December 2022

LCSC Communicator

Regional News, Views, and Information

LAKES COUNTRY Service Cooperative
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Electronic Edition
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Survivors of Violence Deserve Dignity



Anna Sellin, Executive Director, Lakes Crisis & Resource Center

Violent behavior can disrupt lives, homes, communities, and intimate relationships. So often kept a secret; nobody knows that a person has suffered physical violence until the police arrest and charge the abusive partner or caregiver. Domestic violence is much more common than most people think because so much of it is not reported because of shame or fear. Sadly, in our local communities, women, children, and men (10-15% male) each day need a safe place and assistance to navigate choices to end physical abuse.

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We Advocate for Strong Communities



Jeremy Kovash
Executive Director

Izaac Walton, the famed English writer, wrote, “Good company and good discourse are the very sinews of virtue.” We strive daily at Lakes Country to be a piece of this fiber that holds our communities together. We strive to help our communities become stronger and more resilient. We strive to be one piece of our region that inspires strong discourse and problem-solving. We strive to be a solution provider for you, our members. We strive to live out our mission: "We Advocate for Strong Communities Through Service and Leadership." Welcome to this edition of “The Communicator,” which we hope finds you well as we enter the holiday season.

In addition to Mary's Place, LCRC provides the following supportive services.

- **Crime Survivor Advocacy** provides a myriad of support functions for Survivors to minimize the physical, psychological, emotional, and financial effects of the crime.
- **Parenting Time Center** serves children and their parents who have been involved in an unhealthy relationship or where conflict regarding parenting time has occurred.
- **Mental Health** programs can provide violence and trauma-focused mental health services to individuals who come to LCRC through our advocacy program, shelter program, parenting exchange program, or referrals from our community.
- **Kinship** mentoring programs establish quality relationships between kids and caring adult volunteers to promote stability, support, friendship, and community.
- **Children's Services** offers personal and group support to children who have witnessed violence or been abused.



In Detroit Lakes, generous community supporter Mary Newman helped create a place where people could feel dignity when seeking safety in a shelter. She also helped to fund shelters in the North Dakota communities of Jamestown and Grand Forks. In 2011, Mary's Place opened in a quiet neighborhood in Detroit Lakes and is one of six programs offered through the Lakes Crisis & Resource Center (LCRC).

Mary Newman

LCRC's mission is to foster safety, hope, and healing through advocacy, intervention, and education. In 2022, LCRC provided between over 3,000 clients with victim services.

LCRC's Executive Director, Anna Sellin, has been involved with the organization for eighteen years. She first served on the LCRC board of directors before accepting the responsibility of leading LCRC. Sellin is passionate about survivor services and helping others facing this horrific reality.

There are currently twenty-seven staff members supporting the LCRC programs and no open positions. This employee stability allows for the opportunity to add additional programming. Sellin shared that they are currently in the early stages of starting a new program to serve families involved with the Becker County Child Protection program.



READERS CHOICE

BEST AREA NONPROFIT

FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE YEARS

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The reality of working in this field is that it can be emotionally draining for the employees who assist survivors of violence each day. Research and data show that domestic violence can be passed through family generations, and the LCRC advocates work toward breaking the generational cycle daily. I asked Sellin to tell me about a time when she felt their organization had made a difference in someone's life. Sellin shared a story about a four-year-old girl (whom we will call Alice) who arrived at the shelter with her mother following a violent event. The mother was a multi-generational domestic violence victim. They received services for several weeks and then left the shelter. After leaving the shelter within a few days, Alice witnessed her mother being attacked and stabbed five times. Alice returned to the shelter, this time with her grandmother. They stayed for a more extended period for Alice to receive intensive services. When it was safe, and Alice was stable, she left to live with her grandmother. Unfortunately, Alice's grandmother struggled with alcohol and drug addiction and placed Alice in harm's way with the company she would keep. Alice's great-grandmother stepped in and moved into Mary's Place with Alice. Alice and her great-grandmother both received services, and after leaving the shelter, her great-grandmother fought to have permanent custody of Alice. They moved into stable housing, secured transportation, and received a scholarship to enroll Alice in a private school. Fast forward to today, Alice is eight years old and has lived in a stable situation with her great-grandmother for several years. "We may have broken this family's cycle of violence," said Sellin with a smile. Sellin went on to share that Alice recently stopped by LCRC on her bicycle to drop off birthday party invitations for staff to attend her birthday party. Sellin said with a smile, "This little girl views the staff at LCRC as friends, and of course, we will be going to that birthday party!"

