

Today OBITUARY

Commercial-News

FARACI

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in which Faraci allegedly acted inappropriately, and in at least one instance, in a sexually inappropriate manner.

"Kevin came into my classroom and said, 'it smells like [expletive] in here!' during a transition time," they wrote. "Children were doing a transition activity and moving into the next portion of our schedule. Kevin said, 'my finger hurts' while holding his hand up to show me his middle finger. Not fully extended, but out from the rest of his fingers. I looked, and kind of smiled and was trying to move on. He stated, 'my finger hurts' two or three times more. I replied, 'what do you want me to do? Kiss it?' Kevin then said, 'Well if you're doing that I have something else you can kiss.' At this point he exited the classroom."

In an email addressed to Moag on Oct. 10, Faraci apologizes for "embarrassing" the superintendent, but does not explicitly disclose why. Faraci however does go on to describe a vaping addiction, and his intent to quit smoking altogether.

"I want to reach out to you to tell you I am sorry for embarrassing you, but more importantly I am sorry for embarrassing myself and my wife, Megan. The last two days have been the hardest days of my life both professionally and personally," Faraci wrote.

"I made a mistake and understand the consequences of that behavior. In

watching the news the last couple days, I am seeing how addictive the vape oils can be, with it being so easy because it is odorless and dissipate[s] so quickly; I have quit vaping and have thrown away my device. I am also beginning my prescription of Chantix. I want to move forward after my discipline."

Later in the email Faraci expresses a desire to be a "stronger leader," and addresses the relationship he has with teachers, parents, and students.

"It can be difficult, but I feel that I know my staff, students and parents. I listen more than I speak, but sometimes, I am impulsive and make a joke," Faraci wrote.

"However, I do not make fun of or light of the concerns brought to me by my teachers or my parents and students. I always investigate them. I have strong relationships with my teachers. I have gotten to know each and everyone of them on a personal level. I talk to them, ask about their spouses and kids. I ask about their parents and illnesses."

Contrary to the two statements submitted by Park Elementary teachers, Faraci states his staff "feels comfortable with me and knows I have their backs."

"They are the professionals and I have to trust their judgment. I then have to assess their concerns with the direction of the district and support for decisions that are made," Faraci wrote. "I am present in the building, which is why this

has been so hard. I miss being with my kids and my teachers. Again, I am very sorry for my behavior and its reflection of me. I encourage you to stop in or have me monitored closely to truly see my dedication to the teachers and the district."

In a letter addressed to Park Elementary families dated Oct. 14, Moag wrote that Faraci was placed on administrative leave on Friday, Oct. 11. Moag added there would be a "formal investigation into the personnel matter," and assured parents that the matter did not involve students, and announced Cindy Newell would be stepping in as interim principal.

A second letter from Moag sent on Oct. 23 informed parents that the interview portion of the investigation was completed on Oct. 18. Moag said Faraci was still on leave at the time, and would be until the outcome of the investigation.

Moag sent a final letter on Nov. 15 announcing Faraci's resignation, and informed parents that Newell would continue as interim principal for the remainder of the semester. Moag stated the school hoped to make a decision regarding its principal position by Christmas Break.

The Commercial-News reached out to Faraci for comment on this story but he declined.

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GERTRUDE EMMA ENGEL

Gertrude Emma Engel, age 93, of Three Rivers, passed away with her children at her side on Sunday, December 8, 2019. She was born in Dresden, Germany on April 9, 1926, the daughter of Arthur and Elsa (Risse) Hantke.

In 1953 Gertrude emigrated to the United States with her mother and children Heidi, Christine and Daniel. Their family first settled in Milwaukee, WI, before taking up permanent residence on a farm where they raised horses in Menominee, MI.

For many years, Gertrude was a server and host at the Riverfront Inn in Marinette, WI. Although the hotel's affiliations changed a few times, Gertrude's upbeat demeanor and cheerful attitude continued to greet

guests throughout the years.

Gertrude will be remembered as a kind and brave woman who fought hardship, protected her family, and stood up to adversity.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Alfred Hantke of Menominee Falls, WI, and grandson Daniel Stover of Nashville, TN.

Surviving to cherish the memory of her wit and spirit are daughters, Heidi (Douglas) Stover of Sun City, AZ, Christine (Matthew) Lentsch of Three Rivers, MI; and son, Daniel (Cristine) Engel of Green Bay, WI. Grandchildren Melissa, John, Charlie, Jamie and nine great-grandchildren.

In accordance with her wishes, cremation will be conducted and there will be no public services held at this time.

Memorial donations may be directed to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, ncadv.org. Envelope available at Hohner Funeral Home in care of arrangements.

Online condolences may be shared at www.hohnerff.com.

ELECTRIC BUSES

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Towing and Indiana Michigan Power (INP) Monday, teaching them how the new electric school buses work and what to do around them in an emergency situation. In addition, Michigan State Police inspectors inspected both buses.

The buses, two of the first 17 electric school buses in the state of Michigan, were purchased by TRCS and several other school districts around the state as part of a pilot project with the Michigan Association for Pupil Transportation. Funds for the project came in part from a Volkswagen mitigation settlement allocation via the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy's (EGLE) Fuel Transformation Program.

The training Monday was led by David Limoges, a product specialist with Lion Electric, the manufacturer of the new buses. Limoges said in an interview with the Commercial-News there were many things to go over during the two-hour training session.

"We'll go over with the fire department kind of the safety features we want them to be aware of in case of any major crashes," Limoges said. "We also have the tow companies here, so we'll go over procedures with them. There are a few things different with electric vehicles, so we'll go over that with them. And then we have the drivers, and we'll spend an hour with them over how the vehicle functions."

