

HEALTH & WELFARE

Food Shelf

02-16-16

With increased demand during the winter, the Fergus Falls Food Shelf depends on donations and grants. The ^{next} big push is going to be the first couple weeks of March when matching grants really help says Lorna Fugelston with the Food Shelf...

FOOD SHELF 26 SEC

OUTCUE: "...it can sometimes turn into 5 real quick."

Fugelston says almost 40 percent of their yearly budget depends on the March fundraising, so it is important for people to respond when they get the envelopes.

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NNWS

New Lyme Disease

02-10-16

Nature lovers beware. Scientists believe they have found a new species of bacteria that can cause Lyme disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, doctors found at least six cases in patients only in the upper Midwest. Dr. Jeannine Petersen says the CDC worked with health officials from North Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin to test about nine-thousand samples from residents who were bitten by deer ticks. They decided to investigate further when a tiny fraction of patients showed signs of something new...

..."in the blood." :11

Petersen says the new strand of the disease, called *Borrelia* (bore-EL-ee-uh) *mayonii* (may-OH-knee), seems to only affect about three percent of ticks. That is far below the close to 30 percent of ticks infected by the only other, more common Lyme-disease bacteria, known as *Borrelia burgdorferi* (berg-DORF-er-eye). The C-D-C is running more tests to see if the new bacteria shows up elsewhere in the U-S. Currently, the agency is investigating mid-Atlantic and northeastern states, where cases of Lyme disease can be common. Petersen says there is no reason to be overly worried about the new bacteria. She suggests the old ideas apply when it comes to protecting yourself from ticks while out on a hike...

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NewsB
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..."risk of tick bite." :12

She says the current treatments for Lyme disease also work on the new bacteria.

Paid Parental Leave

02-10-16

A plan to ensure that Minnesota state employees have six weeks of paid parental leave is earning praise from workers. Governor Mark Dayton's proposal is part of his supplemental budget package, which still needs approval from state lawmakers. The idea, however, falls in line with what some of Minnesota's largest private employers are already doing. Anglea Byrne is a member of the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, or MAPE, which has been pushing the issue for the past year. Byrne also worked as part of Dayton's Working Group task force to research what parental leave could mean for the state...

... "newborns' lives." :13

Only three other states - California, New Jersey and Rhode Island - have parental leave programs in place. The governor's plan would help about 500 Minnesota families. Also, it would complement the 1993 federal family medical leave law, which does not cover employee wages. Byrne says parental leave could be a boost to agencies and companies that want to hang on to good workers...

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... "if they leave." :08

Similar moves have been backed by Minnesota Democrats in the past, but ultimately went nowhere. The governor's proposal could face an uphill battle in the Republican-controlled House during next month's legislative session.

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Franken Urges Obama To Help Lower Prescription Costs

02-05-16

Sen. Al Franken who is also a member of the Senate Health Committee, pressed for action from President Obama to help bring down the soaring cost of prescription drugs for people in Minnesota and across the country. It is an issue affecting many seniors....

FRANKEN 28 SEC

OUTCUE: "...I think we need to attack this and attack it now."

In a letter sent TO Obama, Sen. Franken and a group of lawmakers called for more support in the President's 2017 budget proposal to help address prescription drug prices and cut health care costs.

NEWS

Fresh From The Farm Becomes Reality with Bluebird Gardens Partnership

02-05-16

Beginning in May of this year, two long time area business are coming together to offer fresh from the farm produce. Mark Boen with Bluebird Gardens...

MARK BOEN 26 SEC

OUTCUE: "...reach out and serve a hundred percent of Fergus Falls."

The goal of the partnership is to eventually bring year-round fresh greens to the area according to Bluebird Garden's Facebook Page. Setup is now beginning for a whole display being planned to open sometime in May at Service Foods in Fergus Falls.

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SNAP Dollars

01-25-16

Even with winter in full effect, farmers markets are still up and running throughout Minnesota. What's new this year is, for people on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or "SNAP," their money goes even further at eight markets in particular. The Minnesota "Market Bucks" program now matches SNAP assistance up to 10-dollars. Martha Archer heads the Mill City Farmers Market. She says the change is increasing access to healthy, local food for all Minnesotans, but especially for those who rely on Electronic Benefits Transfers...

... "who come weekly." :14

Last year, Minnesota lawmakers passed a healthy eating bill that extends incentives for low-income Minnesotans who purchase fresh foods at local farmers markets. The law set aside one-million dollars in grants, with some of the money helping nonprofits provide vouchers to SNAP recipients. Hunger Solutions Minnesota is now in charge of the Market Bucks program. From now until early April, the eight participating farmers markets will be open mostly on weekends across the state. Archer says this will not only benefit people who need access to healthy foods in the winter, it's also good for the food producers...

