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FEBRUARY, 2021

Volume 18 • Issue 6

Adriana Bermudez: Why I love Northfield and AmeriCorps

By Southern MN Initiative Foundation

When Adriana Bermudez was attending Northfield High School and thinking about her future plans, she thought she might want to pursue a career in early childhood education because of her love for children. However, since her experience in this field was limited, she was unsure if this was the right career path for her.

(continued on page 11)

Celebrating the Future Farmers of America National FFA Week February 20-27



Starting in 1948, the National FFA Board of Directors designated a weeklong tradition to recognize George Washington's example and legacy as a leader and farmer. For the past 73 years, FFA members

across the country have taken part in agricultural, leadership and service-based activities during National FFA Week.

"National FFA Week is a significant event that really showcases the heart of our organ-

ization," says Christine White, chief program officer for the National FFA Organization. "Local chapters use this as an opportunity to highlight program success, recognize community supporters and amplify the mission of the organization."

This year, more than 700,000 FFA members will spend the week of Feb. 20-27 developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. They will do so in creative and innovative ways. Whether volunteering to clean up the local fairgrounds or throwing a citywide party to celebrate the 1732 birth of our first president, there is no limit to how this week can be recognized.

"It could be hosting a breakfast for teachers, an open house for FFA supporters or bestowing chapter-level degrees. It truly is an opportunity to celebrate all things FFA. As a former member and agricultural educator, FFA Week is something I always

looked forward to since it was a way to share my passion for the organization," White says. "FFA members should embrace the planning, execution and celebration that occurs with developing activities and events for FFA Week. The skills of teamwork, communication and advocating are ones you will carry with you beyond your FFA experience."

Keep track of all that is happening by following #FFAWeek on your social channels. Find more about all the resources available at FFA.org/National-FFA-Week.

Thank you, Alumni and Supporters!

Whether they wore the blue jacket or support an organization they were never a member of, these individuals are celebrated on National FFA Alumni and Supporters Day. Since 1971, alumni and supporters have found ways to significantly contribute to their local chapters.

(continued on page 5)

Announcements

• **Food Shelf, located in St. Mark's Lutheran Church on Highway 56.** 1st Wednesday 8-9:30 a.m.; 2nd & 3rd Tuesday 4:30 - 6 p.m.; 4th Wednesday 9-11 a.m. We are an emergency food shelf and anyone needing some help, may come once a month and receive at least a week's worth of food. We also want to invite college students to come and get some supplies to help them save some expense. Thanks to the generosity of our community, our shelves are well stocked. Our volunteers are from Stanton Methodist Church, St. Mathias Catholic Church and St. Mark's Lutheran Church. We have implemented a new system of shopping with a list. We shop off of a list you fill out. We ask you stay by the back door while we are filling the list. Any questions contact Beth Bester at St. Mark's, 507-263-9182 and leave a message.

Email:

hometownmessenger@gmail.com

Cory Timm, Fall Trap Medal Earner



Congrats Randolph Junior, Cory Timm on placing 2nd in the Mn State High School Trap League Conference Section 15 for Fall Trap League with a shooting average of 24.2/25.

MN FFA Foundation Continues Tracy's Legacy with Annual Scholarships



Jim Tracy

Many of you reading this knew Jim Tracy. A lifelong rural Dennison resident. Jim grew up on the family farm north of Dennison. During his childhood, Jim was active in FFA and 4-H. After graduating from high school, Jim served two years in the

U.S. Marine Corps. He then returned home to work on the family farm. The family had dairy cows and crop land. After selling the cows, Jim continued to farm his land until his passing in 2014.

Jim was a quiet generous man who made many contributions over the years to his hometown, including his church, Children's Hospitals, The Wounded Warriors Project, the Marine Scholarship Fund, and area FFA Chapters.

(continued on page 5)

Fish Fry All Day Fridays



Saturday Evenings Prime Rib & BBQ Ribs
Sunday Morning Breakfast 8:30am-Noon
Sundays All You Can Eat Roast Beef & Chicken

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Love Potion #1

There's a 50's song that has the lyrics: "I took my troubles down to Madame Rue, you know that gypsy with the gold-capped tooth? She's got a pad on Thirty-Fourth and Vine selling' little bottles of Love Potion Number Nine. I told her that I was a flop with chicks I've been this way since 1956, She looked at my palm and she made a magic sign, she said "what you need is Love Potion Number Nine" According to Madame Rue- you drink this potion and you won't be without a date on Friday night!

Diana Ross sang a song that had a chorus about love too, "What the world needs now is love, sweet love. It's the only thing that there's just too little of. What the world needs now is love, sweet love; no not just for some but for everyone." Our world does need love- I don't think a magic potion will do it. Our world has tried so many different ways to find love and happiness- yet many of us have missed it. We aren't happy, we feel alone and unlovable. While Love potion #9 isn't the answer- I would like to share the true 'Love potion #1' available to each of us.

John wrote in his little letter of 1st John these words, "Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. . . .¹⁰ This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins." John writes that true love- real, lasting, for-

ever love comes from God. God showed His love for us when He sent His Son to take our place on the cross. He loved us so much that He gave His one and only Son for you and me, and for all people for all time. The world does need more love. It is something that there is too little of. We need to learn to show and practice it with the people we pass each day. (as Diana Ross sang)

As John continued, he said, "'¹¹ Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. ¹² No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.'" Since God loves us that much; enough to send His One and only Son to die for us, we should love each other.

