

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2021
SHAKOPEE VALLEY NEWS

BREAKING NEWS ONLINE AT WWW.SHAKOPEENEWS.COM



Asha Nouwen, head teacher at New Horizon Academy located on Windermere Way in Shakopee, plays with Grace Pearson, left, and Skylar Putnam.

PHOTO BY JACQUELINE DEVINE



PHOTO BY LYDIA CHRISTIANSON

Grape growing is a blend of science, art and passion, said viticulturalist John Thull. This year's hot and dry weather could translate to a banner year for local wine crops.

On cloud wine

With hot and dry weather, local wine experts anticipate vintage year

BY LYDIA CHRISTIANSON
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Pondering things that go well together, one's mind might wander to peanut butter and jelly, or salt and pepper.

But what about grapes and dry weather? The recent drought conditions have left many Minnesota crops struggling. However, a few southwest metro winemakers explain why the hot and dry climate has them excited about this year's harvest.

The weather has proved beneficial to vineyards, said Aaron Schram, owner and operator of Schram Vineyards Winery and Brewery in Waconia.

There has still been about a quarter inch to an eighth of an inch of rainfall a week. So, the grapes are doing "exceedingly well," Schram said.

Wineries to 11 ►

ROLLERCOASTER for child care

Local centers take hit from pandemic

BY JACQUELINE DEVINE
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Over the past year and a half, child care centers around the nation have suffered throughout the COVID-19 global pandemic. Child care providers are now speaking out on how it has negatively impacted their industry.

Since the pandemic began and schools moved to virtual learning, millions of parents have had to work from home.

Fearing for the health and safety of their children, many parents have opted out of child care services which in turn has led to labor shortages.

New Horizon Academy CEO and Minnesota Child Care Association President Chad Dunkley said there are currently 72 New Horizon Academies throughout the state. He said the last year and a half has been a rollercoaster for all child care providers across the country. Minnesota was no exception.

"Back at the last end of March of last year, New Horizon Academy was serving over 10,000 Minnesota children, and in a matter of weeks we went to serving about 2,200. We were really struggling with what do we do now," said Dunkley.

"Pre-pandemic we had over 3,100 teachers here in Minnesota and at one point we had about 1,000. We've continued to hire and more families have returned. Today, we sit a little over 2,100 teachers here."

Dunkley said he understands that child care is a critical piece of infrastructure for those families that don't have the luxury of staying home and knows the importance of staying open for them.

"Minnesota was one of the first states in the country that did a significant public policy push to ask Minnesota legislators to come up with a grant program because we didn't have enough children to pay the bills and we needed to serve our

Child care to 11 ►



Scott/Le Sueur County Soybean and Corn Growers donated a set of Goodyear soy-based Eagle Enforcer All Weather tires to the local Sheriff's Departments to promote new uses of soybeans, while supporting local law enforcement. The donation is a part of the Driving Soy statewide campaign Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council created.

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INDEX

OPINION.....	6
OBITUARIES.....	8
SPORTS.....	10
CLASSIFIEDS.....	13

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