... "year-around." :07

A full schedule of when and where the "Market Bucks" farmers markets are open is on the Hunger Solutions Minnesota website. (HungerSolutions.org)

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MN Homeless Campaign

01-25-16

With thousands of families facing homelessness in Minnesota, a group of affordable-housing advocates are ~~kicking~~ ^{kicked} off a campaign in St. Paul today ^{last week} (Thursday) to help with the statewide problem. The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless reports that about 14,000 Minnesotans don't have a home. About half the homeless population is under 21 years old. Kenza Hadj-Moussa, spokeswoman for the coalition, says her group will be asking state lawmakers to set aside 130-million dollars in bonds for affordable housing...

... "individuals and seniors." :10

Last week, Governor Mark Dayton suggested setting aside 90-million dollars for affordable housing. Hadj-Moussa says that move is an excellent start, but more can be done to help. In 2014, Minnesota approved 100-million dollars for affordable-housing programs, which Hadj-Moussa says helped more than seven-thousand low-income households throughout the state. This year, the group also is asking for a policy change to allow the money to be used on senior-only housing...

... "around the state." :11

If lawmakers do approve the group's request for 130-million dollars, about 20-million would go toward rehabbing existing public housing units.

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NEWSB

February Festival of Health

01-21-16

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the year's biggest health fair in Wadena. The 26th annual February Festival of Health is a community-wide health fair to be held Saturday, February 6 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at M-State's Wadena campus on Hwy 29.

This free event offers more than 70 exhibits by local businesses and organizations, including popular booths like Glucose and DNA swab testing. Each booth provides hands-on learning and an opportunity to become familiar with the many resources available for you and your family's health, well-being and safety. Wadena County representatives will be available to discuss Elderly Prevention Services, Healthy Homes, Family Health, Reproductive Health and Emergency Management.

One of the featured events is the Community Baby Shower booth, sponsored by Tri-County Health Care's Obstetrics Department. Moms who are currently pregnant or have had a baby within the last year are eligible to win more than \$400 in prizes in a special drawing.

Health screenings include: blood pressure and blood glucose tests. All screenings are free. The Wadena County Soil and Water Conservation District will also be conducting free water testing, so bring a sample of your water.

Friendly Rider is providing FREE rides all day. Festival of Health attendees that would like a free ride to or from the event should call 218-631-5730 to register.

Lunch is available between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. in the cafeteria for a nominal fee. Throughout the day, free entertainment and demonstrations will take place. They will include dance performances featuring local students, free face paintings by Beth Kern and free caricatures by Doug Curtis.

The health fair is sponsored by Tri-County Health Care Foundation, Tri-County Health Care and M-State, Wadena campus.

700

Metro-Area Consumers Advised Not To Consume Uneviscerated Fish Due To Potential Botulism Contamination

01-15-16

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is alerting Metro-area consumers to avoid eating dried uneviscerated fish after the MDA and City of Brooklyn Park officials discovered uneviscerated product was being sold at three grocery stores, African International Market and Valu Foods African Market both located in Brooklyn Park, MN, and Fountains African Food Market in Crystal, MN. The uneviscerated fish included pike and bony fish varieties. Inspection and laboratory analysis of the product showed that the internal organs (viscera) had not been removed. There are no reports of illness associated with the fish product. However, the MDA issued the advisory because eating salted or smoked, or dried uneviscerated fish, or product that has not had complete removal of all internal organs, can result in potentially deadly botulism poisoning, a severe form of food poisoning. Fish that are salted, dried or smoked, are over 5 inches in length, and are of the pike, kuta, or bony fish variety have a greater risk of not being properly eviscerated.

The MDA is working to determine additional product sources and distribution channels. Consumers are advised to throw away any dried uneviscerated fish they may have purchased. The FDA recommends that any product that will be preserved by salting, drying, pickling, or fermentation should be fully eviscerated prior to processing.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, symptoms of botulism poisoning include double or blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth, and muscle weakness. If untreated, these symptoms may progress to include paralysis of the arms, legs, trunk and respiratory muscles. In foodborne botulism, symptoms generally begin 18 to 36 hours after eating contaminated food, but symptoms can occur as early as 6 hours or as late as 10 days after eating contaminated food.

Consumers who think they may have become ill after eating uneviscerated fish should contact a doctor or other health care provider.

