- Remote Network Monitoring
- Project Management
- iPad Repair
- Education Specific Solutions

- Full and Part-Time Technology Coordinator Personnel
- One-to-One Device Student Implementation and Management
- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Planning and Deployment
- Wireless Design for Schools
- Technology Audits
- Virtualization Design and Support
- Server Design, Installation, Management
- Wireless Design and Maintenance
- Firewall Installation and Maintenance
- Digital Signage Design and Support
- Technology Helpdesk Ticket System ■



Lakes Country Service Cooperative Recognizes Board Member **Jim Fish** on Veterans Day

*Thank You For
Your Service*

This past Veterans Day, we recognized Lakes Country Service Cooperative's Board Member, Jim Fish for his service to our country. Jim served in the NAVY from 1965-1967 as an EMFA.

empowering kids

Skills are Built From Little Moments

Creating Developmental Individual Relationships



Author Mary Phillippe - LCSC
Communications Generalist

Sources Christi Stoll, General Manager,
and Tiffany Schroeer Executive Director

For the parents of a new infant or toddler, noticing something is different with their child may be as small as unusual babbles, repeating words, lining up toys, avoiding eye contact, or wanting to play alone.

For Christi Stoll, General Manager of Empowering Kids, and her young son, Mike, each transition into a new activity created anxiety and a setting for Mike to have what Christi terms a "meltdown." "Meltdowns occurred 10-15 times a day for Mike," said Christi. Christi felt strongly that Mike should be having more moments of contentment, play, and little boy giggles. She knew she needed to find help for Mike after being asked not to return to a childcare facility because "he cries all day." Christi looked to find services in her local community and region, and found services were not available specific to what Mike needed. An Autism support group became available in Perham, and there she met Kim Nelson. Kim was also seeking advice, ideas, and support for her grandson Levi. Fast forward, with Kim Nelson's leadership and serving as the founding supporter of Empowering Kids, they worked together to open Empowering Kids in Perham in 2016. The original Empowering Kids partnership began with the Boys and

Girls Club, as initially, Empowering Kids needed to open the doors to support local families while obtaining their 501c3 status. When they opened in 2016, they began by serving 12 children. Today anywhere from 5-25 children may be receiving services at the center at one time.

Tiffany Schroeer serves as the Executive Director, with ten full-time and six part-time employees. Their focus is on three main areas of support for the children that walk through their doors daily while they are in the process of building a fourth area of focus to better serve individuals across their lifespan:

- **MENTAL HEALTH** - Their outpatient mental health services are for children and families. They serve individuals from childhood through adulthood to help them cope with a variety of stressors that impact their mental health.
- **EIDBI** - Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention services offer medically necessary services and support to people under the age of 21 with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or related conditions. This program allows individuals to receive anywhere from 10 to 40 hours of services per week.
- **AFTER SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM** - Empowering Kids works to provide individuals that have autism a chance to

learn skills and meaningfully engage in interactions with others in the clinic, on outings in the community, and through their special interests.

• **EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM** - Roughly 60 percent of people with autism have an average or above-average intelligence, yet 85 percent are unemployed. Empowering Kids received a two-year grant to purchase curriculum and start creating opportunities for learning and practicing employment skills.

During floor time, teachers are working to have Developmental Individual Relationships. "Floortime is where Developmental Individual Relationships happen," said Executive Director, Tiffany Schroeer, "This is where skills are built from little moments. Children need relationships and need to feel connected. Skills such as learning ways to support your body feeling regulated, engaging in a back-and-forth interaction, problem-solving with another person, and engaging pretend play are learned during Floortime."

Autism support is important for early intervention and to ensure children grow up with the social skills and programs that can support their ever-changing and growing needs. The vision for

Continues on next page



Empowering Kids is to provide a life of hope, happiness, dignity, and purpose for individuals with autism and their families.

Success stories are what all parents and the staff of Empowering Kids want for their families. One example listed below provides an example of how the work of Empowering Kids has made a difference in this family's world.

