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the **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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TECHNOLOGY

Border-to-Border grant aids Cook broadband

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook/Orr Editor

Federal program creates uncertainties for rural broadband development

COOK- Good news in gigabits descended on Cook last Thursday when it was announced that a regional internet provider has been awarded more than \$300,000 in state funds to deploy a new high-speed fiber optic broadband network in the community in 2022.

Bemidji-based Paul Bunyan Communications is set to receive \$311,254 from the state Border-to-Border Broadband Development grant program to help fund the project, which is estimated to cost almost \$700,000. Paul Bunyan would

foot the bill for most of the difference, along with an \$8,000 partnership contribution approved by the Cook City Council last August.

“Paul Bunyan Communications is excited to bring our fiber-optic high-speed

internet to the city of Cook,” said IT and Development Manager Steve Howard. “The pandemic has made it clear that high-speed upload and download speeds are critical for business, education, medical care and the overall economic vitality of a community.

We are proud to be bringing this advanced infrastructure to Cook.”

However, Howard told the *Timberjay* on Tuesday that there’s one more hurdle to clear

See...**COOK** pg. 9

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

COVID-19 vaccines for Ely

EBCH distributes 200 shots at college gymnasium clinic

by **KEITH VANDERVORT**
Ely Editor

ELY – Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital received a 200-dose COVID-19 vaccine allocation last week and immediately scheduled appointments for the most vulnerable people in the community to receive the life-saving serum.

A vaccine clinic was held last Saturday morning at Vermilion Community College that involved many area health professionals and volunteer community members.

Merlin Pipho, 89, was one of the first lucky
See...**VACCINES** pg. 12



Daily vaccinations double, state distribution widens

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Even as state health officials expressed optimism over a reported doubling of the state’s daily COVID vaccination rate, they doubled down in urging patience. At current rates, according to officials, the state won’t have currently eligible groups fully vaccinated until at least June. The recent change to make

vaccines available to those 65 and older and to school personnel and childcare providers added approximately 1.1 million people to the number already eligible.

“With the rate that we currently have, we’re looking at 16 weeks to get through the populations that we need to get through,” said state Infectious Disease Director Kris

See...**STATE** pg. 12

MEDIA

Repeat honors for Timberjay

Wins General Excellence first place in MNA Better Newspaper Contest

REGIONAL - For the second year in a row, the *Timberjay* has taken the top honors in its size category in the Minnesota Newspaper Association’s Better Newspaper Contest, with its second straight first-place finish for General Excellence.

“Relevant and timely coverage of local affairs and keen localization of decisions as far away as Washington, D.C.,” wrote the judges. “A good mix of community features and a separate local sports section each week delivers what so many readers want from a community newspaper. Excellent and fearless editorial page. Clearly, the best in class. The *Timberjay* knows how to fly.”

The award for General Excellence is considered the top award in the contest, reflecting the overall quality of the newspaper. It’s the seventh time in the past 20 years that the *Timberjay* has won first place in the category and it was one of a total of 11 awards that the *Timberjay* won in this year’s contest.

The *Timberjay* also claimed first place for General Reporting in its size category. The judges were especially impressed by the wide range of coverage in the newspaper. “I feel like after reading three issues of your paper, I know the good, the bad, the ugly, and the beautiful elements of living in your community. Diverse and interesting news fare in a clean layout,” the judges wrote.

The paper also won first place for Editorial Page as a Whole, and a third place award for Typography and Design.

Timberjay Publisher Marshall Helmsberger and General Manager Jodi

See...**AWARDS** pg. 9



Above, Merlin Pipho, 89, of Ely, gets a COVID-19 vaccine from Jill Manning at VCC last Saturday. Pharmacist Chris Schneider, top, fills a syringe. photos by K. Vandervort

BOIS FORTE

COVID-19 changes focus of State of the Band message

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook/Orr Editor

NETT LAKE— The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the annual Bois Forte State of the Band activities was profound

and pervasive, beginning with the abandonment of festivities at Fortune Bay Resort Casino in favor of a COVID-conscious virtual presentation livestreamed on the tribe’s YouTube channel.

Tribal Chairwoman Cathy Chavers’ State of the Band address focused less on specific programmatic initiatives and more on the ways in which the coronavirus pandemic has shaped the lives and practices of

tribal members, and how they collectively possess the strength to endure and move forward.

“Our normal world, our normal way of doing things, even simple things such as just visiting, going

to basketball games, going to school, to work, hugging, meetings, going to a restaurant, everything came to an abrupt halt,” Chavers said. “Our normal way of

See...**BAND** pg. 11



Cathy Chavers



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Community notices

Ruby's Pantry food distribution

COOK- The next Ruby's Pantry will be a drive through food distribution at the old Cook School parking lot on Thursday, Feb. 11 from 4:30 - 6 p.m. Please give a \$20 cash donation at the door. For safety, no one over 60 years of age will be asked to volunteer. Ruby's Pantry is sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango.

MDHA Sturgeon River meets Feb. 10

BRITT- On Wednesday, Feb. 10, the MDHA Sturgeon River Chapter will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Pike-Britt Fire Hall located at 8229 Hwy. 68 in Britt. Masks are to be worn and social distancing observed.

8th District MN Horticultural Society scholarships available

REGIONAL- Several scholarships are available from the 8th District MN State Horticultural Society for 2021. An applicant must be a graduating senior residing or attending school in the 8th District or a non-traditional student, college student, second-time winner who will be attending a college or technical school within one calendar year; there are no restrictions as to course or school. Counties in the 8th District include Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis.

The applicant must provide evidence of an interest and participation in horticultural or gardening activities such as a home garden, organized group such as 4-H, Scouts, church or community gardens.

Applications must be received by Monday, March 15. The winning recipients will be invited to the 8th District MSHS Spring Meeting to be held in May in Floodwood (tentative, depending on COVID-19 restrictions).

For an application and more information, contact Jan Dzwonkowski, 6317 Heritage Trail, Gilbert, MN 55741, 218-865-6018 or email jan_dz@q.com.

Several free online mental health courses available

REGIONAL- NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has set up a wide variety of free online mental health classes for February and March. They include classes such as Eating Disorders, Hope for Recovery, Transitions, Ending the Silence, Understanding Early Episode Psychosis for Families, In Our Own Voice, Family to Family, Creating Caring Communities, a suicide prevention class called QPR – Question, Persuade and Refer, a special QPR class for Agricultural Communities and many more.

The classes are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and the general public. Find a complete listing of these classes and how to join in by going to namimn.org and clicking on "Classes" or go straight to <https://namimn.org/education-public-awareness/classes/scheduled/>.

THINGS TO DO

Take an Ely ArtWalk this month

ELY- Volunteers for the Ely ArtWalk were hard at work this week preparing displays for the opening of the 2021 event. Dozens of windows in the downtown corridor are full of hundreds of art pieces and will remain in place through the month of February.

The finishing touches for the walking arts tour will be ready for the start of Ely Winter Festival, and stay in place through the

month of February.

Following suit with the 2021 Winter Festival, Ely ArtWalk will be offering daily virtual participation opportunities, including major Facebook activity all month with a real-time live feed, tours of stores posted daily, talks with artists, and information for buying art.

For more information, go to www.elyartwalk.org.

Serena's Carpet, 114 E Chapman St., is showcasing the arts and crafts of Carefree Living residents. submitted photo



Youth snowmobile races this weekend



The Longbranch in Winton will host youth snowmobile races this Saturday. The public is welcome. photo by K. Vandervort

W I N T O N - Snowmobile oval ice racing returns to the Ely area this Saturday, Feb. 6, with another Kids Championship Power Racing Organization event. Races will be held

on Fall Lake at the Ely-Winton Rod and Gun Club's Longbranch from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Twelve oval ice races are scheduled for youth ages 4-16. KCPRO originated in 1987 in Thief River Falls. At that

time the club consisted of about 20 race families traveling from the Iron Range to Thief River Falls. Because travel was so widespread the club opted to divide into East and West divisions in 1991.

This prompted the official creation of KCPRO-East, a non-profit youth ice racing organization. For more information, go to www.kcproeast.com.

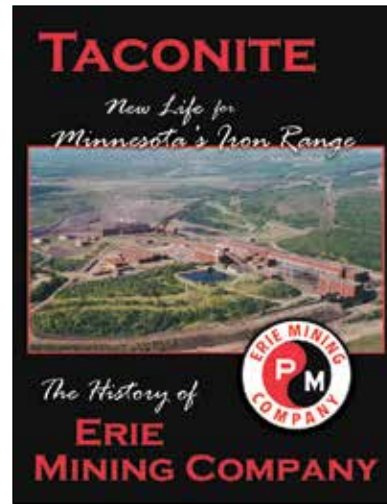
HISTORY

Erie Mining Company book now available

More than 150 first-person memories preserved and donated

HOYT LAKES- The Erie Mining Company History Project Team, in conjunction with the St. Louis County Historical Society (SLCHS), is donating more than 150 oral history interviews to seven organizations in northeastern Minnesota. This donation is the culmination of the area's largest oral history project covering Minnesota's taconite industry.

The interviews were conducted between 2014 and 2019 to collect first-person research material for the book, "Taconite: New Life for Minnesota's Iron Range – The History of Erie Mining Company." These oral histories provide intimate, real-world insight about



the company, its operation, the communities and, most importantly, the lives of the people who were part of the Erie story.

In February, the interview audio recordings and transcripts will be donated to St. Louis County Historical Society, University of Minnesota-

Duluth, Hoyt Lakes Public Library, Aurora City Library, Minnesota Discovery Center, Ely-Winton Historical Society and Cook County Historical Society.

The interviews were conducted across a wide spectrum of people associated with Erie Mining Company including employees, spouses, corporate and civic leaders, local business owners, and community members.

They cover the entire life of Erie from the early 1940s investigations into taconite through construction and startup in the 1950s to its

operation and eventual closure in 2001.


The interviews will be available locally to family members, friends, the general public, and specifically those interested in researching the taconite industry and learning about one of Minnesota's great mining companies.

The book, "Taconite: New Life for Minnesota's Iron Range – The History of Erie Mining Company," is available from the St. Louis County Historical Society (www.thehistorypeople.org) for \$45, including tax and shipping. Proceeds from sales fund scholarships for area students.



DANCE COMPANY

PRESENTS



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Are you interested in the arts in Ely??

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We will be voting on a potential workshop(s) for artists soon!

