World: Quieter reception for Zelenskyy this D.C. visit; more aid likely. **A4**

Sports: Vikings' trust in Mattison hasn't flagged with Akers add, coordinator Phillips says. **B1**

Sports: Twins ready to pop bottles on the cusp of AL title. **B1**

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SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Meeting clarifies force rule

SROs could be back in schools soon, after Walz, Ellison, police discussed law

By Mara H. Gottfried
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School resource officers removed by some Minnesota law enforcement agencies could be returning to schools soon, legislative leaders and the largest public safety association in the state said Thursday.

Minnesota House and Senate Democratic leaders said Thursday they're committed to holding public hearings about school resource officers in the first two weeks of next year's legislative session, which begins in February.

But Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson, R-East Grand Forks, said Thursday that "hearings don't change the law. ... We need clear, legislative solutions that are passed by the House and Senate and signed by the Governor."

A change in state law this year says school resource officers can't restrain students face-down or put a student in a hold that restricts their ability to breathe or communicate distress, except when necessary "to restrain a student to prevent bodily harm or death to the student or to another."

OFFICERS » PAGE 5

A SNOWPLOW RODEO

PHOTOS BY JOHN AUTEY — PIONEER PRESS

Matt Stevens, a St. Paul Public Works employee, hones his driving skills as he navigates a snowplow through an obstacle course during a snowplow rodeo at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in Falcon Heights on Thursday. Stevens has been driving snowplows for St. Paul for eight years. Snowplow drivers from St. Paul, Minneapolis and Ramsey, Washington and Anoka counties put their skills to the test on an obstacle course, to practice safe and efficient use of a plow truck as they prepare for another Minnesota winter.

CONGRESS

McCarthy stymied again by rebels

Spending bills left in limbo; shutdown looming in 9 days

By Annie Karni
New York Times

WASHINGTON » Right-wing House Republicans dealt another stunning rebuke to Speaker Kevin McCarthy on Thursday, blocking a Pentagon funding bill for the second time this week in a vivid display of GOP disunity on federal spending that threatens to lead to a government shutdown in nine days.

Just hours after McCarthy signaled that he had won over some of the holdouts and was ready to move forward, a handful of Republicans broke with their party to oppose a routine measure to allow the military appropriations bill to come to the House floor for debate, joining with Democrats to defeat it.

CONGRESS » PAGE 13

MEDIA

Murdoch exit leaves his empire with son

By David Bauder
Associated Press

NEW YORK » Magnate Rupert Murdoch's surprise announcement Thursday that he's stepping down as leader of his two companies leaves his son Lachlan firmly in line of succession at Fox and the rest of the media empire.

Rupert Murdoch

The 92-year-old Australian billionaire's creation of Fox News Channel has made him an enduring force in American politics. He inherited a newspaper in Adelaide, Australia, from his father in 1952 and eventually built a news and entertainment enterprise dominant in the United States and Britain.

MURDOCH » PAGE 10

FRANCONIA SCULPTURE PARK

Director job a 'chance of a lifetime' for artist

Rural sculpture center will celebrate its 27th anniversary on Saturday

By Mary Divine
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Alex Legeros spent part of 2016 at Franconia Sculpture Park creating a sculpture called "Sugar Shack."

He's now spending time at the park near Taylors Falls in a new role: executive director.

He succeeds Ginger Shulick Porcella, who left in January to become executive director of Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland, Calif.

Getting the job was the "chance of a lifetime," Legeros said.

"When people would tell me they had found their calling, I was always, like, 'Huh. Really?' But now I've found mine," he said. "In the world that we live in, things feel like they can be too good to be true, but for me, I've found one thing that isn't. It's a magical thing."

FRANCONIA » PAGE 13

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Lightning strike was home's inspiration

New build after fire to be featured in architecture tour this weekend

By Mary Divine
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Chris Griese and Vicki Kappus weren't sure what to do after a lightning strike destroyed their 1901 farmhouse in Grant seven years ago.

Building on the foundation of the old house didn't make sense, because the property on 118th Street North is in a flood plain, with setbacks and restrictions severely limiting the buildable area.

Enter architect Rosemary McMonigal.

McMonigal, principal of Minneapolis-based McMonigal Architects, spent hours walking the site, working on a plan to build a new house while saving as many trees as possible and taking advantage of the rural setting overlooking a marsh.

"The site is one of a kind with the marsh here," McMonigal said during a tour of the house on Thursday. "I cannot believe how beautiful it is. To me, because I live on a wetland, it is equally as beautiful as a lake. In Minnesota, everyone says, 'Oh, it's not a lake, it's a marsh.' But I think it's as good or better because the bird life with a marsh is just so rich."

The new house, which sits up to eight feet higher above grade than the previous house, features an open floor plan and is filled with light. There are windows on all four sides of the house — a design element that could be realized once McMonigal persuaded the couple to build a detached garage.