"Empowering Kids has helped my child in so many ways it is hard to put it in just a few words. I have a child who didn't want to talk or express himself verbally before we started with Empowering Kids. Now that same child is laughing while telling us what is funny, sings songs to his little sister, will identify and yell "square" in the grocery store and make sure we are all looking, tells me colors, and says "hi" to others."
- Megan Graten, an Empowered Parent

Empowering Kids is excited to be moving to its new location in December of 2021. The new location is located at the Hub Project in the former Perham High School location. Here Empowering Kids will be able to expand their services and have a larger impact on children in the region.

If you would like more information about Empowering Kids and the services, they provide. Please email Empowering Kids at info@empoweringkidsperham.org or call 218-346-2322. You can also visit their website at www.empoweringkidsperham.org to find more information about the services they provide. ■



Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County, Minnesota

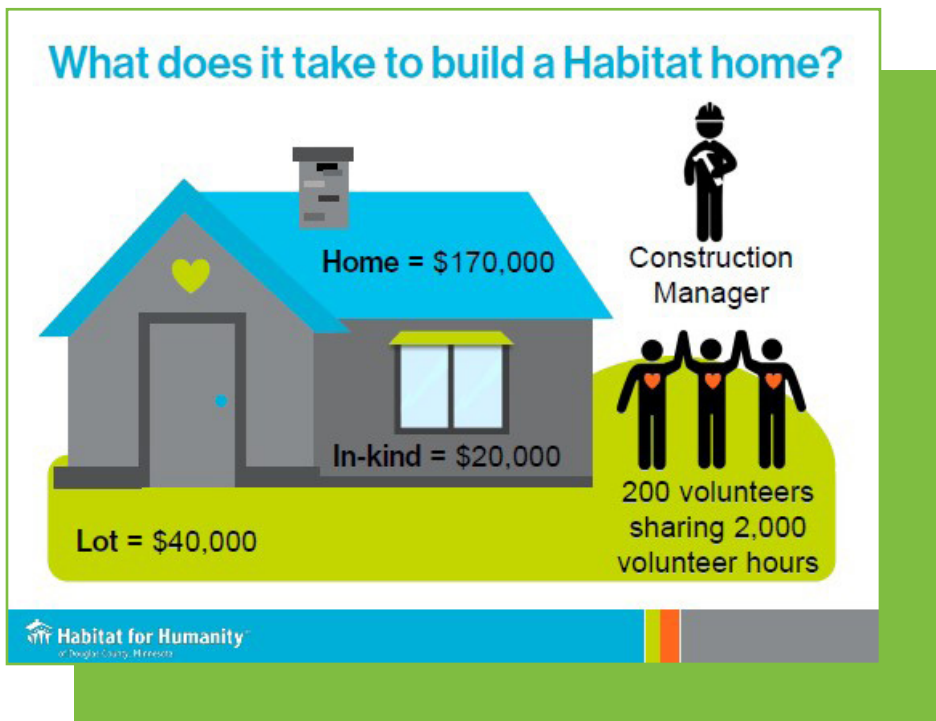
What does it mean for a family or an individual to have a home to go to at the end of the day?

When we think about the way our home makes us feel, it may be our place for belonging, identity, privacy, and security. A place where we can center ourselves and have an emotional connection to the environment around us. For some in our communities, having a home and this stability is out of reach. This is where Habitat for Humanity steps in and works to find this connection for families desiring stable housing.

Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County, Executive Director, Lori Anderson said, "everyone deserves a decent place to live." This is the vision for Habitat for Humanity in Douglas County, and Lori has been bringing families and homes together for over seventeen years. "A home transforms a life, it provides stability and allows for people to have jobs, a family, and supports a more equitable community," said Anderson.

Habitat for Humanity opened in Alexandria, Minnesota in 1997. Since that time, 120 families have been served, 78 homes have been built or improved, and 42 Aging in Place projects have been completed. The homeownership program provides qualified homebuyers the ability to work with Habitat to build or improve a place they can call home, the Aging in Place program provides an aging person or person with disabilities, the improvements needed to stay in their home longer.

