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# the **TIMBERJAY**



VOL. 30, ISSUE 8 March 1, 2019

\$1.00

## CITY OF TOWER

# Mayor allegations will go to mediation

by JODI SUMMIT  
 Tower-Soudan Editor

Kringstad to provide written answers to issues raised by city staff

TOWER— An investigation into the conduct of Tower Mayor Orlyn Kringstad will not go forward, at least for now, following city council action here on Monday. Instead, Kringstad

will provide answers in writing to issues raised by city staff, most likely followed by mediation services from the League of Minnesota Cities in hopes of resolving issues between the

mayor, Clerk-Treasurer Linda Keith, and Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg.

The council on a 2-2-1 vote, with Kringstad abstaining, rejected a motion by Councilor

Kevin Fitton to hire an outside investigator to look into alleged “mayoral misconduct” against Kringstad.

At their Feb. 11 meeting, the council had voted 2-1-2 to hire an

investigator from the League of Minnesota Cities to investigate a complaint made by Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg against

See... **MAYOR** pg. 12

## WOLFTRACK CLASSIC



# Howlin' in the wind

40 teams fight tough weather at Ely sled dog race

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
 Ely Editor

ELY – Howling winds drowned out the symphony of howling dogs at the start of the WolfTrack Classic sled dog race Sunday morning. Despite gale force gusts, a drifted-over race-track and even knee-deep lake slush, 40 teams started and finished the 11th

**Canadian musher Brian Bergen won the eight-dog WolfTrack Classic in Ely last weekend. He completed the 50-mile course in four hours, 45 minutes and 16 seconds.** photo by K. Vandervort

annual Ely winter tradition.

“We haven’t had that many racers in many, many years, said WolfTrack board member and racer Scott Edgett. He said the trails were in excellent condition in spite of the challenging

weather. “We definitely have plenty of snow this year,” Edgett said. “There were some blowing drifts we had to plow through and a couple of areas

See...**RACE** pg. 10

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

# Plea deal reached in Cook murder

Indiana man gets 11 years in prison

by MARCUS WHITE  
 Cook/Orr Editor

VIRGINIA — An Indiana man was sentenced to just over 11 years in prison and five years under state supervision this week for the 2018 murder of his 28-year-old girlfriend Christina Woods near Cook.

St. Louis County District Court Judge Michelle Anderson accepted a plea agreement from Daniel Gregory Lynn, age 41, after hearing emotional testimony from Woods’ family.



Daniel G. Lynn

They recounted how the mother of four raised her children, often reading to them and watching Disney movies together. One of her daughters told the court her mother was working on obtaining her GED and planned to travel the world.

Lynn admitted to strangling Woods at a property owned by Lynn’s family near Cook last summer. On July 2, acting on a missing person report from South Bend, Ind. authorities, St. Louis County law enforcement found Woods’ body in a shallow grave on the property. Bleach

See... **PLEA** pg. 12

## IRON RANGE HISTORY

# How to create a community gathering spot

Nelimark Homestead Museum features hospitality and history

by JODI SUMMIT  
 Tower-Soudan Editor

EMBARRASS- “We are not a living history museum,” said Farmstead Artisan volunteer Jeannine Bjornrud, “but we are connecting people to our history in the most spontaneous ways.”

Bjornrud, along with a group

**Ron Sutton is one of dozens of volunteers at the Embarrass Nelimark Homestead Museum.** photo by J. Summit

of other volunteers, spoke at the Sisu Heritage Inc. annual meeting last Sunday. While Bjornrud joked that her group was the third choice for meeting speaker this year, their talk was a lively reminder of the importance of preserving local

history along with strengthening community ties.

The Embarrass Nelimark Homestead has been restored thanks to many years of work by

See...**SISU** pg. 9



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# COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

## Embarrass Fair Pancake Breakfast fundraiser, March 2

EMBARRASS- Support the Embarrass Fair by enjoying a pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 2 from 8 – 11 a.m. at Timber Hall in Embarrass. Pancakes, choice of ham or sausage links, fruit cup, juice, and a bottomless cup of coffee will be served. Adults cost \$5, children (6-10 years) \$3, and under 5 years eat free. The March 2 breakfast will include a Horse Tack and Supply Swap. Pancake breakfasts are held the first Saturday of each month through May at Timber Hall.

## Minnesota's Lost Mining Towns documentary March 5 on PBS North

REGIONAL- WDSE•WRPT is pleased to announce the premiere of Minnesota's Lost Mining Towns on Tuesday, March 5 at 7 p.m. on PBS North (check your local listings).

Minnesota's Lost Mining Towns explores mining towns and locations across northern Minnesota that have been abandoned or have completely disappeared. For many of these locations, little is left to remember the workers, families, and communities that created the foundation of the region as we know it today. To capture these foundational stories, this new documentary showcases oral histories and photographs from the era to record a history that is unique to the Iron Range.

"Northern Minnesota's Iron Range is one of the most unique landscapes in our entire country with its legacy of open pit mining," said Greg Grell, co-producer. "The mining location town is an integral part of that legacy; these towns popped up quickly, and often disappeared just as swiftly."

"It's been fascinating to hear Iron Range natives, past and present, share heartfelt stories of the joy of growing up in a small mining town," Pamela Fish, co-producer, added. "There is a real community pride around these locations, but, at the same time, there's a sorrow of displacement when that town is shuttered, moved or oftentimes literally excavated away because of the changing needs of the mines."

The documentary was produced with the support of the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

## Songs of Love and Life, March 3 in Ely and March 10 in Virginia

REGIONAL- Pete Pellinen of Virginia and Peter Kess of Ely will perform a program of vocal music titled "Songs of Love and Life" in Ely on Sunday, March 3 at 2 p.m. at the VCC Fine Arts Theater, and in Virginia on Sunday, March 10 at 2 p.m. at the Lyric Annex. There will be a freewill offering with coffee an' to follow each performance.

Pete and Peter are referring to this as a 'senior' recital now that they both have enough gray in their beards to qualify as seniors. They would like to invite their friends and fellow music enthusiasts to join them for an informal afternoon of sharing live music.

The performance will include Peter Kess singing mostly art songs by Mozart, Schubert, Sibelius and others, and Pete Pellinen singing a Gerald Finzie song cycle, "A Young Man's Exhortation."

Peter and Pete have sung together in several of the Northern Lights Music Festival operas as well in last year's Mesabi Symphony's "North of Broadway" concert. They will be joined by Susan Gerkem of Ely and Margie Miller of Eveleth as accompanists.

Susan and Margie will also play piano duo arrangements of Brahms' Hungarian Dances. Pete and Peter look forward to sharing this music, and your company.

## SNOWMOBILE RACING

# Crane Lake Challenge on March 2



A sled takes off at the start of the race last year. submitted photo

CRANE LAKE— Snowmobile racing enthusiasts will want to make tracks to Crane Lake this weekend for the annual Crane Lake Challenge snowmobile race set for Saturday, March 2.

Racers from around the region will take part in the 47 different NSSR and ISR classes established

for the race, with trophies for the three fastest times in each class.

Last year, the fastest racer of the day clocked in at 174 miles per hour along the 1,000-foot-long, shaved ice track.

Anyone can participate in the event. Just register at Voyagaire Lodge, then head down to the ice

to see how fast your machine can go. Racing runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with an awards ceremony at Voyagaire Lodge at 6 p.m. Food and drink specials, both at the Lodge and on the ice, will be offered all day. Visit the Voyagaire Lodge website blog for more information.

# Pond Hockey Championship on March 2 at White Eagle Resort on Lake Vermilion

LAKE VERMILION- The Lake Vermilion Pond Hockey Championship returns to the ice on Saturday, March 2 with some new winter activities bringing fun for the whole family. Once again, the event will be held in front of White Eagle Resort; and this year, in addition to the hockey tournament, there will be opportunities to take a ride behind a sled dog team or hop in a horse-drawn sleigh and cruise a snowy

trail. And if you've got youngsters who know how to skate and can hold a hockey stick, there will be a kids' game at noon for children under 12 to test their pond hockey skills. There's no better way to spend a Saturday in the winter, so whether you're competing in the tournament or just looking for some outdoor fun, the ice in front of White Eagle Resort is the place to be.

The hockey tournament was

first held four years ago as a simple competition between local teams at the Cook community ice rink.

On-ice concessions will be provided by The Crescent Bar and Grill, so there's no danger of going hungry. With plenty of great hockey to watch and several other activities for the family, the Lake Vermilion Pond Hockey Championship is a great hub of winter excitement.

# \$500 Community Sustainability grants available

REGIONAL- The Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability works to support and encourage sustainability projects within our communities. Organizations, students, groups, churches, or businesses that have a project idea to advance the health and sustainability of Iron Range communities, but need funding to support it, are encouraged to apply for the Community Sustainability Initiative (CSI). Members of the IRPS Board of Directors and the Earth Fest Planning Team review and discuss all proposals. The top four proposals will win \$500 to implement their projects. In addition, a \$200 People's Choice Award is voted on by attendees at Earth Fest each year.

Contest applications are due by

Sunday, March 24. The 11th annual Iron Range Earth Fest will be held on Saturday, April 13 in Mt. Iron. Join us for a full day of presentations, demonstrations, a keynote address by restoration agriculture and farmer Mark Shepard, and to learn how last year's CSI winners put their awards to work for sustainability in their community.

The Community Sustainability Initiative is intended to provide the opportunity for people in Northeastern Minnesota to take action on one or more of the three areas of sustainability: the local economy, the community, and the environment. Think creatively—these three areas of sustainability are open to many different ways to be innovative and unique with a

proposed project. Proposals may be for a standalone project, or one that is part of a larger goal.

Visit the IRPS website at [www.irpsmn.org/csi](http://www.irpsmn.org/csi) and use the online form to submit your CSI contest application. If you have questions about the contest, please contact Janna Goerd at [fatchickenfarm@gmail.com](mailto:fatchickenfarm@gmail.com).

The CSI contest is supported by the IRPS Silent Auction, which takes place each year at Earth Fest. Participants place bids on goods and services generously donated by local individuals, businesses, and organizations.

## Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower hosting informational program on what to do in an active shooter situation

TOWER- What would you do during an active shooter situation? Lieutenant Shene of the Duluth Police Department will teach techniques that may help prevent becoming a victim on Sunday, March 3 at 2 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower. This presentation is open

to the public and free of charge. Coffee an' will be provided after the training, in the fellowship hall.

Being able to survive in any violent situation requires much more than an idea of what tactics or techniques may work. You must understand what you, at any point in your life,

are capable of doing. This presentation is based on the belief that all of us are much more capable than we may think we are. In order to tap into that potential it is important that we first understand what "violence" is and how it affects us physiologically. With this understanding we can confidently discuss what we are capable of doing, and what tactics may work for each of us. In short, we do not have to be victims.

Lieutenant Shene is a 22-year veteran of the Duluth Police Department. He has served in numerous capacities including patrol, homicide investigations, sexual assault investigations, predatory offenders, domestic violence, and crimes against children. He is currently assigned as the commander of the tactical response team and the shift commander for patrol group B.

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COUNTY SCHOOLS

# Board offers compromise to custodians' union

Would retain head custodians at each of the district schools, while keeping new district-wide position as union-exempt

by MARCUS WHITE  
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL — St. Louis County School Board members offered a compromise to custodial staff at their meeting on Tuesday, in hopes of avoiding arbitration over a union grievance.

The union is upset over a previous decision by the board to hire a district-wide head of maintenance outside of the union contract. Under the compromise, the new position would remain exempt from union membership, but Superintendent Reggie Engebritson agreed to reverse her previous plan to eliminate the head custodian position at each of the schools.

"The concern is that we can't

find people who have a boilers license," Engebritson said. "It's why the consolidation would need to happen."

School board members Pat Christensen (Orr) and Christine Taylor (South Ridge) said they did not know the superintendent's plan involved eliminating the head custodian position as the current employees retired.

"I want to see a head custodian in each school," Cherry's Lynette Zupetz said. "They'll get it done because they know what needs to be done."

Chair Dan Manick said he still wanted the district-wide position to go forward since he felt projects at the schools had fallen by the wayside without some sort of centralized management of facilities.

School board members expressed some differences over their understanding of the union's grievance. Manick said he felt the core of the grievance was concern over the union exemption for the district-wide position, while Christensen felt the removal of the head custodian position at each of the schools was the biggest issue.

Board member Chris Koivisto echoed Manick's sentiment, but said he felt the district was making the right move and that the restoration of a head of maintenance at each campus was a good move on the part of the board and the district.

Koivisto made a motion to deny the part of the grievance dealing with the district-wide position, which the board sup-

ported unanimously.

"They have to know we're supporting them, but still need to be able to run the schools," Koivisto said.

Engebritson said the restored head of maintenance position would not require a boilers license, but that applicants would be strongly encouraged to obtain one since the union pays for members to undergo the training.

The board's decision now goes back to the union which can either accept it or force the district into arbitration.

In other business, the board:   
▶ Heard plans to implement a pilot program at North Woods to have a summer orientation day for incoming seventh graders. The program is grant-funded through the state to target schools

with a high number of students from a racial minority group. The school was chosen because of the flow of students from Nett Lake to North Woods between sixth and seventh grades.

▶ Heard about changes to Q Comp policies and state rule changes that would no longer allow Tier 1 teachers qualified as "Community Specialists" to teach without holding at least a bachelor's degree. Engebritson said the district has three staff members who could be affected by the change. She called the state's rule change, "dumb" and said she would be talking to state representatives in the future.

▶ Voted to close fitness centers at North Woods and Cherry.

PUBLIC OVERSIGHT

# McCullum requests EPA staff comments on PolyMet permit

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

WASHINGTON, DC — Minnesota's Fourth District Congresswoman Betty McCollum, on Monday, formally called for the public release of any written comments that staff with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency prepared in response to a state-issued draft water discharge permit for PolyMet Mining.

In a Feb. 25 letter to Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler, McCollum alleges that the EPA, under former Administrator Scott Pruitt, "may have sought to circumvent the requirements of the Federal

"If the EPA scientists and staff prepared comments outlining any concerns regarding these permits, then the American people have a right to know.

Rep. Betty McCollum

Records Act by trying to minimize the creation of written records and instead conduct substantive agency business verbally."

McCollum's allegation stems from documents released earlier this year by the Minnesota

Pollution Control Agency, which suggest that EPA staff had concerns over the MPCA's proposed water discharge permit for PolyMet and had intended to submit written comments outlining those concerns. The MPCA released those documents, including hand-written notes from its own staff, in response to a data practices request from the environmental group Water Legacy.

"MPCA's staff's notes suggest that EPA staff raised concerns with several provisions in the permit, including with respect to water quality based effluent limits, monitoring plans to ensure Clean Water Act compliance, and potential risks for

increased mercury contamination downstream of the project," wrote McCollum.

But the EPA never forwarded its concerns in writing and at least one former EPA official has indicated that sources within the agency have told him that political appointees in the agency appear to have suppressed the comments.

"I note that that it is EPA's usual practice to provide state agencies written comments in these situations," writes McCollum in her letter to Wheeler.

McCollum said the EPA has an obligation to do its work transparently, particularly given the risks associated with

the PolyMet project, a planned open pit copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes. "Sulfide-ore mining has the potential to significantly impact water quality, which is why such an extensive and public permitting process exists. If the qualified, expert EPA scientists and professional staff prepared comments outlining any concerns regarding these permits, then the American people have the right to know," said McCollum in a statement. "In the interests of transparency and maintaining the public's trust, I'm requesting that EPA immediately make available to the public the written comments prepared on the PolyMet mining project's permit."

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# OPINION

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e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

## Editorial

### SLC Rescue Squad

These remarkable volunteers deserve our thanks and our financial support

Imagine getting a call in the middle of the night to go rescue a stranger who's lost deep in the woods, miles from the nearest road. In the winter. When it's 30 degrees below zero outside. And doing it for nothing but the satisfaction of making a difference.

For the 59 members of the all-volunteer St. Louis County Rescue Squad, this scenario doesn't require imagination. It's an experience that's all too common.

While most of us are busy living our lives, this remarkable group of volunteers are working, largely unheralded, to protect the lives of hundreds of individuals who find themselves in harm's way somewhere in the North Country. And for most members of the squad, it's not just an occasional gig. According to the rescue squad's 2018 annual report, released late last week, its members volunteered a total of 24,515 hours in 2018, the second highest total in the organization's 60-year history. If you do the math, that's more than 400 hours per volunteer, on average. And some put in far more than that.

During the past year, the rescue squad ran 405 missions, the third consecutive year with more than 400 missions. That included 73 searches and 46 rescue missions, many of them involving miles of off-road travel, often on foot, by canoe, ATV or snowmobile, depending on the season.

They responded to 10 water fatalities but also made a critical difference in the live rescue of 22 others who had gotten themselves in trouble on the water. They set up remote helicopter landing sites, performed heavy extractions, and conducted five rope rescues.

They don't always get there in time, which means that these volunteers frequently engage in body recoveries, a particularly grisly task that most of us would probably rather not have to think about.

Of course, the rescue squad does all this stressful work under some of the most trying conditions imaginable. It's bad weather or

darkness that often creates the need for rescue, which means the squad regularly operates at night, in bitter cold, high winds, rain, snow, or in the aftermath of severe storms. It isn't just uncomfortable and tiring work—it's often hazardous, even life-threatening.

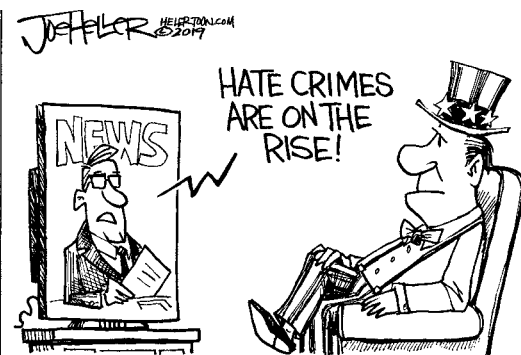
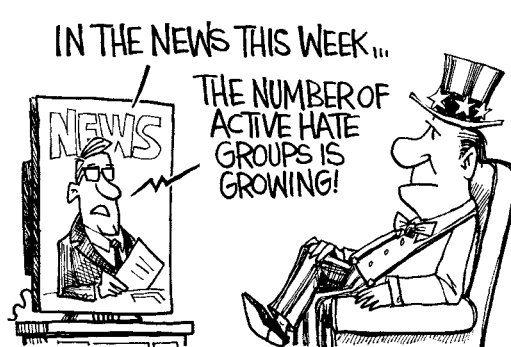
The members of the squad are not only people who care. They are people who are willing to put in the training time to ensure that when they're called upon, they'll be able to make a difference. All of the members of the squad are trained in emergency medicine, at least to the First Responder level, and many are certified as EMTs and even paramedics. Many are certified human trackers, scuba divers, or can rappel from a helicopter in the middle of the night.

And yet it's more than training. Members of the squad are also expected to attend regular meetings, respond to calls, clean and maintain squad facilities, tools and equipment, and keep a ready kit with all the gear they might need in their vehicle at all times. It's an incredible personal commitment.

