

GOT THE SNIFFLES?

The Y's Kristi Stasi tells when it's OK to stick to your workout routine. **A3**

PUBLIC SAFETY

At a meeting Thursday, police will provide details about a Level 3 sex offender in Austin. **A4**

WEDNESDAY'S WEATHER

Partly sunny; wind chill, -9.
High: 25 | Low: 15



More weather
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Austin Post-Bulletin

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Tuesday, December 6, 2011

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ST. LUCIA FEST / DIRECTOR'S FAREWELL



Photos by Elizabeth Nida Obert, enida@postbulletin.com

A rehearsal is held Monday night at the Paramount Theatre for Sunday's farewell performance of Lucia Fest.

Lights to fade on fest

By Heather Rule
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Madlain Vander has put on the Lucia Fest celebration in Austin for the past decade. That run of performances will end with this year's show.

Vander, a native of Sweden, is planning to leave the area and has announced that the Scandinavian-themed Lucia Fest on Sunday will be her farewell performance. It ends a long run of performances under her direction; she started in the United States 19 years ago in Montana.

"I started it for selfish reasons," Vander said. "I couldn't have Christmas without this. I have to have my Lucia Fest. And then it just kind of grew and grew.

"I already know this is going to be my favorite year. It's

LUCIA FEST

When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Where: Paramount Theatre, 125 Fourth Ave. N.E., Austin.
Admission: Free, but donations are requested.

just incredible. It's just gotten better every year."

The event is bigger than it's ever been this year with a cast of more than 100. A lot of people in Austin have made it their tradition to attend the Lucia Fest. What's kept Vander going is seeing the joy from all of the participants — ages 3 to adult — and the joy of the families.

Vander also couldn't stop raving about the music in the show. It goes back to her



Lucia Fest Director and producer Madlain Vander, in jeans and white sweater, leads the rehearsal.

memories of when she sang in St. Lucia festivals as a kid in Sweden. The music is simple yet beautiful, and it just "pierces my heart," she said.

"You can't but feel good when you leave," Vander said.

On stage, a potpourri of legends will come to life with songs and stories about Father Christmas, his gnomes and elves, gingerbread cookie children, dancers as old-fashioned skaters. Main character St. Lucia is the candle-crowned Queen of Light, leading her procession of angels and star-boys.

The large cast represents Jane Taylor Academy of Dance, Pacelli Shamrock Singers and Clover Choir, Pacelli Elementary students, Sons of Norway, Matchbox Children's Theatre and community members.

For this year's show, Therese Tufsvesson, an Austin Rotary Club exchange student from Gothenburg, Sweden, will perform the role of Lucia. Exchange students have participated in the show in years past, as well.

"Foreign exchange students really add a flavor to it," Vander said. "They bring their own special touch."

The performance this year is also a memorial to honor Darren M. Lewis, 38, an Austin man who died in September. Proceeds from the donations collected will go toward buying a ceiling star and permanent seat recognition in the Paramount Theatre, as well as go to a Pacelli School Guardian Angel Fund for the children of Darren Lewis. Memorial donations also may be sent to the Paramount.

2012 PROPERTY TAXES / CITY PORTION

City taxes to increase 13 percent

Council discusses ways to trim budget, but settles on final total

By Heather Rule
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The Austin City Council approved a 13 percent tax levy increase on Monday, but it wasn't without more proposals for tax cuts, lengthy discussion and three failed motions.

The tax levy for 2012 was approved with a 4-2 vote.

Since the state has eliminated some funding and tax breaks, the levy increase is for \$3,975,000.

Council member Judy Enright brought a plan to the table with three options to decrease the overall budget with cuts to various city departments. She wanted to challenge departments to make cuts.

"I think that people need to be challenged to do things differently," Enright said. "It's not impossible. I have confidence in them that they can find ways."