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This activity is made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



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LOCAL NEWS

It did take a village... to get a new handicap-accessible van for Aaron

Generous donations plus matching grant from Jett Foundation made this dream come true

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- The Caravan had only 5,000 miles and was equipped with a side lift and modern safety features for a passenger in a wheelchair. It was just what the Raj family of Tower was looking for. And thanks to local donations and a dollar-for-dollar matching grant from the Jett Foundation, it is now safely parked in the Raj's garage.

The van is not only safer to drive than the 20-year-old model the family had been using to transport their 19-year-old son Aaron, who uses an electric wheelchair, but also has many more safety features for

the passengers. Aaron really appreciates the secure tie-down system, as well as the adjustable seatbelt, which holds him and his chair securely in place during their travels. Everyone enjoys the better suspension, which is making travel, especially on bumpy winter roads, more pleasant.

"So many things fell in place for this to happen," said Aaron's mother Melanie Raj.

The first piece was raising the funds. The family had raised about \$7,000 last fall by putting the word out to family and their community at St. Martin's Catholic Church, but after an article in the *Timberjay* and a television news piece on WDIO, more funds started coming

in, including one anonymous donor who had seen the story and offered to donate whatever else was needed to make the van purchase possible.

The van was not only low mileage and relatively new, but also came with a price tag of \$37,000 that was almost \$20,000 lower than older models they had been looking at. A family cousin in Wisconsin worked for someone who was selling the almost-new handicap-accessible van, and the Raj's received Jett Foundation approval for the purchase. Aaron's



Aaron Raj sits in his "new" van. The purchase was possible thanks to the generous community and the Jett Foundation. submitted photo

father and grandparents drove to Wisconsin in early January and came back with the new van.

Aaron is keeping busy this winter. He has a four-day-a-week work-study job at the Mesabi East greenhouse (former Plagemann building) in Aurora

and has been busy ordering seeds and starting to plant for the spring growing season. He is also learning to troubleshoot greenhouse equipment, deal with customer service personnel and help desks, and is learning a lot about plant propagation.

Tower News puts fake news on front page

Paper misrepresents quotes for City of Tower's official newspaper selection

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER— City officials here are piqued over a false story that appeared on the front page of the *Tower News* last week claiming the city council had approved the *Timberjay* as its official newspaper again this year despite a quote from this newspaper that was five times more expensive.

The story, which was published without a byline under the headline: "Financially-strapped City takes bid 5 times higher than lowest," was false, and clearly misrepresented the actual quotes that the city council reviewed. According to the *Tower News*, the *Timberjay's* quote was \$3.25 per column inch, while the *Tower News* bid just 65¢ per column inch.

"That not only was misleading, it appears intentionally so," said *Timberjay* General Manager Jodi Summit, who prepared the *Timberjay's* quote.

The city's newspaper bid form includes a request for two separate prices— a price for "legals," which would generally include publication of city minutes or ordinances, and a price for display advertising,

which would include most public notices that the city routinely publishes. The city of Tower, given its size, is not legally required to publish its council minutes and hasn't done so for decades, which means its publication of "legals" is quite limited.

In fact, according to an analysis by the *Timberjay*, the city published a total of 50 column inches of "legals" in 2020, com-

pared to 288 column inches of display advertising.

What the *Tower News* failed to mention at any point in its story was that its quote for display advertising was \$4.00 per column inch, or nearly 20 percent higher than the *Timberjay's* quote of \$3.25. Instead, the *Tower News* story compared their legal

See FALSE...pg. 5

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BUYCK 7.1 acre lot located near Lake Vermilion. Property is wooded with mature timber. Electricity available along east side of property. **MLS #140285 \$27,900**

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Crane Lake-\$230,000 10 wooded acres with 485 ft of shoreline on Crane Lake. **MLS#137906**

Crane Lake-\$175,000 35 wooded acres on the Nelson Rd with glacier rock elevation. **MLS#138988**

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OPINION

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Editorial

Talk about law enforcement

Both Tower and Soudan should be clear about the costs and benefits of local police

It's time for a discussion in Tower and Soudan about the future of law enforcement in the communities. Operating a local police department is expensive—really expensive—and residents should understand how much they pay, or how many other services they give up, in order to maintain it.

Given rumblings that change is afoot in the Breitung Police Department, and that Tower's current contract with Breitung expires next year, now is a good time to begin the discussion. It's too easy for communities to operate on autopilot, simply continuing decisions and policies just because they've always been done that way. Breitung has maintained its own police department for decades and remains one of the only townships in the county to do so. If local law enforcement is so valuable, why don't other townships follow suit? Other area townships, like Greenwood and Morse, with much larger populations and more valuation than Breitung, seem to do just fine relying on the excellent service provided by the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office—a service that costs their residents nothing beyond their usual county levy. Fayal Township, with a population of more than 1,800, contracts with the city of Eveleth for police coverage, at a cost of \$40,000 a year. That's one third the cost of the city of Tower's contract with Breitung, to patrol a much larger area with more than three times the population of Tower.

That police contract is a substantial burden for Tower, consuming fully one-third of its property tax levy. For a large commercial business in Tower, that adds up, as much as \$2,500 a year just for the Breitung police. A typical resident of Mill Point pays \$1,500 a year for the service. That's real money and it's one reason that city officials in Tower hear regular complaints about property taxes.

We recognize that, for some, local police provide a source of emotional comfort, an expectation that they'll see a faster response if the need arises. But is that really the case? And do the relatively few actual emergency responses that do occur justify the expense? Would

outcomes be substantially different if we relied on county deputies to respond? These are questions that officials in both Tower and Breitung should seek to answer. Policy-making should be based on solid data, not feelings, guesses, or simply reliance on the status quo.

These questions have been raised before, of course. The city of Tower did discontinue its contract with Breitung Township more than a decade ago, in favor of contracting with St. Louis County. Unfortunately, that didn't save much money and folks in town didn't feel like it was any improvement. Eventually, the city went back to contracting with Breitung.

Would the city of Tower become a lawless hellhole if it discontinued any police contract?

It's unlikely. Other small cities, like Cook, Orr, and Littlefork, for example, rely on the county sheriff's office for protection without any major impact to public safety. Both Tower and Breitung, for the past two years, have discontinued on-call service from the Breitung police in the winter months, to save money, without any noticeable effect. During those periods when no one is on-duty, residents of the two communities already rely on the sheriff's office.

Folks in Tower and Breitung should recognize that the tax dollars they spend for local law enforcement are dollars that can't be spent for other services, or for significant tax reductions. If the city could slash its tax levy by 25 percent, residents and business owners would feel that in their wallets, and the city would still have dollars left over for other purposes, such as street improvements, enhancing youth recreation, staffing a public library, paying a blight officer, or any of a multitude of other services.

This newspaper is not taking a position one way or another on any of these questions. But we do believe an open and fact-based discussion is warranted. When it comes to police coverage, the public should understand both the costs and the tradeoffs involved. That's how we all can make decisions that best achieve the public's interest.



Letters from Readers

Thanks for clear and unbiased reporting

Marshall... It's been quite some time since I've picked up the *Timberjay*. The last time was for your article on growing food in your greenhouse, which I thoroughly enjoyed and wished you had gone into deeper detail.

Today, I read your article on "Tribes pressure Walz to clean up mining pollution." It was refreshing to read a fact-based article that was clearly laid out, did not dramatize the facts or infractions and painted a clear picture of the situation at MPCA. With so many polarizing and divisive articles flooding our media, I appreciate being able to be informed with a minimum of bias.

Thank you for your clear reporting, cool pen and well-written article.

Theo Theobald
Ely

Getting COVID under control enhances our freedom

When opinions diverge and emotions run high, it's tough for anyone to serve in public office. This is especially true when our governor and legislature must agree on how to manage the health and welfare of our state during a raging pandemic. The most we can ask of them is to consider the range of our needs and opinions, and then be wise as they act in our best interests.

Over the years, I have visited Rep. Rob Ecklund on a number of issues. Of course, we've not always agreed. But regardless of our differences, I've always experienced Rep. Ecklund as thoughtful, honest, and

upfront with his views. He has listened to my concerns and been forthcoming with information, helping me to understand his position and better examine my own. Most importantly, he has always shown respect and gratitude for my input, a valued quality in any elected official.

Recently I heard that he's received intense criticism from some folks for his support of statewide mandates that limit business operations and require masks in public places — measures designed to contain the spread of the coronavirus that has now taken the lives of over 6,000 Minnesotans. I applaud his efforts to get this public health crisis under control.

Rob Ecklund's votes for our health and safety are NOT assaults on our freedom. They are necessary steps toward getting it back!

Kathleen McQuillan
Cook

I'm grateful for Rob Ecklund's focus on the greater good

The CEO of Delta Airlines is no slouch. He knows business. Here's what he said about the economy and the pandemic. "What the industry ultimately needs is for the federal government to focus on finding a cure or vaccine for the coronavirus." He also said, "We believe that taking care of our customers, as well as our people, is more important than the profits that we forgo by filling up every seat on a plane." The CEO of a giant company cares more about people's lives than this year's profits.

I am thankful for Rep. Rob Ecklund's support of our governor's thoughtful efforts to control COVID-19. I appreciate that they are following the science. And I'm astonished that some people are willing to sacrifice the

lives of so many Americans, when stopping the spread requires so little from us.

I was recently listening to a news story from Wisconsin about a real estate boom they are having in some northern communities. People are learning they can work from home if they have good internet. Even after the pandemic is over, people are expecting to work at home much of the time, perhaps going in to work a few days a week. That is, if they have fast, reliable internet.

Rep. Ecklund has sponsored several bills aiming to provide high-speed internet in rural Minnesota, which is essential for business operation and expansion, as well as for students who are trying to learn online from home. He has also worked hard to get bonding money invested in our district. The Republican Party has been relentless in gutting these programs, leaving northern Minnesotans at a disadvantage.

I am grateful for his leadership on issues that expand the greater good.

Linda Ganister
Ely

We welcome your letters

The *Timberjay* encourages letters to the editor. You can submit letters by mail at PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790, or email letters to marshall@timberjay.com.

We ask that letters be limited to 300 words.

Letters are subject to editing, primarily for length and clarity.

Letters are a great way to offer your input to the *Timberjay's* editorial page. We want to know what you think!



If it's not one thing, it's another

"Well, Jane, it just goes to show you, it's always something — if it's not one thing, it's another."