These remarkable volunteers not only deserve our thanks, they deserve our support. While the members are volunteers, it still costs plenty to maintain the rescue squad and its operations—and they rely heavily on donations from the public to make it happen. We know there's no shortage of worthy causes to which we can all donate, yet the rescue squad is one where you know your donation will make a difference, possibly, someday, for someone close to you.

You can mail donations to the St. Louis County Rescue Squad at: St. Louis County Rescue Squad, PO Box 16222, Duluth, MN 55816, or donate online at their Facebook page.

You may not be able or willing to respond to that emergency call in the middle of the night. But at least you can do your part by providing a little financial support to the incredible work of those who do.



## Letters from Readers

### Their overheard words were a gift I am grateful for

The television was on with no sound as I sat down in the dealership service lounge while my car was being repaired. I picked up a magazine to read an article. Three men who were also waiting for their vehicles were engaged in a conversation about fishing, hunting cabins and the weather. Then, there was a change in the trajectory of their conversation from Minnesota small talk to experiences they had in combat during the Vietnam war. The war that was a collective trauma for our society and for me personally as friends and family members were drafted into military service.

These three veterans' discussion brought back memories of the multiple losses I experienced when I lost loved ones as fatalities of the Vietnam war. They were young men who hadn't chosen to leave their families and their homes to fight in a war. Yet they went when called by the draft. The veterans' discussion while we waited for our vehicles ranged from health consequences suffered from Agent Orange exposure, the wild fly by the seat of your pants nature of duty in Vietnam, the difficulty of returning home to a regulated base with the expectation that they would follow orders and direction after the chaos of surviving the Vietnam experience, adapting to the unfamiliarity of the different geography and culture of Vietnam, and they spoke to each other of their fear as they carried out dangerous missions. The veterans spoke reverently of the injuries and death of fellow soldiers. The grief expressed was authentic as they spoke of their "lost buddies".

One of the men was called since his car was done. As he stood to leave the other two men also stood, introduced themselves and they all shook hands. I was moved by the conversation I'd heard as these men, who had not previously

known each other, connected through their shared experiences of war.

Just as I was thinking that I should thank them for the heartfelt sharing I listened to, my name was called to pick up my car. I didn't speak to them as I left. Now, looking back, I wish I had taken a moment to thank them for the gift of greater understanding I received by overhearing their conversation. They shared experiences of their humanity, losses suffered, struggles with transitions and the bond obtained through their military service. This experience was during a forty-minute wait in a car dealership lounge in northern Minnesota. By listening I felt the brotherhood of these veterans, expressed in their conversation of shared experience and the connection this sharing created.

Memories of visiting the Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C., and memories of loved ones lost surfaced later that day. As I was in that state of mind a line from Shakespeare's Henry V St. Crispin's Day speech rose in my memory, "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers - for whoever sheds his blood with me today shall be my brother. However humble his birth, this day shall grant him nobility."

My prayer is that our world will evolve into a world where there is no longer a tolerance for war. By listening today I felt respect for these veterans, their service and the bond they expressed and share. The sharing I overheard is a gift I am immensely grateful for.

**Marjory Johnson Wood  
Biwabik**

### Greenwood board should take a stand on RV expansions

In 2016, Greenwood Township Supervisors turned over responsibility for all Conditional Use Permits (CUP) and variance decisions to St. Louis County (SLC).

In June 2017, Supervisor DeLuca made a motion for supervisors to automatically

refrain from commenting on all future CUPs and variance, apparently for both residential and businesses. Chairman Bassing suggested that they leave the commenting option open, in case an egregious situation presented itself in the future. Nonetheless the motion was passed 4-1 when DeLuca, Ralston, Skubic, and Tahija voted yes; and Bassing voted no.

Recently there have been two Conditional Use Permits submitted by local businesses to expand seasonal township resort areas into large year-round RV parks. The Bay View proposal was recently approved for 37 RV sites. If the Daisy Bay resort proposal is approved as it is, it will expand its nine-cabins and 5 RV sites to 43 RV sites, with the future possibility of expanding to 36 more, for a total of 79 sites. In comparative perspective, McKinley Park has 50 RV and 18 tent sites. Hoodoo Park has 81 RV and 18 tent sites.

Large RV park property proposals impact the surrounding environment more than individual residential property proposals. There are many who think these proposals are egregious because they don't fit in with the Lake Vermilion Plan. They have a much larger impact on environmental and public safety standards within the area. I hope that the board will reconsider its 2017 vote and involve itself in informing and listening to citizen concerns, giving guidance, and if enough township residents agree, making official comments to the county. Residential CUP's could remain as is.

The county is accepting interested citizen comments on the Daisy Bay proposal until March 12. You can call SLC Planner Jared Ecklund at 218-741-7565 or email him at [ecklundj@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:ecklundj@stlouiscountymn.gov) prior to the public hearing on Thursday, March 14 at 9:15 a.m. at the SLC Public Works Building in Virginia.

**Shelley Padgett  
Greenwood Twp**

## Tax cuts for the rich have hurt the economy and democracy

Here's a statistic that encapsulates the political moment we're in today: The 400 richest Americans now have as much wealth as the bottom 62 percent of us. And just the three richest of those 400, Warren Buffet, Bill Gates, and Jeff Bezos, own as much wealth as the bottom half of Americans. Let that



**MARSHALL  
HELMBERGER**

sink in a moment.

These are statistics we might expect to apply to the most backward and corrupt of Third World dictatorships, not to the country that once boasted the largest and most prosperous middle class in the world. America has changed mightily over the past few decades, and not for

the better.

It's easy to think of income inequality as somehow inevitable in a market economy—because that's the dismissive story line that both Democratic and Republican politicians have used since at least the 1980s to more or less excuse the remarkable transition that's underway in this country. But there is nothing inevitable about income inequality. We now have the greatest disparity of income and wealth in U.S. history for one simple reason—the politicians in our

nation's capital have rigged it that way.

Which is why we need new leadership and a new direction in Washington, D.C.

Income inequality will be one of the top three issues in the 2020 presidential campaign, and with good reason. Income inequality is bad for the economy and even worse for our democracy and it has been fueled for the past 40 years by a devastating bipartisan consensus to cut taxes on wealthy individuals and corporate America.

Since the 1970s, conservatives have peddled their economic snake oil, known as supply-side economics, which posits that reducing taxation on the wealthy will unleash waves of new economic investment, generating economic growth and higher government revenues in the process. It's the ultimate win-win, except for the fact that economics doesn't work that way and never will. Supply-side economics provides lackluster

See TAXES...pg. 5

# Letters from Readers

## Stauber's statements on mining are false

With regard to copper/nickel mining, Rep. Pete Stauber wrote in his February 4 e-newsletter, "Despite what some would have you to believe, 21st century science has proven that we can responsibly develop our resources all while preserving our environment." This statement is false (fake news). Science

cannot prove this. Science requires data, and there is no data to support this statement. This is just a political brainwashing propaganda statement.

Whether mining is done responsibly depends on the willingness of politics to enforce regulations placed on the process. Whether the environment is preserved in the mining process depends on the willingness of politics to enforce environmental standards. Supporters of copper/

nickel mining claim that both regulations and environmental standards will be strictly enforced. (We can have our cake and eat it too.) However, the iron mining industry provides us with a reality check. When the state talked about enforcing the sulfate standard on tailing pond water, the mining companies said that that would be prohibitively expensive. Then, they whispered that four letter word. Immediately, politics

went to work to obviate both the enforcement of the standard and the standard itself. The result has been that the environment remains threatened with no preservation in sight. And, what is that four letter word that trumps everything related to the environment? JOBS!

Jobs are the political driving force behind copper/nickel mining. Once copper/nickel mining jobs exist, those jobs will not be sacrificed to preserve the

environment. Just the opposite. And, it will not matter if it is the BWCAW watershed or the Lake Superior watershed. Politics will sacrifice either. Neither are more valuable than those copper/nickel mining jobs that are estimated to last for less than a generation.

**Robert Eliason  
Lake Shore**

### CITY OF ELY

# Ely police now equipped with body armor

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY – The Ely Police Department is now ready to handle any active shooter situation, thanks to several community organizations. All seven members of the department received the Shield 616 Armor Package at a recent city council meeting.

Jake Skifstad, president and founder of Shield 616, said local law enforcement now have top-of-the-line gear as he presented the equipment during the Feb. 19 council meeting. "The common theme that we hear is that it gives these officers courage and boldness to go toward danger," he said. "We want to make sure that every agency that reaches out to us is fully equipped."

The seven vests and equipment, valued at \$1,500 for each set, were purchased from Shield 616 by Twin Metals of Minnesota, with three Ely-area church organizations, Oasis Church, St. Anthony Church, and Ely Gospel Men's Group, providing spiritual and emotional support.

Each of the seven packages includes a military grade ballistic helmet, front and back armor plates, armor plate carrier vest and a trauma kit, according to Skifstad, a former International

Falls police officer.

While he worked in Colorado, he was involved in two active shooter situations, one at the largest church in Colorado in 2007 and the other at a Planned Parenthood clinic in 2015. "At the 2015 situation, five officers were shot and one officer was killed," Skifstad said.

"We all see what is going on with law enforcement across the country. We see all these very violent situations that are happening and that law enforcement have to deal with. There is a lot of hostility directed toward our law enforcement. We want to remind them that Ely is a town worth fighting for," he said.

Shield 616 has worked with communities in 18 states to equip hundreds of police officers for active shooter situations. In addition to providing equipment, the organization works with communities to provide spiritual and emotional support for law enforcement personnel and their families. "It is truly fun to see the entire Ely community rally around this effort and support the police to make sure our protectors are protected," he said.

Ely Police Chief John Lahtonen expressed his gratitude to Shield 616 and the community in providing the equipment for the police force. "This is totally amazing and hard to even



From left, Ely Police Department's Adam Borchert, Christian Deinhammer, Dennis Koponen, Chief John Lahtonen, George Burger, Chad Houde, and Bradley Roy with their new body armor. K. Vandervort

believe," he said.

### Other business

In other business, the council:

- Approved staff to attend the Minnesota Municipal Clerks and Finance Officer Association annual conference in St. Cloud, March 19-22.

- Approved the police chief to attend the 2019 ETI Conference and Law Enforcement Expo in St. Cloud, April 14-17.

- Approved a recommendation from the projects committee to revise the purchase agreement from \$16,000 to \$10,000 for the

purchase of the Ely Veterinary Clinic lot by Dr. Chip Hanson.

- Approved a \$50,000 grant from IRRRB for the Downtown Beautification Project.

- Agreed with the recommendation from the Employee Relations Committee to award the position of assistant building engineer/equipment operator to John Sjoborg

- Approved the note and mortgage for Brian and Karen Maverick for \$10,000 for window replacement at 415 E Chapman St.

- Adopted a resolution requesting the U.S. Forest

Service to reinstate the lottery permitting system for motor use permits in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

- Approved the first reading of a revised and amended ordinance regarding peddlers, solicitors, transient merchants, mobile food carts and mobile food vehicles.

- Approved a resolution in support of increasing Local Government Aid in the 2019 legislative session.

## TAXES...Continued from page 4

economic stimulus in the short term and huge government deficits and reduced public investment in the longer term. That's not my opinion — that's a verifiable fact.

Remember that big corporate tax cut that President Trump signed in December 2017? The one that was going to send corporate investment in new plants and equipment skyrocketing? Sorry, that never happened. Instead, corporate America gave the money to their wealthy shareholders and used the rest to buy back stock. Oh, and the federal deficit has jumped dramatically as a result and is now forecast to hit just under \$1 trillion this year.

Most Americans recognize that our economic and political system used to work better and, at times, even served the interests of average folks. Back in the 1950s and 1960s, we actually taxed the wealthy and corporations in America and used those revenues to build modern airports, the interstate highway system, and new public schools to educate the baby boom, to electrify rural America, to subsidize home mortgages for those with sufficient credit or to build affordable housing for those who didn't. The top marginal tax rate under that old socialist, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, was 92 percent, which

meant we could do all those things, plus wage the Cold War, and still balance the budget.

Higher taxes on the wealthy come with a multitude of benefits. And one that isn't often mentioned is the effect that higher marginal tax rates used to have on corporate culture. Back in the 1950s and early 1960s, the typical CEO made about 15 times as much as their average worker. Today, the typical CEO is making 300 times as much as their typical employee. Is it because those CEOs are working 20 times harder than they did in the 1960s? Of course, not. But companies back then had little incentive to focus their energies on boosting CEO pay, since above a certain level the government pretty much taxed all of it. That meant they could put resources into keeping employees happy, with more frequent raises or better benefits, or make longer-term strategic investments. The CEO-to-worker pay ratio remained remarkably flat in the U.S. until the late 1980s, when the top marginal tax rate was slashed in phases from 70 percent in 1981, to just 31 percent ten years later. That change in tax policy altered the corporate culture, putting far more emphasis on top executive pay and shareholder return. Worker wages stagnated as a result, as corporate profits

were shoveled to the top, and that's a trend that has continued ever since.

Higher taxes also generate higher government revenue, which can then be used to provide services and infrastructure that advance the public good and grow the economy to the benefit of everyone, from workers to business owners.

Calling for free college tuition sounds radical, until you remember that we used to fund virtually the entire cost of operating public colleges and universities in this country, which made tuition essentially free. I paid \$276 for my first quarter tuition and fees at the University of Minnesota in 1979. Today, a semester's tuition is more than \$14,600.

Rather than taxing the wealthy to help pay to educate the next generation and make our economy more productive, we force young people to borrow the money from the rich at high interest rates, leaving them in debt for decades in many cases. The student debt crisis was never inevitable. It was something that our

politicians engineered by slashing taxes on the wealthy.

When you hear a politician or pundit claim that we can't afford to provide free public college tuition or affordable housing, or to invest in green energy, or to provide quality health care to everyone, remember what they're really saying: We can't afford those things and still keep our billionaire financial backers happy.

And that's where tax policy feeds into our democratic process. One of the most appalling developments in recent years has been the rise of the billionaire political kingmaker, which is most pronounced in the Republican Party. The Koch Brothers, the Mercers, the Uihleins, and the biggest sugar daddy of them all, casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, now virtually dictate the policies of the GOP through their vast campaign spending. And, not surprisingly, those policies are focused on putting more and more money into their pockets through tax cuts and deregulation. The interests of average Americans aren't

even a consideration.

Sadly, the Democrats, particularly under the Clintons, were all too happy to play the same money game, and it led to a situation where both parties were focused almost exclusively on the interests of the nation's wealthy elite — Wall Street and Hollywood in the case of the Democrats, and Big Oil and Big Pharma in the case of the GOP.

So as the 2020 campaign kicks into high gear over the next several months, it's worth considering the central role that taxation plays in our society. Some candidates are now proposing significant increases in tax rates on the wealthy, and such policies, if passed, would help to reduce the staggering income inequality that now plagues our country,

provide new opportunity for investments in the broader public interest, and help to limit the role of vast wealth on our electoral process.

Those who dismiss higher taxes on the wealthy as somehow un-American, don't know their history. Exactly a century ago, the top marginal tax rate in the U.S. was 73 percent and it remained in that range or higher until the 1980s. The only brief exception was in the 1920s, when the rate was cut to 25 percent, fueling an orgy of financial speculation that led to the Great Depression. Otherwise, for most of a century, America heavily taxed the rich, and our society and economy thrived as a result. If we really want to make America great again, it's time to tax the

### Lunch & Learn: Marketing Starts with M & E March 14, 2019 Noon to 1 pm - Grand Ely Lodge

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This training is sponsored by the Ely Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Entrepreneur Fund.

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## TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY

# Teachers planning innovative teaching methods next year

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- The teaching staff at Tower-Soudan Elementary has more years of experience than they really like to talk about. Yet for this group of energetic and talented instructors, experience doesn't mean they're set in their teaching ways.

"We all work so well together," said first-grade teacher Jo Holen. "We are open to ideas and trying new things, and we all are willing to re-evaluate if something new we've tried isn't working."

The staff effectively manages the day-to-day operations at the school on their own. The school shares Principal Kelly Engman with Northeast Range, but she is usually only in Tower one day a week.

That means that when school district administrators recently moved to cut a half-time equivalent position at the school, the teachers here were actively involved in trying to accommodate the reduction without affecting educational quality.

The move to cut staff at the building is the result of analysis that shows the student-teacher ratio at Tower-Soudan is significantly lower than in other elementary schools in the district. District numbers show the school's teacher-student ratio is 1:11, compared to 1:14.6 at Northeast Range and 1:17.2 at North Woods.

The elementary school is the smallest in ISD 2142, and routinely boasts the highest test scores in the district, and teachers here are intent on maintaining an educational standard they've become known for in recent years. Third-grade teacher Jacqueline Horvat said the staff is now meeting to discuss creative and innovative ways to adjust the staffing with the least impact to students.

The half-time reduction in staffing planned for next year will mean that the current Kindergarten teacher Wendy Jordan, who has the least seniority of all the TS teachers, would only be teaching Kindergarten in the mornings. Jordan was the building's special education teacher before bumping into the Kindergarten spot this year.

"Nothing has been decided yet," said Horvat, who said the staff will have a few more meetings on their own, and then meet with administrators before finalizing plans. Final scheduling plans will depend on the size of the incoming Kindergarten class, which might

end up being a larger-than-average group.

Among the changes made in the past year has been a shift to greater use of multi-age groupings. The school started working with multi-grade groupings in the upper elementary several years ago when class sizes in fifth- and sixth-grade dipped. Other multi-grade groupings were put in place to cover times that fourth-grade teacher Michelle Anderson is teaching music, and fifth/sixth-grade teacher Scott Chiabotti is teaching physical education. This flexible staffing allows the small school to offer these "specials" on a regular basis.

The multi-grade times are also popular with the students. They enjoy being with friends in grades other than their own, said Horvat, and moving to different rooms also makes the day go faster.

And the small class sizes, even when two grades are together, make individualizing lessons for students at different levels possible.

"We can pull the higher kids up, and those who may be a bit behind up at the same time," said Horvat. "It's very manageable."

Wednesday, which is early release day, will feature an all-new look next year, with a focus on hands-on learning. Each teacher will have a learning station set up in their classroom, and students will rotate from room to room. Horvat said this will give teachers the opportunity to focus on areas they are passionate about. Second-grade teacher Charissa Dahl, for example, is looking forward to the opportunity of designing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) centered learning, and Chiabotti is designing games and exercises that promote the type of whole-body coordination that is essential for successful learning, along with advancing overall fitness. Other Wednesday learning opportunities will include language arts, and additional music and art instruction.

The teachers said that once next year's schedule is set, a meeting with parents will be held, to answer any questions from current and future families.

The teachers look forward to next year as a positive challenge. Holen said while it is always more work to create a new curriculum, it's also something new and different for the teachers. She noted that teach-

ing the same curriculum year after year can be boring, so she is usually creating new lessons anyway.

"I'm glad we have the time to figure it all out," she said.

