The Minnesota Star Tribune

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2025

H: 25° L: 21° | SNOW TONIGHT

\$4B DATA CENTER TAKES ROOT IN FARM COUNTRY



Breathtaking change in the energy sector is a long way from fruition.

Story by WALKER ORENSTEIN • Photos by ANTHONY SOUFFLÉ

WORTHINGTON, MINN. power developer has a novel plan to build a \$4 billion data center in rural southwestern Minnesota, as well as an armada of wind, solar and battery plants the company hopes will attract a wealthy buyer. Somewhere among the farm fields that dominate the landscape around the tiny enclaves of Brewster and Reading. Geronimo Power envisions a project that could eventually use as much electricity as roughly 1 million $homes-dwarfing\,other\,data\,centers\,proposed\,in\,Minnesota.$ The development would be remarkable for its rural loca-

tion, its size and Geronimo's idea to bundle clean power with a data center.

The plan also reflects how Minnesota's energy sector is changing at a breathtaking pace, and the lengths businesses, $local \,governments\, and\, electricity\, providers\, will\, go\, for\, a\, piece$ of the volatile but lucrative artificial intelligence industry.

The data center might never happen. Geronimo hasn't cleared the most important hurdle: persuading a U.S. tech giant such as Google, Amazon or Apple to buy the data center and renewable energy.

Geronimo's plan has also been met with mixed feelings SEE GERONIMO ON A3 »



"This area has got three big natural resources. Black dirt with plenty of moisture to grow good crops. It has the sun and the wind. Until 20 years ago, we were only using the one natural resource, the black dirt."

Denny Fultz, one of the owners whose land will be part of the Plum Creek Wind Farm in Tracy, Minn., uses a GPS pin to find the area where a windmill is slated to be built on family farm property.

Guard member shot in D.C. dies

Suspect fought Taliban in CIA-backed force.

By HAMED ALEAZIZ, JULIAN E. BARNES and ELIAN PELTIER
The New York Times

WASHINGTON - One of the two West Virginia National Guard members shot while on patrol near the White House died Thursday, as an angered President Donald Trump seized on the suspect's background to pledge even more severe restrictions on immigration.

The guard member, Army Spc. Sarah Beckstrom, 20, of Summersville, W.Va., underwent emergency surgery after Wednesday's shooting but did not survive. "This is not the result we hoped for, but it is the result we all feared," Gov. Patrick Morrisey of West Virginia wrote on the social platform X.

The other victim, Air Force Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, 24, of Martinsburg, W.Va., remained in critical condition. At his home, a man who answered the door said that "all we need right now are prayers for my son."

SEE SHOOTING ON A7 »

Attack on Somalis' **TPS** raises questions

and CHRISTOPHER MAGAN The Minnesota Star Tribune

President Donald Trump's Nov. 21 announcement that he's ending Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalis living in Minnesota has officials scrambling to figure out what

His announcement comes as the Department of Homeland Security just announced it's ending the protected status of citizens from Myanmar, formerly known as Burma.

On Monday, advocates gathered at the State Capitol to protest Trump's plans and have vowed to push back on the administration's directive.

Regardless of what Trump posted on social media, the SEE STATUS ON A6 »

For conservation officers, their beat is the outdoors and much more

Story by BOB TIMMONS Photo by ANTHONY SOUFFLÉ The Minnesota Star Tribune

WACONIA - As light drained from the sky, conservation officer Alexander Birdsall bumped along in his Silverado 2500, crisscrossing isolated farm fields and patrolling for trouble.

His focus west of town was "outlaw area," as he called it. This time of year, shining deer and shooting from this stretch of gravel are common offenses, and not always caught.

A small dome of light, almost headlamp-like, beamed from a low area about 50 yards off the road. Then it flicked off as Birdsall rolled past.

The light could easily have been missed. Yet Birdsall has had an eye on that spot since he saw a bit of yellow SEE DNR ON A6 »



Conservation officer Alexander Birdsall's duties often go beyond enforcing game law.

South St. Paul to tear down Armour Gates

Stockyard days icon yields for new business.

By EVA HERSCOWITZ The Minnesota Star Tribune

Every morning for some 40 years, Dennis Finden's father strode through the towering brick gateway on his way to work at Armour and Co. – the landmark meatpacking plant in South St. Paul.

Finden followed in his dad's footsteps, working at the bustling facility in the early 1960s to pay for college. So the younger Finden was devastated that South St. Paul officials decided earlier this month to tear down the historic Armour Gates.

A business will soon sup-

plant the storied structures, disappointing residents who want to preserve the memory of South St. Paul's stockyard years for future generations. City officials, meanwhile, have defended the decision, pointing to the high price tag of alternate solutions and touting the tax revenue the business, a plumbing and heating firm, could bring to South St. Paul.

But their explanations haven't satisfied a contingent of South St. Paul residents who have pushed for years to preserve the Armour Gates. They have launched petitions, devised their own vision to keep the structures in place and identified funding sources to sustain the project, with a local teacher

SEE GATES ON A6 »

TOP NEWS

Israeli troops reportedly killed two Palestinians after the pair appeared to surrender. A5

NATION & WORLD

Death toll rises as firefighters continue to battle blaze at Hong Kong complex. A5

STATE & REGION

Iowa woman is awarded nearly \$20 million after a "botched" surgery at Mayo Clinic. A4

SPORTS

Jordan Love threw four touchdown passes as the Packers beat the Lions 31-24. C10

BUSINESS

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday there is no Business section today. It returns Saturday.

VARIETY

Headed to the Mall of America? Tourists and locals will benefit from these insider tips. E1

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Commissioned by Czar Nicholas II for his mother in 1913, the rare Fabergé Winter Egg, valued at \$26 million, is going up for auction. A2

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