Oldsters like me may well recall that classic catchphrase of original Saturday Night Live cast member Gilda Radner in her Weekend Update alter-ego of Roseanne



DAVID COLBURN

Roseannadanna.

She, Roseanne Roseannadanna, would open each skit by reading a thoughtful letter from Richard Feder of Fort Lee, New Jersey, to which she, Roseanne Roseannadanna, would respond. And within perhaps two sentences or less, she, Roseanne Roseannadanna, departed from the

topic at hand and went off in strange directions that usually included odd comments about encounters with celebrities and mildly unsettling revelations involving hair, toenails, and other body parts and functions. When Jane Curtin asked her what her rambling rants had to do with Mr. Feder's letter, that's when she, Roseanne Roseannadanna, would spring her catch phrase.

As a quick aside, note that the repetitious "she, Roseanne Roseannadanna" is my own little bit of homage to the character's

own equally silly habit of saying "I, Roseanne Roseannadanna" numerous times. The incredibly astute among you may have picked up on that. Having now paid said homage, I'm sure you'll be relieved to know that to save on space and typing, I'll henceforth refer to her as RR.

I believe RR was a character well ahead of her time, because I think she would've been a veritable rock star in the world of social media, a world where a simple fact can turn into a full-blown QAnon conspiracy faster

than you can say "She, Roseanne Roseannadanna." And yes, it just became glaringly obvious that I'm quite willing to abandon any prior promise about RR to glibly capitalize on the moment. Go ahead and sue me — all I ask is that you use Rudy Giuliani or another 2020 election fraud lawyer so that I have at least a 70-in-one chance of winning my case.

Ah, but as you've no doubt become accustomed to by now,

See ROSEANNE...pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Trump's Big Lie endangers our democracy

In the 50s and 60s, in some corners of our country, folks were asking how did a predominantly Christian nation, Germany, get converted to a hateful nation, exterminating six million Jews. The answer to making sure it never happened again was dividing it into West and East Germany for fear it would start another World War. In recent days we have seen a new answer with the likes of Donald Trump's racism and running amok on his Twitter account and Marjorie Taylor Greene's crazy conspiracy theories. The Big Lie, and keep telling it over and over until people believe it. Armed with Fox News and his Twitter account, Donald Trump unleashed hate groups and conspiracy-based groups, so much as to spur folks like Green.

At first, I thought when listening to Green's theories that school shootings like Parkland were false flag attacks, we just simply need to confront her with the truth. Galatians, a book in the Bible, tells us to lead a sinner out of sin one must do it gently. But some have tried and she is now threatening other members of Congress. Her push for recognition and power is fueled by millions of dona-

tions from her district. In an unusual move, Senator Mitch McConnell has rebuked her and announced such actions will destroy the Republican Party.

We have now seen what caused a nation like Germany to become a hateful tyrannical force, which caused endless death and destruction—it's The Big Lie, fueled by racism and prejudice such as we have seen in the last four years. Our country needs to find stronger guard rails to defend our democracy.

**Reverend
Charles D. Barnes
Aurora**

Vote NO on Greenwood's Option B

Once again, Greenwood residents are voting on Option B as we did last year when we voted it down by a 2 to 1 margin. It is said that doing the same thing over and over again, and expecting a different result, is the definition of insanity. This fall, with feign discussion and reasoning, the Greenwood Board once again unanimously decided to place the same ballot question as last year on this year's March 9 ballot. The question asks if the clerk and treasurer positions should become appointed positions of the

board, ending the process of electing clerks and treasurers as township residents have done for more than forty years.

Appointed clerks and treasurers are a rare find as no township in our area has one. Statewide, less than ten percent have any combination of appointed clerk and/or treasurer. It should be informative to us that our friends in Breitung Township looked at a combined clerk/treasurer but decided against it.

The smalltown tradition of having an elected town clerk is one that we want to retain. Besides maintaining the smalltown heritage, the elected clerk has some pragmatic advantages over an appointed clerk.

Electing a town clerk avoids cronyism, or the "politics", of having an appointment made by supervisors. An elected clerk (being a township resident) is directly accountable to the people of the township and serves at the will of the people, not the supervisors. This is especially important during town elections, when the independence of the clerk's office is vital. An appointed clerk (could be a non-resident) comes with an inherent conflict of interest in this area.

All local township supervisors have for many years TRUSTED the electorate to make the selection

of its clerk and treasurer. This ballot question, forwarded by the current town board, indicates THEY DON'T TRUST YOU, the electorate, to take the responsibility to make this decision any longer.

There is no valid reason to take this responsibility and right away from the people. The people's power (right to vote) should NEVER EVER be taken out of the hands of the "the many" and be placed in the hands of "a few".

Please Vote No on Option B.

**JoAnn Bassing
Greenwood Twp.**

Ranier repeatedly violated open meeting law

The Ranier City Council and its Safe Harbor/Transient Dock Steering Committee repeatedly violated the MN Open Meeting Law.

On Oct. 10, 2017, Tom Dougherty made a proposal to the Ranier Council regarding a safe harbor/transient dock. Mayor Wagner stated this was a "progressive idea." "Councilmember Coulombe suggested forming a committee of interested parties to discuss the type of dock and amenities we would want. Coulombe, Gautreaux and Dougherty

will work together to recruit stakeholders and set up a meeting."

On Dec. 21, 2017, the minutes of the Ranier Council reflect that the Safe Harbor/Transient Dock steering committee met on Dec. 6, 2017, to begin discussion of the proposed project. The council voted unanimously to proceed with further exploration of the proposal.

On Jan. 10, 2018, Tom Dougherty and AMI Engineering Representatives gave a presentation to the Ranier Council Committee of the Whole. "Mayor Wagner stated that if the council agrees to go ahead with planning, we would need to have an advisory board in place, draw up an engagement letter and grant application."

At the Jan. 18, 2018, meeting the Ranier Council made a motion and it was carried unanimously to designate members to standing committees. Seven committees were listed including the Safe Harbor/Transient Dock Committee which designated Council members Todd Coulombe and Ron Wilcox and City Adm. Sherill Gautreaux to serve on this committee.

There was no public posting made available to residents of Ranier to participate in this steering committee. Residents and non-residents, with rare

exception, were selected based on their business interests. ("Stakeholders" - 10/10/17)

There were no public postings of these meetings so residents were unaware of the meetings or that they could attend. Several meetings of the steering committee were held from 2017-2020. "Minnesota's Open Meeting Law, which the state first enacted in 1957, applies to all branches and levels of government, including committees, subcommittees, boards, departments and commissions." (MN Post 2/4/20 - Jessica Lee)

Would the LCCMR (Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources) have recommended funding of these Ranier projects if they were aware of repeated violations of the Open Meeting Law?

Would the Minnesota Legislature and Governor have approved funding of these Ranier projects if they were aware of the repeated violations of the Open Meeting Law?

Should the Ranier Council attorney respond openly to the citizens of Ranier regarding these violations?

**Sue Swendsen
Ranier**

ROSEANNE...Continued from page 4

I digress. Much like RR, actually. Back on topic.

In the vein of "if it's not one thing, it's another," I discovered in a recent scan of my Facebook news feed that there are some conservatives in our neck of the woods in Minnesota who appear concerned about a proposed law in Oregon that would set the stage for governors in all states to have emergency powers beyond all reason. The comments that ensued took the conversation well into the realm of RR, seeing this as a harbinger of long-feared "one world government" conspiracy theorists. It just goes to show you, it's always something - if it's not one thing, it's another.

I'm quite selective these days about what debunking I try to tackle, but this one seemed pretty straightforward.

Rather than breaking dangerous new ground, Oregon is Johnny-come-lately with this particular clarification of its emergency response law. Liberal Oregon meet conservative Texas, which has given its governor essentially the same emergency power since 1975. The particular aspect of a governor commandeering

private property during an emergency in return for just compensation has been widely recognized in emergency law for years and draws its support from no less than the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

Armed with research, I plunged into a lengthy comment sharing my view that fears about this sparking a revolution among governors wanting to grab land and power were quite misplaced.

Invested the time and research because while the original poster and I are generally on opposite ends of the political spectrum, he's never been one to indulge in name-calling and usually seems to have given some thought to what he posts, even if in my view it seems extreme.

A few hours later, sure enough, he replied. He acknowledged my comments, then countered with more detail about the parts of the proposed law that gave him great concern. One part was already part of Oregon law. The other was a proposed change, and after reading his explanation, I found myself agreeing with him to a certain extent. As written, the language was problem-

atic, and I could see how it could be interpreted as allowing for an overreach in the governor's authority.

Two old guys from Minnesota posting online aren't going to change anything in Oregon. And nothing's going to change in Oregon either, because after a huge COVID-driven backlash from those railing against that governor's emergency pandemic powers, that piece of legislation has been withdrawn. It would be wise to work on language revisions in line with other states before reintroducing it, in my opinion.

I relate this story because I am discouraged with how readily people on social media demean and dismiss anyone associated with something that's on the far opposite side of their political beliefs. Certainly, outlandish conspiracy theories deserve to be met with another Roseanne Roseannadanna catch phrase -- "What are ya tryin' to do, make me sick?!" But not all far-right conservatives are Trump zombie deplorables, and not every far-left liberal is a socialist libtard.

Here I saw the possibility for exchange about the issue of a gover-


nor's emergency powers. I did not call the poster a "deplorable" and he did not call me a "libtard." I did not call him a Trump zombie, and he did not call me a George Soros puppet. We laid out our positions respectfully and came to a greater understanding. It's a good start for text-based social media.

It's always something - if it's not one thing, it's another. A phrase for today's caustic political social media world that's well suited for RR. Mr. Feder puts up a post, and RR talks back at him, not with him, going off on whatever tangent she feels like. The amount of worthless junk in that arena is indeed enough to make one sick.

But if more people would look for opportunities where some thoughtful exchange is possible, perhaps we could have more conversation-like exchanges of substance. Compromises can't happen unless one is willing to make the attempt to understand an opposing viewpoint, something Congress demonstrates its inability to do almost daily. The noise is so loud online that countless numbers of people have just stopped

listening. Social media is jammed with Roseanne Roseannadannas, liberal and conservative alike, spouting off whatever they want. Extremism runs rampant and opportunities may be few, but I believe it's more important now than ever to look for and

take advantage of those moments when at least some possibility of a meaningful exchange exists. We need conversations. RR deserves to be a fond relic of a distant past and not a constant destructive presence in the present.



the
TIMBERJAY

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Subscriptions Available:

St. Louis County: \$39 year Elsewhere: \$54 year. We accept VISA/Mastercard/Discover/AmEx. NOTE: Changes of address must be sent or called in to the Tower office. Out-of-state delivery may take 2-3 weeks. For prompt out-of-state delivery try the First Class Subscription: \$100 year or \$10 per month.