## District committed to maintaining TS School

ISD 2142 Superintendent Reggie Engebritson recently confirmed the school district's commitment to the Tower-Soudan Elementary after some school board members appeared to question its viability. But Engebritson indicated that the district should be able to continue to operate the school unless enrollment were to dip below 30 students. Projected enrollment for next year is 77 and enrollment figures have been relatively stable in that range for several years.

The school district does get special state aid, payment-in-lieu of taxes, specifically targeted to the Tower school due to the presence of the expanded Lake Vermilion State Park. It also receives lease payments from Scenic Rivers Health Services, which operates a medical and dental clinic in part of the building.

## Research shows multi-grade groupings may benefit students

The multi-grade groupings in Tower, along with the small class sizes, mean that the teachers here have gotten to know all the students, and vice-versa. Holen said she feels that is one of the reasons the school has very few discipline problems.

Multi-grade groupings used to be a normal part of rural education—think of the classic one-room schoolhouse. Research over the years has shown little difference in academic achievement between



Above: Fourth-grader Raeanna hands out a valentine to third-grader Arlene during a Valentine's Day party. Below: Third, fourth, fifth, and sixth-graders had a soccer tournament during gym time with teacher Scott Chiabotti. photos by J. Summit

multi-grade and single-grade classrooms, with a slight edge in many studies going to students in multi-grade settings. In researching student attitudes towards school and learning, results actually favor multi-grade classrooms, and the same is true when studying students' social relationships. (See: A Review of the Quantitative Research on Multi-grade Instruction, by Bruce A. Miller, Northwest Regional Education

Laboratory.)

Newer studies have focused on the impacts of grade-level testing and assessments of students in multi-grade classrooms, and while research is still underway, the results so far at T-S Elementary have shown that with small class sizes, it is possible for teachers to make sure students are receiving a quality education, and meeting state benchmarks in a multi-age setting.



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## Area Solid Waste Facility site hours

**Northwoods Transfer Station**  
9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt  
Winter Hours  
Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm  
Tue: 9:30am-3pm  
Wed: 11am-5pm

**County 77 Canister Site**  
2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp  
Winter Hours  
Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm

**Embarrass Canister Site**  
7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass  
Hours  
Sat: 12:30-4:30pm  
Thu: 10am-5pm

**Household Hazardous Waste Facility**  
5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia  
Hours  
Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm

**Cook Transfer Station**  
2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook  
Hours  
Mon: 10am-6pm  
Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm

**Soudan Canister Site**  
5160 Hwy 169, Soudan  
Hours  
Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun  
8am-5pm

**Aurora Transfer Station**  
5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora  
Hours  
Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm  
Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm  
Sat: 8am-noon

**Regional Landfill**  
5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia  
Hours  
Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm  
Sat: 8am-3:30pm

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department  
1-800-450-9278  
Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday  
www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle



## Community invited to attend planning meeting for future Broadband projects, March 27

TOWER- Community members from Tower, surrounding townships, and Lake Vermilion Reservation are invited to attend a Blandin Broadband Community vision meeting to establish the area's broadband needs and priorities, and to decide on projects to improve Internet access and use in the Tower area. The vision meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 27 at the Tower Civic Center. A light meal will be served at 4:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 5 p.m.

Tower was named one of four new Blandin Broadband Communities, a program that provides planning, technical, and financial support to communities that demonstrate the determination to bring the benefits of a broadband-enabled economy to their communities. These four communities will have ac-

cess to a special grant fund; projects will have to meet Blandin Foundation standards in order to be funded.

Representatives from Blandin Foundation, IRRRB, and community leaders will be at the meeting to help participants identify our community's strengths and gaps, brainstorm project ideas, and prioritize potential projects. Cross-sector and collaborative efforts will be a priority; the greater impact the project can make, the better. Once projects emerge, our area will have the opportunity to apply for up to \$75,000 in total grant funding over two years.

For questions or to RSVP, please contact Stephanie Ukkola at stephanie.ukkola@gmail.com or 715-969-7728.

## Mardi Gras family night on March 1 at St. Martin's Catholic

TOWER- St. Martin's Catholic Church invites you to join us for Mardi Gras 2019 to be held in the church social hall on Friday, March 1. Festivities get underway at 5:30 p.m. and run un-

til 9 p.m. This is an open house style event— you can come when you want, and leave when you want! Fun for the whole family. Admission is by freewill donation.

Bingo will begin at

6:45 p.m. Cost for bingo is \$5 for 10 games. There will also be ping pong, foosball, cribbage, bean bag toss, and dice games.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Community Closet free event on March 13 at Immanuel**

TOWER- Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower is hosting their first "Community Closet" give-away on Wednesday, March 13 from 12 noon - 2 p.m. in the church fellowship hall (downstairs). All clothing and household items will be free, and a light lunch will be served at no charge. This event is open to the public. No electronics, books, or exercise equipment will be accepted.

**Little Church meeting, March 9**

VERMILION LAKE TWP- There will be a Little Church meeting on Saturday, March 9 at 9 a.m. The church welcomes anyone and is looking for people interested in keeping The Little Church active and maintained in our community.

There is a men's group that meets every Thursday at 9 a.m. for coffee and conversation. All are welcome. The Little Church is located in Vermilion Lake Twp. on County Rd. 26/Wahlsten Rd. For questions, please contact Len Hujanen at 218-749-2014.

**Shrove Tuesday pancake meal at St. James on March 5**

TOWER- St. James Presbyterian Church in Tower is hosting their annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Meal on Tuesday, March 5 from 11

a.m. - 1 p.m. There will be pancakes, sausages, fruit, and a beverage served. Meal is by free-will donation. Donations will support Vacation Bible School (sponsored by St. James Presbyterian and Immanuel Lutheran) and the Tower Cemetery Association.

**Chimpy's Skating Parties**

S O U D A N - Chimpy's skating parties at the Soudan Rink are now underway. This weekend, March 2 and 3, there will be skating parties from 12 noon - 2 p.m. This weekend's parties are sponsored by Tom and Renee Aro, and Linda Wiire and Fred Ode.

Children of all ages are welcome to stop by for skating, fun, and food. Loaner skates are available in the warming shack.

The warming shack regular hours are weekdays from 4 p.m. to closing, and weekends from 11 a.m. to closing.

**St. Martin's Leten Schedule**

TOWER- St. Martin's Catholic Church is happy to announce their schedule of Lenten activities.

Ash Wednesday (March 6) Mass will be at 9 a.m. For those who are unable to attend Mass, Father will be available for distribution of ashes from 7 to 8 a.m. Ash Wednesday Mass will also be celebrated at Holy Cross (Orr) at noon and at St Mary's (Cook) at 5:30 p.m.

Stations of the Cross will be prayed Friday evenings (beginning

March 8) during Lent at 5:30 p.m. A fish dinner will be served after the stations.

The Women's Bible Study continues through Lent; meeting on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the Social Hall.

In addition to the Women's Bible Study, Father Nick will be leading a Bible Study on Friday mornings at 8:45 a.m. This Bible Study is open to everyone.

**St Martin's Annual Pasty Sale**

TOWER- It's that time of year again- the St Martin Youth are getting ready for their Annual Pasty Sale. Orders are now being taken; the last day to order is March 13. You may place your

order with any of our high school students, or by calling the rectory at 218-753-4310.

You have the option of having rutabaga in your pasties or not. You will need to tell us at the time of your order. The cost of the pasties is still \$5 and they must be paid at the time of the order. Pasties will be available for delivery/pick up on March 30.

Proceeds from this project will go towards the Steubenville Conference trip in July. This year we have five students attending the conference in St Louis!

**Vermilion Country School Honor Roll**



TOWER- The following students were named to the second quarter honor roll at Vermilion Country School in Tower. VCS is a grades 7-12 public charter school. The list published in the Feb. 15 paper, inadvertently left out some of the B Honor Roll names, so we are reprinting the complete honor roll list.

**A Honor Roll**

- Preston Tyndall-Robich
- Alexander Dorman
- Jaicee Krings
- Jacob Dorman
- Alyssa Pratt
- Andrew Sauls
- Jacob Karasti

**B Honor Roll**

- Brody Anderson
- Alyssa Costello
- Maverick Simleness
- Kelsie Walker
- McDazway Dunkley
- Dakota Hanninen
- Mahlia Schuster
- Leah Anderson
- Todd Zibrowski
- Shaylin Peliska
- Jason Premo

Week of March 4

**Monday**  
TOPS - Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower, at 9 a.m.

Embarrass Al-Anon Family Group- Hope Lutheran Church, 5088 Hwy. 21, 6 p.m.

**Tuesday**  
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:30 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is March 19.

Greenwood Fire Dept.- Meetings on the first (drill) and third (business meeting) Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

**Wednesday**  
Tower AA- Open Basics- 7 p.m. at St. James Presbyterian Church. Questions, call 753-2332.

**Thursday**  
AA Meeting- Lake Vermilion 12x12 (Open). 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower, use the rear side door entrance.

Vermilion Country School Board- Meetings posted online at [vermilioncountry.org](http://vermilioncountry.org).

**AEOA Senior Dining Menu**

TOWER- Vermilion Country School and AEOA sponsor a senior dining site at the charter school in Tower. All meals include salad bar, fruit, choice of beverage, and dessert.

Reservations are appreciated the day before, or morning of, but walk-ins are always welcome. Take-outs are available. Seniors age 60 and older who have registered for the program and their partners qualify for special pricing of \$4 per meal, but all ages are welcome at the regular rate of \$5.75. There are no income guidelines.

Meals are served from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. on days when the charter school is open. Call the school at 218-753-1246 ext. 1003 for reservations, or call AEOA at 1-800-662-5711 ext. 7323 for the one-time registration process.

Homebound seniors can sign up for meal delivery. To register for the new Meals on Wheels, or for more information, please call AEOA Senior Nutrition at 218-735-6899.

**Week of March 4**

- Monday- Mini Corn Dogs, Baked Beans
- Tuesday- BBQ Riblet, Corn
- Wednesday- Field trip day, no senior lunch
- Thursday- Pork Wrap, Tortilla Chips
- Friday- No school, no senior lunch served

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THE NEWS OF THE WEEK FROM MS. VERA MILION



I first must apologize to Judy and the staff at the Tower Zup's store.

I feel personally that the man who said, "Is it cold enough for you? HA, HA!" deserved EXACTLY what he got, and we have contacted our insurance agent about restitution.

Anyone should know not to remind someone that dogs are sticking to the sidewalk and that a first-grader might have to live with a permanent lisp caused by ripping his tongue from the flagpole. The staff will not give up their pursuit of the sixth-grader who assured him that cold aluminum flagpoles taste like peppermint.

We have sent your name to our lawyer.

On the home front, there have been some extreme reactions to the cold that I feel made matters worse.

It was, as I explained to the glass repair man, just bad luck and poor timing.

Hilda, during this recent cold spell, has wrapped herself in so many blankets that she looks like a cocoon from some horror film- huge, brown, diseased, and dripping slime.

"Doctor," says the blonde bimbo, dressed in shorts and a teeny-tiny minuscule halter top, "What is in that giant co-

coon?"

"Don't touch it Monica! It is the home of the deadly flying Hippocentaur Sub-Human Lepidopterist! STAY BACK!"

Well, of course she doesn't, and she is ripped to tiny pieces and ingested!

No one is in any danger of being ripped to pieces in our house and long gone are halter tops!

Sanity might NOT have been a problem for Hilda except for the arrival of two pieces of mail. Gilbert H. Wild and Son: America's Largest Grower of Daylilies, Iris and Peonies Spring 2019 Catalog, and The Michigan Bulb Co, gardening for you for 75 years.

Hilda started her list! She must be counting on a HUGE income tax return.

"Banana Cream, Shasta Daisy, Lavender Deep Purple, Crazy Cayenne Coreopsis, Tall Phlox Jeanna, Annabelle Hydrangea."

I could hear her BIC scurrying across her leg pad.

I went to the kitchen to have a wee sip of spiritus frumenti- I knew there would be an eventual Armageddon.

"Alas, I am undone!" She taught Shakespeare for way too many years and can't lose the vocabulary! "EVERYTHING I LIKE THE DEER LIKE!"

Moose erupted from the TV room, "Could you two keep it down, PLEASE?? We are watching the semi-finals of the semi-finals of the PGA."

We fell on him with

our tale of woe.

He rolled his eyes and said, "I will be right back."

"Here, this should help!" he thrust a list into Hilda's hand.

Deer Food: Daylilies and Hosta (wouldn't you know it!) the list went on, Shasta Daisy, Iris, Phlox, Black Eyed Susan.

A second page listed Non-deer Delicacies: Coreopsis, Bee Balm, Columbine and ALL fuzzy plants- Bleeding Heart, Monk's Hood, Lady's Mantle.

When spring arrives, we will be broke but DEER FREE!

Our dear, dear nephew also included a list of "Drinks for the Weary Gardener."

This drink includes cucumber which we KNOW is a vegetable with many healthy aspects. It eliminates bags under the eyes, helps make smooth hair and skin, aids in weight loss and flushes toxins.

And don't we all need our toxins flushed these days?

Children read *the Timberjay* so I will refrain from giving the actual name.

Bois Forte Boys/Girls Club	11:00-11:30 a.m.
Greenwood Town Hall	12:00-12:30 p.m.
Soudan Fire Hall	1:45-3:00 p.m.
Tower Civic Center	3:15-4:15 p.m.
Embarrass, Four Corners	5:15-6:00 p.m.

For further information, call the Arrowhead Library System at 218-741-3840 or [www.arrowhead.lib.mn.us](http://www.arrowhead.lib.mn.us)

**MAKES 1 COCKTAIL**

- Ingredients
- 1 oz. bourbon
- 1 oz. fresh ginger juice
- 1 oz. fresh lime juice
- 1 oz. gin, preferably Beefeater
- 1/2 oz. honey
- Cucumber slice, for garnish
- Instructions

Combine bourbon, juices, gin, honey, and 3 ounces water in a cocktail shaker filled with ice; shake vigorously and strain into a Collins glass filled with ice. Garnish with cucumber slice.

Ta, ta loves...oh and keep this in mind, according to one source, 24 days until spring...get those plant and seed orders in...NOW!

And always remember Auntie Vera's Home for Abandoned Perennials (especially HOSTA) just leave them on the door step...NO QUESTIONS ASKED!

P.S. As gardeners you understand! Getting plant and seed catalogs in the middle of the polar-ice cap weather we have had recently is like holding a Weight Watchers meeting in a bakery!

**Ms. Vera Milion**

**Bookmobile Schedule**

**Wednesday, March 6, 27; April 17; May 8**

Bois Forte Boys/Girls Club	11:00-11:30 a.m.
Greenwood Town Hall	12:00-12:30 p.m.
Soudan Fire Hall	1:45-3:00 p.m.
Tower Civic Center	3:15-4:15 p.m.
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<p>Publisher General Manager Staff Writers</p> <p>Ely Editor Cook/Orr Editor Office Manager Graphics/Ad Sales Ad Sales/Sports</p>	<p>Marshall Helmberger Jodi Summit Melissa Roach Stephanie Ukkola Keith Vandervort Marcus White M. M. White Scarlet Lynn Stone Jay Greeney</p>
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City of Orr, City of Ely, Townships of Bearville, Eagles Nest, Embarrass, Kugler, Vermilion Lake, Field, Morcom, Leiding, ISD 707.

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**Libraries**

**Ely library**  
Hours: Monday — Friday,  
10 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Saturdays — 8 a.m. to noon  
Closed on Sundays  
Phone: 365-5140

**Babbitt library**  
Monday Noon-6 pm  
Tuesday Noon-6 pm  
Wednesday Noon-6 pm  
Thursday Noon-6 pm  
Friday Noon-5 pm  
Phone: 827-3345

**Support groups**

**AA - Alcoholics Anonymous**  
AA - 7 p.m. Mondays,  
First Lutheran Church,  
915 E. Camp St., Ely

**WOMEN'S AA** - Noon  
Mondays, St. Anthony  
Church basement, Ely

**BABBITT AA** - 7 p.m.  
Tuesdays, Woodland  
Presbyterian Church.

**AL-ANON** - Sundays  
8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's  
Catholic Church in Ely.  
For persons who encounter  
alcoholism in a relative or  
friend.

**BABBITT AL-ANON**  
- Thursdays, 7 p.m. at  
Woodland Presbyterian  
Church.

**CO-DEPENDENTS'**  
12-step support group,  
noon Fridays, St. Anthony's  
Catholic Church, Ely.

**ELY FOOD SHELF** -  
Third Wednesday each  
month, 15 W. Conan St.

**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION**  
**GED** - Study materials  
and pre-test available.  
Tower by appointment.  
Call 365-3359, 827-3232,  
or 1-800-662-5711.

**Tuesday Group**

ELY - The upcoming Tuesday Group schedule is listed below. All talks are at 12 noon on Tuesday at the Grand Ely Lodge.

**March 5** - Finn Liesching - Ely's Rotary Foreign Exchange Student

**Ely Free Clinic**

ELY - The Ely Community Health Center is open every Monday evening from 5:30-7 p.m. in the AFU Building, 111 S 4th Ave. E.

For more information, call 218-365-5678, or visit their website, [www.elycommunityhealth.org](http://www.elycommunityhealth.org), or Facebook page.

**Correction**

A photo outline in the Feb. 22 issue of the *Ely Timberjay* included incorrect information about tactical vests for the Ely Police Department. All seven vests were purchased by Twin Metals Minnesota. We regret the error.

**Breathing Out**

by Cecilia Rolando © 2019



new snowfall records  
brew perfect sport conditions  
such winter delight

RECREATION

**IRRRB grants help Ely rec trails, Birch Lake/Babbitt campground**

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

**REGIONAL**

Through the support of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, a 22-acre campground complex with 49 new campsites for recreational vehicles and tent campers will be added to Birch Lake Recreation Area in Babbitt this spring.

IRRRB aided the project with a development infrastructure grant to the city of Babbitt through taxes paid by Minnesota's mining industry. Other funding partners include the city of Babbitt, State of Minnesota Capital Bonds and the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.

Construction will begin this spring and is scheduled to be completed by 2021.

Birch Lake is 7,600 acres in size and 21 miles long with 80 miles of shoreline and several islands.

It is one of the most heavily fished lakes in northeastern Minnesota. The lake is 75 percent undeveloped, has 14 back-country campsites and is located two portages away from the Boundary Water Canoe Area Wilderness.

The Recreation Area currently has a developed swimming beach, picnic area and beach house. To prepare for the campground expansion, the city of Babbitt recently

reconstructed a public boat landing and parking area with handicapped parking, two new docks, concrete boat landing ramp, boat cleaning area and rain garden for storm water runoff.

"Birch Lake attracts outdoor recreation tourists and anglers from Minnesota, the United States and Canada," said Cathy Bissonette, city of Babbitt clerk/treasurer. "The new campground is expected to increase tourist traffic even further because it will be connected to the new Prospector sLoop ATV trail system and eventually to the paved Mesabi Bike Trail."

According to Explore Minnesota, tourism in the state is a 15-billion-dollar industry. "When completed the new Birch Lake campground will become a part of that economic engine," she said.