Sellin also shared that working through the pandemic and the "Stay at Home" order was an eye-opening experience. Sellin said that the phones stopped ringing during the order, and the office became eerily quiet. When the order was lifted, LCRC advocates proceeded to write more orders for protection the month after the order was lifted than in the organization's history. Another testimony to how important it is to have the ability to receive help and resources when you live in a situation out of your control.

"THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN."

-Anna Sellin
LCRR Executive Director

Most of all, Sellin wants the community to know that you should not be afraid to reach out for help if you are in a dangerous situation or feel it could turn into an abusive relationship. "When someone comes here, you are not going to be judged," said Sellin. "We know that when someone arrives at our door, we need to respond by meeting them where they are at with their self-identified needs. We will not judge and will always keep the door open."

Are you passionate about helping survivors of domestic violence? Are you interested in donating financially, volunteering, or learning more about this vital community organization?

Visit their website at lakescrisis.com or call 218-847-8572.

Source: Anna Sellin, Executive Director, Lakes Crisis & Resource Center
Author: Mary Phillipe, Communications Generalist, Lakes Country Service Cooperative

Battle Lake

NURTURING THE SMALL TOWN VIBE



Located in central downtown Battle Lake - *The fish*, over 15 feet high, was sculpted in 2015 by artist Sue Seeger.

Battle Lake is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise! You can often find my vehicle parked downtown in the summer or winter with either a bicycle on the back, a paddleboard on top, or a pair of snowshoes in the back seat. Recently designated as a Bronze-level Bike Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists, you can easily find the trails to the lakes and local Glendalough State Park. After you have hit the trails, you might be craving a place to eat as your reward for the exhilarating paddle around Annie Battle Lake or the trek around the state park. Battle Lake is a well-known food destination, home to ten unique restaurants. But what else does this progressive lakes community of 857 residents have up its sleeve?

I recently spent a morning in Battle Lake to visit City Clerk and Economic Development Authority (EDA) Director Val Martin. Martin has been with the city for seven years and has been instrumental in helping to develop plans for growth in the City of Battle Lake. She was excited to share their story and the recent opportunities that have come to light.

The vibrant downtown and increasing energy in Battle Lake are somewhat new to the community. If you have lived in Otter Tail County over the past two decades, you can remember when Labor Day weekend ended; it meant the end of the retail season for many Battle Lake businesses. Breathing life back into downtown Battle Lake started around ten years ago with the Complete Streets Project, the public art placement on Lake Street, the Glendalough State Park trail, and some commercial downtown beautification projects. Since 2015, over 20 retail, medical, and professional office locations have opened or relocated to this small community. "The legislators at our state capital are familiar with Battle Lake's progress, success, and plans. They share our economic development model with Minnesota rural communities who are also in economic development planning stages," said Martin.

Fast forward to today, The downtown area has a major construction project underway. The "Hatchery Row Project" has broken ground and is expected to be completed at the end of 2023. The project started in 2016 with EDA representatives meeting with property owners to determine their interest in selling. After that time, a group of community members gathered to discuss possible future uses of the property. With the help of a grant from the Blandin Foundation, the Battle Lake EDA hired Duet Design to work with community members to develop a visioning study.

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Source: Val Martin, City Clerk of Battle Lake, and Economic Development Authority Director for Battle Lake

Author: Mary Phillipe, Communications Generalist, Lakes Country Service Cooperative



FUTURE HOME OF "HATCHERY ROW"

This concept was an essential tool when meeting with prospective developers. Building off the momentum of the increased commercial traffic and the need for additional space, this project became a priority. Hatchery Row has stood for years as a former agricultural and industrial building on the north side of Henning Street. Over time, the buildings became unsightly. With its proximity to Lake Avenue and its historical affinity, this site was selected as the perfect location for the redevelopment of future businesses as an expansion of the downtown. The city worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) on cleaning the site and removing old fuel tanks and contaminated soil, and all the buildings have now been demolished. Goodneighbors Property was selected as the developer and provided a plan to build a three-story building with underground parking to accommodate 12,000 to 15,000 square feet of commercial space and 15 to 20 apartments.