Read the entire paper on-line every week. On-line subscriptions cost \$29.95/year; details at www.timberjay.com.

Moving? Questions about your subscription? Call the Tower office at (218) 753-2950.

FALSE...Continued from page 3

rate of 65¢ per column inch with the *Timberjay's* display rate, a clearly misleading comparison. The *Timberjay's* quote for legal publishing was actually 99¢ per column inch.

Based on the volume of display advertising undertaken by the city in

2020, the *Tower News's* quote would have cost the city \$1,152 to the *Timberjay's* \$936, providing a savings of about \$216 with the *Timberjay*.

Based on the volume of the city's legal publishing in 2020, the *Timberjay's* bid of 99¢ for legals would

cost the city \$49.50. The *Tower News's* bid would cost the city about \$25, for a savings of approximately \$24.50.

That would provide an overall savings to the city from the *Timberjay's* quote of approximately \$190.

The *Timberjay*

emailed the *Tower News* editor for this story, asking who wrote the false story and whether the newspaper intends to issue a retraction. The *Tower News* did not respond.

Your best source for local news...

Go to timberjay.com to subscribe or call 218-753-2950

Week of Feb. 8

Monday
TOPS - Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower, at 9 a.m. Canceled until further notice.

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

Tower City Council- 5:30 p.m. on Feb. 8, see cityoftower.com for info.

Tuesday
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:00 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is Feb. 16.

Greenwood Fire Dept.- Meetings on the first (business meeting) and third (drill) Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Greenwood Town Board- 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 9. Meeting held via teleconference, contact town clerk at 753-2331 for info.

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.

ST. MARTIN'S YOUTH

'Souper Bowl Sunday' booya on Feb. 7 from 11:15 a.m. - 1 p.m.

TOWER- Mark your calendars, the St. Martin's youth will again be hosting their annual "Souper Bowl of Caring" on Sunday, Feb. 7. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, there will only be take-out meals available.



Take-out dinners may be picked up from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the church social hall. The dinner includes booyah

(vegetable beef soup), rolls, and choice of desserts. Freewill offerings will be accepted. All

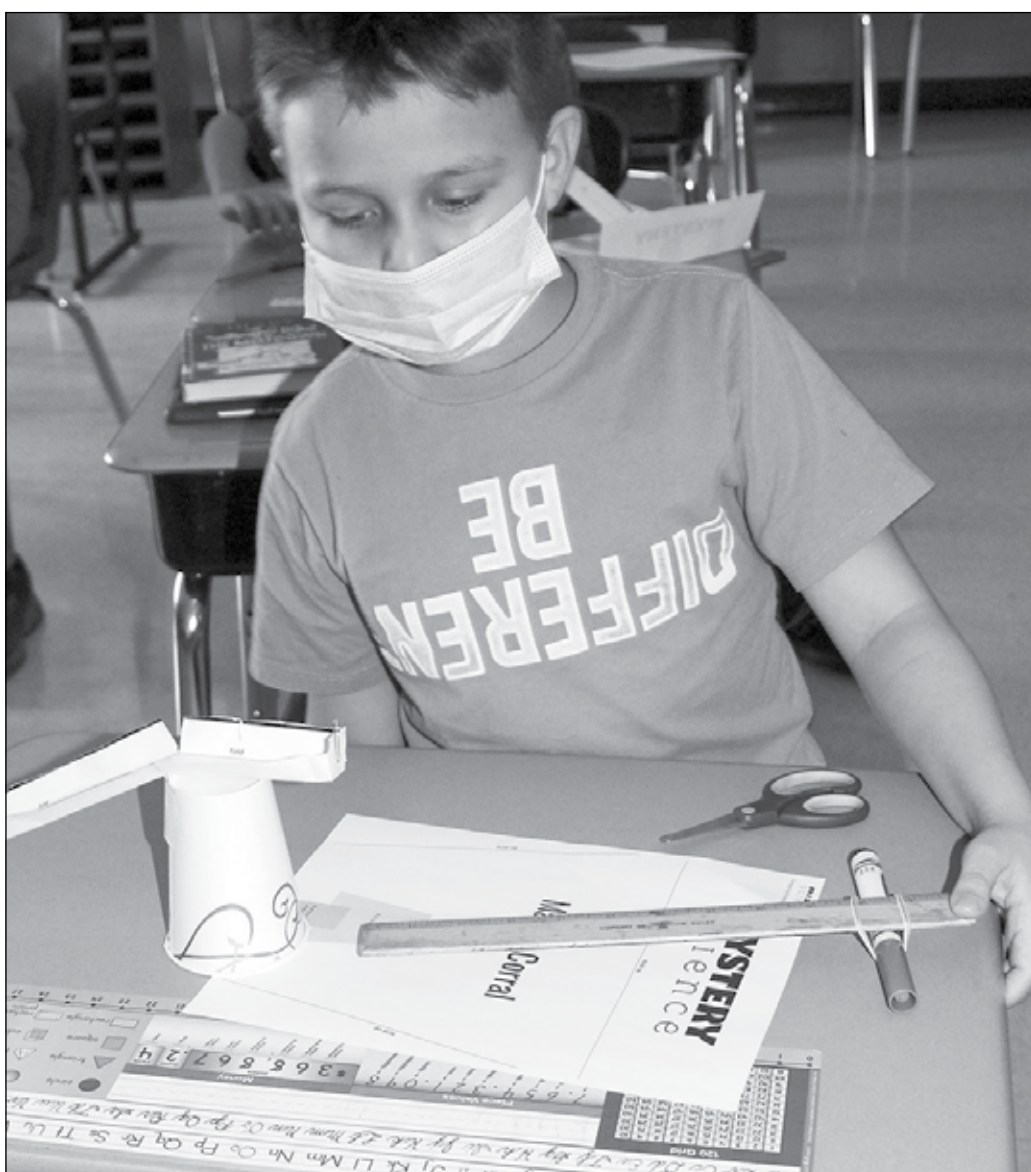
proceeds will be donated to the Tower Food Shelf.

For the past 16 years, the youth at St. Martin's have been donating the ingredients for the booyah. They come in the day before to peel, cut, and dice the vegetables. This year, a group of parishioners will make the desserts on Friday.

Everyone in our community is encouraged to support the

youth in this worthwhile project.

'Souper Bowl of Caring' began as a senior high youth fellowship that has spread nationwide. It enables young people to see that by moving beyond themselves and working together, they can make a difference in their community.



Reaction!

Tower-Soudan third graders have been building contraptions, while learning about levers, force, and motion.

At left: Kija works checks the adjustment on his lever so it can launch her marble.

Below: Kayla gets her contraption aligned properly. photos by J. Summit



BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

Longtime Breitung Supervisor Chuck Tekautz to retire

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA Staff Writer

SOUDAN- Longtime Supervisor Chuck Tekautz is retiring after 15 consecutive years of service on the Breitung Town Board.

"There's a time for everything," Tekautz said. "It's been a good 15 years. I'm sad to see it's gone but I'm getting older now. If I hadn't been on the board, there are many nice people I would have never met. I'm going to miss it."

Tekautz will be remembered for his dedication to the community and especially for his financial savvy.

"Everything I did I tried to get the best bang for the buck," he said. Tekautz said he took seriously his responsibility



Chuck Tekautz

to spend taxpayer money wisely.

Running unopposed for the vacant seat is newcomer Terry Anderson. Jorgine Gornick will seek reelection as treasurer, also running unopposed.

Township elections are set for noon to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9. The annual meeting usually takes place after but because of COVID

it may be held in person, on a video meeting, on the phone, or may be postponed until summer. Supervisors will make a decision at next month's meeting.

Skating rink

Soudan ice rink attendants Alex Tomsich, Shawn Villebrun, Jayne Sundeen and Xander Port received hearty commendations from Supervisor Greg Dostert during the Jan. 26 Breitung Town Board meeting.

"I've been in charge of the rink for many years now, both on and off the board, and it's the best staff we've ever had. I'm really happy with their work," he said. "It's taken a lot of pressure off me and maintenance."

He noted their reliability, care for the rink, and Sundeen's care for COVID-19 precautions. "She's got it like a hospital in there [the warming shack]," he said.

Dostert said that the turnout for Chimpy's parties is smaller than last year, as expected, because of the pandemic and the restrictions on the

warming shack.

Dostert said that Hockey Day Soudan is set for Valentine's Day, Sunday, Feb. 14, at 1 p.m. and asked participants to bring bonfire wood.

Police

The board accepted the resignation of Lieutenant Jason Sanderson, with regrets. His last day will be Thursday, Feb. 4.

The board also approved a motion to suspend on-call hours for Breitung Police in February, March and April. February through April has historically been the slowest time of the year for Breitung police and this is the second year the township has opted to trim winter hours. The decision saves both the township and city of Tower, which contracts with Breitung for police coverage, about \$1,000.

Police holidays and leave time will be paid at eight-hour days but the officers will still be scheduled for twelve-hour shifts.

Projects

Breitung maintenance received a thank

you and compliments from resident Tony Sikora for work on the trees near his home and professionalism in communication.

Supervisors will work with JPI Engineering to plan the replacement of manholes on the Mesabi Trail. The township's manholes on the trail are in violation of an agreement and must be fixed at a cost of \$400,000. The work will be planned to coincide with trail replacement scheduled for 2022 when Mesabi Trail will completely replace the section of trail between the Tower train depot and the Soudan Store.

Gorsma will look into costs for replacing the township's plow truck, as last year's scheduled replacement was postponed due to the high costs of the town hall renovation project.

Other news

In other news, supervisors:

Received a letter from St. Louis County Environmental Services to call ahead to make sure

the landfills are open due to staff shortages.

Heard that the Breitung Community Room will open as of Monday, Feb. 1 for events, but township offices will still remain closed. All events must follow COVID-19 guidelines. Call 218-753-6020 to schedule an event or meeting.

Increased the monthly wage for the fire department training officer, Lance Dougherty, from \$300 to \$350.