"ATV use in Minnesota is very high and continues to grow each year," said Joe Scherer, city of Babbitt recreation director. "The new campground and its proximity to the Prospectors Loop can attract week-long stays, which is great news for the community of Babbitt and its businesses."

Email Chris Ismil or call him at 218-735-3010 for information.

A new IRRRB Regional Trails grant program will assist with engineering and construction of various types of

new trails such as snowmobile, bicycle, ski, hiking and ATV.

Nine projects were recently awarded grants that will either create new trails or improve existing trails throughout the region.

Near Ely, the Hidden Valley Recreation Area mountain bike skills trail will receive \$20,000 for trail construction.

A partnership among three regional ATV clubs to develop the Prospectors Loop trail, Voyageur Country trail and Quad Cities trail, will receive \$2.3 million for trail construction, engineering bridges and culverts.

Other projects include:  
► City of Crosby - Multi-use trail system tunnel connector under Highway 6, \$134,000 for tunnel construction;

► City of Grand Rapids - Multi-use trail connector between downtown Grand Rapids and Cohasset, \$250,000 for trail construction;

► City of Mountain Iron - Forested hiking and Nordic skiing trail adjacent to K-12 school, \$5,000 for bridge construction;

► Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority - Mountain bike trail connector between Britton Peak and Lutsen Mountain, \$375,000 for trail construction, trail-head enhancement and signage;

► Iron Range Tourism

Bureau - ATV trail connector between Virginia and Eveleth, accessing Highway 53 bridge, \$60,897 for trail construction, signage and culvert;

► Lake County - Split Rock Wilds mountain bike trail in Two Harbors, \$300,000 for trail construction and bridges;

► Northern Lights Nordic Ski Club - Sugar Hills Nordic Ski Trails in Grand Rapids, \$9,056 for signage and trailhead enhancement.

"Trails can have important economic impacts to a rural region," said Mark Phillips, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation commissioner. "They attract tourism spending and auxiliary startup businesses such as rental and repair shops. Trails can also be a business recruiting tool for health care and other large industries."

Projects require a one-to-one match, and grants were awarded based upon community impact and partnerships, economic impact, job creation, project leverage and readiness.

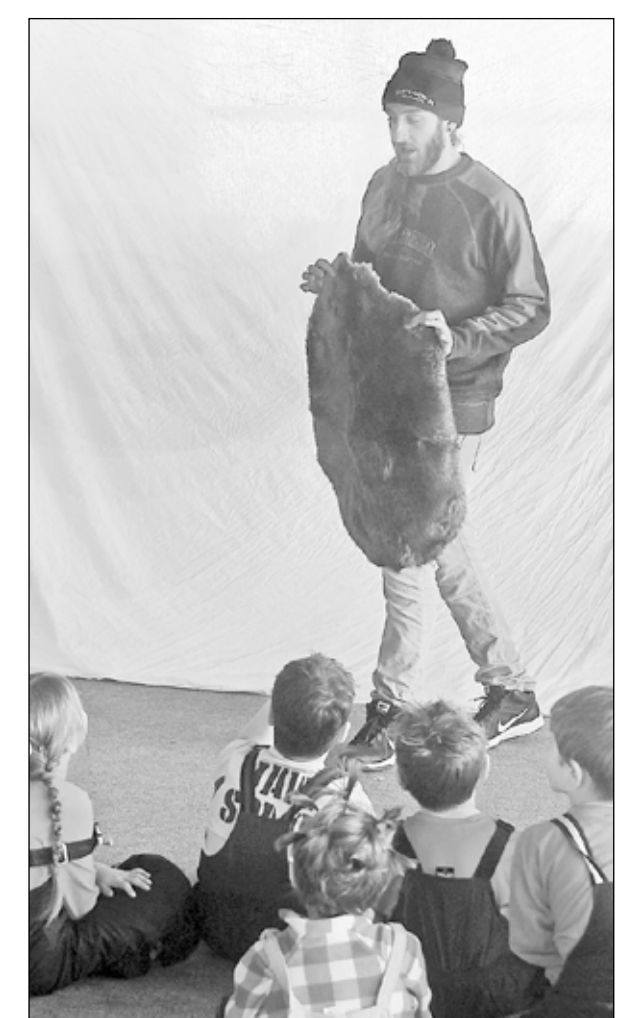
The Regional Trails program is funded at \$3.47 million for fiscal year 2019.

Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation funds the Regional Trails program through taxes paid by Minnesota's mining industry. For more information email Jim Plummer or call him at 218-274-7006.

**KINDERGARTEN FIELD TRIP**



**Ely Kindergarten students took a field trip to Hidden Valley Recreation Area last Friday for sledding fun, above, and a lesson in animal fur identification with The North American Bear Center's Spencer Peter, right, and below.**  
photos by K. Vandervort



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General Manager	Jodi Summit
Ely Editor	Keith Vandervort
Cook/Orr Editor	Marcus White
Staff Writer	Stephanie Ukkola
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Graphics	Scarlet Lynn Stone
Ad Sales	Jay Greeney

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YOUTH HOCKEY



**Ely Squirts win District 12 tourney**

The Ely Wolves Squirts team won first place at the District 12 Tournament on their home ice at the Ely Ice Arena last weekend. They advanced to the North Region Tournament held in Coleraine on March 1-3. Shown from left, front row, Anya Moger, Alex Merriman, Drew Marolt, Ty Walker, Bennett Leeson, Brecken Sandberg, Jace Huntbatch, Deegan Richards, Tommy Homer, Peyton Gregory. Back row, Garrett Rohr, Eli Hall, Coach Andrew Saarla, Eli Olsen, Kaiden Zupancich, Wesley Sandy, Coach John Payne, Owen Brecke, Blake Schaller. submitted photo

TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE



The Ely Ice Arena was full of first-time hockey players Saturday morning for a Try Hockey For Free event. Above, Kada Kohrt, 2, gets a hand up. At left, Brody Grotberg, 4, is all smiles as he tries on his gloves. Coach Jake Myers, below, fits a face mask for Maxim Haugen, 7. photos by K. Vandervort



News in In Brief

**Ely pharmacy extends hours**

ELY - The Ely Community Pharmacy will extend their hours of operation beginning Saturday, March 9 to better meet the needs of the community.

Their new hours will be Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

"In an effort to provide the best service possible and to help customers navigate the uncertainty that has come with the recent Shopko Pharmacy closure we strongly encourage you to ask Ely Community Pharmacy to contact Shopko and have your prescriptions transferred to ECP, or contact Shopko and request that your prescription information be transferred to the pharmacy of your choice," said Jodi Martin, communications director for the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital.

"It is important that you do this as soon as possible to avoid any delays in your prescription refills that may happen with the full closure of the Shopko Pharmacy when your prescription profiles will no longer be easily accessed," she said.

For more information, contact Ely Community Pharmacy at 218-365-8788.

**PEO meets March 7**

ELY - PEO Chapter FD will be meeting on Thursday, March 7, beginning at 1 p.m., at the home of Alice Moren, 345 E. Pattison Street. Visitors from other PEO Chapters are also welcome. If anyone has any questions, please call 218-365-5134.

**Spring sports meeting is Monday**

ELY - The annual high school spring sports meeting will take place on Monday, March 4, starting at 6 p.m., in the high school gymnasium. The meeting is open to parents and all students in grades 7-12 who plan to participate in baseball, softball, boys or girls track, or boys or girls golf this spring.

Coaches will address their players with information about first practices, and registration forms will be available to pick up and complete.

Those unable to attend are urged to get in contact with their respective coach to get early-season information.

For more details, contact athletic director Tom Coombe at 218-235-1025 or Tcoombe@ely.k12.mn.us.

Higher Education

**Tanner Bina joins Phi Beta Kappa**

ELY - Local student Tanner Bina was elected to the University of Richmond chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest and most prestigious honorary society in America, and celebrates scholarly attainment in the liberal arts and sciences.

News in Brief

**St. John's men's chorus to perform**

ELY - The Saint John's University Men's Chorus will appear in concert at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, 231 E. Camp St., on Saturday, March 2, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The concert is part of the choir's 2018 -2019 concert season, under the direction of Dr. Axel Theimer, a native of Austria and a former member of the Vienna Boys' Choir.

The 26-member choir will perform concerts throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin and, during the day will visit high schools, sharing their music with music lovers of all ages.

Admission to the concert is free but donations are suggested and welcome to help defray travel costs.

**Senior Center hosts Smear tourneys**

ELY - Smear tournaments are held the first and third Mondays at the Ely Senior Center, 27 S. 1st Ave E, starting at 6 p.m.

There is a \$5 entry fee, plus 25 cents per set.

Donald C. Gardner  
**Humanities Trust**

*We are now accepting*  
**2019 Arts Grant Applications**  
for Individual Artists, Project & Youth Grants, Scholarships & Operational Funding

Updated grant applications and guidelines are available online at [www.gardnertrust.org](http://www.gardnertrust.org)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS: 12:00 noon on Wed., March 27**

*Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Keiko Williams, Executive Director, by mid-March for help and review of their applications.*  
Call 365-2639 or email [info@gardnertrust.org](mailto:info@gardnertrust.org)  
Youth Grant applicants must contact Keiko by March 1 to schedule a grant review meeting.

**SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**  
BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

**Area Solid Waste Facility site hours**

<b>Northwoods Transfer Station</b> 9384 Hwy 21 N. Ely/Babbitt Winter Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: 11am-5pm	<b>Aurora Transfer Station</b> 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
<b>Embarrass Canister Site</b> 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30-4:30pm Thu: 10am-5pm	<b>Soudan Canister Site</b> 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am-5pm
<b>Household Hazardous Waste Facility</b> 5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	<b>Regional Landfill</b> 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

*Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th*

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department  
1-800-450-9278  
Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday  
[www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle)

PARENTS NIGHT



At the final regular season home game last Friday, the North Woods Grizzlies took time to honor their senior players along with the parents who have stood by them for their high school careers. The group of seniors has much to be proud of going into the playoffs, with one player, Cade Goggleye, setting the all-time scoring record for the team, and another, Chase Kleppe, heading off to start a college football career at St. Scholastica in Duluth. photo by C. Stone

Community Notices

North Woods parent-teacher conferences

FIELD TWP - North Woods School Teacher Conferences for parents and guardians will be held Monday, March 4 and Tuesday, March 5. Conference hours on Monday, March 4 are 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Conference hours on Tuesday, March 5 are 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The conference schedule is also available on the North Woods School website.

Local student makes Mankato Dean's List

MANKATO - College senior Michael Bodri was named to the Minnesota State University Dean's List. Bodri is studying Integrated Engineering.

Your story as art

COOK - Your story matters, so who is this class for? Any person at least 12 years old who wants to play. Artists looking for inspiration. Writers wanting a new perspective on their story and poets with ideas. Humans who need a break from the daily grind. Makers seeking community. The curious. The intimidated. The open-minded. Join us at the NWFA Gallery in Cook Saturday, March 30 and Saturday, April 20 from 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Each class will stand alone, and may be attended separately. Attending both will be a deeper experience.

For each day, be guided in creating a visual representation of your story. Use drawing, collage, paint and paper provided (or other materials you bring) to create a finished art piece on canvas, board or paper. This class transcends just the technique of 'how to' draw, paint, etc, by diving into concept, symbolism, representation and metaphor in a fun and stress-free environment!

We will spend some time developing our stories and experimenting with materials. Then continue to learn about composition, visual symbols, drawing, surface treatment, and current artists who are using story.

What is 'My Story'? 'Story' may be a memory, fiction, dream, story, idea, poem, opinion,

struggle, victory, comedy, tragedy, etc. We can work with anything!

A check confirms the registration for each class. \$40 for NWFA members, or \$55 for non-members for each class plus an additional \$5 supply fee payable on the day of class (minimum of 10 students, maximum of 12).

Need more info? Contact Kris at kmusto@mcad.edu or 612-325-0258.

Register through nwfamn.org@gmail.com or by calling Alberta Whitenack at 218-666-2153 or Shawna Kishel at 218-780-6510. Checks written to NWFA can be dropped off at the NWFA Gallery in Cook or mailed to NWFA, PO Box 44, Cook, MN. 55723.

Winter events at the Cook Library

COOK - The Cook Public Library is ready for winter, offering programs and events for all ages. The programs kicked off in January and run through March.

Adult Winter Reading: Curl up with a good book and enter to win prizes during the Winter Reading Program. Prize entry tickets will be given for each book or audio book checked out from the Cook Public Library. This includes items requested from other libraries. Write your name, phone number and prize number on your ticket and turn it in at the front desk. Prize bundles are on display at the library. Drawings for prizes will be held on March 13.

Teen Winter Challenge (Grades 7 - 12): Check out 25 books or more and get an invite to an all-day Saturday party at the library in March.

Preschool - Sixth-Grade Reading Challenge: Every time a child checks out a book she or he will receive a mitten cutout to hang in the library window. If 400 mittens are in the windows by March 8, we'll have a pizza party at the library.

Cook Senior Citizens Club

COOK - The Cook Seniors meet monthly on the first Wednesday at 1 p.m. For more information, call Nancy at 666-2726 or Lois at 666-5578.

CAN YOU ESCAPE?



Members of the Blue Team work to solve clues to help them escape from the Cook Library last Friday night. The building was turned into a fairy tale escape room as part of the teen winter reading program. Ten students participated in the program that put the kids' reading and critical thinking skills to the test.

photo by C. Phillips

Crane Lake News by the Singing Teapot Dames



Will the cold and snow ever leave us? The temperature as of this writing is 14 below zero. During the night, 37 below was recorded at International Falls. March will soon be with us. Will it come in as a Lion or a Lamb? We all wait for a break in the cold and snow. We have snow drifts piled everywhere. There is no place to put the snow. In towns, trucks are hauling it away to huge dumping areas, which should be thawed out by the 4th of July. Is this why we live here and some folks choose to be snowbirds?

The town should be jumping this weekend with the great Crane Lake Challenge. Join in to enjoy the hundreds of snowmobile enthusiasts who come to this exciting race. Anyone can participate. Just register at Voyageire Lodge, and then head down to the ice to see how fast your snowmobile can go! There will be 47 different classes with trophies for the three fastest times in

each class. Last year the top speed of the day was an amazing 174 mph! Racing runs from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. with an awards ceremony at Voyageire around 6 p.m. There will be food and drink specials all day, both in the Lodge and down on the ice. It's a great day to be in Crane Lake to celebrate the bright sights and sounds of snowmobiling. Make plans to be here! Any questions, call 993-2266.

Sandra Bodkin is receiving therapy in Grand Rapids. She misses her friends and likes mail, so send her warm greetings to: Sandra Bodkin, 923 Hale Lake Pointe, Grand Rapids, MN 55744. We all love Sandy!

While Minnesota has been basking in cold and snowfall, Destin, Fla. has been having its share of inclement weather. After bunches of foggy days with cancelled airline flights and closed airports, there was a bright orb in the sky that made it difficult to see without squinting from the glare. Some of the locals here indicated that they remembered this phenomenon from the past, and they recalled this being called "sunshine". It made a reappearance for a second day in a row—however, the forecast for the remainder of the week is for clouds and rain. It has not been a great winter anywhere on the con-

tinient this year. Didn't the Farmers Almanac predict an easy winter this year, and the groundhog say winter would end soon because he didn't see his shadow? How could two such expert weather prognosticators have been so wrong?

There was a remote cabin fire on Crane Lake about a week ago. Apparently, the structure suffered a complete loss. Fires are always difficult, but even more so during the winter when the number of neighbors who may notice such problems is greatly decreased.

Do you know anyone who exhibits heterochromia? People with heterochromia have a fascinating condition: their eyes are actually two different colors. Kate Bosworth has the relatively rare and really cool condition called "heterochromia iridis," meaning the irises of her

eyes are different colors. Bosworth's eyes are noticeably different in pigmentation, with one being blue and one being a much darker hazel. Some other examples of celebrities with heterochromia include Kiefer Sutherland (one blue eye and one green eye), actress Mila Kunis (one eye green and one eye brown), and Jane Seymour (one eye brown and one eye green).

Did you watch the Oscars last week? You may not have noticed anyone with heterochromia, but several of those present have been accused of having two faces!

Let us hear from you! Send news by e-mail to info@thelakecountry.com, by fax at 218-757-3533 or by phone to Sandy at 218-757-3233 and it will be added.

Until next week, the Teapot Dames are singing off!

Thank You

The family of Mark Abrahamson would like to give thanks for all the kind expressions of sympathy during our time of loss. A special thanks to Pastor Peter Rosenkvist, the Trinity Lutheran Church ladies, Mlaker Funeral Home staff, Lisa Kvas, Bailey and Bill Conger, and Vic Gunderson. You eased our burden during this difficult time.

Travis and Bethany Abrahamson  
Justin Abrahamson and families

GRIZZLY UPDATE

# North Woods Empty Bowl raises funds for food shelf



FIELD TWP - It was another successful year for the North Woods Empty Bowl, held last Friday evening.

Students raised \$1,600 for local food shelves by selling handmade bowls and other ceramic goods produced as part of class or part of the Art Club.

The event was attended by royalty, with Miss Minnesota Teen Eden Web signing autographs and taking photos.

Besides tasting soups ranging from turkey chili to chicken noodle and everything in between, event goers could also get their face painted or watch a live demonstration of how the bowls were made.

This is the seventh year the event has been held at the school.



# Meet Ms. Deb Johnson

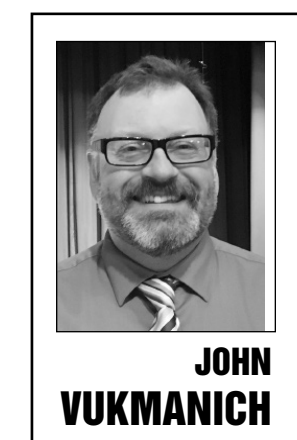
Principal John Vukmanich interviews a selection of educators and coaches at the North Woods School

FIELD TWP - North Woods School had a second "Ride Your Snowmobile to School" event this past week on Thursday. It was a bit more eventful than the previous ride. Heavy amounts of snowfall have actually made certain areas very challenging to access without a long-track snowmobile. As a result, we had a few riders become stuck in the ditches. Special thanks to our School Resource Officer Deputy Brock Kick for his assistance with getting our riders across Highway 53, and also to Deputy Marwick who, along with Kick, assisted in getting several riders dug out of waist-deep snow! The most important thing, of course, is that all of our riders arrived safely.

This week's interview candidate is Deb Johnson. Deb is another of the veteran staff in North Woods Elementary.

Mr. V: Where are you originally from and where did you go to high school and college?

Ms. J: I grew up in Cloquet but attended school in Carlton. I attended the College of St. Scholastica; my three siblings also attended CSS, and because we are all just a year apart in age, all four of us were



**JOHN VUKMANICH**



**DEB JOHNSON**

students there for one year!

Mr. V: Were there teachers who were an influence on you? Please name a few if you can.

