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# NORTH SHORE JOURNAL

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Christine Mallory, Editor

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## Half of Lake Superior School District Referendum Passed

By Kitty Mayo

In the only vote on the ballot in Lake County, voters passed part one of the proposed referendum for the Lake Superior School District last week.

The plan to make major improvements to William Kelley and the Minnehaha, with some upgrades at the Two Harbors High School, was approved by 61% of those casting a ballot.

The projects are estimated to cost around \$45 million, and taxpayers will see a continuation of the level

of property taxation that was used to build Two Harbors High School in 2005.

Safety features, such as moving and rebuilding entrances for security was a top priority, as well as health and safety changes to the William Kelley and Minnehaha, both of which were built over a half century ago.

The second referendum on the ballot regarding an increase in property taxes to fund updating athletic facilities was not passed.

## Community Thanksgiving Service Planned for Unity

By Kitty Mayo

Coming together over shared values is something that churches in the Silver Bay area are encouraging, giving everyone a chance to give thanks together in an effort to increase a spirit of unity. To that end, a Community Thanksgiving Service is planned for Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 pm. The event will be held at the Bay Area Vineyard church in Silver Bay.

According to Pastor John Szurpicki, the churches are trying to bring people together during a time that has seen a great deal of divisiveness and struggle.

“There has been such a spirit of dis-unity over the past two years with really divisive topics from elections to Covid, it's even reaching into people's families. I believe the community needs more unity,” said Szurpicki.

Szurpicki and his wife Holly are new residents of the north shore, but have long been fond of the area. Since 2018 Szurpicki has been the pastor of the Beaver Bay Community Church.

Visiting the area in 2016, Szurpicki says he stopped at the Beaver Bay church by chance. Two years later he got a call asking him to consider becoming the pastor there. Though it took some time to sell their home in Bemidji, the Szurpicki's happily embraced the opportunity and finally were able to make the move in 2019.

Szurpicki says he is excited to be seeing renewed energy at the church, and hopes to continue to contribute to that.

The sign the church puts out

each Sunday, Szurpicki says, really is an accurate expression of how his church community feels. “The sign says, 'Welcome As You Are', and we really do operate that way,” said Szurpicki.

A prayer service with five churches was held under one tent at Bay Days in Silver Bay, and Szurpicki says that many people who attended commented how much they enjoyed the gathering, and that it reminded them of the Thanksgiving service they used to have.

“Everyone has had loss in the last two years, we have to respect each other and figure out how to help each other out,” said Szurpicki.

So far, churches who plan to participate in the Thanksgiving service include the Bay Area Vineyard, Sychar Lutheran, United Protestant, and the Beaver Bay Community Church.

The Beaver Bay church has been holding prayer sessions for the school, praying for the health and safety of students, staff and teachers. Szurpicki says they will continue the Community Prayer Services once a month at the Beaver Bay Community church on the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 am, and invites all community members to join them.

“Everybody's invited to all come together, and although we may not agree on everything, we can celebrate what we do agree on and share the common goal to pray for our community, for the defeat of Covid, and for the support of our first responders,” said Szurpicki.

doctor or pediatrician, and can be made through the MyChart patient portal, or call (833)494-0836.

**\*Correction:** From last week's Covid Update article, the total deaths in Lake County from Covid-19 was incorrectly stated as 24, the correct number is 23. Case rates were incorrectly indicated as being from the most recent week, however, they were a two-week case count.

## Pediatrician Answers Questions about Child Vaccines

By Kitty Mayo

As Lake View Hospital partners with public health to begin Covid-19 vaccination clinics for children ages 5 to 11 this week, parents have shown strong interest in signing their kids up, and others have lingering questions.

Dr. Gretchen Karstens, St. Luke's Pediatrician and Medical Director of Wilderness Health, has been getting a lot of questions from parents about the Covid-19 vaccine for kids. She says the most common questions are: *Do you think it's safe? Would you do this for your kid? Should I do this?*

“The answer is always yes, and I have done this for my teenagers. Yes, I think this is safe,” responded Karstens.

The emergency authorization of Pfizer's Covid vaccine for children is given in two doses, three weeks apart, and contains one-third of the adult dosage.

Dr. Karstens says that though the vaccine is relatively new, it has been well researched and tested for safety in children.

“We know these vaccines are very safe. The first mandate of developing them was that they were safe, then that they reduced the risk of death and disease.”

When asked about the risk of myocarditis from the vaccine, she responded that the risk from getting Covid was much higher.

“The risk of myocarditis for males under thirty is six to thirty times more likely from a Covid infection (than the vaccine), and myocarditis from an infection is likely to need hospitalization for

twice as long than from a vaccine.”

Karstens says that the vaccines are excellent, but wants to be clear that long-term data is not yet in.

“We don't have long term data yet, it's an evolving picture. It's important to say we don't know some things. But, what we do know is that giving the vaccine decreased the risk of severe disease and death. Even though that's low in kids, it can happen.”

Concern about the use of mRNA vaccines is an aspect that Karstens says needs more education.

“Parents want to know how long the mRNA from the Pfizer vaccine lasts inside the body. I compare it to a picture on SnapChat. It is a nanoparticle wrapped in a lipid so it can get into the cell. The lipid coating quickly breaks down and the message is used by the body to make a spike protein, and the body then makes an antibody to protect against it. This is sort of like a Snap, it isn't going to linger and change your kids' DNA, and there is no evidence that it affects fertility. Our bodies are making mRNA all the time, and removing them. It's like that SnapChat picture, it's here, then it's gone.”

Karstens says that child vaccinations are a path back to normal.

“Vaccines for kids are going to help get them back to having a fully cultural normative experience, this is how we get back to regular school functioning, this is how we are going to have safer holidays. I know the difference it's going to make in my family so we can all be together this year.”

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