Heard that the Army Corps of Engineers has committed \$3.5 million for the planned Tower/Breitung water filtration plant. Another \$250,000 has been committed from IRRRB, leaving a \$750,000 funding gap.

Heard that the township was recommended for a \$100,000 grant from CDBG and a \$145,000 grant from IRRR for work to improve wastewater inflow and infiltration.

The next meeting is set for Tuesday, Feb. 23 at noon with the board of audit to follow.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Skating parties set

SOUDAN- Chimpy's skating parties are now underway, with the next party set for Saturday, Feb. 6 from 12 noon - 2 p.m. There will be free food, including hot dogs, burgers, pizza, drinks, and snacks. The skating rink is being kept in good condition, and children also have fun playing on the huge snow piles adjacent to the rink and playing on the swings and playground.

Rink attendant Jayne Sundeen will be offering food at the rink for skaters on Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school, weather-permitting.

The rink warming shack is open daily, weather-permitting,

weekdays from 4 - 8 p.m., and weekends from 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. with safety provisions in place and reduced capacity.

Sponsors this year included Frank and Jorgine Gornick, and Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Recreation Board. Anyone interesting in donating money to help pay for the food should contact Chimpy at Zup's in Tower.

Area students named to University of Minnesota-Duluth Fall Dean's List

DULUTH- The University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD) has announced its Dean's List for Fall

Semester 2020. Students on the Dean's List have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

Area students on the list include:

Jonathan D. Lanari, Tower, Senior, Swenson College of Science and Engineering (SCSE), Chemical Engineering BS Ch E

Maude F. Lenz, Embarrass, Junior, Swenson College of Science and Engineering (SCSE), Pre Civil Engineering

Sophie R. Lenz, Embarrass, Senior, Swenson College of Science and Engineering (SCSE), Pre Civil Engineering

Advertisement for Saint Louis County Environmental Services, listing various waste management sites and their hours, including Northwoods Transfer Station, County 77 Canister Site, Embarrass Canister Site, Household Hazardous Waste Facility, Cook Transfer Station, Soudan Canister Site, Aurora Transfer Station, and Regional Landfill.

SUPPORTING THE ARTS

Reflections of 'Home on Earth'

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

Ely dance company transitions from live show to the big screen

ELY – A full-length dance movie, “Home on Earth,” featuring this community’s Reflections Dance Company, will be screened this weekend at Ely’s Historic State Theater at the group’s Winter Showcase.

The show runs 1-2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 6-7. Tickets are \$10 each and are available on Ely’s Historic State Theater website at movies.elystatetheater.org/movie/reflections-dance-company.

The event features live performances of the pieces and works-in-progress for the upcoming summer 2021 show, “Work/Play,” scheduled for August. The dancers on stage will be accompanied by live musicians. Seating is limited.



Social distancing and mask guidelines will be followed at the event. Concessions will be available.

The showcase will also feature the full-length dance movie “Home on Earth” from this past year. Organizer Molly Olson said the dance company was challenged last summer with switching from a live show to a movie due to the public health precautions in place because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In the “Home on Earth” film trailer, dancer Kasha Hyde said, “We knew a lot of the dances up until March last year,



Reflections Dance Company ballet students Natalie Bermel, Ella Rue, Fiona Olson, Cora Brekke, Cosette Brekke, Cathryn Brekke and Sammy Peterson, and teachers Gracie Pointer and Molly Olson, rehearsed last Sunday at the Ely Rec Center for this weekend’s Winter Showcase at Ely’s Historic State Theater. photo by K. Vandervort

then COVID hit and we just stopped.”

Olson noted, “We didn’t know it at the time, but we would all be stuck at home for months at a

time. We decided that we needed to meet virtually and gathered for weekly Zoom fitness classes where we did stretching and strengthening along

with dance lessons.”

Short video pieces were choreographed and produced into the longer movie.

Olson added, “The

movie that we created is all about taking that love and joy of dancing and bringing it out into nature. It was such a unique experience. Our dancers contended with rain and rocks and mud and blood. It was a testament to their grit and their love of dance. It was meant to be filmed outside. I don’t know that we would have found as many interesting and unique ways to portray our pieces if we were doing it all on the stage.”

Musician Joey Kenig said the COVID quarantine last summer changed the orchestra’s approach to the project. “We knew we would need to record the music,” he said “The Reflections project for three seasons now has been a wonderful example of community theater at its finest.”

Olson said, “We plan to release the movie on YouTube eventually, but since it will be entered into a film festival, we will wait until after that time.”

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2021



a new dawn bright sun suddenly a new month starts

eager for resolve

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

OPEN AA - 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely.

ELY WOMEN’S OPEN

AA - Every Monday at noon at St. Anthony’s Catholic Church, 231 E. Camp St., 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.

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. Call 218-365-3359, 218-827-3232, or 1-800-662-5711.

Arts funding offered by Gardner Humanities Trust

ELY – Applications are due next month for the first grant cycle of the year for the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust arts funding program.

“The Trust will have a little over \$20,000 for two grant rounds in 2021,” said Keiko Williams, the Trust’s executive director. “We believe this may be another interesting year of grant applications as groups and individuals are still trying to figure out how to complete their work during the pandemic restrictions.”

Grant applications are due by noon on Friday, March 19.

Artists and groups can apply for grants in the following five categories:

► Individual Artist Grants encourage developing and established artists with funding of up

to \$1,000 to take advantage of an impending, concrete opportunity.

► Organization Project Grants support activities in the fine arts and for the Ely Public Library. Grant support is intended to make it possible for organizations to present or produce a fine arts activity.

► Youth Grants are awarded to Ely school students in grades 6-12 who have an interest in and demonstrate high motivation in the fine arts. The youth grants of up to \$750 can be used for workshops, classes, lessons or mentorships.

“Youth Grant applicants need to schedule a Grant Review Meeting in order to go over their draft application,” Williams said. “This meeting is intended to help the individual youth make their

applications as well written as possible.” Youth Grant applicants must call or email Williams by Friday, March 5 to schedule their meeting.

► Scholarships are available for graduates of Ely Memorial High School who are in their third or fourth year of college studies or in graduate school. Trust scholarships are awarded to students majoring in one of the disciplines of fine arts or library science.

► Operational Funding Grants fund high-quality, established Ely area organizations that produce, or present fine arts activities or provide services to artists.

Individuals and organizations that would like to have a draft application reviewed should try to contact Williams by early March. The office is open by appointment

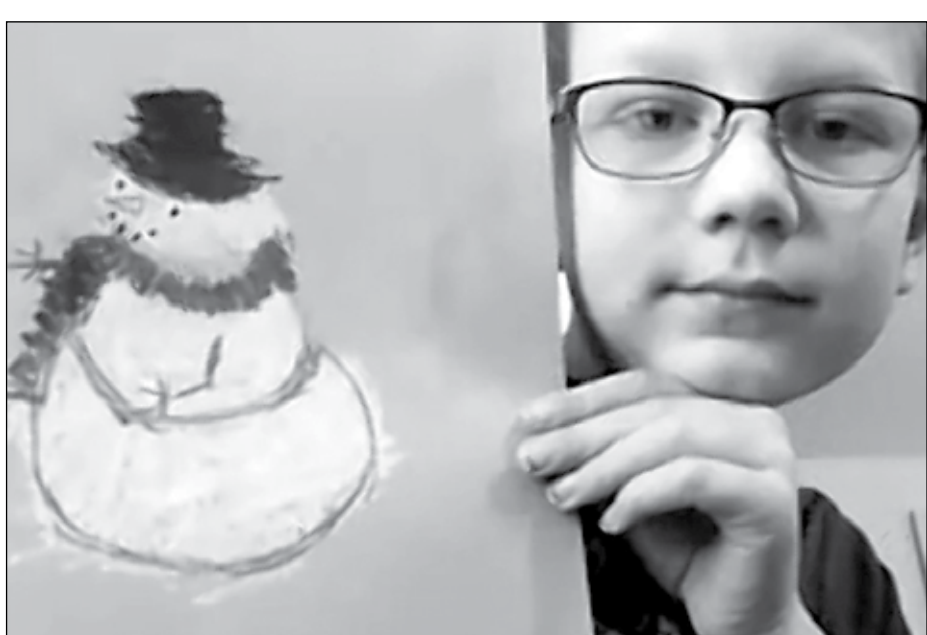
only, but she can be reached by phone at 218-365-2639 or email at info@gardnertrust.org.

Grant forms and eligibility requirements are available on the Gardner Humanities Trust website at www.gardnertrust.org. Those without internet access can contact Williams to have a paper application mailed to them.

Completed applications can be mailed to the Trust office at P.O. Box 720, Ely, MN 55731 or dropped off at the Ely City Hall, Clerk’s Office, at 209 E. Chapman St.

The 2021 Trust board of directors are: Beth Ohlhauser, Jill Swanson, Chris Steele, Mary Setterholm, Angela Campbell, David O’Donnell, Brooke Lund and Vince O’Connor.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY ART STUDENTS



Amanda Faulkner’s fourth graders at Washington Elementary School were busy recently trying their hand at drawing snowmen from different perspectives. “They read ‘Snowmen at Night’ for some inspiration,” Faulkner said. “They used oil pastels to create these beautiful drawings.” Brian Angelo is shown with his creation. submitted photos

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

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	Aurora Transfer Station 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am–4pm Tue, Wed: 10am–4pm Sat: 8am–noon
Embarrass Canister Site 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30–4:30pm Thu: 10am–5pm	Soudan Canister Site 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am–5pm
Household Hazardous Waste Facility 5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am–1pm	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



NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

National Honor Society inducts new members

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The National Honor Society chapter at North Woods School more than doubled its membership on Monday with the induction of ten new scholar members.

Nine of the ten, along with current members and limited numbers of North Woods staff and family members, gathered in the school's commons area for formal induction ceremonies conducted with appropriate COVID precautions for mask wearing and social distancing.

2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the National Honor Society, a group created by the National Association of Secondary School Principals to recognize students who exhibit a combination of the organization's four core values - scholarship, service, leadership and character. Membership is by invitation only, and mem-

bers give back to their schools and communities through service activities.

Senior members Olivia Fultz, Brynn Simpson and Cole Thiel conducted the ceremony which included opening remarks by Fultz, candle lighting to acknowledge each of the society's core values, group recitation of the NHS pledge, and presentation of membership pins.