Ms. J: Yes, in high school my art teacher, Dorothy Hall, was a big influence. She noticed early on I had an interest in art, so she encouraged me to spend time in the art room. I was the president of the Art Club for two years because of her support and her belief in my abilities to take on that role. At CSS, my advisor, Jane Dietrich, impacted my career path greatly. I was an undecided major until the spring of my sophomore year; we met and when I told her how much I enjoyed working with children at the Boys and Girls Club, she asked me if I ever considered elementary education as a profession. I knew my career path after that

conversation.

Mr. V: What characteristics did these teachers have that were important to you?

Ms. J: They both took the time to get to know me; we had a relationship. I knew they cared and listened to me, therefore I listened to their advice.

Mr. V: What do you teach at North Woods?

Ms. J: Third grade.

Mr. V: Why did you choose teaching as a profession?

Ms. J: After working in different environments with children during my college experience, I knew I had found my passion.

Mr. V: What are your hobbies?

Ms. J: I love Polish polka music and dancing because I am 100 percent Polish. I love to travel, and enjoy running, cooking and being outside with friends and family.

Mr. V: What is something you really like about North Woods?

Ms. J: It's like an extended family for me; people care about each other in this building.

Mr. V: What is a professional goal for you?

Ms. J: To never stop learning new ideas and approaches to teaching. Students need to learn new approaches every year, so I can too.

Mr. V: What is something you love about northern MN?

Ms. J: Its beauty. I enjoy all the seasons, but my favorite is fall.

Mr. V: What is a piece of advice you'd give your students?

Ms. J: "Doing your best is more important than being the best." Zig Ziglar

Mr. V: Do you have a favorite saying or expression?

Ms. J: Don't give up until you are proud.

Mr. V: What do you hope your students will remember you for?

Ms. J: I listened and cared about them, just like my influential teachers did for me.

Thank you, Deb, for being a part of our team at North Woods. We appreciate getting to know you a little better!

Go Grizzlies!

Your Principal,  
John Vukmanich

## Bookmobile schedule

Visit your library on wheels, the Arrowhead Library System Bookmobile.

**March 14, April 4**

**Nett Lake** - Community Center 9:30-10:15 a.m.

**Crane Lake** - Ranger Station 11:15 a.m. - 12 noon

**Orr** - Lake Country ReMax building 1:45 - 2:30 p.m.

**Kabetogama** - Town Hall 3:15 - 3:45 p.m.

For further information on the Bookmobile or Mail-A-Book services, write or call the Arrowhead Library System, 5528 Emerald Ave., Mt. Iron, MN 55768 218-741-3840, or check our website at [www.alslib.info](http://www.alslib.info).



## the TIMBERJAY

The Cook-Orr Timberjay is published weekly on Friday by The Timberjay, Inc. Offices are at 414 Main St., Box 636, Tower, MN 55790 [218-753-2950] and Box 718, Ely, MN 55731 [218-365-3114]. Fax number is 218-753-2916. E-mail address is [editor@timberjay.com](mailto:editor@timberjay.com). Visit our website: [www.timberjay.com](http://www.timberjay.com).

Entered as Periodicals at the Post Office in Tower, Minnesota. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Timberjay, P.O. Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Three award-winning community editions are published each week for Cook/Orr, Tower/Soudan, and Ely.

Publisher	Marshall Helmberger
General Manager	Jodi Summit
Staff Writers	Melissa Roach Stephanie Ukkola Keith Vandervort
Ely Editor	Marcus White
Cook/Orr Editor	M. M. White
Office Manager	Scarlet Lynn Stone
Graphics/Ad Sales/ Staff Writer	Jay Greeney
Ad Sales/Sports	

**Official Newspaper:**  
City of Orr, City of Ely, Townships of Bearville, Eagles Nest, Embarrass, Kugler, Vermilion Lake, Field, Morcom, Leiding, ISD 707.

**Member:** Minnesota Newspaper Association, Lake Vermilion Resort Association, Lake Vermilion Area Chamber of Commerce, Orr Chamber of Commerce, Ely Chamber of Commerce.

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<b>Orr Canister Site</b> 4038 Hwy 53 Winter Hours Tue, Thu: 9am-noon Sat: 8am-noon	<b>Portage Canister Site</b> 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Winter Hours Tue, Sat: 1pm-4:30pm	<b>County 77 Canister Site</b> 2038 County Rd. 77 Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm
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<b>Household Hazardous Waste Facilities</b> 5345 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Tue, Sat: 8am-1pm		3994 Landfill Rd, Hibbing Sat: 8am-1pm

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

## Irish Dance Lessons on Mondays at Ely Folk School

ELY- Carol Booth and Jim Ganahl are leading two nights of Irish Dance classes, Monday, March 4 and Monday, March 11, at the Ely Folk School in advance of the Friday, March 15 Irish Dance in Ely. Admission per adult per class (children free) is \$5 payable in advance or at the door. Classes begin at 6 p.m. Comfortable shoes are recommended. Carol and Jim will be teaching the steps and patterns for both group and couple dances including jigs and reels, waltzes, polkas and hornpipes. More information is available at [elyfolkschool.org](http://elyfolkschool.org) or by calling 218-666-5990.

## Learn outdoor skills with 4-H at Bear Head Lake State Park, March 9

EAGLES NEST TWP- All youth in grades three and up are invited to participate in 4-H Winter Outdoor Skills Day on Saturday, March 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Bear Head Lake State Park. Children will have a chance to explore and have fun with a variety of topics. This is a great opportunity to see what 4-H is all about and learn new skills.

Cost is \$10 per person, registration fee includes supplies and lunch. Checks can be made payable to NSL 4-H Federation. Scholarships are available. Please contact the extension office for more information, 218-749-7120 or [vande422@umn.edu](mailto:vande422@umn.edu).

Pre-registration is required. Deadline to register is Thursday, March 7. 4-H members can fill out the form online at <https://goo.gl/forms/rXFdQwSpPRbByJvv1> and non 4-H members should enroll at <https://mn.4honline.com> and fill out the form at <https://goo.gl/forms/rXFdQwSpPRbByJvv1>.

## Sons of Norway to meet March 7

VIRGINIA- Sons of Norway Haarfager Lodge 40 will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 7 in the Virginia City Hall Club Room. The King and Queen will be crowned. Ray Reinholtzen will present the program. Serving committee will be Pat Sleemen, Sara Palazzari, Duane and Sue Gustafson. Anyone interested in Norwegian culture and heritage is welcome to attend.

## NWFA Writers Group meets March 9

COOK- The Northwoods Friends of the Arts Writers Group will meet Saturday, March 9 from 1 to 3 p.m. at NWFA Gallery, 210 S River St. in Cook. Dr. Ellie Larmouth, a volunteer instructor, is in her ninth year as NWFA's Writers Group facilitator. Winter Writers Group meets the second Saturday each month from 1 to 3 p.m.

All who enjoy writing, talking about writing, and writing together are welcome to join this supportive writers' group. Larmouth often assigns a prompt subject to write about during the meeting.

The Summer Writers Group will begin on Tuesdays starting June 11 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. For more information, contact Ellie Larmouth at 218-753-5327.

## Learn about The Rutabaga Project, March 3 at Mesabi UU

VIRGINIA- On Sunday, March 3 at 10:30 a.m. at Mesabi Unitarian Universalist Church, Marlise Riffel and Jenna Ballinger will tell the congregation about The Rutabaga Project. At the intersection of the local food movement and the social justice movement, the Rutabaga Project focuses on access to healthy local food for all. We will watch the new documentary about the Rutabaga Project and explore ways in which our church can amplify the project's impact.

Mesabi Unitarian Universalist Church is located at 230 7th Street S in Virginia and is handicap acces-

## YOUTH HOCKEY

# Ely Squirts win Marwick Tournament



The Ely Wolves Squirt team took home the first place trophy at the 2019 Erik Marwick Memorial Tournament in Virginia last weekend. The tournament featured 16 teams. The Wolves beat Cloquet Purple 7-2, Hibbing Navy 9-3, International Falls Purple 4-3, and then Hibbing Red 7-2 in the championship game. Kneeling (from left): Nico Lenci, Owen Marolt, Cazimiro Carlson, Sean Merriman, Hunter Halbakken, Evan Leeson. Standing: Ozzie Anderson, Sylvia Shock, Jayden Zemke, Tyler Forsberg, Brayden Akins, Jon Schlosser, Brady Eaton, Ryland Sandy, Stig Majerus. Coaches: Justin Zemke, Bill Forsberg, Joe Majerus, and Head Coach Nicole Carlson. Not pictured is Lewey Powell. submitted photo

## COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

### Vermilion Dream Quilters meet March 7

TOWER- Vermilion Dream Quilters will meet Thursday, March 7 at 6:30 p.m. to banish cold and snowy weather at St. Martin's Catholic Church Social Hall in Tower.

Since our February meeting was canceled due to bitter cold we have a lot on the agenda for March. First, our Chinese Auction, postponed from February. Check bins, shelves, closets and cupboards for quality things you never want to see again. They might be unfinished projects, duplicate tools, fabrics or any other item (quilting related or not) that will benefit by leaving your home, finding a new home, and will generate a much needed donation to the Tower Area Food Shelf. Bring cash or your checkbook to buy chances and win a new treasure. Kathy Lovgren

and Marlene Johnson will coordinate. Next, Colleen Junnilla will share a Japanese Boro Patchwork. Everyone is encouraged to bring any Asian needlework, either purchased or made. And finally, Brown Bag Challenge 1, a pin-cushion or needle case to exchange is due.

March hostesses are Michele Sherwood, Autumn Cole, and Leah Hazell.

Please bring your projects for Show and Tell - we all love to see what you are doing.

The Vermilion Dream Quilters is a guild with members from throughout the Iron Range and Arrowhead Region and is open to anyone interested in quilting and creative sewing. Members encourage and instruct each other and share tips. Guests and visitors are welcome. For more information, please contact Corrine Hill at 218-753-4600.

### Learn to make a painted barn quilt, March 27

COOK- Take home a completed barn quilt on Wednesday, March 27. Cynthia Buchholz of Bittersweet Barn Quilt Company will teach a barn quilt painting class at the Cook Community Center from 1 to 5 p.m.

Painting Barn Quilts is a popular, lively four-hour class with guided instruction which will take you through the process of

barn quilt painting from beginning to completion. You will choose a quilt pattern from the several dozen offered or you may bring your own (instructor will evaluate difficulty level). You will gain knowledge on measuring, layout, taping and painting specific to barn quilt painting. You will leave with your own 2 ft. by 2 ft. masterpiece, ready for hanging and possibly the inspiration to participate in a "Barn Quilt Trail" in your own neighborhood.

The supplies included in the cost of the class are a 2' x 2' piece of aluminum composite, over 75 fabulous colors of highest quality Behr exterior paint, dozens of quilt block patterns to choose from, and foam brushes, rollers, aprons, quilters squares, rulers, extension cords, blow dryers, and even a dance off for prizes.

The registration fee for the class is \$40 for NWFA members and \$55 for non-members. At the time of the class each student must pay a materials fee of \$45 to the instructor, Cynthia Buchholz.

Register with Alberta Whitenack at 218-666-2153, Shawna at 218-780-6510, online at [nwfa.org](http://nwfa.org) or by email at [nwfamn.org@gmail.com](mailto:nwfamn.org@gmail.com). Class size is limited to 20 students. A check for \$55 sent to NWFA, P.O. Box 44, Cook, MN 55723 will finalize the class registration.

### Senior Bingo in Tower on Monday

TOWER- Senior Bingo will be held in Tower on Monday, March 4 at the Tower Civic Center from 11:45 a.m. - 3 p.m. There is a \$10 charge for the bingo party, which includes lunch. All ages are welcome to attend this community event. Lunch is served starting at 11:45 a.m., and bingo begins at 12:45 p.m. Bingo may be cancelled in case of inclement weather (and if the Tower-Soudan School is closed). Call Jodi Summit at 218-753-2950 with any questions.

### Attorney Joseph Leoni earns award for 35 years of service

VIRGINIA- There's nothing more impressive than experience. Joe Leoni is a respected attorney at the Trenti Law Firm who focuses on helping personal injury and wrongful death victims fight for compensation for injury expenses and losses. He was recently awarded the impressive milestone of 35 years serving Northern Minnesota as a Civil Trial Specialist and personal injury lawyer.

He's earned and maintains the AV Preeminent rating from Martindale-Hubbell. The AV Rating is the highest possible rating given by LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review for a lawyer and is established wholly on a peer-review basis. The AV Preeminent designation signifies that attorneys have been rated by judges and fellow attorneys as having the highest possible rating for legal abilities and ethical standards.

Leoni graduated from University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, with a major in speech communication. He received his law degree from the William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul in 1984, and has been a member of the bar since 1984.

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**SISU...**Continued from page 1

Sisu Heritage. It operated as the Sisu Tori for many years but closed over ten years ago due to financial shortfalls.

Its absence was noticed, and a group of volunteers, calling themselves the Farmstead Artisans, hatched a plan to keep the tradition of Embarrass hospitality alive.

Bjornrud, along with fellow artisan member Verna Sutton, had visited a small business located in Twig, outside of Duluth.

"It was a quaint little homestead with chickens running around," said Bjornrud. "They served food and sold gifts. We thought, wouldn't it nice to have something of this flavor in Embarrass."

The two were also looking for places for area craftspeople, including a friend who was a potter, to sell their wares. The idea of reopening the Nelimark was born.

A group of dedicated volunteers, most of them crafters and bakers, came together. The volunteers have managed the day-to-day operations at the Nelimark Homestead Museum for the last ten years. The property itself is owned by Embarrass Township and overseen by Sisu Heritage. The Nelimark is open Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays during the summer, and also hosts two holiday weekend events in November and December.

The property features the restored house, a sauna that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and various farm outbuildings and antique farm equipment and tools. The house hosts travelling history exhibits, as well as displays of historic artifacts from the area.

Our mission was to recreate the hospitality that the Nelimark was known for, said Bjornrud. "People often stopped by for coffee at the Nelimark house and Mrs. Nelimark always had freshly-baked home-baked goods for her guests."

"Making friends was more important than making money," said Ron Sutton, describing the philosophy of the volunteers. What evolved was a unique combination of craft store, coffee spot, and local history museum.

Over coffee and homemade treats community members gather, both regulars and visitors. And then what happens is often magic. "You get old-timers like Edgar Petrell giving oral history of the area firsthand," Bjornrud said.

A few years ago, an older woman came in and loudly asked "Who



**A panel consisting of Farmstead Artisan volunteers and frequent Nelimark visitors, from left, Carol Knuti, Verna Sutton, Jeannine Bjornrud, Glen Salo and Ron Sutton, spoke at the Sisu Heritage annual meeting. photo by J. Summit**

do I know here' Within minutes she was visiting with her old classmate Bill Lamppa and reminiscing with Edgar.

Another time a contractor who was restoring an old home in Embarrass stopped by for coffee. As he talked about his project, two of the artisan volunteers realized the house he was restoring had been built by their father.

It is these connections, that the volunteers see happening every week, that keep them happy to donate their time.

"The main reason we do this is to preserve this history," said Bjornrud.

Verna Sutton said that once a family's children are grown, they often lose an important connection to their community. The Nelimark is restoring those connections.

"I am really thankful for this," she said. "It's our gathering place."

Dorothy Bruno, the youngest of the Nelimark children born at the homestead, comes to visit at least once every summer. Now nearing 100, she still insists on navigating up the steep stairway to see their old bedrooms. And every time, she has new stories to tell, the volunteers said. Other family members also make the trip back to Embarrass, to visit the house.

Glen Salo, a regular visitor, said the Nelimark is full of surprises.

"You never know who you are going to meet here," he said. "This is real people and real conversation, face to face." Salo noted this was an important community service, especially for those who tend to be loners.

"This is a good place for hermits to come out to," Salo said.

Ron Sutton said one of the most popular phrases heard is "50 years ago, I knew..."

The Nelimark has also become a place dedicated to preserving the Finnish language. Once a week in the summer, Gary Rantala hosts a Finnish language time on Thursday afternoons when Finnish speakers and those who want to learn gather

in conversation.

The Nelimark also features handmade crafts in the spirit of the area, Scandinavian gifts and books, and fresh-baked goods including local Finnish specialties like pulla.

"We make things to sell that are in the spirit of this place," said Verna Sutton. Crafters noted that the money made on the crafts they sell is often just enough to cover their costs.

The Nelimark has become a tourist destination as well as a community gathering spot.

"We meet people from all over the world," said Ron Sutton. Every summer the Nelimark hosts visitors from Finland, as well as those who just want to visit "The Cold Spot" that they've seen on the news.

Andy and Beth Urban, from Eagles Nest, could not attend the meeting but sent a note.

"We always feel welcomed here," they said. "We've made friends and shared our love of bluebirds." The couple gave a talk on bluebirds at the Nelimark last summer.

Insuring that this community gathering spot is maintained in the future is on the minds of the current group of volunteers, who are mostly on the older side of 60.

The group talked about ideas for increasing the visibility of the Nelimark, as well as networking with other area communities in promotion efforts. More volunteers are needed, they said, to help organize and catalog items that have been donated, as well as to help out in the shop.

"I have a vision that we will begin to see more and more donations," said Ron Sutton. "We need to be able to keep them organized."

The need to recruit a younger batch of volunteers is also a concern.

"We need to keep our history alive," Bjornrud said.

Volunteers also noted that the time donated by the township, for mowing and other maintenance, as well as other volunteers

who help with the actual maintenance of the old building is vital.

"We'd be stuck without these volunteers," Becky (Kallio) Coy said.

Paul Knuti noted that the Mesabi Trail section planned to be built in Embarrass goes right through the Nelimark site, and this will bring more visitors to the area.

Knuti said a few years ago some teachers put together a tour in Embarrass, which included his farm, the Nelimark, and other places of interest. "I was amazed at how excited the kids got," he said.

Jack LaMar asked that residents become more active at Embarrass Town Board meetings, to let board members understand the importance of the Nelimark to the community, and to thank the township for its current support.

"This is an important asset," LaMar said.

**Sisu Heritage annual report**

Sisu Heritage hosts two community events each year. This year National Sauna Day will be on Saturday, June 8 at the Nelimark and will feature live music with Bill Maxwell and Cowboy Angel Blue. Community Night Out at the Seitaniemi Housebarn will be on Sunday, Sept. 8.

Sisu is looking for more portable saunas to bring to Sauna Day!

Sisu took over ownership of the Embarrass Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church last year and will host a concert on Sunday, June 2 featuring Whirled Muse, a folk trio with Eli Bissonett.

Sisu Heritage has 139 total members, and of these 22 are lifetime members.

"This makes a great birthday present," said board member Mickey White.

Sisu approved their

2019 budget of \$29,420. The organization has no grant money scheduled for projects this year and they did not receive a \$10,000 grant they had applied for last year for the housebarn. The group did receive an IRRRB grant last year to help fund the purchase of a new furnace for the Nelimark, and has applied for grant funding for a security system. The next phase in the housebarn project will most likely include a grant to do a study of the future uses of the building, as well as a market study.

