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THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022

Girl Scout project benefits animal shelter

FOR THE REVIEW

PARK FALLS — Chequamegon Senior and Girl Scout Paige Dragovich, 18, teamed up recently with Catkins Animal Rescue in Park Falls to complete her Girl Scouts Gold Award Project.

The Gold Award is the highest award that a senior Girl Scout Ambassador can earn. The Girl Scout designs her Gold Award Projects to incorporate all of the knowledge and leadership skills that were learned into a capstone experience that identifies a root cause of a community issue, and develops an action plan that requires collaboration, mentoring and outcomes for a long-term benefit.

The Girl Scout must show leadership by guiding a team of volunteers, and the project must be sustainable and measurable with a national or global link to qualify for the award.

Dragovich's project focused on pet enrichment needs, and particularly in the animal shelter setting. She made a series of educational pet enrichment videos that show the viewer how to apply the tips with pets at home.

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MAILING LABEL ONLY

Butternut Historical Society and Museum celebrate 10 years



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

Accordionist George Faltinoski and guitarist Noah Tashner play and sing during the Butternut Area Historical Society and Museum 10th anniversary open house on June 3.

BY TOM LAVENTURE
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BUTTERNUT — The effort to preserve the stories and artifacts of generations of families that founded a community was celebrated on June 3 with the 10th anniversary of the Butternut.

Area Historical Society and its museum in the former Norma Wartgow convenience store, one of the oldest buildings in the downtown.

The day was filled with music, food and lots of conversation while viewing more than a century of history in the two-story museum. Many who were present

pointed out parents, grandparents and even themselves in school, business or community photos and exhibit items.

"We want to thank the Butternut community for coming out for this; it's really great to see the support," said Kelly Meredith, board president. "It's been 10 years of slow, steady progress."

The board formalized on Jan. 18, 2012 and the museum officially opened in July of that same year, she said. The work started with taking an empty building and a garage and now both are filled with items that tell the story of the community, she said.

"We feel like this is a nice memorial for the pioneers

and the people who have settled this area," Meredith said. "It's a good memorial to the citizens of Butternut and so we appreciate people sharing their stories, and sharing their objects and sharing their memorabilia and the various things that help us as we're trying to continue to tell the story of Butternut."

Maxine Kilger and Kelly Meredith are founding board members and are still with the current board of Jane Weinberger, Diane Peterson, George Faltinoski, Jim Cermak and Marshal Venz.

Faltinoski said the board had a few options in 2012 but were fortunate to find the former store that had fallen into receivership at a time

when the board did not have much in funds.

"We bid for it and we got it," he said.

The project to figure out how to make the former store into a museum, with exhibits, was a real challenge, he said. But it has worked out and now there is even a garage with a fire engine.

"Before we had this it was kind of like a traveling museum," Faltinoski said. "All the pictures and stuff would be set up at local celebrations and then we'd have to take it down, and in the meantime things would get lost or damaged and so we were looking for a permanent place."

SEE MUSEUM PAGE A8

Names released in falling tree fatalities

BY PRICE COUNTY REVIEW

PHILLIPS — Price County Sheriff Brian Schmidt has released the names of two Minnesota campers who were killed by a falling tree in the town of Lake on May 29.

Sandy Michael Langseth II, 39, and April M Sheldahl, 45, both residents of White Bear Township, Minnesota, were pronounced dead at the scene after a tree fell and struck them late afternoon while seated at a campsite picnic table along the North Fork of the Flambeau River in the Town of Lake, according to a sheriff's office press release on June 1. The sheriff's office received the call of the incident at 5:43 p.m.

A third person who was seated at the same picnic table was uninjured, according to the news release. A fourth person who was nearby at the campsite was also uninjured.

Two people who were fishing the river nearby assisted the campers until emergency services arrived. The anglers had reported that they noticed the wind pick up for about 10 minutes before hearing a tree fall along the north bank of the river.

Park Falls Fire and Ambulance Service, Fifield Fire Department, Price County Law Enforcement Chaplains, and the Price County Coroner's Office also responded to the scene. The investigation is ongoing.

Library to review 30 books after protests

BY TOM LAVENTURE
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PHILLIPS — The Phillips Public Library Board will review 30 books between now and September after community members used the library's collection development policy process to object to new materials they felt were not appropriate for children or opposed to them for religious or political reasons.

About a dozen community members put themselves on the public comment list at the May 26 library board meeting where some spoke against the subject matter of books with LGBTQ content or social justice and race themes including critical race theory and Black Lives Matter. Others spoke in favor of the materials, saying the books present perspectives that will inspire conversations with parents and peers on contemporary issues, along with the dangers of book banning.

More than one person present said they felt that the subject matter was too heavy for developing minds. Books at that age should be instilling basic formative values and not an "indoctrination," as some called it.

Proponents said it was dangerous to cherry-pick content based on one's own set of particular values. Others said the books presented a basic understanding of the complex issues that the country is currently facing.