God loves me so much- and because of His love for me I should be loving others with the same grace and patience He has had for me. When I think of all the times that I have hurt Jesus... the times I said something spiteful, or the times when I hurt someone with a cruel word, or when I used to treat my parents disrespectfully or party so much I don't remember my drive home, and all the times when God was only 2nd thought or no thought at all in my day; I am so profoundly grateful and humbled that He

loves me now and He loved me then! I am undeserving of His Love. All He has desired for me, for all humankind, is to be in a relationship with Him- but in those days, before I really knew Him, I just blew Him off. Yet His love was there all along.

As I became an adult I discovered His love through the eyes of my Grandparents, my daughter, my son, the Pastor, and the people at the church I began to attend. I hadn't experienced that kind of love before- acceptance and totally unconditional love. They showed me God's love for me- and it blew me away! I had finally discovered true love- love that wasn't based on what I did or didn't do or based on my looks- thank goodness!- or based on some distorted pay back system. God's love was and is unconditional.

When we become of a follower of Jesus we discover that God is love. He is the essence of what love is and without Him Love wouldn't even exist. When we accept the truth of the gospel- that we are sinners and that Jesus Christ is God's Son; He lived, died, and rose again to set us free- then we are His followers; and His love lives in us. There are times when it is tough to love someone. There are people that may be very annoying, or mean, or hateful to us or to the people we love, but Christ

reminds us that He loves them too. He loved us before we were very lovable. And because His love lives in us, we can extend that same love to others. Is it easy? Nope! It can be downright difficult and feel impossible- yet we are called to love them like Jesus does. That's a tall order- we can only do that when we are filled with His Love.

As we love God, we are more able to love people that are created in His image. I like how John spells it out at the end of verse 20, "If we don't love people we can see, how can we love God whom we cannot see?" If we can't love those people we see- people we rub shoulders with: maybe people we don't always agree with, or people that are different; in how they talk, or dress or look, how can we truly love the God that created them? Verse 21 leaves no mistake in interpretation this Valentines Month: Those who love God MUST also love their fellow believers! We are called to Love God and to Love People. As we celebrate the month of "love" may we learn to extend the same love that God has displayed towards us to all the people that He created and for whom He died for. Love one another as Jesus love you.

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Sunday School 9:00a.m.
(children, teen, and adult classes)
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Jesus and Me (JAM) Kids Club 3:00-5:00p.m.
first and second Wednesday of the school month.
Pastor Dennis Ingolfsland
Questions? Call church office 507-663-1437

CHRIST CHURCH UMC

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Pastor Pat Walker
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Worship 9:15a.m.
Wednesdays - 5:45p.m. Wednesday evening potluck dinner; Adult Bible study; Kids Club; Youth Group

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Rev. Gary Liker
Email: stantonumc@gmail.com
Worship 10:15a.m.
Questions? Call 507-263-4063

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

Who Then Can Be Saved?

The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" — Mark 10:26

In reading stories about people like the man in this episode, people who don't really understand Jesus, I'm tempted to look down on them. The man appears to have been wealthy, and he had a high opinion of how well he kept the law. But he seems to have had no idea that Jesus was simply calling him to give his whole life to God—or maybe he just didn't want to do that. I think to myself, "I guess he just doesn't get what it means to follow Jesus."

And yet I often respond to Jesus in the same way that man did. Often I don't catch what Jesus is about, or understand what he has just said, or realize what he expects of me.

But in this story, Jesus doesn't look down on the man. Jesus looks at him and loves him, the Bible says.

I am so thankful that—even though the man had it all wrong—Jesus didn't just dismiss him or condemn him. Instead, Jesus loved him and invited the man to follow him.

Right there is something wonderful I can learn from Jesus. When I don't understand his teachings, or when I misunderstand the truth about Jesus and his kingdom, there is still a loving invitation from Jesus to follow him and keep learning.

Whatever else Jesus says to the man in the story, it's in the context of Jesus' love for a person who doesn't fully get it. That is reassuring to me!

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NOTICE
Due to COVID-19 check your church website or Facebook page for updates.

Spencer D. "Hoot" Gibson

Spencer D. "Hoot" Gibson, 88, of Randolph passed away peacefully, with his family by his side on Sunday, February 7, 2021.

Spencer worked at the Minnesota Department of Transportation for over 35 years. In his spare time, Spencer was an avid hunter. He was most well-known for just being a "great guy" and loving his kids

and grandkids unconditionally.

Spencer is survived by his children; Kathy (Bob) Gibson Christensen, Mike (Melodie), and Dan, grandchildren; Jon (Becky) Richter, Jacque (Corey) Uhlar, Charles, Adam (Sarah), Ben (Mallory), Judy Christensen, and Dan Christensen, 16 great-grandchildren, his brother Wayne (Blanche), and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

He is preceded in death by his wife Barbara, daughter-in-law Beth, great-granddaughter Danielle, his parents, and all his grandparents.

A visitation was held 1pm-5pm on Saturday February 13, 2021 at Lundberg Funeral Home (5839 Highway 19 Blvd Cannon Falls, MN 55009).

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Willis Edwin Moorhouse

Willis Edwin Moorhouse, age 88, of Cannon Falls, passed away on Wednesday, February 17, 2021.