Three existing board members, Ron Sutton, Cindy Scherer, and Carol Knuti were reelected to the board. Rena Hartman, who is the executive director of the Mesabi Symphony Orchestra and a grantwriter, was elected to fill the spot previously held by Gary Rantala, who is now a town board member.

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# Ely School Board hung up on hanging banners

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY – School Board members here recently gave retroactive approval for the permanent mounting of a banner in the Ely Ice Arena. Apparently, pushback in the community and by the school board for the unauthorized hanging of the banner by the Blue Line Booster Club prompted the school board to give its approval after the fact.

That action and resulting community controversy did not sit well with Ely School Board Chair Ray Marsnik who called for the formation of a task force to develop a school policy. Board members discussed the issue this week at a school board

study session.

The banner that was hung honored Ely graduate and West Point Athletic Hall of Fame member Dave Merhar, who was recently honored at the arena for his athletic accomplishments on the ice during a “Dave Merhar Night.”

“This (issue) came about because a permanent banner was placed in the arena and as we discussed last month, there should be (school) board approval when permanent banners are being hung in our facilities,” Marsnik said.

New school board member Tony Colarich made the motion at the board’s regular meeting last month that a procedure should be developed for the school district to adopt.

“In my opinion, I think

this should be in the hands of our administration, including the superintendent, principals and athletic director,” Marsnik said. “They could bring in someone from the outside to get some input if they want.”

He tasked the administration with developing a policy to present to the school board for approval. “Like any policy, we would have three readings and the board would have an opportunity to make any changes they deem necessary,” he said.

Marsnik asserted that he was concerned strictly with permanent banners being hung in school district facilities. “(Approval for) the temporary banner that may be hung at a basketball game or football

game, or at homecoming, should remain in the hands of our administration.”

Colarich said, “Over the past 10 or 20 years, people’s perceptions of things are constantly changing and anytime you put a permanent banner up without approval we leave ourselves open to some issues. Someone’s connotation could be political, mean-spirited, derogatory or racist. That’s the kind of world we live in. We should do the right thing to avoid that from happening. I prefer to have a procedure.”

School board members noted that the policy doesn’t have to be complicated, and suggested that policies from other school districts be studied to develop a pro-

cedure. “We don’t have to re-invent the wheel here,” he said.

Athletic director Tom Coombe said that the process of developing a policy should not be too difficult. Administration members should have something to present to the board next month.

## Other business

In other recent action, the school board:

➤ Held a closed update meeting with district counsel Kelly Klun on the lawsuits filed by 16 teachers over a payroll deduction. A court date with three of the litigants was set for Feb. 27.

➤ Approved a revised 2018-2019 school budget, showing as much as a \$168,000 deficit in oper-

ating funds, and an unrestricted fund balance of more than \$2.5 million.

➤ Heard an update from Facilities Director Tim Leeson on the hot water issue in the Washington building. He said bids are being sought for the project. He is also gathering estimates for the purchase of a new school bus.

➤ Approved a high school band trip to Chicago, set for early April.

➤ Hired Mataya Barrett for an open para-professional position.

➤ Accepted the resignation of teacher Darren Visser at the end of the 2018-2019 school year. According to Coombe, Visser said he hopes to continue serving as the girls basketball coach.

## RACE...Continued from page 1

where the trail was hidden from view, but the dogs just stayed on scent and we kept moving forward.”

The 2019 WolfTrack Classic winner split a prize purse of \$6,000 this year. The top five eight-dog teams split a race purse of \$3,400, and the top five six-dog teams split \$2,400.

Leading the nine eight-dog teams with a 50-mile time of 4 hours 45 minutes and 16 seconds was Canadian musher Brian Bergen who entered the race late in the week.

He finished just four minutes ahead of defending 2018 WolfTrack champion Ryan Anderson who had a time of 4:49:11.

“Heading across Bear Head Lake this year was much better than last year, Anderson said. “There wasn’t as much loose snow this year,” he said. “Everything was flat out there other than the drifts and the head winds and the ground blizzard. We ran into slush too. It was about 16 inches deep, but there wasn’t much of it to deal with. It might have gotten worse for the other racers.”

Veteran musher Frank Moe came in third at 5:07:26. Finland resident Blake Freking, the 2019 John Beargrease Marathon champion, did not enter a team. His wife, Jen Freking, who is also an Ely veterinarian, finished



Above: Frank Moe’s eight-dog team tears away from the starting gate Sunday morning for the 50-mile race.

Right: Jo Jo Weishar guides her six-dog team to the Highway 1 crossing at the beginning of the 30-mile race. photos by K. Vandervort



fourth with a time of 5:39:42.

Al-Jo Thiart led the field of 31 six-dog teams this year for 30 miles with a time of 2:21:37, followed close on her heels by Liz Vanden Toorn at 2:24:48, and Gerhardt Thiart at 2:28:52.

Jim Ward, of Duluth, finished the six-dog race with a time of 2:29:33. “This was my fourth time up here in Ely,” Ward said. “I thought the track

was hard and fast. I had a good race. The wind kept the trail hidden at times, but the dogs always seem to keep on scent and find the trail again.”

Vermilion Community College’s Law Enforcement, Dog Sledding Class and Wilderness Club provided support this year. “New to the WolfTrack Classic was Team Rubicon, a fantastic group of veterans, first responders and

civilian volunteers who provided assistance as first response,” Edgett said. The Vermilion Range Amateur Radio Club provided communications throughout the day. “We also would like to thank all the many individual volunteers who helped out too. It takes a lot of people to pull this event off every year.”

For complete race results, go to [www.wolftrackclassic.com](http://www.wolftrackclassic.com).

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# West end development gets top priority this year in Ely

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY – Growth and expansion for the city’s west end took top billing in the recent Ely Economic Development Authority review of priorities for 2019.

With actual funding becoming a real possibility, the recreational trailhead project is finally coming into sharper focus. At the same time, the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital is exploring facility expansion on their campus and studying a partnership and collaboration with health and wellness partners like the Ely Regional Community Complex and the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities. Ely Area Ambulance Service is also looking at building a new garage and facility in collaboration with EBCH.

Meanwhile, the city’s Housing Rehabilitation Authority is considering various vacant spaces nearby to add more workforce housing.

The planned extension of Pattison Street to the west, which would connect it to a new Fifth Avenue West between Hwy 169 and the hospital would tie the project together with the needed infrastructure to make the growth a reality.

In discussing the priority list, economic advisor John Fedo told the members of the authority, who also serve as city council members, that many items on past lists have been crossed off the list with successful completion.

The multi-trail facility and parking area at the west entrance to the city will bring together the Mesabi Trail, the Taconite Trail, and the new ATV trail, known as the Prospectors Loop, which will connect Ely, Babbitt, Lake Vermilion and the North Shore.

“The trailhead will come together with the hospital’s new construction and expansion,” Fedo said, “and the other development in this district. There is a funding and financing need for these various projects.”

West-end developments will all tie into each other, according to Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski. “It is kind of one big project now,” he said. “If you tie in housing and the ambulance garage and all these other items, that all ties in together. We are looking at how development in that entire area will be assisted by the EEDA.”

Advancing a broadband project in the down-

town area was brought up to No. 2 on the priority list. “Based on all the action we have taken, and the ongoing financing we are going after, we are nearing the possibility of developing a budget,” he said. “We are hopeful that within the next 30 to 60 days we will have a request in to a funding partner to make that happen.”

Fedo noted that city officials are working on their own to get the initial project done. “We have this proposed loop in the downtown business district. We think we have the IRRRB to help with funding now. To try to apply for state funding, right now the language really rules us out, so our ability to have a shovel-ready project is going to be difficult. That doesn’t mean we can’t go after additional state funds, pending a change in legislation.”

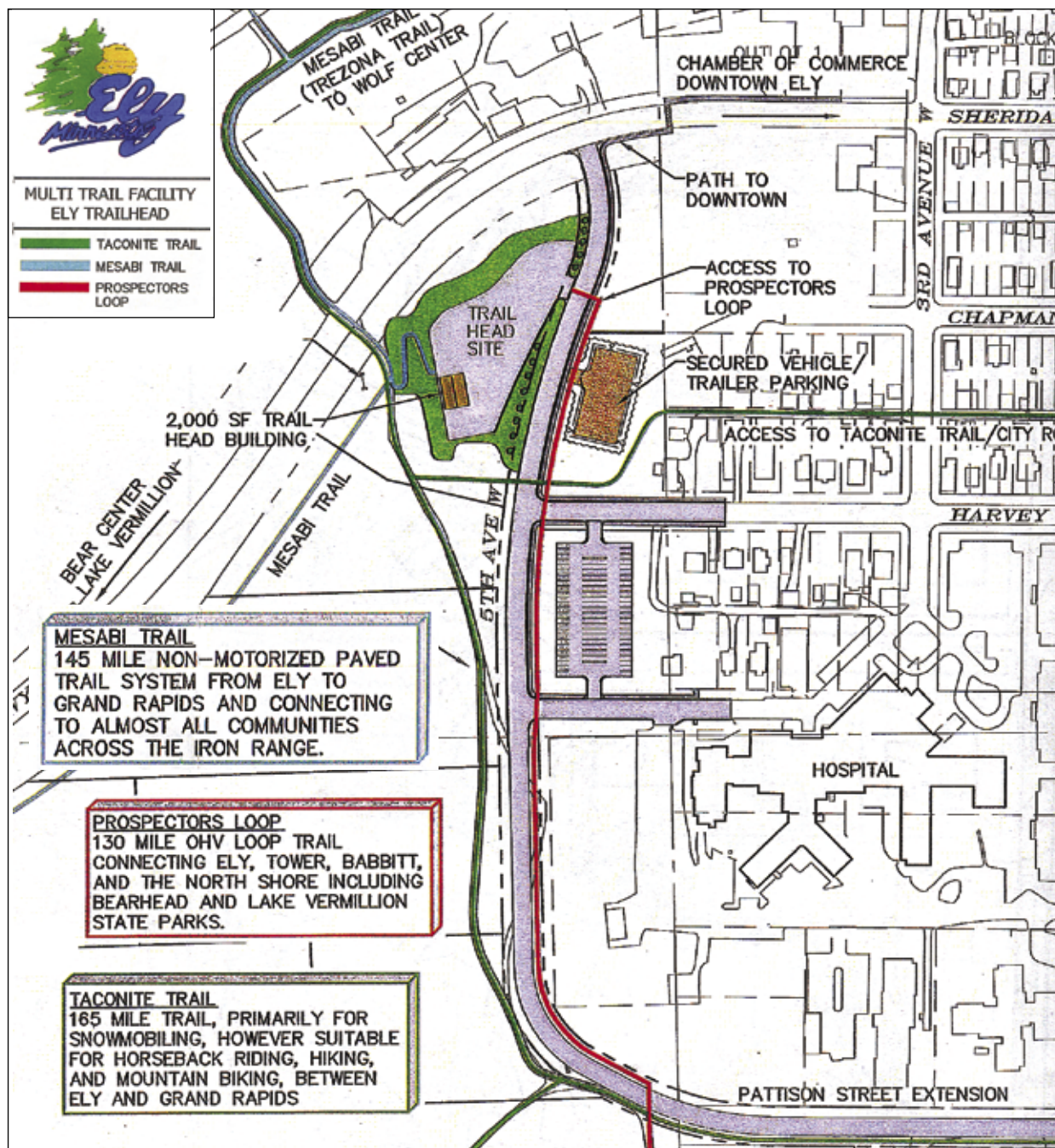
Fedo noted that by the legislative definition, the city has broadband service available, even though the project was stopped at the edge of town when Lake County’s Lake Connections project ran out of money in 2017.

St. Louis County commissioners have been reluctant to enter into broadband funding of any kind, despite encouragement from the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools, according to EEDA member Paul Kess.

Fedo added, “Under the whole concept of (high-speed) fiber needs in the city of Ely, there are a number of areas that we need to get into yet. If we can accomplish the downtown loop as proposed, that gets us to the point where we have levers to what else we want to accomplish in the next six to 12 months.”

Langowski said many broadband “solutions” are being led by cooperatives in many Minnesota communities as well as county governments. “I know that RAMS is working very hard with St. Louis County on how they can have more of a leadership role in this. I’ve seen for myself how reluctant they are. I think it is up to us to prove to them how we can make it happen,” he said.

A second round of \$50,000 in funding from the Blandin Foundation early this year will help in the continuation of the city of Ely’s broadband projects. “In early spring, we hope to have several more marketing and business development workshops,” Langowski said. “Media marketing consultations will again be part of the training. “Those are worth as much as \$1,500 each.”



Fedo said completion of the downtown high-speed fiber loop is an important part of the city’s economic development. “We need service that is consistent and dependable and available at an affordable cost,” he said. “Those things help us to market the expansion and growth of the downtown area.”

EEDA member Albert Forsman added that the third item on the priority list should include the continuation of support to local business creation and expansion. That includes continued advocacy for local business assistance through a variety of financing programs, locally-available and through regional organizations and state programs.

EEDA members will revisit the 2019 priority list at the next meeting on March 12.



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PUBLIC SAFETY

## County Sheriff investigates Arrowhead Trail crashes

REGIONAL – The St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office is investigating a pair of snowmobile crashes that occurred last Friday.

In the first incident, Robert White, 72, of Shakopee, was traveling in a group of riders along the Arrowhead Trail Friday morning when he drifted off the trail and struck a tree near the Camp 90 Forest Road north of Orr.

White was airlifted to a hospital with

non-life-threatening injuries.

Later in the day, Robert Holt, 69, of Rogers, was also riding along the Arrowhead Trail when he struck a snow-covered beaver dam on his way to Elephant Lake.

Holt was able to ride to the Vermilion River Tavern where First Responders transported him to the Cook Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

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**MAYOR...**Continued from page 1

the mayor. But Keith subsequently informed the council that the League does not conduct investigations, although the organization does provide human resource training and mediation services.

During discussion, Fitton outlined additional issues he felt required investigation. He said he felt the allegations from Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg that the mayor had purportedly called Altenburg sexist created an adverse working relationship. Fitton also said there were the issues raised in the grievance committee meeting held prior to the regular meeting. Grievance committee members are Steve Abrahamson, Brooke Anderson, and Steve Altenburg as the citizen representative.

In a written summary, Fitton also questioned whether Kringstad had authority to look into concerns related to Keith's conduct and performance and claimed that Kringstad had made unspecified "demands" on city staff, which he said had created a hostile work environment in violation of the city's code of conduct. Fitton also appeared to suggest that Kringstad had provided information from a recent closed meeting to the *Timberjay*, a claim that the newspaper can verify as false.

Fitton cited complaints that the mayor had committed city funds by registering and paying for his attendance at a League of Minnesota Cities training conference for newly-elected officials that he had permission to attend. Kringstad then asked the city for reimbursement for the expense. He said, at a previous meeting, that he didn't know it was policy to have the clerk do the registrations. Fitton also said Kringstad had made calls to the city attorney without council permission.

Fitton further complained that there were unanswered questions on whether or not Kringstad had a conflict of interest, relating to his previous involvement with Tower

Harbor Shores, the town home developer.

"There are a lot of ethical and procedural concerns," Fitton said.

Kringstad noted that every single one of these issues could be "simply answered."

"Does the council want to spend money on hiring an investigator?" he asked.

Fitton insisted that only an independent authority could answer the questions.

But Fitton's motion to hire an investigator with a limit of \$500 failed, 2-2, with Abrahamson and Rachel Beldo voting against. Only Anderson supported the motion.

"Working things out by ourselves is better in the long run," said Abrahamson. "I'd prefer to have the mayor write out his reasons, and then have a mediated discussion. Then, if we can't resolve it, move on to an investigator." A motion by Abrahamson, seconded by Beldo, to go with mediation first, passed on a 4-0 vote.

Abrahamson said the council should pay attention to the comments from longtime resident Mary Shedd, who had submitted written public comment, which Keith read out loud at Kringstad's request. In her comments, Shedd had taken issue with the council agenda, which listed "Mayor Misconduct Investigation," noting that it suggested a predetermination of wrongdoing.

"If an investigation determines it is misconduct, then it can be called that. Before you accept the agenda, I respectfully request that you change it to either "Altenburg Complaint Against Mayor" or Investigation of a Complaint against Mayor."

Shedd also questioned the vagueness of the motion made at the last meeting for the investigation, asking if it was just to consider the complaint from Altenburg, or additional undisclosed matters.

"Kringstad and Tower citizens are due an open

complaint, not a fishing expedition," she wrote.

Fitton's complaint prompted some discussion on the powers of the mayor.

"Orlyn made demands [to the clerk] as if this was a strong mayor model," said Fitton. "Tower is a weak mayor model."

But Abrahamson, who previously served as mayor, said the mayor definitely has the right to request information from the clerk without permission from the council.

**Clerk-treasurer evaluation**

The council also held a nearly hour-and-a-half-long closed meeting to discuss employee misconduct allegations and/or employee evaluation of the clerk-treasurer. The council made a statement that they had conducted a performance appraisal on the city clerk and that the performance appraisal was incomplete.

The clerk-treasurer's union representative Erik Skoog read a copy of the letter sent to the mayor and council, falsely alleging that private personal data from the closed meeting on Feb. 11 had somehow been "leaked."

"Somehow, some way," he said, "the article that was printed in the *Timberjay* just happened to be once again, verbatim, to what was in the information passed out by the mayor, who said, emphatically, it has to stay in this room."

"Based on the Feb. 14 edition of the *Timberjay*," he said. "It appears that private personal data regarding Ms. Keith has been distributed to the public."

Skoog then said he was warning the council that if this happened again, the union would seek damages from the city.

He then went on to threaten the mayor.

"I've warned you beforehand," Skoog said. "You are being a bull in a china shop right now."

**Ambulance subsidy revisions**

The council approved an updated three-year ambulance service agreement between the city and the surrounding townships and Fortune Bay.

Instead of the previously proposed doubling of the annual per capita subsidy payment from \$15 to \$30 per person, the new agreement calls for a 25-percent increase, per year, over the next three years, with a rate of \$18.75 in 2020, \$23.45 in 2021, and \$29.30 in 2022. The agreement also calls for raising the fee charged to Fortune Bay Resort Casino to \$6,240 in 2020, \$7,500 in 2021, and \$8,750 in 2022. In addition, the agreement states the city will calculate the number of out-of-area transfer calls each year, and then add an amount equal to the number of transfers times the subsidy amount to the ambulance replacement fund for each of these years (although this is not part of the formal agreement).

Altenburg's calculations showed that this updated agreement will bring the total subsidy amount in 2020 to \$58,937 (plus 2019 transfers), \$73,394 in 2021 (plus 2020 transfers), and \$91,083 (plus 2021 transfers).

**Other business**

In other business, the council:

► Hired Benjamin Velcheff, of Tower, for the maintenance worker position.

► Accepted the resignation of Josh Carlson as fire department training officer. Carlson is remaining on the department, just not as an officer. The council then appointed Jesse Gornick to the position. Gornick has previously served as training

officer. The council also accepted the resignation of Randy Johnson, a 29-year veteran, from the department. The council also accepted the resignation of Nicole Carlson from the ambulance service. Carlson said family commitments, her job, and volunteer time spent coaching youth sports meant she wasn't able to meet the minimum time requirements to stay an active member at this time.