Lori Anderson was hired as Executive Director in 2004, and prior to accepting the position, the organization was 100% volunteer led. As the organization grew, the affiliate moved several times to accommodate growth. In 2011, Lori began a search for a permanent building and office space for the organization and found it at 1211 Nokomis NE in Alexandria, MN. This parcel of land and the 12,500 sq. ft. building, which is now owned by Habitat for Humanity, serves as the office space for eleven full-time, and two part-time employees and a space for their very successful "ReStore" retail site. This location also houses the construction and



building supply facility and provides an office for the Construction Team and volunteers to meet when preparing for a build. This location has a large footprint which is available for expansion, if needed.

The Habitat for Humanity ReStore is a home improvement donations center which sells new and used building and remodeling materials to the public. ReStore manager, Bob Voltz said "Shopping for building and remodeling supplies at the ReStore not only helps support Habitat Builds and operations; you can save money on building supplies, and also reduce the amount of waste going back into our landfills."

The rewarding moments when Executive Director, Lori Anderson felt their work has made a difference is evidenced by seeing the stability of a family in employment and the ability to afford their home. "It is so fulfilling when a family pays off their mortgage," said Anderson, "We know we have made a difference in their life!" One of the requirements of a homebuyer is they must invest 200 hours of their own sweat equity. "Many participants go over those required number of hours," stated Anderson, "They are proud of their personal investment of time and

effort they have put into their own home."

Right now, the challenges facing the organization are the growing costs of supplies, the national supply chain issues. "Windows and doors are hard to access," said Anderson. "Our construction crews are facing delays in completing the siding on a home without these important supplies. When there are constant delays, it is hard to know when to schedule

volunteers to arrive at a site." While these disruptions may continue for Habitat for Humanity for some time, the staff and volunteers are doing their best to ensure home builds carry on, and Aging and Place projects continue to help Douglas County residents stay in their homes.

Future builds and events are already planned for 2022, and include a Team Build, Hard Hat events, a Faith Build, a Cardinal Build, and the opportunity to serve on the 365 days of Prayer Team. Most importantly will be the Habitat for Humanity's 25th Anniversary Build. You can join past and present board and committee members, volunteers, and friends in the celebration of serving the community and improving lives locally. ■

If you have questions, want to volunteer, or support the Habitat for Humanity's Mission of "Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope." - Contact Habitat for Humanity at 320-762-4255.



Lori Anderson and Bob Voltztes, Rebuild Store.

Author Jerome Evans,
CPC Program Representative



Over \$100 Million Procured Through the Cooperative Purchasing Connection Contracts in FY20

Cooperative Purchasing Connection (CPC), the award winning procurement service of eight Minnesota Cooperatives, works hard to be the go-to purchasing vehicle for Minnesota education communities, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations. Over the past several years CPC has developed an extensive portfolio of facilities and grounds, instructional resources, and office supply contracts as well as the thriving eProcurement marketplace, Express.

Now, for the first time, over \$100 million dollars were procured using the CPC Contract in a single fiscal year! Reaching this milestone has inspired the CPC Team to continue innovating and looking for new ways to serve Minnesota's municipal, nonprofit and education communities while also continuing to deliver the exceptional level of service members have come to expect from CPC.

For more information on the CPC Contract offerings, please visit <https://www.PurchasingConnection.org>.



GETTING BACK TO *Exercise* SAFELY IN A PANDEMIC

How do you grow memberships at a health and fitness facility when you are in the middle of a pandemic? For most college students graduating with a marketing degree, this subject, most likely, was not part of the normal curriculum.

For Emily Stawarski, Fergus Falls Area YMCA (Y) Membership and Marketing Director, quickly pivoting strategies at the beginning of the pandemic was critical and involved placing herself in the minds of their members. Emily directed energy into understanding how to meet people where they are at and helping them to feel safe while getting the social

engagement and fitness they desperately need.

Emily knew for her senior members using the Silver Sneakers and the SAIL (Staying Active and independent for Life) virtual programs, continued participation was critical for their wellbeing.