Willis is survived by his wife, Carol; children, Gary (Mary Kay), Karen (Ken) Volkert, and Doug (Liz); grandchildren, Abby Morelan, Kelsey Moorhouse, Rhea (Andrew) Duncomb, Austin Moorhouse, Kayla (Bret) Otte, Kyle Volkert, Madi Moorhouse and Lexi

Moorhouse; six great-grandchildren and one on the way.

He is also survived by his step-children; Sandy (Mike) Wood, Kevin (Loralie) Illa, Keith (Cindy) Illa, Debra Ohmann, Mary (Joe) Gergen; ten step-grandchildren and nine step-great grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his wife of 46 years, Bernie; and a great-grandson, Isaiah Morelan.

Willis spent his entire life in Randolph, MN other than his time in the Army and his final years in Cannon Falls. In 1957 he married Bernadette Ehlers and they purchased a farm in Randolph where they raised their three children. Willis was a lifelong member and very actively involved at the Randolph Baptist Church. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict, spent many years as an active member of the Randolph Fire Department, was a Pioneer Seed Dealer, and was involved with the Randolph FFA Alumni.

He was a collector of antique Minneapolis Moline tractors and spent many years attending tractor shows locally and around the country, participating in parades and events, and was a member of several antique tractor organizations. He was a very active member of the Minneapolis Moline Collectors Club.

After the passing of Bernadette in 2003, Willis married Carol Engler in 2007 and they settled in Cannon Falls for the next 13 years.

He enjoyed seeing his grandchildren and great grandchildren and spent numerous

evenings at the Randolph High School supporting many of them and the community at various sporting events.

He was always grateful to the Lord for blessing him with the family that he had, and for the life that he had the privilege to live. He will be remembered by many family members and friends.

A visitation was held on Sunday, February 21, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at Lundberg Funeral Home (5839 Highway 19 Blvd, Cannon Falls, MN 55009). A celebration of life was held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, February 22, 2021, at Randolph Baptist Church (29020 Dawson Avenue, Randolph, MN 55065). A visitation started at 9:00 a.m. A private family interment followed the funeral service.

There was a live stream of the service starting at 10:00 am on Monday, February 22, 2021. To view the service live, scroll to the bottom of this page and CLICK PLAY to begin. Please leave a message of support on our Tribute Wall or complete the HeartStrings message form to let the family know you were able to attend the live stream. The funeral service will also be uploaded to our website for future viewing.

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DAILY SOUP SPECIALS

- Monday
Chili or Chicken Noodle
- Tuesday
Tomato Basil or Chicken Wild Rice
- Wednesday
California Medley or Lasagna
- Thursday
Chili or Potato Ham
- Friday
Tomato Basil or Broccoli Cheese
- Sat. & Sun. Cooks Choice

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COVID-19 STRESS RELIEVERS

COVID-19 has been great stress for all of us. The mental well being of our students, staff, and community is a priority concern of ours during these challenging times.

Randolph School Social Work has a new website with resources for students, parents, and families. It's designed as a virtual calming space but also includes information for accessing resources to meet mental health (therapy) and basic (food, clothing) needs. Check it out from the school website.

Thank you.

Mr. Kelley, Superintendent
kelley@m@district195.org

Randolph Wellness Round-up

Randolph teachers engage students with movement while learning. In doing so, we are helping to keep their mind and bodies healthy. Some of the activities include brain breaks where students dance by doing activities and movements to a variety of songs. Clapping out spelling words with movement are just a few examples. Some of the programs the teachers use are Cosmic Kids Yoga and GoNoodles.

High School Update

Here are some important events for students in grades 7-12:

Mid-quarter was February 25th.

Parent/Teacher Conferences on February 25th from 4-8pm and February 26th from 8am-12pm. There is no school for students on February 26th. Conferences will be held virtually like they were in the fall. You will be sent instructions on how to sign up for individual conferences with your student's teachers.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please remember to either call the high school office or e-mail Mr. Soule or Mary Kay Moorhouse, high school secretary, so we know about the absence. Mr. Soule's email is: soulea@district195.org; Mary Kay's is moorhousem@district195.org High school phone numbers are (507) 645-4773 ext. 202 or (507) 263-2151 ext. 202.

We will be offering Juniors the opportunity to take the ACT with Writing Test or the ASVAB, free of charge, on March 2nd, during the school day. Questions about this, contact Mr. Fisher.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, they must see the school nurse first before being excused to leave school.

At this point in time, finals for the end of the school year will be June 3rd and June 4th. It is imperative if at all possible, that your kids will be in school these days to finish up classes, take final tests etc. We don't give out "Incompletes" Quarter 4/Semester 2 unless there is an extreme circumstance. We realize this may change due to circumstances of the pandemic. Stay tuned for further details.

Thanks for supporting Randolph High School students.

Sincerely,

Benjamin P. Fisher

High School Principal/Special Ed. Director/Counselor

fisherb@district195.org

Elementary Update

I am so fortunate to work with such great people. With everything that has gone on this year and the way the staff has handled it is truly amazing. Our goal in the elementary is to get everyone back to in person learning. I truly believe it is time to move on from distance learning and get kids back in school.

February 25, Virtual Conferences 4:00 -8:00 p.m.

February 26, Virtual Conferences 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. No School

Don't forget to keep sending gloves, hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants to school everyday for recess.

Kindergarten Round-up is tentatively planned for April 6, 2021. More information will be forthcoming.

Thank you.

Mr. Rutledge rutledgem@district195.org

Community Education

Randolph Preschool 2021/2022

We are tentatively planning Preschool Open House for April. More information will be available as we continue to monitor the pandemic.