Dentists Give Back

01-18-16

With today's focus on the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday as a national day of service, thousands of Minnesota dentists are ready to donate their time. The group is asking for help in finding children who need free dental care. In all, they're looking to help up to five-thousand children, 18 years or younger. Dr. Teresa Fong, with Metropolitan Pediatric Dental, says there is a need for free care, because many children enrolled in Medicaid don't receive dental services throughout the year...

..."every six months." :10

Parents can sign kids up now for the Minnesota Dental Association's "Give Kids a Smile" event by calling 2-1-1. The 14th annual event takes place on February 5th and 6th. Fong says another reason they're providing free dental care is, some patients with state-funded insurance either don't have dental coverage, or may have trouble finding a dentist who will take state insurance, because the reimbursement levels are so low...

..."treatment goes." :10

Fong says Minnesota dentists are reimbursed for their services at about half the rate of most other dentists in the nation. But she maintains that, regardless of pay, dentists have a special skill and the need for care is important, especially for low-income children or those without health coverage.

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Perham Tobacco Regulations

01-13-16

The January meeting of the Perham City Council heated up over discussion of an exemption to the city's tobacco regulations - specifically, whether to allow sampling of e-cigarettes in specific "vaping" stores. Representatives from Perham's Masterpiece Vapors claimed not having an exemption would essentially put them out of business or force them to leave town. Adults and children representing the Perham Boys & Girls Club were present to speak against the exemption - urging the council to maintain the regulations' strict rules. The council ultimately voted unanimously in favor of allowing for the exemption.

The council also moved forward with plans to pave the gravel portion of East Coney Street - from near Dean's Country Market to East Main. This will be part of the designated truck route and will receive other utility upgrades for an estimated \$1.2 million. Construction on the project is expected to be done this summer. No members of the public attended the project's hearing.

NEWS
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Blood Donations

01-12-16

The American Red Cross is urging blood donors to roll up their sleeves this month to restock the nation's blood supply.

Spokesperson Sue Thesenga...

... "blood shortage." :25 (Thesenga Shortage)

Every two seconds a patient in the U.S. needs blood. Minnesota has at least one blood drive a day and contributes about 1,000 units.

For information on donating, go to RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RedCross.

Blood drives are scheduled in Alexandria for January 14, 18, 19 & 28. Fergus Falls drives are scheduled for January 13, 14 & 15. Henning has a drive on January 26. Parker's Prairie has one scheduled for January 27 and Pelican Rapids will hold one on January 25th.

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Rising Rents

Use Sator or Sam

01-09-16

Where you grow up has a lot to do with your opportunities for success in life, according to a new report by the Center for American Progress. Sarah Edelman, the study's co-author, says because rentals are too expensive in high-opportunity areas – places with good jobs and schools, and access to safe playgrounds and grocery stores with fresh produce – low-income families end up in high-poverty areas. Edelman says high rents also have led to an increase in racial and economic segregation...

... "of opportunity are." :11

The report found the available inventory of affordable rentals isn't enough to provide housing for even a third of the nation's low-income families. Edelman adds that almost half of all renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, and more than a quarter spend at least 50 percent – sharp increases from just a decade ago. Edelman says the combination of stagnant wages coupled with continuing cuts to social services and housing programs has kept millions of Americans stuck in areas with fewer opportunities for advancement. Edelman says eliminating restrictive zoning in more affluent neighborhoods and giving tax credits to renters could open the door for more families...

... "we already have." :15

Edelman says more than two million affordable rental units are currently scheduled to phase out over the next decade if they're not preserved. The report also recommends expanding the federal Housing Choice Voucher program to help more families. Edelman notes that only a quarter of eligible households today actually receive rental assistance.

Sex Trafficking

01-04-16

January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, and there's a move in North Dakota to curb one major cause of the problem. The state's new so-called "John School" law went into effect on January first. Democratic State Senator Mac Schneider sponsored the bipartisan bill, which he says has several goals. One is to avoid re-victimizing the victims, which are many times women and children. Schneider says the other point is to help "johns," or the people who pay for sex, understand the scope of their role in the crime...

..."of the equation." :09

North Dakota's recent oil boom has brought an influx of working men to areas like the Bakken oil fields. Some state law enforcement agencies have reported an uptick in human trafficking in those areas, where the ratio of men to women can skew heavily male. The new sex offender education program could take several months to launch. Christina Sambor heads a group known as a Force to End Human Sexual Exploitation, or "FUSE." Sambor says she's working with the state's Human Trafficking Commission to create a curriculum for the school...

7:30

..."different models." :11

The "John School" law is just one of several state reforms passed last year aimed at curbing human trafficking in North Dakota. Other changes include ramping up the fines and punishments for people caught paying for sex.