"We gained a view from all these rooms, versus partitioning them off," Griese said. "Our old house had partitioned-off rooms, narrow hallways, small windows. Everything was a little space."

TOUR » PAGE 5

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Tour

FROM PAGE 1

Constructing an unattached garage was key, McMonigal said, because that allowed water to flow between the garage and the house to the adjacent marsh.

Because of the potential for flooding, the solar-powered house is a slab on grade with no basement. The exposed concrete slab has a stained finish, provides a passive-solar heat sink, and has in-floor heat.

"Rosemary was like, 'Forget about a basement. The marsh is always trying to invade it anyway,'" Griese said. "The basement was constantly flooding. The sump pump was running all the time, even in the winter."

McMonigal worked closely with officials from Grant, Washington County, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the surveyor to precisely locate FEMA flood lines and the wetland-delineation zone. The house is just at the edge of the protected zone and is raised higher to reduce the risk of flooding and improve views over the marsh.

"Now we can see the marsh," Kappus said. "Before when the cattails grew up, it was like being in a cornfield. You couldn't really see anything, and, honestly, the garage really blocked the best view."

COURTESY OF MCMONIGAL ARCHITECTS

A house in Grant designed by Minneapolis-based McMonigal Architects will be one of the 14 homes included in the 16th annual AIA MN Homes by Architects Tour, which will take place Saturday and Sunday.

'Your house is burning to the ground'

Griese, who is the eastern U.S. sales manager for Sake Story, a sake importing company, and Kappus, a substitute teacher, moved to Grant in 1990 from West St. Paul. The couple had a 2 ½ year old, and Kappus was pregnant with their second child.

"We decided we needed a little more room, and we happened to see a listing in the newspaper," Kappus said. "Chris grew up on a farm in Wisconsin, and the idea of some property was really appealing to him."

The couple put in an offer below the asking price "thinking that they wouldn't take it," she said. "They called the next day. ... At that point, I didn't even know if there was a washing machine in the house. I felt like I had barely looked at it."

The site is surrounded by farmers and artists. Artist Kami Mendlik lives on one side of them; artists Doug and Angie Malin live on the other side.

In 2016, Kappus and the couple's daughter, Sydney, were in Chicago and Griese was out grocery shopping when Mendlik called Griese to report the fire. "I was at Kowalski's buying a roast chicken," he said. "Kami called and said, 'Chris you'd better get home. Your house is burning to the ground.' Those were her exact words."

Griese got in his car and raced back to the house. "I could see the plume of smoke from three miles away," he said. "I came racing around the corner. I got here before the fire department did."

The house, which had huge wooden beams and cedar on the outside and inside, "just went up like a Roman candle," he said.

Some features and furniture from the original house could be saved. A wooden door from their bedroom was salvaged. An Oriental rug, a family heirloom from Griese's side of the family, had recently been cleaned and was still rolled up and wrapped in plastic in an area that escaped water damage. Art glass windows, created by Griese, were saved from the fire and now hold a place of prominence in the dining room and owners' bedroom.

A secretary in Kappus's office didn't burn, but "the outline of whatever was on the top of it is still there," Kappus said. "Those kinds of things just amazed me when I saw that — just how much that smoke and blackness penetrated."

MARY E. DIVINE — PIONEER PRESS

Architect Rosemary McMonigal, left, greets her clients, Vicki Kappus and Chris Griese, right, outside their house in Grant on Wednesday.

Modern touches

The new house is 2,375 square feet, about 1,000 square feet smaller than the original house. It was designed with most living space on the first floor, so Griese and Kappus can "age-in-place." "We don't really need to go up and down at all," he said.

The living room features a modern woodburning stove that rotates 90 degrees to face either the dining or living spaces. McMonigal talked the couple out of "a big gas fireplace feature," Kappus said.

"People often place a fireplace on an inside wall, but we wanted them to see the view of the marsh, so we combined the view and the fire element on one side," McMonigal said. "They produce plenty of wood branches around here to burn."

Just off the living room is a screened porch that anchors the northwest corner of the house and takes full advantage of views to the marsh. A hammock and comfortable furniture make it a favorite hangout spot when the weather is good.

"We never had a screened-in porch before," Kappus said.

"All we had were mosquitoes," Griese joked.

"We use this a lot," she said. "It's sad when we have to close the door for the winter."

The smaller second floor includes a loft area, bedroom, bathroom, built-in bed alcove and storage. When the couple asked their children, Stuart Griese, 33, and Sydney Griese, 30, what elements they wanted to be included in the new house, "both of them remembered the loft in the old house, and they wanted to have a loft area," Kappus said. "That was important. We still think of this as their home."

Architect's guidance

Griese and Kappus found McMonigal through their friends Becky and Andy Braden; Andy Braden was the founder of Braden Construction in Stillwater.

"Becky, having worked on her home with Rosemary, said, 'Rosemary will keep you going in a straight line. I didn't realize how helpful that was,'" Kappus said.