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1,000 Minnesota Farmers and Landowners Now Enrolled in Ag Water Quality Certification Program

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) has reached the milestone of enrolling 1,000 farmers and landowners from across the state. Now, more than 715,000 acres of land are helping to protect the state's water resources.

"Water quality is important to all Minnesotans, especially those that care for the land, and we want to thank everyone that has stepped up to protect and restore our state's lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater through the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program," said Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen. "We can be assured these certified farmers are managing their operations to protect water quality now and into the future."

The MAWQCP puts farmers in touch with local conservation district experts to identify and mitigate any risks their farm poses to water quality. Producers going through the certification process have priority access to financial assistance. After being certified, each farm is deemed in compliance with new water quality laws and regulations for 10 years.

Since the start of the program in 2014, the Ag Water Quality Certification Program has:

Added more than 2,050 new conservation practices

Kept near 38,500 tons of sediment out of Minnesota rivers

Saved 110,000 tons of soil and 48,500 pounds of phosphorous on farms

Reduced nitrogen losses by up to 49 percent

Reduced the equivalent of over 39,000 metric tons of carbon emissions per year

There are also extra endorsements available to water quality certified producers for soil health, integrated pest management, and wildlife. These endorsements celebrate farmers and landowners who are going above and beyond to implement conservation efforts on their land.

The program is on target to meet Governor Tim Walz's goal of enrolling one million acres by the end of 2022.

Farmers and landowners interested in becoming water quality certified can contact their local Soil and Water Conservation District or visit MyLandMyLegacy.com.

Celebrating the Future Farmers of America

(continued from page 1)

Jeremy Krerowicz, the past president of the Denmark FFA Alumni in Wisconsin, fondly remembers his time as a member, and he uses those experiences as motivation to lead the 2020 Outstanding FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter.

"Our members love to see the students grow," Krerowicz says. "We love seeing them being recognized at state and national conventions, during their chapter banquet and throughout the community. It shows that we are doing our part. We help them with the resources they need to get that far."

In every state in the nation, alumni and supporters chapters work to create environments where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success. They are raising funds to send

Give FFA Day: By The Numbers

Every gift to FFA matters. Consider the impact made during the 2019 Give FFA Day. All in a day's work.

471 donors contributed more than **\$234,000** in one 24-hour period to support more than **760,000** FFA members in over **8,700** chapters across the country.

members to the Washington Leadership Conference, hosting students with supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs), helping to advocate for their local chapters and more. And 2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the National FFA Alumni Association. Thank you, alumni and supporters!

MN FFA Foundation Continues Tracy's Legacy with Annual Scholarships

(continued from page 1)

He especially supported the Randolph Area FFA. Many of these donations over the years were anonymous. Jim never needed the spotlight. He was also a founding member of the Dennison Lions Club. Jim had a lifelong passion to help and support the youth and Future Farmers in Minnesota. Part of Jim's estate was given

to the Minnesota FFA Foundation. With the generosity of this gift, Jim's dream of providing scholarships to youth involved in agriculture continues. Applications are accepted annually from November thru January. This year's scholarships will be announced in Mid-May.. More information about the Minnesota FFA Foundation can be found at mnffaafoundation.org

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Cone and Seed Collection

Do you have or know of a woodland or forest that produces large amounts of seeds or cones? You can sell viable tree seeds to the Minnesota State Forest Nursery.

The Minnesota State Forest Nursery is interested in buying seeds and cones from the following trees:

Coniferous trees

- Black spruce
 - Eastern white pine
 - Jack pine
 - Red pine (also called Norway pine)
 - Tamarack (also called eastern or American larch)
 - White spruce
- Deciduous**
- American basswood

- Bitternut hickory
- Black walnut
- Bur oak
- Northern pin oak (also called Jack oak, hill oak)
- Northern red oak
- Red maple
- Shagbark hickory
- Silver maple
- Sugar maple
- Swamp white oak
- White oak
- Yellow birch

Black spruce cone are needed now to meet the need for spring reforestation efforts. Contact the area forestry office drop off location in your area before collecting, for instructions on proper collecting, handling, and labeling requirements.

For instructions on collecting seeds and cones and zone map visit www.dnr.state.mn.us







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Ice Fishing Shelter Removal Deadlines

Dark houses, fish houses and portables must be off the ice no later than midnight for each of the dates given in the categories below. County sheriffs may prohibit or restrict the use of motorized vehicles if dangerous ice conditions are present. If shelters are not removed, owners will be prosecuted. A conservation officer also may confiscate, remove or destroy any ice structure and its contents if not removed by the deadline.

Inland waters

South of line - March 1, 2021
North of line - March 15, 2021

Border waters

Minnesota-Iowa - Feb. 20
Minnesota-Wisconsin - March 1
Minnesota-North and South Dakota - March 5
Minnesota-Canada - March 31

Dates of removal are determined by an east-west line formed by U.S. Hwy. 10, east along Hwy. 34 to Minnesota Hwy. 200, east along Hwy. 200 to U.S. Hwy. 2, and east along Hwy. 2 to the Minnesota-Wisconsin border. After removal dates, shelters may remain on the ice between midnight and one hour before sunrise only when occupied or attended. Storing or leaving shelters



on a public access is prohibited.

Shelter licenses

All non-portable ice shelters must be licensed.

Wheeled fish houses are not considered portable and must be licensed.

An annual shelter license costs \$15 for residents and \$37 for non-residents, not including issuing fees that may be charged.