The North Woods chapter had nine active members prior to Monday's inductions. New members are juniors Erik Aune, Taylor Jones, and Jake Panichi and sophomores Cooper Antikainen, Kohen Briggs, Kaden Ratai, Karan Scofield, Elias Smith, Steven Sopoci and Skyler Yernatich.

NHS members are eligible to compete for college scholarships and can take advantage of special college- and career-planning tools.



North Woods National Honor Society inductees at the ceremony on Monday are, front row, from left, Cooper Antikainen, Karah Scofield, Taylor Jones and Skyler Yernatich, and back row, Kohen Briggs, Steven Sopoci, Eli Smith, Jake Panichi, and Erik Aune. Not in attendance was fellow inductee Kaden Ratai.

photo by D.Colburn

Timber Days gets 'yellow light' from council

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- People still experiencing withdrawal symptoms from the cancellation of regional summer festivals last year in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic should be heartened by action taken last Thursday at the Cook City Council meeting.

Council members gave the Timber Days organizing committee a unanimous thumbs-up to "proceed with caution" with planning for a somewhat scaled-down version of the three-day festival to be held, COVID-permitting, June 11, 12, and 13.

Organizing committee chairman Steve Kajala described initial plans

for the festival.

"We are looking to hold a bare bones version of the regular Timber Days, but bringing in most of everything we can," Kajala said.

Operating under the assumption that some or all COVID safety and prevention protocols will still be in place, the committee has pared away activities that would be difficult or impossible to do. "The bounce house is not going to work," Kajala said. "Kids games where people are touching things, that's not going to work. Baseball, obviously, is out."

A beer garden also would not be possible, Kajala said.

In addition to asking the council's permission to utilize the downtown

park and Front Street, Kajala said the committee wants to incorporate the new Veterans Park by the river on the north end of downtown.

"The fence is not going to be in and probably not the monument and other stuff, but we'll have some of the tables and fixtures there," Kajala said. "It would be good to bring people down there so people know what's going on."

The committee is also looking at options for a virtual event, perhaps a virtual escape room, that will engage people in Timber Days who may be uncomfortable participating in Timber Days in person, Kajala said. Possibilities for streaming video of some of the activities is also being ex-

plored.

Without a crystal ball, there's no way of knowing if yet another big spike in COVID-19 would cause Timber Days to be canceled again, but for now the committee is planning with the hope they can pull it off.

"The big risk is if we're two weeks away and we've laid out a lot of money ahead of time which wouldn't be refundable at that point," Kajala said. "When we canceled last year it was at the beginning of April, so the only money we had laid out was for the gambling permit and fireworks, and the fireworks folks allowed us to postpone to this year."

Council members approved use of the spaces Kajala requested, and



Carrolle Wood rides in a past Timber Days parade. Organizers are planning for this year's festival after last year's was canceled.

file photo

city administrator Theresa Martinson also said that she would temporarily block out reservations

for the community center for those dates in case the committee came up with an idea that could use it.

Arts group to reboot photo contest fundraiser

COOK- After a forced year's absence due to coronavirus, Northwoods Friends of the Arts is back with its popular photo contest fundraiser, with a number of new wrinkles sure to resonate with photographers and patrons.

"Finding Light!" is this year's theme. What makes you happy? What gives you hope? What activities give you joy? Capture them in a photo.

Plan, create, select and enter your photos into NWFA's contest from now until May 1.

There are new photo entrance sizes and photo

evaluation rules this year.

Photos may be submitted in three sizes - 5x7, 8x10 and 8x12. Each photo will be placed in white mat sets so all will be uniform in appearance. Please mark the tops of your photos so that they may be displayed properly.

Because this is a fundraiser, there is an entry fee of \$10 per picture. Students 18 and younger may enter up to three photos free of charge.

Photographers are encouraged to submit a short description, written thoughts, or a poetic verse with each photo.

These will be displayed with the photo during the exhibit. It is optional and interesting!

The exhibit will begin on May 6 and run through May 29, again highlighting some changes.

Contestants may sell their photos, with a portion of each sale going to NWFA to support fundraising. Prices are: 5x7 prints, \$15 (artist receives \$10); and 8x10 and 8x12 prints, \$25 (artist receives \$15). Sold photos must remain on exhibit for the duration of the show, which ends May 29.

This year's contest

winners will be determined by the "People's Choice", by those folks visiting the gallery and voting during the exhibit. The most favored winning photo will be awarded \$100 and the runner-up \$50. There will be celebrating but there will be no reception.

Entrants must pick up their photos by 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 29.

Entry forms may be picked up at the NWFA gallery or downloaded on NWFA's website: nw-famn.org.

Participants are asked to either mail their entries to NWFA, PO Box 44,

Cook, MN 55723, or drop them off at the NWFA Gallery on Thursdays or Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the gallery's open hours.

For ten years, NWFA has been celebrating all arts and artists in the region of Cook. Annually, there is a member show, a Spring Art Expo, Summer Art Classes and a photo contest. In the Fall of 2020 and the Winter of 2021, artist volunteers have kept the art gallery open (210 S River St.), and created do it yourself art in the newspaper and in restaurants with doo-

ding placemats. During 2021, plans are going forward again for future art, writing and music classes and concerts. Contact NWFA by email at nw-famn.org@gmail.com, visit the website at NW-FAMN.ORG or Facebook.

READERS AND RAPPERS

Book club to meet online on Feb. 9

COOK-- Readers and Rappers, a Cook-area book club, will have their next meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 1 p.m.

The book to be discussed is 'Rodham' by Curtis Sittenfeld, a 'what-if' novel that reimagines the life of Hillary Rodham without Bill Clinton. Jane Kujala will be the moder-

ator.

The Zoom link will be sent to each member's email prior to the meeting. Questions concerning the link should be directed to Shawna Kishel at 218-666-5096.

March's book selection has been changed to 'The Dutch House' by Ann Patchett.

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
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Orr Canister Site 4038 Hwy 53 Winter Hours Tue, Thu: 9am-noon Sat: 8am-noon	Portage Canister Site 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Winter Hours Tue, Sat: 1pm-4:30pm	County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77 Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm
Cook Transfer Station 2134 S. Beatty Rd. Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm	Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm	St. Louis County Environmental Services Department 1-800-450-9278 Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle
Household Hazardous Waste Facilities 5345 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Tue, Sat: 8am-1pm		3994 Landfill Rd, Hibbing Sat: 8am-1pm

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CITY OF TOWER

Tower council rejects move to suspend on-call police coverage

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER— The city council here, at a special meeting on Monday, rejected on a two-two vote a move by Breitung Township to suspend on-call police coverage for the months from February through April— but it's unclear if the decision will ultimately matter.

Under the township's police contract with the city, Breitung retains the right to manage personnel hours for the township's officers. The town board greenlighted the staffing reduction at their own board meeting last week but did so after hearing

from Tower Mayor Orlyn Kringstad that he was approving the change on behalf of the city via executive order. He acknowledged at Monday's special meeting that he lacked the authority to make such a decision on behalf of the council.

"They could do it themselves under the contract," noted Kringstad, but said township officials preferred to act with consensus from the city. The township eliminated on-call service during the same three months last year, as a cost-saving move, which saved both the city and township about \$500 a month each. St. Louis County Sheriff's

Office deputies responded during periods when no Breitung police officer was on duty. The city council approved the township's staffing reduction at that time with no controversy.

At least two councilors had concerns this time around. Councilors Joe Morin and Dave Setterberg both questioned the call volume during the period and wondered how many complaints went to the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office rather than the Breitung police during that same period last year.

"For \$500 a month, to have one real emergency response go unmet, would be tragic," said Morin. "I'm a big supporter of

having local law enforcement," he said.

Clerk-Treasurer Victoria Ranua said the township hadn't provided much information about the impact of last year's staffing adjustment, done during what is normally a slow period for the Breitung police.

"I don't know if we got any complaints," said Kringstad.

Setterberg seemed to question the purpose of Monday's special meeting, which Kringstad called for the sole purpose of addressing Breitung's request. "It's their call," Setterberg said. "I'll support them, but it doesn't really matter what we do and I don't

have any information on which to make a decision."

Morin agreed and when Ranua called the roll after Kringstad motioned to approve the township's action, he voted no. Councilor Kevin Norby voted to support the township, but when Setterberg joined Morin in opposition, the motion went down to defeat. Councilor Sheldon Majerle was not in attendance at the meeting.

The council could still reconsider the issue at their regular meeting, set for Monday, Feb. 8.

Missed deadline

The council's special meeting was the first consequence of the city's new schedule for council

agenda and packet preparation, which requires items for council meetings be provided to the clerk-treasurer at least seven business days ahead of the meeting. Breitung Board Chair Tim Tomsich had submitted his request to be on the city's Jan. 25 council meeting on Jan. 15, but that was one day late so his request would normally have gone to the council on Feb. 8.

Instead, Kringstad called the special meeting solely to address that issue, originally for Jan. 29. That was subsequently changed to Feb. 1 to meet posting requirements of the Open Meeting Law.

AWARDS...Continued from page 1

Summit took second place for the Lynn Smith Community Leadership Award, for their work on the planning and construction of the Ancient Cedars Trail in Tower. "An inspiring entry," wrote the judges. "Excellent community leadership— positive leadership— at

a time when communities everywhere needed positivity beyond the pandemic. Close to the winner."

Other *Timberjay* staff won individual awards as well.

Cook-Orr Editor David Colburn won first place for Social Issues

reporting for his story on how the COVID-19 pandemic affected Mother's Day.

Ely Editor Keith Vandervort and Jodi Summit took second place for their stories on the outdoor staging of the annual summer opera performed as part of the

Northern Lights Music Festival. Editor David Colburn took second place as Best Columnist.

HelMBERGER won third place awards for investigative reporting, for an analysis of the Tower Ambulance Service, and for Best Human Interest Feature for a story on an

Embarrass couple's interest in dragonflies.

Summit also won a third-place award for Best Sports Feature for her story on a local musher's involvement in a major motion picture.

"We're obviously very pleased again at the results of this year's contest,"

said *Timberjay* Publisher Marshall HelMBERGER. "As usual, we've won in a wide range of categories, reflecting the broad strength of our newspaper overall."

COOK...Continued from page 1

before green-lighting the project, a hurdle created by a conflict between state and federal broadband funding programs that threatens to compromise other area broadband projects as well.