When the first Emergency Executive order was executed in March of 2020, the Y closed their doors to the general public on March 18. Now the Y was tasked with the challenge to support the need in the community for childcare. All through the pandemic, and still today, the Y continues to provide childcare to local families in addition to maintaining childcare assistance for many families in need. Much

of the square footage at the Y was used for childcare as much larger spaces were needed to meet public health guidelines and keep children safe.

The Y was able to reopen to the public on June 17, 2020. Upon reopening, the Y implemented strict safety protocols to protect their staff and members. Increased COVID cases in Minnesota again forced the Y to close on November 21 through December 18, 2020.

During this time the Y lost over 40 percent of their paid memberships. These statistics do not include the Silver Sneakers members. Memberships from young families and 20–30-year-olds experienced the greatest decline in participation as this demographic was looking for convenient ways to exercise outside of crowded gyms, such as hiking, biking, and running.

Thankfully, the Y board and staff experienced many generous supporters who gave during this time to help ensure the special community services they were providing could continue. “The

community support has been the lifeblood of the Y during the shutdown,” said Emily Stawarski. “The support has also helped the staff stay focused as we have transitioned leadership of the organization.” Today, Pat Riemersma is serving as the interim executive director. Pat has over 37 Years of YMCA experience and is a resident of Savage, MN.

Fast forward, members are coming back, fitness classes are back in session, volleyball and basketball teams are active, and pickleball is experiencing an increase in players. “The 50+ aged members are coming back faster than the 20–30-year-old members,” said Stawarski. “They crave social engagement.”

Throughout the fall, the Fergus Falls Area Family YMCA has been, and will continue to be, offering different membership specials to encourage former members and people thinking about a new membership to join, learn about new classes and experience what a membership at the Y can do for them physically and mentally. ■



“
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“
Emily Stawarski

To learn more, you can stop by for a tour, visit their website at fergusfallsymca.org or give Emily a call at 218-739-4489.





Underwood

A Growing, Rural Community

After twenty-one years of service as Underwood's City Clerk and Treasurer, Ann Kiser said goodbye to the City of Underwood office on Main Street and retired on September 3, 2021. Battle Lake resident, Kattie Meek was selected as the new Underwood City Clerk and began her role on August 2, 2021. Meek, who lives near Phelps Mill, and was formerly employed at the Underwood School District said, "It was like coming home. There is something very special about knowing your neighbors and feeling safe in a small-town community."

While she has been on the job for over 4 months, "there is still so much to learn!" said Meek. Right now, her focus is on a substantial retail development project in Underwood. The City of Underwood has begun construction of a new municipal liquor store expansion and location. The current 1,500 sq. ft. location is attached to the City Clerk's office in downtown Underwood. The new store will be in a more visible

location on HWY 210 and will double its size to 3,000 sq ft. This new facility will be the only liquor store on HWY 210 between Fergus Falls and Staples, MN. The new store's foundation was poured on November 8, with plans to open in the Spring of 2022.

"With more visibility and a larger footprint, the city is anticipating an increase in revenues available to support current and ongoing infrastructure projects," said municipal store manager, Anita Gumphrey. The municipal store is being considered for the city council chambers meetings and other community group meetings; however, a final plan has not yet been determined.

Underwood's current population is 342 residents, and like many small communities, the Public School is the heart of activity for families and residents. Meek noted, "Young families are moving to the area because they appreciate the Underwood Public School, their excellent staff, and the

activities that bring the community together." Regular events scheduled for residents and local families include the Harvest Festival, Halloween party, Veterans Day, and the popular "Santa's Community Christmas" scheduled for Saturday, December 4, 2021.

An additional development in Underwood is the Eagle Stone Campground. Owner and developer of the seasonal campground, TJ Pelanek, has plans to provide a campground with fifteen RV drive-through sites, three tent sites for rustic camping, a dog park and a walking trail. The RV sites will include full hookups of water, sewer, and electricity. This amenity will bring visitors to the beautiful Underwood community in addition to dollars being spent at local Underwood establishments. ■

If you are interested in finding out more about the growing community of Underwood, you can contact Kattie Meek at Ph. 218-826-6686 or Email: undrwdcit@prtcl.com

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