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See page six



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compete  
in Monte

See page 14

# TRACY HEADLIGHT HERALD

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Tony Peterson enjoyed a light moment at Monday night's city council meeting. Peterson retained his seat in Monday's recall referendum.

## PETERSON WITHSTANDS RECALL VOTE

Councilman retains seat by 211-174 vote

Tracy voters decided Tuesday that Tony Peterson should continue serving on the city council.

Peterson held onto his council seat as 211 voters (54.8%) rejected a measure to recall the former mayor and longtime council member from office. A total of 174 ballots (45.2%) favored Peterson's removal from office.

The recall referendum asked voters to check "yes" on the ballot if they wanted Peterson recalled from office, and "no" if they wished Peterson to remain in office.

The unusual recall

referendum was sparked by a citizen petition signed by 130 city residents last fall. The petition asked that Peterson be recalled from office over alleged violations of city code and charter. Peterson denied the charges.

Had a majority of voters approved Peterson's recall, a special election would have been needed to fill the subsequent vacancy.

Peterson was elected to a four-year term in the fall of 2016 that began in January of 2017.

The council is scheduled to canvass the recall election results on Feb. 22.

## Faster Internet eyed for Tracy

Public invited to  
hear updates  
from providers

By Seth Schmidt

Faster and higher-capacity Internet services are on the horizon for Tracy, according to local business leaders.

"The way it's been explained to me, what we now have in fiber optic capacity in Tracy is like a two-lane highway," says Tracy businessman Mark Seager. "What's coming in the future is going to be like a four-lane freeway."

Local people are invited to find out more about this digital super-highway of Tracy's future Wednesday,

Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. at The Caboose.

The Tracy Development Corporation, which has made improved broadband services in Tracy a priority, is sponsoring the meeting.

All four of Tracy's Internet providers have been invited to give an overview of existing fiber optic cable, and outline plans for the future.

Seager said that he's "really excited" about the new offerings he's been told will be available soon for both fiber optic cable, as well as increased speeds for coaxial cable speeds.

VAST Communications, Charter-Spectrum, and Woodstock Communications have all confirmed that they

**Internet:**  
See page three

Administrator timeline sees late May job offer

By Seth Schmidt

The City of Tracy's search for a new administrator is about to be put on the front burner again.

Monday, the council reviewed a proposed timeline that would seek new applications in April, conduct interviews and select finalists in May, and strive to have a new administrator on the job by June 11.

Wendell Sande of the South

**Timeline:**

See page three

## Jeri Schons to join council

Jeri Schons has been appointed to the Tracy City Council.

She will serve out the remaining year on the four-year term that former Mayor Steve Ferrazzano was elected to in 2014. Ferrazzano resigned in January, to accept an appointment as a district court judge. Council member Pam Cooreman was then appointed to the office of mayor.

Schons is the Director of Nursing and Clinical Services for Sanford Tracy Medical Center.

"My main goal will be to do the best job that I can, be a good representative for Tracy, and help move Tracy in a positive direction," Schons said Tuesday morning.

Her appointment was made Monday,

on a 4-0 city council vote. A committee comprised of council members Dave Tiegs, and Kou Thao recommended Schons for the vacancy, after interviewing five applicants last week. Schons will take the oath of office Feb. 26.

Schons said that she applied for the council position, after deciding that she wants to help chart Tracy's future, and feeling that she had some leadership experience to offer. She has been a part of the Tracy Kids' World board of directors since its inception, and has also served on the St. Mary's School Board and the St. Mary's parish council.

Schons said that she feels that Tracy has "many positives" going for it, which

need to be emphasized more.

The new council appointee is a Tracy native who earned her degree in nursing at South Dakota State University. She's been employed at the Tracy hospital since 1987.



Schons

## Leonard jumps in race to give voters a choice

Progressive Democrat, attorney from Walnut Grove will challenge Tina Smith in special election

By Per Peterson

Nick Leonard is taking his passion for politics to a whole new level.

Leonard, a Tracy Area High School graduate and Democratic activist originally from Walnut Grove, announced last week that he will challenge former Minnesota Lt. Gov. and current U.S. Sen. Tina Smith for the seat to which she was appointed after the departure of Sen. Al Franken, who stepped down in January after allegations of sexual abuse surfaced.

Leonard is the first Democrat to challenge Smith in a November special election. Republican state Sen. Karin Housely, R-St. Marys Point, is also running for the seat.

"I think it's really important for people to have a choice within the party," Leonard said in an interview with the Headlight Herald on Tuesday. "Politics have gotten so contentious, and I think it's time for someone with core Minnesota values to represent the people."



Leonard

By Per Peterson  
See page two



## TRACY TORNADO 50TH ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCE SET

By Seth Schmidt

Planning is underway to mark the 50th anniversary of the Tracy Tornado this summer.

The infamous June 13, 1968, tornado killed nine people, and left a path of destruction through the heart of Tracy.

"It's such an important date in Tracy's history," said Scott Thoma, a 1977 Tracy graduate who is helping organize the event. "I just think it is important to pass on the stories of the tornado to the next generation and remember those who lost their lives that day."

"Never Forget" has been chosen as the theme for the 50th-year remembrance, which will be observed Saturday, June 9. Events will be held at Central Park, Tracy Lutheran Church, and The Caboose. The Veterans' Memorial Center will serve as indoor back-up site in case of inclement

weather.

The Tracy Chamber of Commerce is helping sponsor the event, and the City of Tracy has granted permission for use of VMC and Central Park.

The "Never Forget" itinerary includes:

- Live music at the Central Park bandshell, with performances by several local groups. Pizza and refreshments will be served.

- A program about severe summer weather and the Tracy Tornado staged by KSTP television meteorologist Jonathan Yuhas.

- Speakers will share memories of the 1968 tornado.

- A silent auction will be held to raise scholarships for nine TAHS seniors, in memory of the nine people who lost their lives in the tornado.

- Commemorative T-shirts, emblazoned with the "Never Forget"

**Remembrance:**  
See page two

## Tracy Area High School's Hook is Region 3A Triple 'A' winner

By Per Peterson

Sarita Hook, a Minnesota State High School League ExCEL Award winner her junior year, is Tracy Area High School's second straight Region 3A Triple 'A' Award winner.

The MSHSL announced the 2018 winners last week. The MSHSL sponsors the award, which goes to select nominated high school seniors with a "B" or better GPA and who participate in League-sponsored athletic and fine arts activities.

Hook expressed humility this week when discussing the award.

"I am very humbled to have received this award,

especially since many of my classmates were very deserving of this recognition as well," she said. "I believe any one of us could have been chosen and would have been a great representative of our school and community."

Aside from being an honor student, Hook is involved in band, choir, one-act, speech, cross country, and track and field. In speech, Hook was the Section 3A runner-up in Extemporaneous Reading in 2016 and was the winner in the same category last year. She finished in the top six at state the last two years. Hook has also received "Superior" ratings in music contests in both band and choir and has been heavily involved in her schools' fall the-



REGION 3A Triple 'A' winner Sarita Hook keeps busy outside of the classroom with cross country and track and field, as well as band and choir.

atre productions and is a member of the schools' chamber choir.

In sports, Hook is a member of the cross country, and track and field teams. Last spring, she was a member of the 4400 relay team that reached state.

**Hook:**  
See page two