After the fire, the couple lived with the Bradens for two weeks and the Malins for two weeks before moving to two different condos in St. Paul's Summit University neighborhood for two years while their new house was in design and construction.

"To see this and think of just walking away from it — cleaning it up and selling it, it just didn't seem fair," Kappus said. "It didn't seem fair to what we had. It didn't seem fair to the neighbors. It would have been wrong to do that."

"We love life out here," Griese said.

Living in a condo in St. Paul gave the couple lots of ideas of what they wanted in the new house, including a walk-in shower with side sprays in the owners' bathroom.

"A new house is so great," Griese said. "You don't have to constantly fix stuff."

The house's exterior features an upper band of corrugated steel, designed to reflect the sky, while the earthen color of the lower band of cedar siding ties the structure to the land, McMonigal said. The interior features a mix of woods, metal and concrete, along with a range of ceiling heights.

The roof of the house was designed to optimize exposure for the roof-mounted solar panels, and McMonigal insisted that the house include a large mechanical room/laundry room. "With solar you need more things — there's an extra meter and panels," she said.

"We had thought the front of the house would just be a porch," Griese said. "She's, like, 'What are you going to do with a large porch? You just come and go.'"

Instead, the trio compromised on a landing outside the east door where the couple could put their gas grill. Griese jokes that the couple "needed a place to cook bratwursts."

Just below the landing is a large patio area that includes a pizza oven that was built by Griese.

"This side of the house is our social side," he said. "It's really protected, and you can be out here pretty much all the time. The west side is very private. It's a teeny little porch, and we have tea and breakfast and lunch and sometimes dinner out there."

Lightning strikes twice

Six months after Griese and Kappus moved into the new house, lightning struck again. It hit their tall Douglas fir tree and leapt over to the house, starting a fire that damaged controls, electronics and some of the interior. The 2019 fire "burned a hole in the gas supply line which, fortunately, was burning in a steel-lined box," Griese said. "It could burn away, but it wasn't going to burn the house down."

The couple say they hope to remain in the house for decades to come.

"It's a home now," Griese said. "It feels like where we're supposed to live."

COURTESY OF MCMONIGAL ARCHITECTS

The couple's new house features an open floor plan with windows on all sides.

AIA MN HOMES BY ARCHITECTS TOUR

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Cost: $25 in advance or $35 during the tour; $10 for the virtual-only tour experience; $10 for students and children 6 and older; children 5 and under are free

House No. 13: Chris Griese and Vicky Kappus' house at 10510 118th St. N., Grant.

Details: All homes are designed by registered members of the American Institute of Architects Minnesota. Ten of the homes will be available for in-person visits and four can be toured virtually. Visitors will have a chance to meet the lead architects and their design teams.

Info: www.homesbyarchitects.org

Officers

FROM PAGE 1

Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association sent a letter to its members in August recommending they "evaluate the risks associated with the new law to make a choice on whether to participate in school functions." The association's general counsel said at the time he had "significant concerns" about officers working as SROs or doing any work contracted through a school district.

Many school districts never had SROs and, for those who do, the majority are still in place, Gov. Tim Walz said earlier this week. But about 40 law enforcement agencies paused their school resource officer programs, some as recently as this week.

Attorney General Keith Ellison issued a legal opinion about the law in August and put forth a supplemented opinion Wednesday. His office said there have been "significant misunderstandings about the impact" of changes to the state law, including an interpretation by some that SROs couldn't use any physical contact to address non-violent behavior, but Ellison said that is not the case.

Walz met Wednesday with law enforcement, legislative leaders and Ellison, which he described Thursday as a productive meeting "where we made significant progress in coming to an agreement that will help ensure school safety."

"Law enforcement leaders came to the Attorney General with valid questions, and I am grateful for the Attorney General's binding opinion clarifying that school resource officers can continue to do their jobs effectively," he said in a statement. "I am committed to further addressing this issue next legislative session and eager to see school resource officers return to schools as soon as possible."

Also on Thursday, House Speaker Melissa Hortman and Senate Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic said they've been listening to parents, teachers, students, school leaders and law enforcement in recent weeks and have been working to provide clarification of the law.

"On Sept. 20, the Attorney General issued a binding legal opinion that provides law enforcement with the level of clarity they have been seeking," Hortman and Dziedzic said in a statement announcing their plans to hold public hearings next legislative session. "... After discussions with law enforcement organization leaders, we all believe these latest developments will help to return SROs to schools as soon as possible."

MPPOA plans to issue guidance to law enforcement members, but a spokesperson agreed Wednesday's meeting was productive and said she expects some law enforcement agencies could reinstate SRO programs soon.

The police association was concerned that the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) could take action against an officer's license if, under the changed SRO law, an officer's use of force was regarded as unauthorized or unreasonable.

The POST Board told law enforcement associations Thursday that it understands Ellison's legal opinion is binding.

Republican legislative leaders and law enforcement previously called for a special legislative session over the changed law.

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