The ice shelter license must be readily visible from the exterior of the shelter.

A shelter license is valid from March 1 through April 30 of the following year.

A shelter license is not required on border waters between Minnesota or Wisconsin, Iowa and North and South Dakota.

Portable shelter definition

A shelter that collapses, folds or is disassembled for transportation.



Portable shelters only need licenses and identification when left unattended, which is defined as all occupants being more than 200 feet away.

Shelter identification requirements

ONE of the following must be readily visible from the exterior of the shelter with characters at least 2 inches high:

- Owner's name and address
- Owner's drivers license number
- Owner's Minnesota DNR identification number.

If a shelter is left out overnight, it must have at least 2 square inches of reflective material on each side.

Keep it clean

It is unlawful to improperly dispose of garbage on the ice. Please clean up around your shack. What stays on the ice stays in the lake.

It is illegal to leave an ice fishing shack or pieces of it on the ice anywhere in Minnesota. Check with local refuse providers or landfills for ice shelter disposal information.

Ice is never 100% safe

The DNR does not measure ice thickness on Minnesota lakes. Your safety is your responsibility. Check ice thickness at least every 150 feet.

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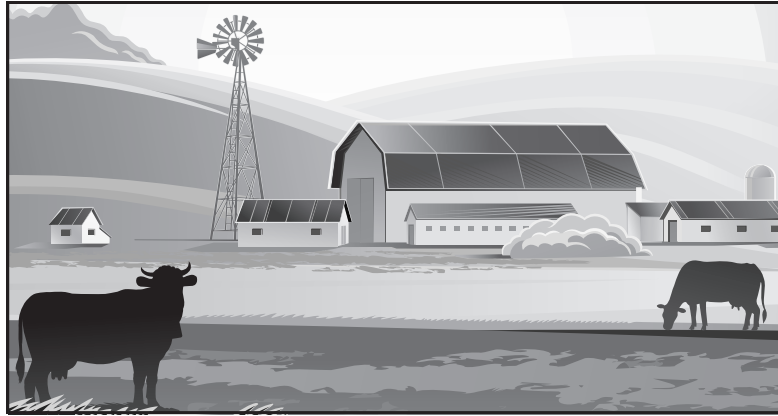
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The National FFA Organization promotes the growth of tomorrow's agricultural leaders through education.

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From hard work on the farm to important lessons in the classroom, FFA has shown its strength and determination to achieve success.



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[NATIONAL FFA WEEK FFA]

This year, FFA members and the organization will celebrate National FFA Week from February 20 to 27, 2021.

During this week, FFA members organize activities that raise awareness not only about the National FFA Organization, but also the role agriculture plays in students lives.



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Collaboration is Our Way Forward



Tim Penny
So. MN Initiative Foundation

When I served in Congress, I was dedicated to representing my southern Minnesota district. I was not there to simply vote the party line; I did my best to take into consideration the differing political ideologies that existed at the time among my constituents. As a legislator, I made it a priority to develop partnerships with other legislators – in both parties – to find common ground and to influence legislation to the benefit of the communities I served.

As divisions in our country and state have become amplified in recent years, I believe it is important to emphasize that collaboration is central to how we will be able to

move forward. Here at Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), collaboration is a key value and a guiding force in how we do our work.

SMIF's vision is that southern Minnesota will be a prosperous and growing region with vibrant communities, innovative and successful economies and engaged and valued citizens. As we celebrate SMIF's 35th anniversary this year, and more than \$121 million invested in our 20-county region during that time, we know that we would not have been able to make progress on this vision without the many partners that have supported our efforts over the past three and a half decades.

Partnerships have made it possible for SMIF to award 4,300 grants since our inception. For example, we work with Ace Hardware and Arrow Hardware & Paint, to distribute paint to communities for projects like murals through our Paint the Town Grants. We partner with publishers ABDO and Capstone to distribute thousands of books to children birth through age five through our Early Literacy Grants (and many more thousands of books get distributed through our Early Childhood programming). We recently partnered with Region Nine Development Commission and SE MN Together to launch a special Inclusive and Equitable Communities Grant program, awarding \$160,000 to organizations that are increasing equity and inclusion within communities and supporting entrepreneurs of diverse backgrounds.

Since 1986 we have been able to support



more than 700 businesses through our lending program because of our partnerships with financial institutions and economic development agencies. We have also partnered with our 30 Community Foundations by providing \$823,000 in matching grants over the years, offering direct support to their communities.

Our commitment to collaboration made it possible for us to distribute \$12.1 million in COVID-19 response dollars. SMIF partnered with the State of Minnesota throughout 2020 to distribute grants and loans to support children, childcare providers, entrepreneurs and communities in our region during this crisis. Most recently we partnered with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to distribute \$10.2 million in Small Business Relief Grants, helping keep more

than 1,000 southern Minnesota businesses afloat. We also worked with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to award \$180,000 in Early Care and Wrap Around Grants to fund early care and education wrap around services for children birth to age eight from underserved populations impacted by the pandemic.

It is impossible to name every partner that has made a difference in SMIF's work, but we are appreciative of each and every one of them. Without this culture of collaboration, we would have a vision for our region's prosperity without the means to execute that vision. Likewise, Minnesota – and our country – will make progress when we all work together.

As always, I welcome your comments and questions. You can reach me at timp@smifoundation.org or 507-455-3215.

Let the COUNTDOWN Begin!