BLUE SPRUCE PROPERTIES

Additionally, Martin was excited to share the news that $100,000 from the Blandin Foundation was awarded to Art of the Lakes for a Creative Placemaking grant. This Blandin Foundation Leadership Boost Grant is to develop a creative center in Battle Lake that uses the arts as an incubator for community involvement and regional economic development. Art of the Lakes (AOTL) proposes transforming the former First Lutheran Church/LACC building in Battle Lake into a rural arts center with the mission of using the arts to make a connection, identity, and economic growth within the Battle Lake community and the surrounding region. “We have a wealth of talented artists calling Otter Tail County home, and their network is another resource from which we can draw. As this venue develops, attendees traveling here for these events will help fuel our local economy by eating, sleeping, and enjoying the many excellent restaurants, lodging, and attractions our Lakes Country has to offer,” says Kristi Kuder, President of Art of the Lakes.

“We are running out of room to expand business and residential properties in Battle Lake,” said Martin. The city is growing, and so is the need for housing. In conjunction with the Otter Tail County Big Build project, Battle Lake worked with a developer that wished to construct six rental townhomes with 12 units. Most units have been built and are owned by Blue Spruce Properties from Perham, Minnesota. The completed units have occupants, and there is a waiting list for the remaining unfinished units.

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2023 is right around the corner, and several additional community projects are scheduled to be completed by year-end. Bethel Church began its building project on the south side of Battle Lake. Glendalough State Park will add a new trailhead facility and retail establishments; Neverbetter and Chelsea Pacifica will open downtown before the summer tourist season, along with a new carwash. “Battle Lake has an excellent public school. It is the heart of our community, and we need to support our school. With the strong school system and incredible business growth in Battle Lake, we are adding the retail, professional, and recreational amenities that our residents need and want. It helps to keep them in the community. Attracting people and new business has been our goal,” said Martin.



Val Martin
Battle Lake City Clerk and Economic Development Authority Director



An old grain elevator still stands near downtown Battle Lake. Originally part of a cooperative grain marketing organization of farmers.

You can reach Val Martin, City Clerk, and EDA Director, by phone at 218-864-0424 or by email at blcity@eot.com. You can also visit their website at ci.battle-lake.mn.us.

LCSC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BUILDING ENGAGED TEAMS



WHAT ARE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR 2023?

Often at the start of a new year, we have renewed energy to take on a project or pursue an idea. Why not bring that energy to the team you lead? Join us at Lakes Country Service Cooperative on January 12 for Building Engaged Teams. Professional Leadership Consultant Lisa Negstad will help you build a team that is

- more engaged
- high functioning
- collaborative
- able to work in increasingly complex and uncertain environments, and
- ready to practice shared leadership.

Want to know more about Practical Leadership and Leadership Consultant Lisa Negstad? Follow this link to learn more and register! **CLICK HERE!**

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RUSC KINSHIP

Raising Up Stevens County

Author: Lisa Denzer, Executive Director, RUSC Kinship

RUSC Kinship is a grassroots movement in Stevens County founded by County Commissioner Jeanne Ennen and initially funded by a Bush Fellowship grant. RUSC Kinship Mentoring, Inc. is an affiliate of the 36-affiliate network of the national mentoring organization Kinship, Inc., which has been changing lives for 60 years.

RUSC (Raising Up Stevens County) Kinship is Jeanne's response to a feeling deep in her gut that her investment in youth today could be the solution to many of our social challenges. Jeanne's idea has continued to gain momentum since 2013 through a series of community meetings held to determine the program's direction and assess the community's needs.

Mentors and mentees are encouraged to spend time together throughout the month. Some of our partners enjoy busy activities such as hiking or skating. Others prefer cooking or watching movies. It doesn't matter what the activity is – the time spent together is essential.

The time spent together provides the young person with a trusted adult mentor who is invested in a long-term, consistent commitment to providing guidance and support to the youth of Stevens County.

