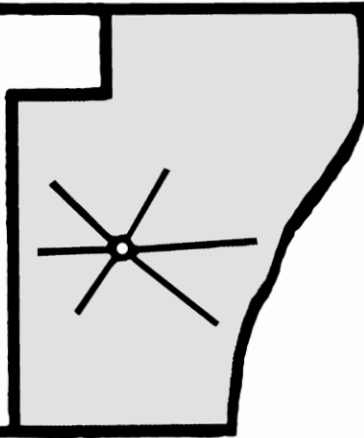


# the Valders Journal

Vol. 82 No. 22 Thursday, January 13, 2022  
Subscription \$32 Per Year Single Copy \$1



## ERs not place for COVID testing

Area hospitals, health departments and healthcare companies have joined in pleading with people to refrain from going to emergency rooms or urgent care sites to seek COVID-19 testing. Hospitals and clinics are overwhelmed with COVID patients and others needing care and don't have time or staff to do routine tests for those who have been exposed or don't have symptoms. People are asked to follow CDC guidance for masking, isolating and quarantine if they have been exposed or have mild symptoms and to seek out community testing locations for coronavirus tests.

## Plan calls for buying pair of rigs

By Todd S. Bergmann

Valders officials continued plans to swap ambulances to upgrade the reliability of its emergency medical service.

The Valders Village Board voted to buy and finance two ambulances on Monday, a week after deciding to sell one of its two existing rigs. Plans call for selling the current Ambulance 8 after both newer ambulances are in service.

Only Trustee John Regan voted against the motions Monday, which specify buying and financing two ambulances for up to \$175,000.

"You are swapping a \$9,000 truck for a \$200,000 loan for an ambulance service that does not have any money," he said.

Last week, the board voted unanimously to sell a diesel-powered 2016 Ford ambulance—Ambulance 7—to a dealer in Minnesota for \$61,000, and pay off a \$54,000 loan.

This leaves Valders Ambulance only with 16-year-old Ambulance 8, with about 175,000 miles on the odometer.

Devan Schneider, village president, said the alternative would be to run that ambulance until it stops operating.

"If our ambulance goes down, we are not fulfilling any of our contracts," he said.

This week, the board voted to buy a 2008  
See Village p. 11



## Canine Rescue

Chris Dallas, Valders fire and ambulance chief, administers oxygen to revive a pit bull after firefighters rescued the dog from a mobile home fire in

Valders on Saturday afternoon. The dog responded to the treatment and was taken to a veterinarian, but the mobile home was destroyed. See p. 4 for more coverage of the fire.  
—Journal Photo

## Sub list shrinks, leaving staff to pick up the slack

By Todd S. Bergmann

Teachers and subs are overworked in the Valders Area School District, although Superintendent Debra Hunt said the situation is getting better.

While the district has more substitute teachers this school year than last, she said a shortage remains.

The reason for the need is that teachers are quarantining for COVID-19, Hunt said.

"Many of the days during the week, we are short on subs," she said. "We have to be creative. The principals sub quite a bit. Other teacher are subbing during their prep times, which is really super difficult."

Hunt said that the schools needs three to six substitutes on a typical day, the same as before COVID-19 hit, but many people who worked as subs have decided to stop because of the virus.

"I know of at least three substitute teachers that we had on a regular basis are not comfortable coming into schools right now because of the high levels of coronavirus," Hunt said. "They are not interested in subbing until COVID numbers decline, so they can remain healthy."

With fewer outside teachers available to fill in classrooms, other teachers have to teach during their prep periods, Hunt said.

"Quite a few teachers are losing prep periods right now because there is a shortage of substitute teachers," she said. "That has increased considerably."

This school year, the faculty gave up 15 to 20 prep periods a day, on average, compared to six to 12 periods a whole week before the pandemic, Hunt said.

But, she said teachers are willing to do this because this enables the school to stay open and in-person learning to continue.

"It is really tough on teachers," Hunt said. "They are trying to meet the needs of the students. They are trying to keep themselves healthy so they can keep things going."

"They know it is the best way for students to learn. That is why they are helping out each other, even though it has been a huge stressor."

Teachers receive \$20 added pay for each period they substitute. Hunt said she did not know exactly how much the school district spent this school year for substitutes.

However, she said the need for substitute teachers recently diminished.

In October, two or three teachers at a time were out because of coronavirus, Hunt said. But as classes resumed on Jan. 6 after Christmas break, she said only one teacher was out with the virus.

"We hope our COVID numbers decrease soon," Hunt said. "Then, our subs will be interested in returning and working with us."

High school and middle school teachers normally teach six classes and have two preparation periods a day, but they have often been using those periods to substitute for other teachers.

Kristin Siders, middle school social studies teacher, said she has a mixed perspective on the situation.

"It is always fine to go in and sub," she  
See Subs p. 8

## Heartbreak hits Valders school when 'always smiling' child dies in crash

By Mary Thomsen

Students and school staff are remembering Skylar Rose Beattie a week after her death in a traffic crash in northern Manitowoc County.

"She was smart as a whip," said Kris Brown, Skylar's third grade teacher at Valders Elementary School on Monday as she talked about the little girl with the ever-present smile.

Skylar, 8, died on Jan. 5 of injuries suffered in a one-vehicle accident along I-43 near County Road K on Jan. 4. Little information has been released as the Wisconsin State Patrol investigates the crash.

The State Patrol did say that a truck driven by a 31-year-old man rolled over around 4 p.m. that day after going into the ditch. He was hurt and taken to a Green Bay hospital, while Skylar was taken to a Grafton hospital, where she died the next day of multiple traumatic injuries, according to Manitowoc County Coroner Curtis Green.

The weather was snowy and windy that afternoon, but no official cause or contributing factors have been released, nor has the driver's name.

The accident left a void at VES, where Skylar has been a student since 4K, principal Jason Procknow said. The child has an older sister who attends Valders Middle School.

Skylar, a Manitowoc resident, was the daughter of Troy Beattie and Krystle Cooley. Her obituary said she participated on the Dolphins swim team at Valders and enjoyed tae kwon do, archery and dance classes, along with participating in Lego League at Lakeshore FIRST Robotics.



Skylar Rose Beattie

She also was a one-girl welcoming committee for new students, Procknow recalled, saying she was the first to help them feel comfortable. He said she was curious, willing to help others, bright and active.

"She had an engaging personality and she was typically smiling," he said.

Brown said she has been talking to her class about their classmate as they process her loss. She described Skylar as a "go-getter."

"She always had a smile on her face," Brown said. "She just had a great spirit. We talked about how she will always be a part of our class."

Brown said that students have grown used to others being gone for periods of time due to the pandemic and quarantines, so it may take a while to sink in that Skylar will not be coming back.

Procknow said Skylar's death is the first such loss at VES since Tyler Timm died in a drowning accident in 1995.

"Any loss is one too many," he said. "It's just heartbreaking and always on our minds." He said news of the girl's death brought out "a lot of shock, grief, a lot of support, a lot of love and resilience" to the school.

The school district's protocol for dealing with the aftermath of a student's death was  
See Skylar p. 4