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Adriana Bermudez: Why I love Northfield and AmeriCorps

(continued from page 1)

Then she learned about a program called AmeriCorps LEAP Initiative which would give her hands-on experience in a classroom setting. She jumped at the chance to join this program to explore whether or not working with young children was truly something she wanted to do professionally.

The AmeriCorps LEAP Initiative program is managed by Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) which recruits and connects members to positions in preschool classrooms and nonprofit organizations throughout its 20-county region. Members work one-on-one with children to focus on the emotional development of young children who are at risk of falling behind. The LEAP program is one of many AmeriCorps programs nationwide. AmeriCorps members commit their time to addressing critical community needs like increasing academic achievement, mentoring youth, fighting poverty, sustaining national parks and preparing for disasters. More than one million members have served through AmeriCorps since its inception in 1994. SMIF has sponsored

more than 600 members who have served our region since 1995.

When Bermudez started her LEAP service year term in 2019, she was excited to be placed at the Northfield Head Start Center. Not only is Northfield her hometown where she was born and raised, but she was serving at the very same school that she attended when she was a young child. As a Social Emotional Skill Builder in the classroom, the title given to AmeriCorps LEAP members, she was able to get to know the children on a more intimate level and learn more about their social and emotional needs. "We are helping them on a daily basis learn more about themselves and how to express their needs and wants in a positive and effective way," she explained.

One of the memories that has stuck with Bermudez was of a little girl who would cry all day because she had never attended school before and she only spoke Spanish. "She felt very lonely and scared not being able to understand the teachers and her classmates," said Bermudez. "Our 'calm down corner' worked so well to help her and being fluent in Spanish and English helped me communicate with her and calm her down." Slowly but surely the crying stopped and the little girl eventually became excited about being at school.

Experiences like this are what inspired Bermudez to serve a second term through the AmeriCorps LEAP program. Her current host site is the Northfield Community Education Center. "I've really felt like I've been able to make a difference, especially

for those kiddos who have moved from different parts of the world and who are trying to find their way with the language and academics," said Bermudez. "I think that it truly helps when you can be that adult which a child can lean on and confide in to use as a trusted base from which to explore their surroundings."

As she continues to learn from her AmeriCorps experience, Bermudez is simultaneously working on her associate's degree through Riverland Community College. Her goal is to eventually get her bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and a master's degree in the same subject but with a focus on special education. She credits her experience in the AmeriCorps LEAP program with influencing her chosen career path. "I am very thankful to have been granted this opportunity because I have grown and learned so much through this program and I do think that it guided me in the right direction and convinced me to pursue this major," she said. She will also be able to take advantage of one of the many benefits of serving through AmeriCorps – members receive an education award after they complete their service, which can help pay for student loans and college tuition.

While AmeriCorps has helped set Bermudez on a course for becoming an early childhood professional, she knows that her experience living in Northfield, a community of a little over 20,000 people, has also shaped her life in important ways. "There are so many great opportunities and



Adriana Bermudez serving in a Northfield classroom as a Social Emotional Skill Builder.

lots of help for students and families," she said. "I feel very thankful to have grown up where I am. I wouldn't be where I am right now if I weren't living in Northfield. And thanks to the LEAP program, being able to give back to my Northfield community convinced me that my heart is with the kiddos and I couldn't picture myself doing anything else."

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A Brief History Lesson

1928, 33 students from 18 states gathered in Kansas City, Mo., to form the Future Farmers of America.

The roots of FFA originate from a time when boys were losing interest and leaving the farm. Walter S. Newman, who in September 1925 became the Virginia State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, sought a solution to the problem with Edmund C. MaGill, Harry W. Sanders and Henry C. Groseclose, staff members of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute Agricultural Education Department.

Newman proposed forming an organization that offered farm boys "a greater opportunity for self-expression and for the

development of leadership. In this way they will develop confidence in their own ability and pride in the fact that they are farm boys." Groseclose immediately began work on a constitution and bylaws for the new organization, and J.O. Hoge later suggested a name: Future Farmers of Virginia.

The idea was presented during an annual vocational rally in the state in April 1926, where it was met positively. The Future Farmers of Virginia was born.

Two years later, the idea reached the national stage during the American Royal Livestock Show in Kansas City, Mo. That's when 33 young students from those 18 states gathered at the Hotel Baltimore to

establish the Future Farmers of America. The group elected Leslie Applegate of Freehold, N.J., as its first president and adopted the national emblem – a mark similar to that of the original Virginia emblem – during the new organization's first convention.

In 1929, national blue and corn gold became the official colors of FFA. A year later, delegates adopted the official FFA Creed and by 1933 the familiar Official Dress of blue corduroy jackets was adopted after convention delegates were enthralled by the jackets won to Kansas City by members of the Fredericktown, Ohio, FFA chapter.