RUSC Kinship offers monthly Mentor Mingles, allowing mentors and Mentees to participate in a free scheduled activity. Not only are the Mingles fun and engaging, but it's an excellent time for the Mentees to become friends and the Mentors to network. Some of the most popular activities so far have been learning to make arm blankets, bowling and pizza party, and painting parties.

RUSC also encourages community projects hoping to foster a sense of belonging, pride, and commitment to our community.

RUSC Kinship's hopes and dreams is that through these opportunities, our youth will want to stay and return to the community in which they grew up and invested in themselves.

Kinship
Raising Up Stevens County

RUSC Kinship's Mission is to provide positive role models and guidance to youth in our community. At RUSC Kinship, we match adult mentors with a child from age 5-17 who has common interests. Mentors can be individuals, couples, or entire families. With our youth's best interest and safety always at the forefront, mentors undergo screening and training. RUSC Kinship offers support throughout the partnership so all volunteers feel equipped and trained to do their best work.

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If one is not ready for the commitment of a community mentor, RUSC Kinship has several other opportunities. The Lunch Buddy program brings a caring, competent adult into the Chokio Alberta, Morris Area, and St. Mary's schools. The Lunch Buddies eat lunch together and then do a special project.

The time commitment is about an hour once a month. If you step back and watch the students and adults meeting up, it's hard to tell who is more excited about seeing each other, the children or the adults!

At this time, RUSC Kinship is providing almost 50 children with a Lunch Buddy in Stevens County. When you multiply 50 hours monthly by the seven visits in a school year, that is 350 hours of mentoring. The positive impact this can have on a child is unique and has long-term positive effects.

RUSC Kinship is also deeply invested in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The Dolly Parton Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free books to children from birth to age five. This fantastic program was founded in 1995 in Dolly Parton's home county in Tennessee. RUSC Kinship, along with amazing sponsors like the Early Childhood Initiative, Superior Industries, Agralite Operation Round-Up, and Federated Telephone, has made it possible for over 1,235 free books to be delivered to Stevens County children in the first 12 months of being involved in the program!

Sponsorship of a Mentor Mingle or helping to volunteer at an event are other ways to get involved in RUSC Kinship. Indeed, any amount of time and effort can make such a difference in a child's life. For more information, please check out the RUSC Kinship website at rusckinship.org.

ARE YOUR WORKPLACE MANDATORY POSTERS UP TO DATE?

Minnesota law requires employers to display five state-mandated posters in a location where employees can easily see them.

Free printable: https://www.dli.mn.gov/about-department/workplace-posters

Age Discrimination - September 2017
Minimum Wage - October 2022
Safety & Health Protection on the Job - August 2017
Unemployed? March 2022
Workers Compensation - Rev 2017

All businesses must post federal labor law posters in a common workplace area frequented by employees and applicants.

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR POSTERS

Free printable https://www.dol.gov/general/topics/posters

EEOC EEOC-P/E-1 - Rev 11/09 https://www.eeoc.gov/employers/eeo-law-poster
FMLA - Rev 04/16
Employee Polygraph Protection Act - Rev. 07/16
USERRA Publication Date - Rev. April 2017
OSHA Postings - OSHA 3165 - 2019 https://www.osha.gov/publications



YOUR HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM

Rick Brynildson, Health & Safety Manager (rbrynildson@lcsc.org or 218-737-6555)
Jeff Preuss, Health & Safety Facilitator (jpreuss@lcsc.org or 218-737-6513)
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Melissa Mattson, Director of Administrative Services (mmattson@lcsc.org or 218-737-6507)
Linette Hanson, Health & Safety Assistant (lhanson@lcsc.org or 218-737-6529)

WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA Communities Action

2022 TAX SEASON

FREE TAX PREPARATION

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WHEATON
GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH 605 10TH ST. N

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS: 8:30AM-3:30PM
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
221 7TH AVE. W.
ALEXANDRIA, MN 56308

THURSDAYS: 9AM-3PM:
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CONTACT: Scott Wendorff
Manager of Technology
218-737-6538
swendorff@lcsc.org

Lakes Country Service Cooperative's (LCSC) dynamic team of IT professionals provide affordable, high-quality hardware and software solutions for members.



IT'S A YES!