Her three motions were to cut the budget to reduce the levy by \$105,663 (about 3 percent), \$70,442 (about 2 percent) and \$35,247 (about 1 percent). The first two failed on 4-3 votes, with Mayor Tom Stiehm breaking the tie. The third motion (\$35,247) failed by a 4-2 vote.

Enright and Marian Clennon voted in favor of all three motions; Roger Boughton voted for the first two. Janet Anderson, Jeff Austin and Brian McAlister voted against all three. Steve King was absent from Monday's meeting.

Those who voted against Enright's ideas said they were supportive of them for the future, but there was concern about what kinds of cuts would be made.

"We don't know what these real dollars are going to give us," Austin said. "We're at the 11:59 hour here."

Enright maintained that although the cuts would be work, they would be doable. The council should also be able to trust department heads to make cuts, she said.

"There's a lot of unknowns out there," Enright said. "We've got to think of everybody in the community, not just the department heads."

Boughton, who had presented other cost-cutting ideas to the council during the months of budget talks, had one more idea to try and lower taxes: Eliminate the contingency fund of \$140,000 for 2012. This would have reduced the tax increase from 13 percent to 9 percent. His motion failed to get a second.

The council also approved the 2012 budget of more than \$30 million by a 4-2 vote. Clennon and Enright voted against the motions for both the levy and budget approval.



Austin



Boughton



Clennon

HEALTH CARE / LONG-TIME PHYSICIAN RETIRING

Retirement reception set for family physician with 39-year career

By Kay Fate
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Dr. Dick Schindler, a family medicine physician who began his career in Austin in July 1972, will hang up his lab coat and stethoscope for good Dec. 31.

Schindler saw hundreds of patients over the course of his 39-plus years at Mayo Clinic Health System in both the Austin and Adams clinics, many of whom were generations of families.

To honor Schindler's service and to recognize all he's done for the communities in which

he lives and works, an open house retirement reception will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday at the Austin YMCA.

Schindler is and has always been health-conscious, so having the reception at the YMCA is a good fit. Anyone who attends the retirement reception also is invited to spend time using the Y at no charge — no membership will be needed to enter between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. The running track, wellness center and pool are just a few of the areas that will be available.

"Dr. Schindler is an exemplary physician who serves as a

mentor for all," said Dr. David Agertter, CEO of the Austin clinic. "He's caring and compassionate and always places the needs of the patients first. He has provided tremendous educational and leadership support to our medical staff for many years and he should be very proud of his accomplishments."

Schindler was instrumental in starting the medical center's educational program for providers and caregivers and was chairman of the Continuing Medical Education Committee from 1973-2009.

His commitment to provid-

ing the best care possible to all patients was evident by providing leadership for the Infection Prevention and Control, and Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committees, as well as being the medical director of the Anticoagulation Clinic. He was also a member of the Ethics, Sports Medicine, Mayo Pharmaceutical Formulary, Child and Maternal Health committees.

As part of his list of accomplishments, Schindler received the Minnesota Family Physician of the Year award in 1993 and was runner-up for the American Academy of Family Physicians in 1995.

Throughout the community, Schindler is known for his involvement as chairman of the YMCA Board of Directors; a member of the regional Emergency Cardiac Care of the American Heart Association; member of the National Faculty of PALS (pediatric advanced life support); chairman of the Mower Community Health Services Advisory Board; medical consultant and member of the Minnesota Medical Association's Continuing Medical Education.

Schindler will continue to live in Austin and remain involved in the community.

RECEPTION

Who: Dr. Dick Schindler.
When: 6-9 p.m. Wednesday.
Where: Austin YMCA, 704 First Drive N.W.

A separate retirement celebration to honor Schindler will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 8 at the Sacred Heart School gymnasium in Adams. That event is also open to the public.

Vol. 86, No. 291
12 pages

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Rochester, Minnesota



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How would the Minnesota Vikings' stadium be paid for?

PUNCHLINE

"Listen, Dad, you bought the mini-van — you have to live with it."

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OBITUARIES

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