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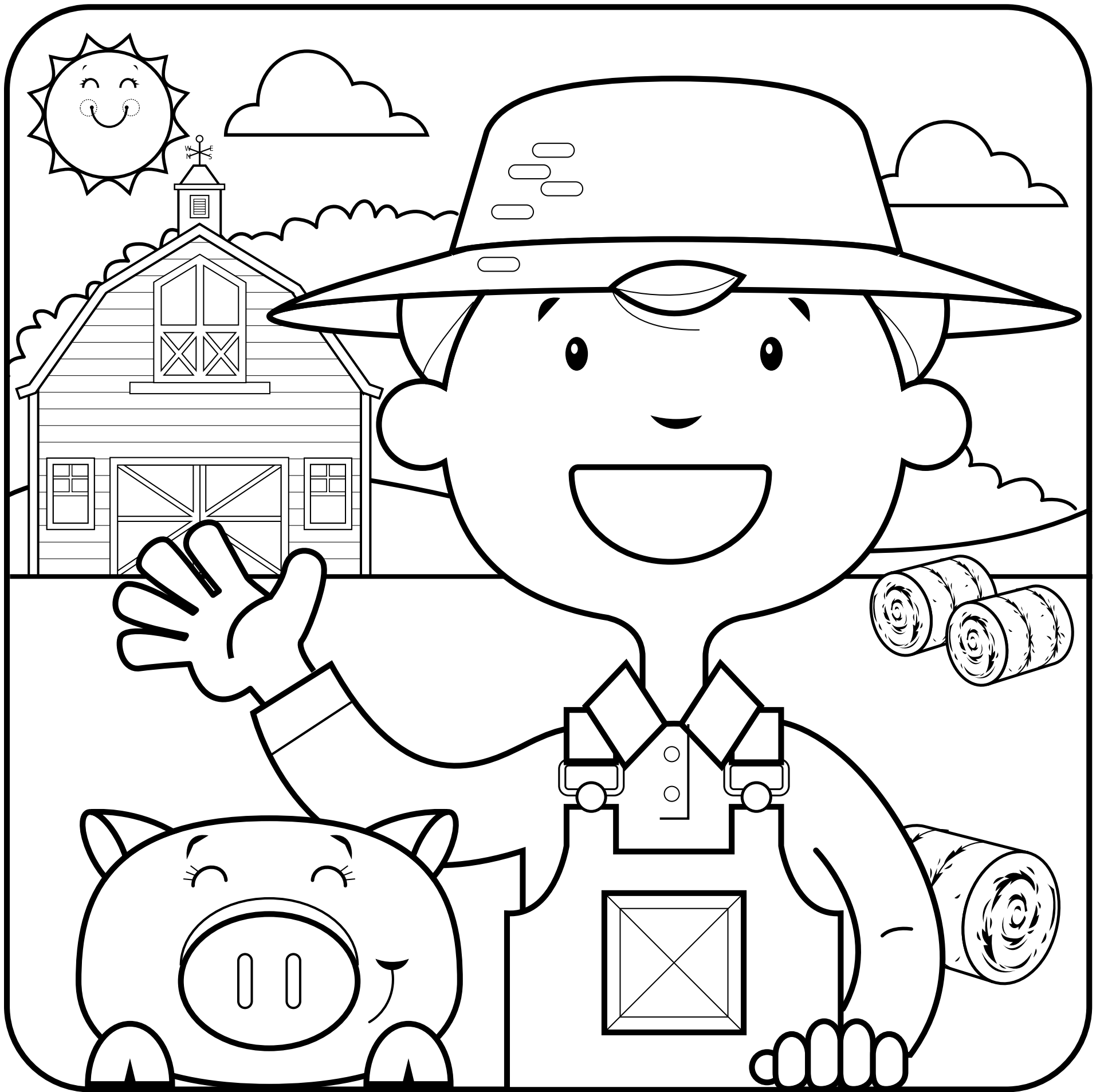
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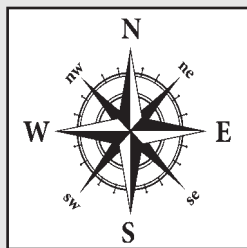
E-mail your entry to: hometownmessenger@gmail.com by March 10, 2021

In the "subject" line put: 2021 FFA CONTEST. Winners announced in the March issue of the Messenger

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Parents Name _____

*Changes in Latitudes,
Changes in Attitudes*
**Soft Spoken
Sweet Southern
Sunshine**



By Terry Campbell

This column is written by Messenger editor and Minnesota native Terry Campbell. Terry now splits his time between Minnesota when it's warm here and Tennessee when it's cold here.

There is a language all of its own in the south, and a curious delivery by the natives who have coined the expressions. Sometimes you get the idea and other times you haven't a clue.

My first exposure was the kindly looking lady working at the local landfill. You were to pull onto the scale to declare what you

were hauling but you didn't have to weigh leaving after unloading. So, I pull up with my truck and trailer and got too far on the scale. After asking what I was delivering, she smiled and sweetly said, "Honey, you pulled up too far on the scale. If you do it next time I am going to have to come out there and kill you."

You get used to terms of endearment. The ladies are effusive in buttery words. It is "how you doin' love, what can I get you darlin', what'll you have dear, how are you honey." Don't think that you are special because they say it to everyone. You will sit down at the booth in the diner with your wife and the young waitress steps up to take your order, looks you right in the eye and calls you sweetie. Whoa girl, we kind of reserve those words for the special lady we are with where I came from. One day while paying for my lunch at the local café, one of the elderly matrons walked through the door, looked straight at the cashier and said "how are you beautiful?"

Well, you get used to it. And you actually start to really enjoy it. A kind word and a pleasant demeanor brightens up the day. But don't start thinking that those southern belles are pushovers. I still remember the first summer we were in Tennessee, and a little old lady was describing encountering a copperhead in her yard. She said, "I emptied my .380 on him and then came back out with the 12 gauge and blew his head off.