Moorhead

Voters Approve Sales Tax to Fund Library and Community Center

The future is bright for libraries in Minnesota. On November 8, 2022, Moorhead voters approved a 0.5% local option sales tax that will be used to fund a new Community Center/Public Library. The final vote was 8,782 (64.37%) to 4,861 (35.63%).

"We are thrilled that the residents of Moorhead chose to support this project," said Megan Krueger, Moorhead Library Director. "We're looking forward to expanding the library's impact and services in a new space."

Construction plans and timelines will now be developed under the direction of the City of Moorhead, the Moorhead City Council, and the Mayor's Task Force, including hiring design professionals, identifying a precise location, and budgeting amenities. In April 2023, the 0.5% city sales tax is expected to begin after the City of Moorhead completes the steps required by the Minnesota Department of Revenue.

The project allowed Lake Agassiz Regional Library (LARL) to better define the many ways libraries and the nine LINK Sites across the region impact their communities. "Not only was it a thrill to witness the community's affirmation of the value of the library, but we were blown away by the many people who showed us such an incredible amount of support and shared the reasons they love their library with their friends and neighbors," said LARL's Executive Director, Liz Lynch. "It's exciting to see circulation and attendance numbers again rising after the COVID-19 pandemic and to recognize that many individuals and families across our seven-county region rely on their library for entertainment, education, and enrichment."

To stay up to date on this project, like the Moorhead Public Library on Facebook and visit the library's page on the project at **larl.org/moorheadbuilding**.



YOUNG CLIMATE HERO

SOPHIE SCHAUMANN, CONCORDIA GREENHOUSE CLUB PRESIDENT

Author: Benjamin Velani, AmeriCorps Fellow, West Central Initiative



"I care so much about the environment, and I don't like the impact humans are having on it, at all."
-Sophie Schaumann,

SCHAUMANN HAS BEGUN LABELING ALL THE PLANTS BEING GROWN WITH THEIR LATIN NAMES.

"One of my biggest goals in life is to combat the climate crisis." said Sophie Schaumann, a junior at Concordia College majoring in biology and environmental and sustainability studies.

Schaumann is also the president of the Concordia Greenhouse Club (CGC). CGC is comprised of roughly 20 members from a variety of backgrounds and majors, "Not just plant sciences or biology majors," said Schaumann. Schaumann herself got involved after asking former Head of the Greenhouse, Chris Graf, if any positions were available. Graf told her about an upcoming greenhouse internship. "I love plants. And I loved the greenhouse whenever I got a chance to come in here. So, I took her up on that opportunity," said Schaumann.

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Schaumann worked the next semester organizing greenhouse volunteers into running events and working on plant projects. One ongoing project has been taking care of a living pond. “Professor Dr. Michelle Marko, who sadly passed away a few years ago, started this pond, and now we’re restoring it,” Schaumann said, “We have fish and snails. We also have lily pads, a cool bog area, and little waterfalls on the sides.”

Studies show that spending time in nature or around natural things can be a boost for mental health, so Schaumann and the volunteers of CGC are providing a sanctuary for students.

“I see the greenhouse as a spot where people can disconnect from the stress that classes and activities bring,” said Schaumann, “It’s a form of hope, particularly in the winter when it’s completely white and lifeless outside. You come inside the greenhouse, and it’s a breath of fresh air completely made by plants. It just makes people happy.”



THE POND AREA OF THE CONCORDIA GREENHOUSE

Schaumann also runs an Instagram page, posting pictures of the greenhouse plants “just to brighten people’s days.”

Empower yourself and work in service of the climate crisis by making small changes at home. Try reducing the number of single-use plastics you consume by using bar shampoo. Buy laundry detergent from companies like Dropps in bulk, with friends or neighbors, to save on detergent and help save the planet. Toothpaste too comes in tubes that won’t degrade for thousands of years, so try Bites to eliminate that single-use plastic from your life. Three tips are enough for now, but keep an eye out for future content with guides on how to make more of these changes at home and within your community.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Benjamin Velani *is the Lead for America Climate Fellow and serving AmeriCorps member at West Central Initiative. He recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Cornell University, majoring in Religious Studies and Government and writing an undergraduate thesis on the human and ecological effects of light pollution and dark night skies. He was formerly the Dining Editor at The Cornell Daily Sun, and he’s now taking the lead on West Central Initiative’s Climate Action Newsletter.*

COOPERATIVE *Purchasing* CONNECTION

Let Us Help You with Winter Preparedness

Winter is here! This means ensuring all your buildings and grounds are prepared inside and out. Cooperative Purchasing Connection's (CPC) contracts meet the competitive solicitation requirements, so you can purchase without needing to go out to bid.