With so many titles being objected

to, the library board will work with 10 books per meeting, said Rebecca Puhl, library director. The first 10 titles to be discussed include "Antiracist Baby" by Dr. Ibram X Kendi; "Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness," by Anastasia Higginbotham; "Race Cars: A Children's Book About White Privilege," by Jenny Devenny; "Beaty Woke," by Noniequa Ramos; "Call and Response: The Story of Black Lives Matter," by Veronica Chambers; "Our Skin: A First Conversation About Race," by Megan Madison; "When We Say Black Lives Matter," by Maxine Beneba Clark; and "Use of Force and the Fight Against Police Brutality," by Elliott Smith.

The books are being kept at the library's circulation desk for the public, and for board members to check out overnight to review, Puhl said.

The library purchases books through a vendor called Baker and Taylor, or other retailers that serve libraries, she said. The library uses curated lists of the library system, library journals, and the New York Times bestsellers list, she said.

"Because those are the books that people want," Puhl said.

Patrons may suggest a title they want and the staff check to see if it fits the collection development policy, she said. Books are purchased through professional resources to avoid any individual from promoting a certain topic.

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VOL. 8 - NO. 23 © 2022
(USPS No. 511500)



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» MUSEUM
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Maxine Kilger took on the challenge as museum director and curator. She had dreamed of such a museum as a Butternut school teacher who once had her students bring items from previous generations to display.

There were so many items in the school hallway that she said it was clear the town should have a museum. The abundance of artifacts was in part due the large number of residents with roots dating back to the founders, she said.

"The children brought things to school and I commented that this community has a museum but it doesn't yet have a roof," Kilger said.

The society and the museum are a tribute to the founding settlers of a community where daily life was full of tasks and tremendously difficult,

she said. The community are the descendants of those first settlers.

"I hope that after I'm gone and the rest of the board members are gone that this place will continue to be a place to go to understand the trials of the early settlers," Kilger said. "I mean life was so difficult. Everything was just so difficult."

Noah Tashner, who teaches music in the Butternut School District, performed on guitar and sang with Faltinoski on accordion during the open house. It was his second time in the museum and he looked forward to exploring a little more of what he missed the first time.

"It's a nice cozy, little memory lane," Tashner said of the museum.

Tashner said the museum is a social space for the community to mingle with each other but it's also a way to socialize with generations

now gone by viewing and understanding their story. It's about trying to understand who they were and connecting to them, whether it was a family connection or through a job or other item of daily life.

"Everything just sort of connects if you open your mind to it," Tashner said.

The museum is open during the summer to local visitors and tourists and is a resource throughout the year for individuals doing family, community and school research. Though it was originally supported largely through private funding, the society now receives half its budget from the three local municipalities, the village of Butternut, the town of Chippewa, and the town of Agenda. The rest comes from the Oktoberfest fundraiser, and the Ever Life Tells a Story event and private donations.

» BOOKS
FROM PAGE A1

There are more diverse titles from publishers now than there were a few years ago, she said. The idea is to publish different voices, because that's the way that society is moving at this point, she said.

"We buy books for everybody, we're a public library," Puhl said.

The titles have been on the shelves and it's really up to parents to decide whether kids can check them out or not, she said. There has been verbal opposition to titles in the past but this is the first written objection, she said.

"I've had conversations with parents about how we're a public library, and we have to have things for everybody," Puhl said. "This is just the first time it's gotten to this point."

The most common way unpopular books disappear is by not being checked out, she said. After six months most of those books go to the book sale in order to help purchase new books.

The exceptions are reference books and the classics, she said. If other materials that aren't checked out often are

kept the library also has a policy for that process.

At this point there are titles that people are actually asking for the library to ban, Puhl said. A library does not want to be in a position to ban books, not only for the negative attention that it brings, but for potential legal issues, she said.

The most recent examples of calls to ban came with the Dr. Seuss books, in relation to inappropriate pictures in some of the books. The books were not removed, but were put in the reference section because the infamy suddenly made the books more valuable and at risk of theft.

The works of Laura Ingalls Wilder came under scrutiny by groups due to stereotypical depictions Native Americans, as well as Mark Twain for language in reference to Blacks. Those books remain on the shelf for historical value and as a free speech issue, she said.

"They bring up topics that you can chat with your kids about," Puhl said.

Contentious issues are not usually resolved, she said. People who are held to an opinion will not likely compromise on these issues, she said.

"But we are a public

library, and we are buying these according to our collection development policy and that is how we are supposed to operate," Puhl said. "We need to have something for everybody. We need to represent society as a whole, and not just the views of this group or that group or whatnot."

Children have First Amendment rights too, she said. So the library and board must be careful of lawsuits when deciding whether or not to ban books.

After the objections began, the library has been taking a deeper look at the collection and there are areas that need improvement, she said. Patrons are always welcome to suggest a book for purchase and it might be based on the collection needs and the collection development policy.

"But I don't ever not listen," Puhl said. "That's what we're here for."

The next library board meeting will be held on June 28. For patrons who wish to send their comments in writing ahead of the meeting, they must be delivered to Puhl by June 21, either in person, vial mail or email to Rebecca@PhillipsPL.org.



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