

LITCHFIELD

# Independent Review

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022

Antonia Muellerleile as Alex the lion, Adeline Nelson as Marty the zebra, Ben Gosswiller as Melman the giraffe, and Allyson Dallmann as Gloria the hippo team up for adventure in “Madagascar Jr.”



## Tests confirm case of bird flu in Meeker County flock

Commercial flock of nearly 300,000 birds identified by state

BY BRENT SCHACHERER  
schacherer@hutchinsonleader.com

A Meeker County poultry flock is one of three in the state afflicted with confirmed cases of the bird flu, according to the Board of Animal Health.

Samples taken from flocks in Meeker and Mower counties were tested Friday at state laboratories and confirmed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa, showed H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza, or bird flu.

The Meeker County case involves a commercial turkey flock of almost 300,000 birds, where mortality and signs of depression were reported. That report led to samples being collected and tested at the Minnesota Poultry Test Laboratory in Willmar.

Bird flu to 2 ➤

## Dollar General plans receive City Council approval

Variance allows 42 fewer parking spaces than required by ordinance

BY BRENT SCHACHERER  
schacherer@hutchinsonleader.com

A new Dollar General store took another step toward reality March 21 as the Litchfield City Council approved a variance request for the proposed site on North Sibley Avenue.

The City Council unanimously approved, with member Eric Mathwig absent, a variance to allow a smaller parking lot than required by ordinance.

Litchfield Planning Commission reviewed the site plan and variance request during its March 14 meeting and forwarded the plan to the City Council with its recommendation for approval. The plan for property at 702 Sibley Ave. N., submitted by Rod Hamby of Overland Group and Rodney Parrott of Overland Engineering, included request to reduce the 72 parking spots required by zoning ordinance to 30.

The plan calls for construction of a 9,100 square foot store (7,220 of retail space), which will face east, toward Sibley Avenue, with access to the store and parking lot from West Seventh Street. A memo from the applicants included an explanation of the typical Dollar General site and traffic generation, along with parking needs.

“The proposed parking, facilitated by the

Parking to 2 ➤

# Theater in the wild

Litchfield Community Youth Theatre will stage ‘Madagascar Jr.’ April 7-10



Visions of steaks, including Therese Kulzer, left, dance in Alex the lion's (Antonia Muellerleile) head during a scene from “Madagascar Jr.”

BY BRENT SCHACHERER  
schacherer@hutchinsonleader.com

Litchfield Community Youth Theatre has turned into a real zoo.

Oh, and uh, just to be clear, that's a good thing.

The animals take over the stage for LCYT's annual spring musical, “Madagascar — A Musical Adventure Jr.,” with four shows planned April 7-10 at Bernie Aaker Auditorium.

A cast of 32 youth ranging in age from third to 11th grade has been rehearsing since early February under director Roseanne Hansen, who landed her role in November.

“We have a good group of kids (in the show),” Hansen said. “I think, probably, at least half of them were in the show last year. I wasn't involved in that show, but most of them have experience in theater somewhere.

“There's maybe a quarter that are brand new, and that's fun, too, as they all learn together,”

Theater to 2 ➤

## City Council reviews wastewater treatment proposals

Some treatment targets remain unsettled, leaving costs uncertain

BY BRENT SCHACHERER  
schacherer@hutchinsonleader.com

Changing requirements and increasing industrial demand will force some expensive improvements to Litchfield's wastewater treatment plant.

Paul Saffert, a wastewater expert with Bolton & Menk, told the City Council Monday that the city's engineering consultant is still reviewing improvement options as they create a plan to deal with more stringent wastewater discharge limits from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and at the same time handle increasing loads from some of the city's large industrial customers.

In addition, even though the wastewater treatment system has seen some upgrades in the past decade, some components at the treat-



STAFF PHOTO BY BRENT SCHACHERER

Litchfield Wastewater Treatment Facility faces some major upgrades due to changes in state treatment requirements and an increase in demand from so-called significant industrial users.

ment plant are at least 40 years old, Saffert said.

Depending on the technological path that's chosen — and where the state's limits on wastewater discharge land — upgrades could range between \$55-\$90 million.

Discussion of upgrades at the treatment plant began late last year and was sparked by what City Engineer Chuck DeWolf described

Treatment to 2 ➤