Limoges said operating an electric school bus compared to a standard diesel bus is "not much different," with many of the same functions as a diesel bus, calling them "kind of a big golf cart." The main difference, Limoges said, was the powertrain, which has no transmission and no oil, which leads to less maintenance on the components. He also mentioned the batteries are expected to last 12 to 15 years.

The training, Limoges said, also helps

to get the two drivers who will be driving the buses comfortable about driving them and get everybody on the same page.

"We want to make sure there's no range anxiety," Limoges said. "You are limited at 125 miles, but obviously the buses are going to be set on specific routes."

Three Rivers Fire Chief Jeff Bloomfield said with the voltage that runs through the new buses, he expects handling emergencies will be "a lot different" compared to a diesel bus.

"When you talk about electricity and knowing where the shutoffs are, if these are on fire, we can't just come in and throw water on them," Bloomfield said. "We have to shut the power down and make sure it's safe for our firemen to operate in those conditions, too. We use a lot of tools that have over 300,000 pounds of force to cut things. Well, if we cut the wrong things, it could affect our lives too."

Bloomfield added the new buses are a great thing from an environmental perspective, and looked forward to learning more about them.

Aaron Hunnicutt from Brokers Towing said learning about towing new vehicles is "nothing new" with the job, as they have to learn about new vehicles every year, and said it's "different" learning about the new buses.

"With electric becoming more prevalent, there are changes in our industry in how we do our job," Hunnicutt said. "What I'm seeing is this is just like a regular bus." couple things with these, you don't have to worry about transmission. Plus, we won't need a drive shaft with these if we're going under 30 miles per hour, and that saves us some time."

Craig Morris, Energy Services Program manager at Indiana Michigan Power, said he was looking forward to learn more about the bus on the inside

rather than the outside.

"Everything we've seen on the outside is more the visuals and riding on the bus, the sound quality, you don't really hear anything when you're riding on the bus itself," Morris said. "I've actually never been under an electric bus to see all of the parts, so it's kind of a neat experience."

Morris also detailed INP's role in the pilot project. He said they helped the district with navigating funding opportunities with the VW fund, as well as with implementation of the charging stations, the cost of which was offset thanks to a contribution from INP. Morris said INP is also assisting with data collection from the stations, which he said helps monitor the performance of the buses.

The drivers of the buses, Jessica Wilbur and Trish Rea, said they were excited to learn more about the buses they will be using to transport students. Both received the official keys to the buses on Monday.

"I know some things, that it doesn't have any emissions, but I just want to learn the ins and outs of it, because it is so different than a conventional bus," Rea said.

"I'm just excited to get to learn how to drive a vehicle that's different than what I'm used to driving," Wilbur said.

Overall, Limoges said Lion was excited to partner with TRCS and the other school districts with the project and the training that goes with it.

"Personally, I've been dealing with the districts for the last two years now, and now that we're about to get them inspected is very exciting," Limoges said. "They're lucky to have them, and we're very proud to be able to help them."

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Democrats lay out case for Wednesday Trump impeachment vote

By Lisa Mascaro and Mary Clare Jalonic Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats laid out their impeachment case against President Donald Trump on Monday, a sweeping report accusing him of betraying the nation and deserving to be ousted, as key lawmakers began to signal where they stand ahead of this week's landmark votes.

What Democrats once hoped would be a bipartisan act — only the third time in U.S. history the House will be voting to impeach a president — is now on track to be a starkly partisan roll call Wednesday. No Republicans are breaking with the president, and almost all Democrats are expected to approve the charges against him.

A raucous town hall Monday in the Detroit suburbs put on display the nation's wrenching debate over the unconventional president and the prospect of removing him from office. Freshman Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin was both heckled and celebrated as she announced her support for impeachment.

"There's certainly a lot of controversy about this," Slotkin acknowledged to the crowd of 400. "But there just has to be a moment where you use the letter of the law for what it's intended."

Trump faces two articles of impeachment brought by Democrats. They say he abused the power of his office by pressuring Ukraine to investigate Democratic rival Joe Biden ahead of the 2020 election and obstructed Congress by aggressively trying to block the House investigation from its oversight duties as part of the nation's system of checks and balances.

The president "betrayed the Nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections," says the 650-page report from the House Judiciary Committee. He withheld military aid from the ally as leverage, the report says, and "Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office."

TAMMY

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"What?" I responded incredulously.

"Remember, I started the swim two groups after you," she explained. "I was behind you, yes—but not in time. Plus, I was four minutes slower this year than last because of my injury."

She proceeded to hand me an apple.

Outwardly I was congratulatory. Inside—I wanted to jump off a bridge. The 5-foot tall, energy-packed, lake-churning, road-burning dynamo had topped me after all.

Of course, it was all in good fun. I was grateful beyond measure for her help—just as I

was for the support of Jodie Walker, Kathy Griffin and Kerry McClain.

Tammy, though, was at my first triathlon. Being the rank newbie I was, she served as a calming influence from the start—offering advice and tips gained from decades of competing, such as rubbing a small amount of baby shampoo in my goggles to keep them from fogging, and riding in mid-gear to build cadence during practice, then engaging the big gear to power ahead during the actual race.

She showed me how to set up the optimal transition area and provided a bib belt to display my race number to save time.

In fact, I am the beneficiary of a bike rack and helmet from Tammy, wetsuit from Jodie, road bike from Kerry and body-pump classes from Kathy. What more could I ask for? Nothing. Except to stay even with Tammy.

But that will take more training. Lots of it. Tammy is, to a significant degree, the handiwork of Kerry McClain, her personal trainer and swim coach for 20 years. "Tammy has a strong base from years of competing," Kerry reminds me. "So keep going. Train harder. Maybe someday you'll keep up with her. Maybe."