**A Minnesotan
in the North:
Snow Boots**



By RosaLin Alcoser

In Minnesota it is a fairly common practice, as in I have seen a lot of people do this over the years, for people to wear their snow boots and carry their dress shoes when it is snowing and they have to go somewhere where they will need their dress shoes. Then change shoes when they get there.

This is just a practical practice that many Minnesotans have adopted over time to keep their feet warm and dry... unless you're a pastor from the Caribbean and have lived in Minnesota

for 20 years.

One Sunday morning when we had about three or so inches of snow come down before the night before my mother and I both did this as we got ready to go to the church. My father on the other hand did not.

Since it was not spouse to snow there was a chance being way up north like we are that the church parking lot would not be plowed when we got there; after all the pastor always has to get there first. So I reminded my father that he should wear his boots to which he replied that he would not need them.

Except the parking lot had not been plowed out yet and he decided to shovel paths in the parking lot so that people would not have to walk in the snow.

After people got to church he was telling them all about how he had to shovel the parking lot and how his feet were now cold. I could hear all of this from where I was in the sound booth.

So into the social hall I popped saying, "don't take pity on him. He was told to wear his snow boots and bring his shoes so that if he had to shovel his feet wouldn't be cold and he told me, 'no, I don't need my boots.' So don't take any pity on the pastor because he was told." Then back to my sound booth I went while people laughed at him.

Houseplants 101



Teri Knight



BRRRR... baby it's cold outside! We're hunkering down indoors with our houseplants and noticing some things.

Like dull color, browning tips, yellowing or leaf drop. What could be going on? A few things. Our homes aren't getting as much light and humidity at this time of year and that has an affect.

My Norfolk Pine is not pleased... and frankly, I'm embarrassed. BUT, my home is very dry and I didn't check the moisture as well as I should have.

But my Mother-in-law tongue is a happy camper.

Two plants, different needs. Something very helpful I've learned is, when you first purchase your houseplant, keep it in the pot it's been growing in. These are designed to drain.

Place the new plant in your decorative pot, if there's no drainage to that one, then either make a hole in the decorative container or use a plastic saucer underneath so your plant doesn't sit in water. That's the quickest way to kill them.

Another thing, invest a few bucks in a moisture meter. I had no idea how helpful that it was going to be! Mine also measures pH but you can buy ones that measure soil temperature too!

For plants that require humidity, pebble trays of water and/or misting are two of the best things you can do for them.

Be sure to know which plants need it. For instance, my norfolk pine enjoys a mist, but the sansevieria does not! Unless I'm wiping down his leaves and drying them off!

Remember that our houseplants are mostly dormant right now, they're taking some down time. In other words, don't fertilize them right now.

Too much stimulation when they would really rather relax! Sort of like having a dark roast coffee right before bed time!

Teri Knight became a Master Gardener with Dakota County, Minnesota in 2003. She currently produces her website, www.gardenbite.com, that supplements her daily radio program which has aired Monday thru Friday on radio stations throughout Minnesota since 2007. In 2017, several stations in Wisconsin began airing her show. Teri's been involved in community projects which include a Junior Master Gardener program for 8 to 12 year olds, designing and planting a garden for a women's center and various other organizations! Besides all that, Teri is News Director at KYMN Radio and can be heard weekdays on AM 1080 and 95.1 FM The One, From Northfield, MN.



**Mother-in-law tongue
2020 aka Sansevieria**

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 16. Of long ago
 17. Gastric problem
 18. *A show that had a Ball
 20. Surveyor's map
 21. Changes to a manuscript
 22. Mai follower
 23. Get a move on
 26. *Superman portrayer
 29. Knot-tying words
 30. Like unskilled work
 33. Play with a bow
 35. New Mexico's state flower
 37. Will Ferrell's Christmas classic
 38. On the radio
 39. Nobel Peace Prize capital
 40. Beat around the bush
 42. Toddler
 43. SAT administrator
 45. Software plug-ins
 47. Facebook photo option
 48. Indulgence of impulses
 50. Brees or Barrymore
 52. *"Dragnet" sergeant
 56. Old Brazilian coins
 57. Pakistan's official language
 58. *"Your Show of Shows" comedian Reiner
 59. Novelist Zola
 60. Not made up
 61. *"The ____ of Night"
 62. Extinct bird
 63. Call minus c
 64. Gloom's companion

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1. Arizona tribe
 2. Bad to the bone
 3. Nevada city near Lake Tahoe
 4. Warrant for officer promotion with no pay
 5. As opposed to stay in
 6. Chagall and Anthony
 7. 3-pointer in basketball
 8. *"Toast of the Town" host
 9. Willy of "Free Willy"
 10. Track event
 11. Always, to a poet
 13. Reference to the writer
 14. Between larvae and adults
 19. Allergic reaction to bee sting
 22. ____ Aviv
 23. *Ranger's call to Silver
 24. Sunbaked, archaically speaking
 25. Wall or pedestal support
 26. Kon-Tiki, e.g.
 27. One of the Muses
 28. Offspring
 31. Getting warm
 32. Not in good health
 34. Tiny leftovers
 36. *Abbott's comedic partner
 38. Online purchase
 40. *Marjorie Reynolds in "The Life of Riley"
 41. Scolding
 44. Schoolmarm's whip
 46. Defrosted
 48. Popular winter boot brand
 49. Put it to the metal
 50. Audition tape
 51. SWAT attack
 52. France/Switzerland border mountain range
 53. Carpenter's groove
 54. Ben Affleck's 2013 Oscar winner
 55. Original matter
 56. *Buttons or Skelton

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