Emergency maintenance may be necessary if a winter storm damages your property or equipment and CPC members are a top priority!

Know how to reach professionals through CPC or keep necessary components handy so that you can make repairs yourself.

Below are some suggestions for winter preparedness; find a complete list of CPC vendors **HERE**.

We look forward to helping you prepare for another Minnesota winter!

Inspect internal equipment to ensure everything is in working order and improve efficiency by reducing energy expenses. Your HVAC system is essential during the winter; freezing conditions can create an unsafe environment for your employees and community members utilizing your facilities.

Setting the standard for performance, energy efficiency, and sustainability, **Carrier** offers solutions in air conditioning, heating, and building controls. **Carrier** service offers new equipment start-up, preventive maintenance, and comprehensive service and repairs.

Cleaning and replacing filters is a great way to ensure maximum heating efficiency, **Tri-Dim Filter Corporation** offers the finest air filter design and installation, which controls the dirt and dust in buildings at discounts up to 45%.

Having repair parts on hand is vital, **Best Plumbing's** catalog includes thousands of items, including general repair parts, fittings, drain cleaning equipment, chemicals, tools, and more!

Burst pipes are the leading cause of property damage from winter weather; **ServiceMaster Recovery Management** (SRM) is the leading provider of Disaster Restoration Services. Whether you have damage in a single room of your facility or an entire complex of buildings, **SRM** will respond quickly to get you back on course.



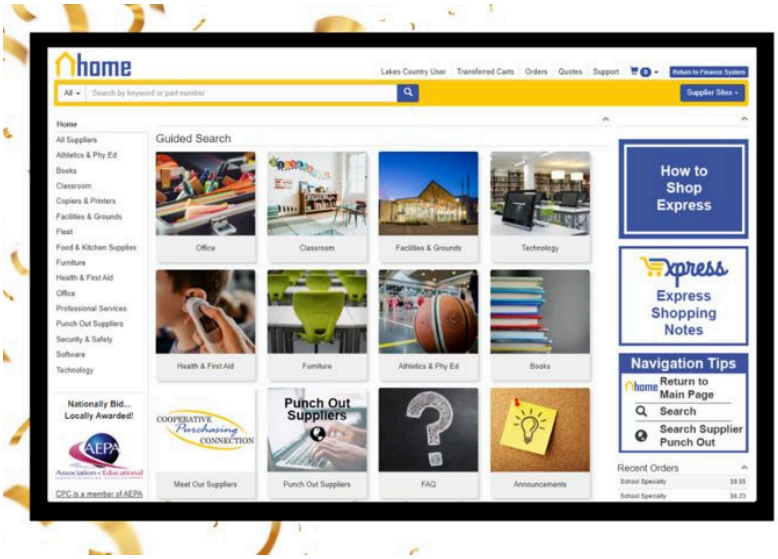
Provide a safe environment outside. Repair and protect concrete walkways and parking lots. The freeze-thaw effect causes cracked concrete and potholes; **Precision Concrete Cutting** is the national leader in trip hazard management; their unique saw-cutting method delivers a cleaner, safer, more professional-looking repair at a fraction of the replacement cost.

Snow and ice make it dangerous for people to access your building, making walkways slippery. **Hillyard** can help you find the best de-icer, while **Bobcat** can provide snow removal equipment and attachments at discounts up to 20% through your local dealer!

Finally, check for snow and ice on your roof; excessive snow can add a dangerous load to the supporting structure. **Tremco** delivers unique facility asset management solutions designed to reduce your roofing and building envelope life-cycle costs while extending overall performance.

Beyond facilities and grounds, CPC has nearly 120 vendors who can help with security, technology, office supplies, fleet vehicles, and more!

Please get in touch with Julia Dangerfield at 218-282-5289 or julia@purchasingconnection.org for more information.



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