

Problems, Needs and Issues Quarterly Report Fourth Quarter, 2016

The following is a list of issues of community interest the news department covered during the months of October, November and December of 2016. Included is a description of each issue and the news stories that were written and aired to inform the local residents about each issue.....

1.) -- **Property Tax Levies**.....During the quarter all local units of government including counties, cities and school districts prepare their budgets for the following year and with them their property tax levies. The budget and levies are finalized in December and then certified to the state of Minnesota. Listeners were kept abreast of the proposed and final levies and their impact on them. See attached stories.....

2.) -- **Frack Sand Ban**.....In November the Winona County Board of commissioners became the first county in Minnesota to ban controversial frack sand mining...and possibly the first county ban in the nation. The final vote was 3-to-2 in favor of the controversial ban after months of research, public input and deliberations. See attached news stories.....

3.) -- **10 Days of Giving**.....The Merchants Bank in Winona conducted its 28th annual 10 Days of Giving food drive in December to help re-stock the local food shelves operated by Winona Volunteer Services. The overall drive went over the 3-million pound mark for the 28 years. News Director Darryl Smelser attended the kickoff press conference on December 1st, marking his 28th consecutive news conference for the drive. See attached news stories.....

4.) -- **Minnesota Healthcare Crisis**.....At the end of the year a number of Minnesotans saw their health care premiums skyrocket as lawmakers attempted to agree on a special legislative session to try and provide some financial help for constituents. In the end they were not able to agree on the special session so the fix was waiting for the 2017 session to get underway in early January. See attached news stories.....

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5.) -- **Elections and Bonding Bill....**The entire Minnesota legislature as well as local and county offices were up for election in November. The news department provided live election coverage on November 8th. One of the chief election issues was the need for a bonding bill which the governor vetoed in the spring of 2016. Winona State University was waiting for approval of the final 17-million dollars to complete its "education village" on the Winona campus. No special session so no bonding bill. WSU hopes for a new bonding bill in 2017. See attached news stories.....

Submitted by,



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