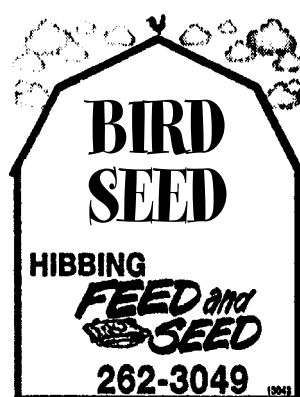
► Heard that the Board of Appeal and Equalization will be held on Tuesday, May 7 from 4 - 5 p.m. Council members asked if that could be changed to 5 - 6 p.m., so the city will ask St. Louis County if that is possible.

► Approved spending up to \$2,000 in city funds to replace the commercial stove and refrigerator at the Tower Civic Center. The Tower Soudan Civic Club is raising funds for the project as well, and Altenburg said the Tower

Fire Department Relief Association may also be able to donate funds as well. The current kitchen equipment is close to 40 years old and in poor condition.

► Approved spending \$8,145 to purchase the wetland credits needed to complete the Pine Street relocation and trail projects at the Tower Harbor.

► Passed a proclamation in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is in April. The Sexual Assault Program of Northern St. Louis County noted that in 2018 and 2018 they had worked with more than 1,000 primary and secondary survivors of sexual abuse and sexual assault in northern St. Louis County.



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**PLEA...**Continued from page 1

stains on the property's lawn suggested that Lynn had attempted to conceal the murder.

The discovery of Woods' body led to an 11-day manhunt for Lynn. He was

apprehended in Michigan on July 13.

Judge Anderson said she hopes that Woods' extended sentence will have him "come out a changed person."

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## BOYS BASKETBALL

# One game at a time

Seventh-ranked Grizzlies pace themselves as playoffs draw near

by **MARCUS WHITE**  
Cook-Orr Editor

**CARLTON** - The Grizzlies dipped to seventh place in the statewide boys Class A basketball rankings this week, but it did nothing to slow their success on the hardwood as they took down the Bulldogs 93-56 on Tuesday night for their 12th win in a row.

"We started a bit slow but found our stride

**Ian Sherman grabs some air to put the shot in.** photo by C. Stone

midway through the first half and played better basketball," Head Coach Will Kleppe said.

Five North Woods players hit double digits during the game, led by freshman forward Darius Goggleye who scored 19. Seniors Cade Goggleye and Ian Sherman along with freshman T.J. Chiabotti each scored 16. Junior Trevor Morrison rounded out the top-scoring players with 11.

On Friday night, the Grizzlies played their final regular season home

game, notching another win against Chisholm, 77-42.

"We did an excellent job on the boards and made the hustle plays we needed," Kleppe said.

Chiabotti had a big night at home, scoring 26 of the team's points. Morrison added 19 points and 11 rebounds for a double-double, while Sherman added 14 points. Cade Goggleye added 11 points and eight assists, while Darius Goggleye added seven rebounds.

The Grizzlies are set

to play their final regular season game this Friday against Deer River, but all eyes will be on who North Woods will face in the playoffs.

"We're taking it one game at a time," Kleppe said. "Working hard and remaining focused are the goals as we approach playoffs."

The Section 7A tournament will begin Monday for the lowest ranked teams with most teams beginning next Wednesday.

Tipoff for the Deer River game is 7:15 p.m.



## GIRLS BASKETBALL

# A tale of two halves

Northeast Range and Ely go toe-to-toe in final season matchup in Babbitt

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**  
Managing Editor

**BABBITT**— In their final road game of the regular season, the Wolves held the Nighthawks to just eight points in the second half to fend off a first half challenge at Northeast Range.

"NER came out strong

in the first half and played really good defense to keep the score close," said Visser. "In the second half we were able to use our more fast-paced game to stretch out the lead and come away with the victory."

Northeast Range Head

See **NER vs ELY...**pg. 2B



**Above and right: Ely's Erika Mattson up against Northeast Range defenders.** photos by J. Greeney



# Hawks spear Spartans in playoff opener

Northeast Range goes to second round

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**  
Managing Editor

**BABBITT**— The Nighthawks took control early and never let up in their Section 7A girls basketball tournament play in tilt with Nashauk-Keewatin on Monday. It was the second time in February that the Nighthawks, who entered the playoffs as the 16th seed, had beaten the 17th-seeded Spartans and this time it was by a convincing 49-33 margin.

"We came out with a lot of intensity," said Northeast Range Head Coach Paxton Goodsky. "We really did well rebounding, and that had kind of been a downfall much of the season."

The Nighthawks' strong start made the difference, as they outpaced the Spartans 29-9 in the first half to grab a lead that the Spartans never threatened.

The Nighthawks, who have relied steadily on the scoring prowess of senior guard Shayler Lislegard much of the season, saw three players reach double figures on Monday night. Lislegard led the scoring with 15 points, nine assists and seven rebounds, while junior forward Makaya Bodas notched a double-double with 11 points and ten rebounds. Junior center Casey Zahnow added ten points and nine boards. Senior Sophie Lenz added five points while freshmen Natalie Nelimark and Jenna Smith added four points apiece.

The Nighthawks were set to face top-seeded Cromwell-Wright in the opening round of the playoffs on Wednesday as the Timberjay went to tough one," said Goodsky.

## NORDIC SKIING

# Ely well represented at 2019 Birkebeiner

by **KEITH VANDERVORT**  
Ely Editor

**ELY** - Local Nordic skiing enthusiast Molly Olson provided a synopsis of race results involving the many Ely racers at the 45th Annual Slumberland American Birkebeiner competition held last weekend in Hayward, Wis.

Ely Nordic Wolves skier Raif Olson finished 11th overall in the Kortelopet classic and earned a third-place finish in his age group (15-16). Allison Heimann also skied in the Kortelopet, finishing 965th out of 1,067 racers.

"Ely's Elton Brown raced to third place in his age group (75-79)

in the Kortelopet freestyle race, for an overall finish in 649th place among the 1,447 racers who competed in the event. Other Ely finishers included Christine Kolinski (542nd), Jeff Pike (787th), and Tobi MacKey (1,141st)," she said. Bernie Baltich skied the 15K Prince Haakon race, finishing 54th out of 628.

The 55K Birkebeiner Classic race on Saturday included 1,874 skiers. Finishing 66th overall was Kjetil Middtun who lives with the Olson family as an exchange student at Ely Memorial High School this year. "He raced in the Norwegian Birkebeiner last year," Olson said. "Rules state that compet-

itors in the (U.S.) Birkie must be 18 by the start date of the race, but Kjetil's birthday is Feb. 28. He wrote an email appealing to the race director to make an exception, and his request was granted. He may be the youngest skier to ever complete in both the Norwegian and American Birkie races."

Wyatt Behrends, also of Ely, finished 99th in the classic 55K, while Ellen Anderson, a former Ely Nordic Wolves skier, came in at 383rd.

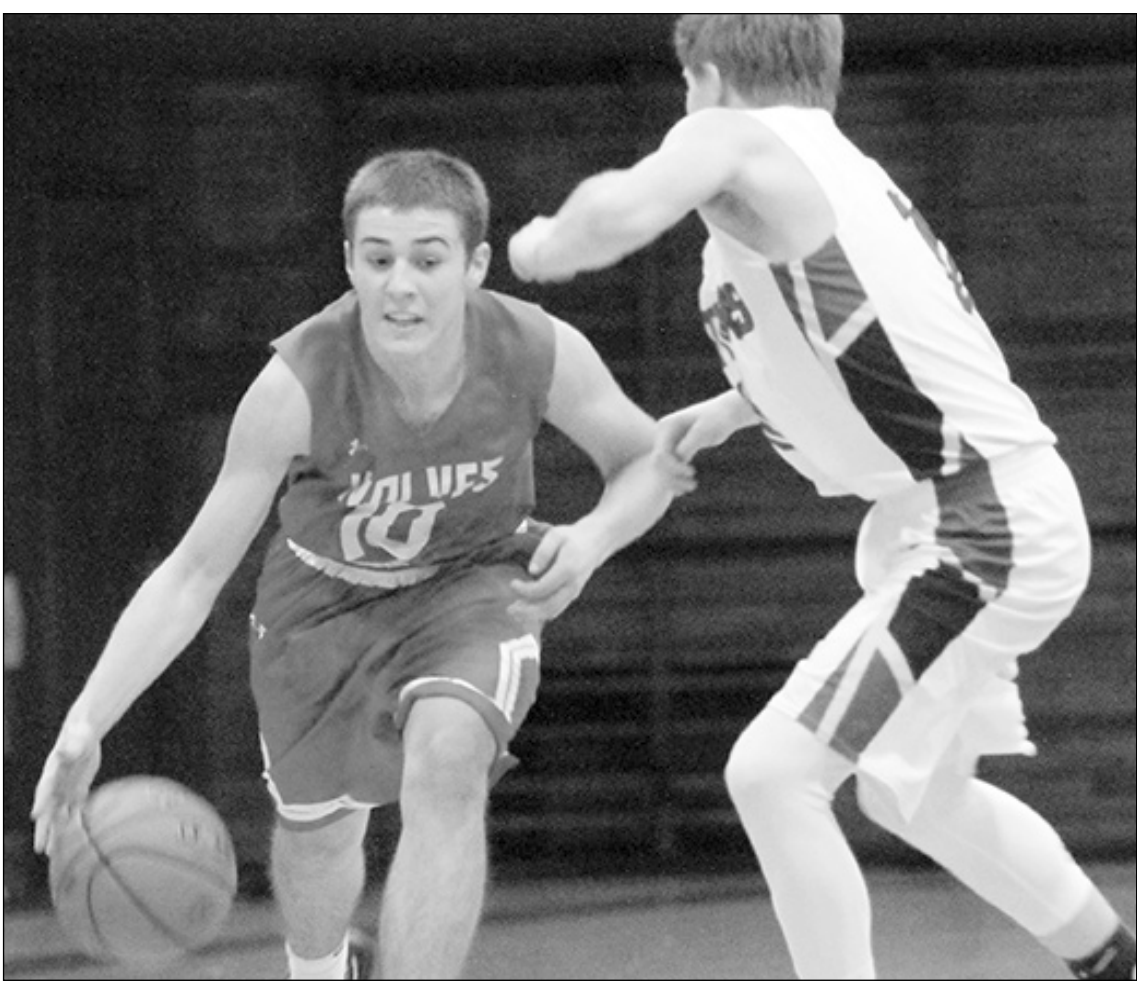
In the 50K Skate race Amy Bianco, another Ely Nordic Wolves alum, finished at 188th which earned fifth place in her age group. She was joined by Carl Skustad (585), Joe Bianco (1,414),



Jeff Nelson (2,642), and Micheal Heimann (2,874). There were a total of 3,696 racers, the largest group of the weekend.

**Ely Timberwolve skier Raif Olson at the 2019 American Birkebeiner.** submitted photo

BOYS BASKETBALL



Eric Omerza dribbles past a Vikings player. photo by J. Greeney

# Vikings fold against Timberwolves

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

LITTLEFORK — Ely pressed and the Vikings folded here on Tuesday as the Wolves notched an 86-38 rout in their penultimate game of the regular season.

“We really put a lot of pressure on them which led to many easy baskets,” said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald.

Senior Patrick Vanderbeek posted another strong performance with 31 points and five rebounds while junior Dylan Fenske added 16 points and five boards. Junior guard Eric Omerza added 14 assists.

The lopsided margin allowed Ely to give some of its backup players a bit more varsity experience. Senior Charley Dammann

and freshman Harry Simons both notched their first varsity points on three-point shots in the second half.

Tuesday’s win was a nice recovery from a tough 62-55 loss to Sacred Heart in Greenway on Saturday. “We led by two at the half, but they came out shooting really well in the second half and got up by 13.”

Ely closed the gap to three points later in the half, but ultimately couldn’t reclaim the lead. Omerza led scoring for Ely with 15 points and eight assists, followed closely by Vanderbeek, who notched 14 points and five rebounds. Senior guard Trevor Mattson posted six assists.

It was Ely who rebounded in the second half last Friday as the Wolves went on to dump South Ridge 70-51 in Ely.

“We trailed by two points at halftime and turned things around in the second half by putting on a press,” said McDonald. The Panthers struggled under the pressure, giving up several costly turnovers that allowed Ely to put more points on the board.

Vanderbeek was hot, pouring in 27 points on the night, while Fenske added 16 and eight boards. Omerza added six assists.

The Wolves were set to face Wrenshall, now 9-15, on Friday night, with a tip-off of 7:15 p.m. With a win, Ely could improve their record to 14-7 and likely gain a home court berth in the Section 7A boys basketball tournament, which gets underway next week.

# Wolves hold off South Ridge

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

ELY — The Timberwolves held off a late South Ridge surge to win their fifth straight game here last Friday, sending them into the Section 7A girls basketball playoffs as the eighth-seed, with a 15-9 record.

“This was a very important game for us in order to get a home playoff game,” said Ely Head Coach Darren Visser. “It was a game where we were able to get the lead and maintain it throughout the game.”

A second-half Panthers comeback attempt cut Ely’s lead to six points, before the Wolves could stem the damage and hold on for the 64-57 win. “We hit some key free throws to finish out the game,” said Visser.

Junior Erika Mattson had

another big night with 30 points and nine rebounds to lead all scorers, while classmate Brielle Kallberg notched another double-double with 17 points and 19 boards. Grace LaTourell added six points for the Wolves.

Mattson led in scoring with 25 points and added eight rebounds, while Kallberg notched yet another double-double with 15 points and 13 rebounds.

The Timberwolves were set to host South Ridge on Wednesday night in the opening round of the playoffs as the *Timberjay* went to press. An Ely victory would send the Wolves to the quarterfinal round, where they would likely face top-seeded Cromwell-Wright at Grand Rapids High School at 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 2.

# Grizzlies lose in final game

FLOODWOOD - The North Woods girls ended their regular season on a sour note here last Thursday, falling 66-43 to the Polar Bears.

Senior Bria Chiabotti led the team in scoring with 21 points. Senior Regan Ratai added nine points, while senior Kate Stone scored seven.

Kennedi Johnson led

scoring for Floodwood with 16 points.

The Grizzlies were set to play their first playoff game against Littlefork-Big Falls on Wednesday night as the *Timberjay* went to press. North Woods did scrape out a 57-55 win against the Vikings on Feb. 19.

# NER vs ELY...Continued from 1B

Coach Paxton Goodsky said it was a game of two different halves for his team, which finished the regular season at 3-15.

“We started out really hot and were down by only two at halftime. But in the second half, we didn’t play so well.”

Junior Erika Mattson led in scoring with 25

points and added eight rebounds, while classmate Brielle Kallberg notched yet another double-double with 15 points and 13 rebounds.

For the Nighthawks, junior Casey Zahnow led the way with 13 points, while senior guard Shayler Lislegard tallied eight points.

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Published in the *Timberjay*, March 1 & 8, 2019

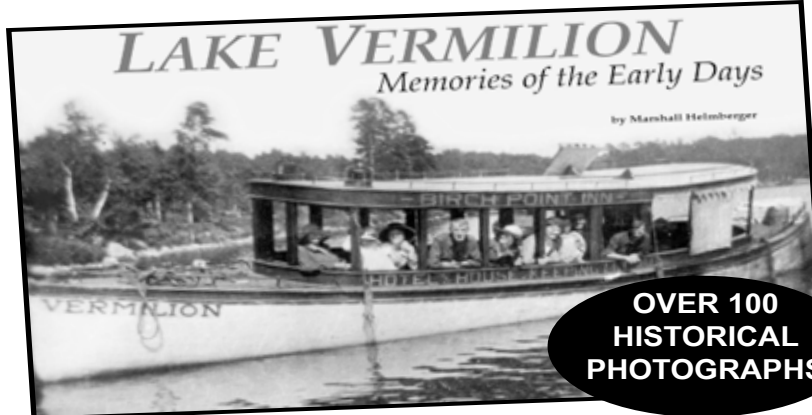
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GREENWOOD

# Four running for two spots on Greenwood board

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP-Incumbent Carmen DeLuca and former town board chairman John Bassing are running for the single supervisor seat on the ballot on Tuesday, March 12.

Incumbent Treasurer Pam Rodgers is being challenged by newcomer Carol Maus. Below are excerpts from interviews conducted with the candidates.

## Carmen DeLuca

Incumbent supervisor Carmen DeLuca did not return email or phone requests for comment. DeLuca was elected three years ago in a three-way contest against Byron Beihoffer and Don Doroff. He had served on the board previously. DeLuca has volunteered to oversee township maintenance matters, since Greenwood no longer employs a full-time maintenance worker, hiring out some duties, like cleaning and snowplowing, but leaving DeLuca to oversee the general day-to-day operations at the town hall. DeLuca has also volunteered as the 911 sign coordinator. DeLuca has been a strong supporter of the township fire department. He also was the lone board vote against raising the levy request to \$250,000 for the upcoming year.

## John Bassing

John Bassing has won an election to the Greenwood Town Board, but he has also lost one. He is hoping to be on the winning side again in the upcoming March 12 township election.

Bassing was elected to a three-year term in 2015, and assumed the chairman spot shortly thereafter. In 2018, he initially decided not to run, and had urged another resident, Rick Stoehr, to run for his seat, for which Byron Beihoffer had also filed. But then Bassing changed his mind and filed to run against incumbent Larry Tahija. The election was a close one, but both Bassing and Stoehr lost their bids, by five and six votes respectively.

"I am semi-retired and have

time to dedicate to township business," Bassing said.

Bassing's goals for the township have changed a little since he ran in 2015. Back then, the main goal was bringing township spending under control by moving zoning to St. Louis County, and getting rid of the full-time maintenance position. He was also adamant that the township not be forced into the Cook-Orr Healthcare taxing district without a vote from residents. This issue, Bassing said, appears to be off the table for good.

Now that these goals have been accomplished, he is still intent on keeping the township tax levy as low as possible.

He was not happy to see the town board recommending a \$100,000 increase in the 2020 levy (to be voted on at the March 12 annual meeting).

"Township reserves are still inflated," he said. "I think we can keep the levy at \$150,000 for at least one more year."

He noted that Greenwood currently has the lowest local tax levy, on a percentage basis, of any other area township, even small townships like Vermilion Lake and Kugler.

One new issue for Bassing is to bring broadband internet access to the township.

"We have fiberoptic cable running down Highway 77 right now," he said, "but there are no offramps to any residents in the township."

Such broadband access is important to businesses, students, and other residents who would like increased internet speeds.

"We missed being on the leading edge of this technological advancement," Bassing said, "I will work hard not to have us on the trailing edge."

Bassing said, if elected, he would once again volunteer at the town hall, helping with maintenance and recreation-related tasks.

He and his wife Joanne have lived in Greenwood for 38 years.

## Pam Rodgers

Pam Rodgers is hoping to get another two years on the job.

"I really enjoy working

with the current board and fire department administration," she said, "as well as the contacts I have made in the community."