Howard said that Paul Bunyan had to scale back the size of its original proposal because the area overlapped in places with census tracts covered by the federally-supported Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. In December, the Federal Communications Commission awarded Nevada-based LTD Broadband nearly \$312 million to develop broadband systems for tracts throughout Minnesota, including those bordering Cook.

Minnesota officials won't allow Border-to-Border funds to be used for locations in RDOF tracts in order to avoid duplication of funding and to develop services in other areas. Since LTD Broadband has RDOF funding for those tracts locked in, Paul Bunyan would have to foot the full bill for locations they originally anticipated would be covered by Border-to-Border funds. Therefore, Howard said, they had to drop some of the proposed service locations outside Cook city limits from the project. It's fortunate that the Cook project is still a potential go. When the state Office of Broadband Development in December required Paul Bunyan to remove RDOF areas from five other projects they submitted for Border-to-Border support, all of them became financially unfeasible to pursue.

Howard said he notified city officials of the changes on Tuesday and is awaiting a response indicating if the city still wants to move forward with a smaller project at the same \$8,000 commitment.

The system would provide first-time broadband capability to 57 customers and significantly upgraded broadband to 254 more locations, both residential and commercial. The vast majority of those locations are in Cook

proper but some locations outside city limits are still included in the proposal because Paul Bunyan determined keeping them while assuming all the costs for their development was economically viable.

Operating at ultra-high speeds of 1Gbps, the system will be almost nine times as fast as the highest currently advertised speed of 115 Mbps by troubled Frontier Communication, a wire-based DSL service with extremely limited access in Cook. Broadbandnow.com estimates that 70 percent of residential locations in Cook do not currently have access to high-speed broadband service.

The Cook award was among 39 announced on Thursday by Gov. Tim Walz and DEED Commissioner Steve Groves.

"The pandemic this past year has made it crystal clear that fast, reliable broadband access is critical for people living in Greater Minnesota for everything from education and health care to business operations and telecommuting," Walz said. "These grants continue this vitally important work toward our goal of ensuring that every Minnesotan has high-speed internet access by 2022."

However, 25 other proposed projects didn't get Border-to-Border funding, and along with the conflict with RDOF funding it's virtually assured that the state won't meet that goal.

Townships caught

With LTD Broadband bidding successfully for RDOF funding for rural census tracts throughout the North Country, the game has changed for rural townships that have been working with other internet providers to assess demand and hopefully bring high-speed broadband access to their residents.

LTD Broadband doesn't have exclusive development rights in those areas, a fact borne out by Paul Bunyan's proposed plan for limited service in tracts around

Cook. What they do have a lock on, however, is government funding to underwrite system development.

Howard told the Cook council last August that the reason Cook and surrounding rural areas didn't have widely available broadband was that companies couldn't afford to build those systems without government support. The Border-to-Border award makes the Cook project possible for Paul Bunyan; without it, there would be no project.

Greenwood Township has been working with CTC Internet on broadband possibilities, although getting residents to respond to a needs assessment survey has been challenging. Now that LTD Broadband has secured access to federal RDOF funds and no state money is available, the likelihood of CTC Internet making an enormous investment of its own cash in a broadband system for the township has evaporated.

That doesn't mean there won't be broadband access in rural townships down the road, since LTD Broadband has committed to build fiber optic systems in these tracts with RDOF support, but there's skepticism among many that LTD has the capability to fulfill its pledge.

LTD Broadband won \$1.32 billion nationally and \$312 million in Minnesota — the most of any one company in the country and the state. The money is doled out over 10 years, but projects are supposed to be built in six years.

LTD's CEO Corey Hauer said they will deliver gigabit service through fiber-optic internet.

Competitors in the business balked at the auction results because LTD Broadband is a relatively small company with expertise in fixed-wireless internet, where homes get service from a signal placed high on a structure, such as a silo. It can be cheaper to build than fiber, which requires a physical connection to houses, though state officials who

run the Minnesota grant program have avoided fixed wireless, arguing it is slower and less reliable than fiber.

Hauer says LTD Broadband has some experience in fiber and is ready to quickly expand and meet the challenge of providing gigabit service to a huge and disparate geographic area.

But competitors argue LTD can't pull off the gargantuan challenge and wonder if they will pass the next step in the application process, in which the feds will scrutinize their plans in greater detail. Winning bidders have to give the feds more information about their qualifications,

their funding and show a bank will issue them a letter of credit.

Given these concerns, a number of Minnesota broadband providers have lobbied DEED to lift the restrictions on Border-to-Border funding so that they could develop competing proposals for service in some of LTD's census tracts.

Vince Robinson, chairman of the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition, wrote to DEED saying the agency should award cash in areas that developers had originally asked for, regardless if they will be covered in the FCC initiative.

Robinson said DEED

has "thoroughly vetted" applicants and said the FCC isn't far enough along in their process to know what areas will be served by that program and at what internet speeds.

"We have shovel-ready projects and a brief construction season in Minnesota, and we cannot afford to wait to see the results of this uncertain process," Robinson said.

Thus far DEED has given no indication that a change in policy is forthcoming.

MinnPost contributed to this article.



NOTICE

Ely area food shelf

Wednesday, February 17

the Ely Area Food Shelf will be distributing food curbside from

11 AM-5 PM

at the FOOD SHELF located at 15 West Conan Street.
(Directions: Approach from West Pattison Street then watch for signs and follow the directions of volunteers directing traffic.)

Curbside pick-up will continue.

We will take your household info in one area, you will drive ahead to load your food.

Please wear a face mask if you have one.

We have plenty of food, so it is not necessary to line up early.

To avoid congestion arrive after 1 PM.

We will be delivering food to the apartments and townhouses Thursday, February 18.

Babbitt delivery in municipal parking lot

Saturday, February 13 from 10:30-11:30 AM.

Please call 218-235-8912 to reserve delivery or volunteer.

Thank You!



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Car stolen in Tower recovered unharmed

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Leaving unattended cars running in the cold of winter is a rather common occurrence in these parts; just check out the Zup's parking lot any day the temperature hovers below single digits.

But leaving your car to warm up a few minutes in your driveway can also be an invitation to someone to break the law.

"Leaving a car unlocked with the keys in

“It's just a bad idea to leave a car unlocked with the keys in it.

Dan Nylund, Breitung Police Chief

it leads to crimes of opportunity," said Breitung Police Chief Dan Nylund. "Though there isn't a state law that prohibits it."

Car thefts are an uncommon crime in Tower-Soudan, and Nylund couldn't remem-

ber any examples except for several years ago when a couple of vehicles were stolen from a hangar at the airport.

But on Tuesday, Jan. 26, John Zaitz started his car and left it to warm up for a few minutes in

the driveway of his son's house on North Second Street. When he went back outside to drive it home, it was gone. At first Zaitz thought maybe a friend who lived across the alley had played a joke on him and moved his 2008 Ford Escape. But soon he realized the car was actually gone, after following the tire tracks which swerved down the alley, almost hitting a utility pole, before heading towards Main Street.

After calling 911,

Zaitz was contacted by the Breitung Police, who noted they were attempting to locate someone who was intoxicated in that area and wondered if the two were somehow related. Attempts by area law enforcement to locate the car were initially unsuccessful, but the car was found abandoned the next day near a vacant home on the Vermilion Reservation, locked without the keys inside.

"The car was all in one piece," said Zaitz,

"and there was no damage except the missing set of car keys."

Breitung Police took fingerprints off the car, but Zaitz hadn't heard if the results were back yet.

For now, Zaitz said, he is keeping his car out of sight and off the road, worried that whoever stole the car may still have the keys and attempt to take it again. He said he is looking into having a new set of keys made if the missing keys are not recovered soon.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Iron Range Delegation reaches out to Biden administration

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Members of the Iron Range Delegation are reaching out to incoming Biden administration Cabinet nominees in hopes of having influence over decisions that could impact the northeastern Minnesota economy.

In a letter sent last week to U.S. Rep. Deb Haaland, Biden's pick for Interior Secretary, and Tom Vilsack, who has been tapped as Agriculture Secretary, Iron Range legisla-

tors are seeking to have input over natural resource decisions, particularly any mining or mineral exploration decisions that could impact the region. As Agriculture Secretary, Vilsack will oversee the U.S. Forest Service, which manages millions of acres of surface lands in parts of the region and has veto authority for mining projects on the Superior National Forest. As Interior Secretary, Haaland would oversee the Bureau of Land Management, which controls federal mineral rights in much of the country, including

northeastern Minnesota.

"The mining industry, in particular, has long served as the backbone of our economy, and it has significant potential to continue to bring incredible growth opportunities to our area in the future," wrote the eight lawmakers who signed the letter. "It also can support key priorities of the new administration, including transitioning to a greener economy, ensuring a robust domestic supply chain, and strengthening economic recovery through job creation—particularly among

local unions."

Members of the delegation include Sen. David Tomassoni, DFL-Chisholm, Sen. Tom Bakk I-Cook, Sen. Justin Eichorn, R-Grand Rapids, Rep. Rob Ecklund, DFL-International Falls, Rep. Julie Sandstede DFL-Hibbing, Rep. Dave Lislegard, DFL-Aurora, Rep. Dale Lueck, R-Aitkin, and Rep. Spencer Igo, R-Grand Rapids.

The letter marks a distinctly different approach from that taken recently by Eighth District Congressman

Pete Stauber, who circulated a letter to members of Congress that urged President Biden to withdraw his nomination of Haaland over her support for green energy investment and her opposition to sulfide mining on the edge of the Boundary Waters. Stauber's effort deeply upset tribal officials in the region, who were excited by the historic Cabinet nomination of Haaland. If confirmed, the New Mexico Congresswoman would be the first Native American to serve in a presidential Cabinet.

COVID-19 assistance fund fuels jobs growth for Ely economy

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – The Ely Economic Development Authority (EEDA) last week approved forgivable loans to four more local businesses to create at least five more jobs, fueling the economic outlook in the community in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. City council members,

acting as the EEDA, approved the loans that will be forgiven as long as the employees are paid at least \$15 per hour and stay on the companies' payrolls for at least two years.

The initiative, dubbed the City of Ely COVID Assistance Program, started late last year largely through a contribution of \$125,000 from the Department of

and Rehabilitation, with another \$30,000 contribution from the city of Ely. As many as 12 local jobs have been created through the funding program.

Previous loan applications resulted in seven such high-paying jobs being created. The latest round of applications resulted in two jobs created at Wintergreen Northern Wear and one job each at Treehouse

Broadband LLC, J&L Hardware and Burntside Electric, Inc.