"It is rewarding to be able to improve processes for the township utilizing current technology and my accounting skills," she added.

Rodgers said her biggest accomplishments over the past two years have been automating most of the accounting practices that the township had been doing manually, including fire department reporting of call data. This was useful during the Department of Labor's audit of the fire department.

Rodgers said she has also corrected reporting problems with tax withholding.

"We received a letter from the Social Security Administration that our W-2s didn't match our payroll returns for 2016. I performed a reconciliation of that year and amended the returns," she said. "When the clerk provided incorrect information to the state on the W-2s a year later, we received a notice that we had way underpaid our taxes and we would be audited. I was able to work with the state and figure out that the incorrect data was transmitted resulting in cancellation of the audit."

Rodgers said she has developed spreadsheets to calculate the Social Security, payroll, and PERA contributions required each month, so that township reporting is more accurate.

"We can verify our numbers on a monthly basis rather than having issues in the following year when mistakes are found by the authorities."

Rodgers also created a new process for budgeting, creating spreadsheets that provide prior years' actual results, current year data and have formulas to make sure the math is correct. "Changing one number will change all related cells resulting in less errors and an easier process," She said.

Rodgers has worked in accounting for over 35 years, as a public accountant, controller, CFO and consultant and is experienced in Human Resources and Payroll, Information Systems, and Insurance Administration.

She worked for companies as small as 30 employees and \$10 million revenue and as large as 9,900 employees and \$5 billion revenue. She is a CPA although her license is inactive since she doesn't practice public accounting.

Some have criticized Rodgers because she is spending two-and-a-half months in Florida in the winter, noting this causes additional expense for the township.

"That is a completely false statement," she said. "I work remotely dealing with normal accounting as well as filing the year-end reports and working on the budget. The program I use allows me to take over the computer at the town hall. The data is encrypted, and the program requires multistep authentication so the data is completely protected and stored on the township computers. I have a deputy that reads the report I prepare and does the banking. In 2018, she earned under one thousand dollars, while the Deputy Clerk earned twice that filling in when the Clerk was absent. Because of my qualifications, I was encouraged by John Bassing to run for treasurer last term even though he knew I would be gone for part of the winter."

## Carol Maus

Carol Maus is looking to step into a role in township government. Maus said she has been interested in running for treasurer in Greenwood Township for quite a long time.

"I used to check in with long-time treasurer Delores Clark every couple of years, to see if she was running again," she said, "But she always was."

"I just thought that now was a good time to do it," she said. Maus holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota, and worked as an account representative and sales representative in the Twin Cities before she and her husband Jeff moved to Greenwood 14 years ago, shortly after their twin daughters were born.

Since moving to Greenwood, Maus has been an active volunteer in the wider community as well as in the township, serving

on the township's board of adjustment (member for three years, and chairman for one year), and also working as an election judge for 11 years, including as head judge the past year.

For the last eight years, Maus has volunteered for a well-respected Iron Range-based charity, working as its bookkeeper and doing all the accounting-related activities.

"I do all the bookkeeping, the quarterly taxes, run reports, and track payables and receivables," she said, noting this is very similar to the duties required for the township treasurer.

"Volunteering is very important to me," she said. Some of her volunteer work includes teaching Sunday School, working with the Parent-Teacher Organizations at the Tower-Soudan and Virginia schools, and volunteering at numerous community events.

Maus noted she was looking forward to working with the township clerk and supervisors, as well as other township officials. "I enjoy working with different people," she said. "Over the past 25 years I have served on many boards and committees and have always worked well with everyone."

Maus noted that she is here year-round so can be present at meetings throughout the year.

## Other Tower area township elections

REGIONAL-In Vermilion Lake, Crystal Alaspa has filed for the open one-year clerk seat, and Steven Lotz (incumbent) has filed for the treasurer seat. Robert Pratt (who had been appointed to an open seat last year), and former supervisor Bruce Swieringa both filed for the open supervisor seat.

In Breitung Township, Tim Tomsich (incumbent) filed for supervisor, and Jorgine Gornick (incumbent) filed for treasurer.

Kugler, Embarrass and Eagles Nest hold their township elections in November.

## Obituaries and Death Notices



## Hedwig J. Reindahl

Hedwig "Hedy" Jane Reindahl, 96, of Fosston, passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2019, at Villa St. Vincent Nursing Home in Crookston. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, Feb. 27 at Carlin Funeral Home in Fosston with Pastor Seth Johnson officiating. Interment will be in Clearwater Cemetery in rural Oklee in the spring. Arrangements are with Carlin Funeral Home of Fosston. May her memory be blessed. A special thank you to the staff of Villa St. Vincent for their wonderful care.

Hedy was born on March 6, 1922, in Kooi, Wyo., to parents Paul and Agnes (Malyurek) Sikora. She was raised on a ranch in Decker, Mont. She moved to Chicago, Ill., where she met her future husband, Sidney, at a canning factory. She was united in marriage to Sidney LeRoy Reindahl on Aug. 26, 1943, in Oklee. Shortly after their marriage, Sidney left to serve in the U.S. Army during

World War II. After the war ended, they began their life together in Story, Wyo. In 1955, they moved to back to Minnesota and resided for two years with Sidney's grandparents, Theodore and Valborg Reindahl. Then they lived in Vermilion Township, near Tower, where Hedwig raised her family and Sidney worked in the mines. They moved to Fosston and bought a home in 2008. Sidney passed away on Jan. 29, 2015, after 71 years of marriage. Hedwig lived at her home in Fosston until June 1, 2017, when she became a resident of Villa St. Vincent in Crookston.

Hedy liked gardening and flowers, and definitely had a "green thumb". She always encouraged her family to continue their education. Hedy had a great love of classical old music. She played the accordion and dabbled with the piano. She loved to read until her vision no longer allowed reading. She was entertained by Harry Potter books which were written in Montana. Hedy loved seeing her grandchildren and great-grandchildren growing up into responsible adults. Many gifts of money, books, and baby clothes were bought for the many children.

Hedy is survived by two children, Sidney Reindahl Jr. (Darlene) of Virginia and Sedona Reindahl-Fossand of

Bemidji; 12 grandchildren, Darryn (Dana) Fossand, Dana Erickson, Erica Fossand (Jenna), Jennifer (Nate) Ainsworth, Charles (Sarah) Hastings, Shannon Reindahl, Melanie Pearson, Wendy Pearson, Heidi Reindahl, Danielle Zika, Erin Reindahl and Katrina Reindahl; sister-in-law, Dellys Rendal; and nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Sidney; parents, Paul and Agnes Sikora; two children, Cheryl Hastings and Gene Reindahl; son-in-law, Charles Hastings; brothers and sister, Paul, Mary, Edward and Joseph; sisters-in-law, Olga Dahlen, Corrine Roisland, Evelyn Lillo and Gladys Reindahl; and brothers-in-law, Leonard, Kent and Harold Reindahl.

## Helen J. Otonichar

Helen Jean Matson Otonichar, 95, lifelong resident of McKinley and summer resident of Lake Vermilion-Tower, died peacefully on Saturday, Feb. 23,

2019, at St. Raphael's Health and Rehabilitation Center in Eveleth after suffering from several health issues this past year. Funeral services were held on Thursday, Feb. 28 at Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home in Gilbert with Pastor John Dietz officiating. Interment was in Lakeside Cemetery in Biwabik alongside her husband Anthony and five generations of her immediate family.

Survivors include her children, Danny (Rhonda) Otonichar of Mt. Iron, DeeAnn (Larry) Lindholm of Mt. Iron and Debra Otonichar of McKinley; grandchildren, Corey, Breiann, Kristina and Jordan; great-grandchildren, Kobe, Kirsten, Christopher, Natalie and Kaylee; and several nieces and nephews.

## Robert J. Jorgenson

Robert James Jorgenson, 88, of Embarrass, died on Monday, Feb. 11, 2019, at

his residence. A gathering of family and friends will be held from 12 noon to 2 p.m. on Friday, March 1 at Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home in Aurora. Inurnment will be in the Embarrass Cemetery.

He is survived by three children, Judy (Roger) Osborne of Stewartville, Debra (Butch) Pintar of Nashwauk and Lori (George) Nutt of Pine City; ten grandchildren; eleven great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

## Jeffrey L. Enders

Jeffrey L. Enders, 68, of Virginia, formerly of Angora, passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019, at his home. A celebration of life will be held at 3 p.m. on Friday, March 1 at the Log Cabin in Angora. Arrangements are with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by many friends.

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# TOWER BINGO

## Monday, March 4

TOWER- Senior Bingo will be held in Tower on Monday, March 4 at the Tower Civic Center from 11:45 a.m. - 3 p.m. There is a \$10 charge for the bingo party, which includes lunch. All ages are welcome to attend this community event. Lunch is served starting at 11:45 a.m., and bingo begins at 12:45 p.m. Senior Bingo is organized by the Friends of the Vermilion Country Charter School. In case of inclement weather school closure in Tower, bingo will be cancelled. Questions, call Jodi Summit at 218-753-2950.

### Upcoming dates for 2019:

- Monday, April 1
- Monday, May 6
- Monday, June 3
- Monday, July 8 (2nd Monday)



# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
Northwoods

## WHITETAILS



### Tough winter could start to affect deer population

Winter severity index continues to climb

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Weeks of deepening snowpack and intense cold are beginning to push this season's Winter Severity Index, or WSI, for whitetail deer into the above-average range for this time of year. And with an extended forecast calling for below zero temperatures for at least the next week, it appears increasingly likely this winter's severity index could reach the severe category, where deer mortality could become significant.

"Most of northern St. Louis County has received 30-plus inches of snow in February alone," said DNR Tower Area Wildlife Manager Tom Rusch this week. That's left most parts of the area with at least 25-30 inches of snow on the ground, with depths of 30-40 inches in northern Lake County.

The depth and duration of deep snow cover is the most important factor in deer winter survival in northern Minnesota, according to Rusch. Already, said Rusch, conditions will likely lead to above normal deer mortality. "If deep snow persists into April, mortality will be severe," Rusch predicts.

As of March 1, the WSI readings around northern St. Louis and Lake counties ranged from 95 to about 110. That's getting close to the 110-120 WSI reading that is considered average for the Tower area for the entire winter. Yet with no warm-up in the extended forecast, the WSI reading is certain to climb well above the average range this year. The WSI adds a point for every day with a below-zero temperature reading and a point for every day with a snow depth of 15 inches or greater. Given the current extended forecast, the WSI reading could well climb as much as 15-20 points in the next ten days alone. Longer term weather forecasts put out by the National Climate Prediction Center hint at continued below-normal temperatures in most of Minnesota into the second half of March.

Generally, winters where the WSI reaches 180 or above are considered severe and can lead to significant winter mortality for deer. Whether this winter reaches the severe level is dependent on the weather over the next several weeks, notes Rusch.



## EMBRACING WINTER

# Learning outdoors

Northern Tier High Adventure outreach benefits VCS students

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Vermilion Country School tenth-grader Stetson Dewberry grew up in Arizona, but he is certainly taking advantage of his first winter in Minnesota. He earned the distinction of being a "sub-zero hero" after sleeping outdoors in a quinzee when the temperatures dropped to minus-10 degrees F.

Stetson, along with six other VCS students, recently spent three days and two nights winter camping at the Northern Tier High Adventure Base, a camp operated by the Boy Scouts near Ely.

VCS Paraprofessional Sue Beaton said the trip was "so much fun." While it wasn't her first time winter camping, Beaton said she really enjoyed the opportunities offered at Northern Tier as well as the time spent with the students. Besides teaching outdoor skills, the trip was a chance for team-building and cooperative learning, she said.

Students got the chance to cross-country ski, snowshoe, sled, cook outdoors, and build snow shelters called quinzees. The students had the choice of sleeping outdoors in the quinzees they had built, or in the unheated cabins at the adventure base. And while Stetson said the night he spent in the quinzee was pretty warm, his classmates who opted for the unheated cabin said it was chilly, even in the winter camping sleeping bags.

Stetson said the outdoor sleeping arrangement included two sleeping bags, a camping bag, and tarp. Among the other sub-zero heroes was eleventh-grader Jules Schmidt and eighth-grader Alyssa Costello, who acknowledged that it was a pretty cold experience. "But the food was good," she added.

Ninth-grader Preston Tyndall said it was really fun being outdoors all day. His grandfather owns Canoe Country Outfitters in Ely, so he is no stranger to spending time outside.

"I want to go again," he said. The staff at Northern Tier clearly made an impression on ninth-grader Gage Monsrud, who



**Top: Students from Vermilion Country School in Tower celebrate their ski adventure on a wilderness lake near the Northern Tier High Adventure Base outside of Ely.**

**Above: Students take a break from working on quinzee huts on the base grounds. Three of the students opted to sleep in the quinzees overnight in subzero temperatures.** submitted

said he hopes to get a summer job at the base when he is older. He wouldn't be the first VCS student to do so— Jules Schmidt worked at the base last summer.

Making life-changing impressions is part of the mission at Northern Tier. Mike Joint, the associate program director at the Scout base, said their mission is to deliver wilderness adventures that last a lifetime, as well as to provide high-quality character development to teenagers.

"You give a kid a chance to camp this time of year, something they never thought possible," he said. "It really opens their eyes."

Joint is a former paraprofessional at VCS and helped arrange the trip, which was provided at no cost, as part of the organization's outreach program. While the adventure base mostly serves Scout troops, they do have a special fund, created by donors, to serve other youth.

The base provides all the winter gear, including outerwear and boots, to make sure the participants can stay warm in the winter temperatures. The base can serve up to 22 groups of teens at a time, in their 22 cabins.

"We have room on the base in the cabins in case it's too cold to camp outdoors," Joint said.

The Scouts stand for year-

round outdoor programming, Joint said. "Our goal is to have youth having experiences in the outdoors, and not stopping when the weather gets bad."

High Adventure has been working with VCS for several years now, offering a winter camping and a summer canoeing trip at little or no cost to the school. Joint says they hope to make these two trips an annual part of the VCS student experience.

"We are such a small charter school," said teacher Karin Schmidt. "It's essential that we reach out to the community and form partnerships. The fact that we can partner with Northern Tier helps us further our educational goals."

Schmidt noted that the staff at Northern Tier has the expertise to teach students topics that expand on the curriculum offered at the school.

"We have also formed partnerships with the DNR, Lake Vermilion Soudan Underground Mine State Park, and the Laurentian Environmental Center. We are hoping to form more community partnerships," she said, "especially in the areas of the arts and music."

VCS is a grades 7-12 charter

See ADVENTURE...pg. 5B

## USFS

### BWCA permit reservations to go live on March 4

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Anyone hoping to make a reservation for an overnight permit in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness can do so at recreation.gov beginning at 9 a.m. central time on Monday, March 4.

The U.S. Forest Service announced the new date for the opening of permit reservations on Feb. 21. The Forest Service had previously indicated that they hoped to have the system operational again by Feb. 27.

The system had originally gone live on Jan. 30, but a host of technical problems forced the Forest Service to shut the system down the same day. The technical issues with the permit sale software have been addressed, according to an agency press statement, and additional testing has been completed by reservation system programmers.

Forest Service officials say they're confident that the reservation system will function correctly when it goes live on March 4, and that visitors will have equitable access to make permit reservations.

### DWI while on a snowmobile? You could now lose your right to drive a car

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— A new law in Minnesota significantly ups the ante if you get caught snowmobiling while under the influence of alcohol. Known as "Little Alan's Law," the measure mandates that anyone caught driving while intoxicated— regardless of the vehicle they're driving— loses their driving privileges for all motor vehicles, including automobiles, ATVs, motorboats, and snowmobiles.

In the past, only those convicted of DWI in a highway-licensed vehicle lost their license, but that is no longer the case in Minnesota. The new law took effect on Aug. 1, 2018, but has only recently begun to impact snowmobilers.

The new law is named for eight-year-old Alan Geisenkoetter Jr., who was killed last year by Eric Coleman, who struck the boy while driving a snowmobile under the influence. Coleman had multiple previous DWIs in a motor vehicle, but under previous law was not prohibited from using a snow machine. The incident prompted state lawmakers to close loopholes in the state's DWI law.

"We hope the increased penalties for people convicted of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence will cause them to think twice before drinking and riding," said Jen Mueller, a regional training officer in the DNR Enforcement Division.

**ADVENTURE...**Continued from page 4B

school that has a focus on environmental learning, so these trips are actually an outgrowth of the school's curriculum, said Schmidt, who has participated in the outdoor adventures in past years. School staff hope that over the course of their time at VCS, most of the students will get the opportunity to take one or two of these wilderness trips.

**Giants Ridge trip**  
VCS students' winter

fun got another boost last Friday, when they spent a day skiing at Giants Ridge. Stetson couldn't wait to try downhill skiing for the first time. The trip was part of the school's positive behavior incentive program, where students who are meeting academic and attendance goals are rewarded with a special field trip at the end of each quarter. This is in addition to the regularly-scheduled school-wide field trips.

**LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST**

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
19 -2					10 -15					3 -17					7 -9					15 -4				
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
02/18	21	-16	0.00		02/18	21	-25	0.00		02/18	na	na	0.00		02/18	14	-18	0.00		02/18	22	-24	0.00	
02/19	17	-19	0.00		02/19	14	-26	0.00		02/19	na	na	0.00		02/19	21	-19	0.00		02/19	16	-24	0.00	
02/20	21	-19	0.00		02/20	21	-25	0.00		02/20	na	na	0.00		02/20	23	3	0.00		02/20	21	-23	0.00	
02/21	22	5	0.14	3.2"	02/21	22	1	0.20	2.3"	02/21	na	na	0.19	4.0"	02/21	27	10	0.24	3.0"	02/21	20	4	0.24	4.5"
02/22	30	10	0.00		02/22	28	7	0.00		02/22	25	10	0.01	0.2"	02/22	28	16	0.00		02/22	28	6	0.00	
02/23	30	20	0.02	0.8"	02/23	30	19	0.04	0.9"	02/23	29	19	0.08	1.5"	02/23	28	21	0.00		02/23	30	24	0.00	
02/24	30	23	0.01	0.2"	02/24	30	18	0.00		02/24	30	21	0.12	1.5"	02/24	27	-11	0.00		02/24	28	20	0.01	0.2"
Totals			1.25	65.9"	Totals			1.51	55.3"	Totals			1.38	60.3"	Totals			1.52	NA	Totals			1.91	58.8"

# Hit the Trails!

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Groomed

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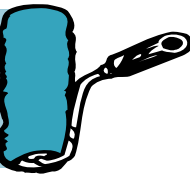
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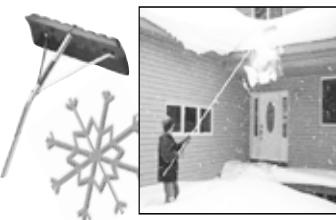
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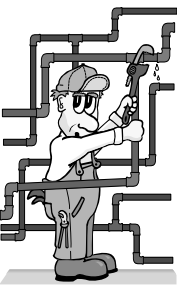
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