EEDA members Paul Kess and Heidi Omerza, along with Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski and the city's economic advisor John Fedo, reviewed the latest applications and recommended the approval action at the Jan. 26 meeting.

The program has about

\$23,000 left to award to local businesses.

"We are accepting applications until it is gone," Langowski said. "If we get a backlog of applicants, I think we make a good case to ask for more funding."

Fedo noted that the successful Ely economic development program was recently highlighted in an IRRR newsletter. He also

highlighted the continuation of a business assistance program offered by St. Louis County, with funding through the federal CARES Act legislation.

Additional funding could be available to local businesses if the \$1.9 trillion American Relief Program legislation recently introduced by the Biden administration is enacted.

TOURISM

Ely Tourism Bureau seeks to foster aesthetic pride in community

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY - Ely has a brand-new look these days. The Ely Brand, a singular defined logo and design elements, is the culmination of two years of work by local creative professionals and reflects the community's

collaborative spirit.

"Ely, for the first time, proudly has a defined logo adopted by multiple leadership entities, and is one residents and visitors alike can't help but notice," said Ely Tourism Bureau Executive Director Cindy Smyka.

"The intent of the new

Ely Brand is to foster aesthetic pride and a spirit of development in Ely," she said. "The simultaneous adoption by Ely's leadership entities, including the city of Ely, Ely Chamber of Commerce and Ely Area Tourism Bureau, is more than a collaborative effort, it is an informed and impactful step into the future," she said.

"To create the new Ely Brand, local marketing and design specialists studied a variety of graphic representations and identified the elements that influence both individually and collectively," Smyka noted. This included representing the landscape's unique social, cultural, economic and natural attributes.

"The goal of the Ely Area Tourism Bureau or Visit Ely, MN is to be a creative force in Northeastern Minnesota that does not rest

on our laurels or singular assets. We strive to continually modernize marketing systems in place, based on consumer and stakeholder feedback, or from competition's advancement. We aren't changing the narrative, just how we share it," she said.

According to Smyka, the new Ely Brand has been "wildly well-received" by locals and visitors.

"This is largely because the Ely Brand is reminiscent of the past and applicable to today's modern needs in a diverse and highly competitive market. Through strategic use of marketing techniques, a meaningful and meticulously designed experience can be lived with each impression and attract visitors and residents for generations to come."

She continued, "Ely is strong and proud, rich in tradition and richer in the con-



viction of the people who love this place. Positioning local stakeholders at the heart of this project was the key to its success and guaranteed authenticity."

The Ely Tourism Bureau highlighted other new marketing projects:

"My Ely Story" is a new podcast featuring the unique and vibrant people who live, work, create, explore and play in Ely. As one local character who has traveled the world once said, "Ely has more stories per square inch than any other place I've been."


Ely's own Brett Ross hosts the program. "Over the last two decades as part of WELY Radio, I've been able to capture and share many of these stories," he said. "Now, with 'My Ely Story,' we'll share even

more of the history, culture, creative endeavors, entrepreneurship, wilderness adventures, and tales of resilience, struggle and survival that converge in Ely."

"What's Up Ely, MN" is a valuable visitor and local resource joining the ranks of the Ely Area Tourism Bureau's digital presence. This Facebook page is a trusted community-led treasure trove of Ely happenings updated in real time. "This site is filled with authentic and positive contributions by those, and for those, who can't get enough of life in Ely," Smyka said.

In March, VisitElyMN.com will get a facelift to better serve its role as the online home to all things Ely. Visit the Ely Adventure Blog, photo galleries, podcast series and more. "Check out our travel resources and recommendations on things to do and places to stay," she said.

For more information, go to www.visitelymn.org, #visitelymn, #myElyStory, and @visitelymn.



NOTICE

ely area food shelf

Mark your calendar!
Foodshelf Day is February 17
11 AM-5 PM

15 W Conan St. in Ely. Curbside only.
Approach from 2nd Ave West near
Carefree Living. No appointment necessary.
Did you know that income limits for food
eligibility have been raised due to COVID?

Weekly Income Guidelines	
Family Size: One.....	\$0 - \$798
Family Size: Two.....	\$0 - \$1,078
Family Size: Three.....	\$0 - \$1,358
Family Size: Four.....	\$0 - \$1,638
Family Size: Five.....	\$0 - \$1,918
Family Size: Six.....	\$0 - \$2,198
Family Size: Seven.....	\$0 - \$2,478
Family Size: Eight.....	\$0 - \$2,758

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FEBRUARY 4-28, 2021

Watch as the city of Ely is transformed into an outdoor art gallery by local artists and community members.

Virtual participation from any distance encouraged - options for the duration of the event on the [Ely ArtWalk Facebook page](#).



This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust.

More at ElyArtWalk.org.



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CITY OF ELY

Ely city council: No need to 'prove it first'

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

Adopts another resolution in support of sulfide mining

ELY – With little fanfare and no opposition, the City Council here this week adopted another resolution in support of sulfide mining in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness watershed.

In a unanimous vote, council members agreed to disregard proposals to “Prove it First,” as spelled out in recent federal and state legislation that would require scientific proof before any copper-nickel mining could be permitted in Minnesota without risking pollution to the nearby million-acre wilderness.

The resolution adopted by the council contends that the recent “Prove it First” legislation “would cast aside Minnesota’s exceptional environmental review and permitting process for determining the viability of mining operations,” and not take into account any previous mining operations that proved hazardous to existing watersheds.

A recently-introduced state bill would not ban sulfide mining operations such as the PolyMet and Twin Metals proposals, but would require companies to prove that a similar mine has operated elsewhere in the United States for at least 10 years, and has been closed for at least 10 years, without causing pollution.

The city council’s resolution maintains that Minnesota and the federal government have “the

Ballot set at six candidates for Ely mayor position

ELY – All six Ely mayoral candidates have been invited to participate in a candidate forum on Thursday, Feb. 18, beginning at 6 p.m.

Due to coronavirus concerns, the event will not be open to the public but will be broadcast live on Ely-TV, recorded for later viewing, and be streamed live on Facebook.

Persons wishing to submit questions for consideration should e-mail them by Friday, Feb. 12 to khv771@gmail.com. The event is co-sponsored by the Ely Branch of American Association of University Women and the Ely Rotary Club.

Ely resident Micca Leider, a first-time candidate for public office, will join four current city council members, Angela Campbell, Jerome Debeltz, Paul Kess and Heidi Omerza, and former Ely mayor Roger Skraba on a primary ballot for an election on Tuesday, April 13. The top two vote-getters will face off in a general election on Tuesday, Aug. 10.

Former mayor and current interim mayor Chuck Novak, who lost his bid for re-election in November, did not file to run for the position in the special election.

most comprehensive and transparent science-based environmental review and permitting process” in place.

The new resolution goes on to say that anti-mining legislators are practicing “environmental elitism” by exporting jobs and environmental responsibilities to foreign countries.

Council members apparently spoke for all their constituents and the entire community in their resolution. “Be it resolved, the City of Ely is in opposition to this unnecessary and mining industry-targeted (prove it first) legislation.”

Two officials with Twin Metals Minnesota, along with at least two mining advocates, attended the council meeting but did not speak to the issue.

Council member Angela Campbell made the motion for the council to adopt the resolution,

with support from council member Al Forsman. Campbell quoted a regional newspaper’s recent editorial in support of sulfide mining, “I say enough is enough. Let Twin Metals go forward.”

Council member Paul Kess noted that the form of the resolution parrots a similar action recently taken by the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools (RAMS). “This comes to us from them,” he said. “It is important to know that RAMS, like many organizations, has not supported mining directly, but instead supports the process. We want to support (mining) that is done safely. So far it has all worked out fairly well, and I hope we are getting there. It is always about the process and that’s what this motion is.”

Interim Mayor Chuck Novak pointed out that the Ely City Council has come

out in support of sulfide mining for the last couple of decades. “We have been in support of Twin Metals, PolyMet, taconite mining, Enbridge’s Line 3, and this membership has always voted unanimously in its support. We have always said that (mining) has to be environmentally safe, and the attacks that are coming to it are a lot of hooey. I will stand tall with the process,” he said.

Legal newspaper

City property owners can expect to pay more this year to support a substantial rate increase in the cost of legal publishing for the city of Ely.

With no competition for the lowest cost, the *Ely Echo* was selected by default as the city’s legal newspaper, despite submitting a quote that is in clear violation of a state law that limits rate increases to ten percent

per year for legal publishing.

According to the *Echo*’s bid, the newspaper will charge the city \$3.50 per column inch for print legals, an 80 percent increase over its rate of \$1.94 per inch charged in 2020. The newspaper indicates it will charge \$7 per column inch for display ads, also an 80 percent increase over 2020.

Minn. Stat. 331A.06, Subd. 2, states: “no newspaper may increase its rates for publication of public notices by more than ten percent per year, as compared to the maximum rate actually charged by the newspaper in the previous year for publication of public notices...”

In a cover letter to the city of Ely accompanying the bid, dated Jan. 27, 2021, *Echo* Publisher Nick Wognum said, “While our bid did increase from the previous year, we are still providing the city with a 72-percent discount off our normal legal rate. Wognum’s claim has no bearing on the applicability of state law to its bid.

“If the city of Ely actually pays these rates to the *Echo*, it will be in violation of state law,” said *Timberjay* Publisher Marshall Helmsberger.

The *Timberjay* began publishing a single, regional newspaper at the beginning of the year and eliminated the separate Ely, Cook and Tower editions. The *Timberjay* did not submit a legal

publishing bid to the city of Ely this year, in order to comply with Minn. Stat. 331A.04, which requires that a city use a newspaper with a local office of issue, if available.

Other business

In other business the city council took the following action:

► Approved allowing The Wolf, previously known as The Heck Epic bicycle tour, to spend the night at Semer’s Park on Friday, July 17.

► Agreed to send a letter to Midco Communications asking for a schedule and updates of cable service improvements and to include a list of grievances and complaints from customers concerning the increasing amount and length of service outages.

► Granted a request from the WolfTrack Classic to close the city’s recycling area on Sunday, Feb. 21 in order to conduct the event in a COVID-safe manner.

► Approved the low bid of \$11,900 from G-Men Environmental Services to demolish the structure at 274 N 5th Ave.

► Agreed to purchase a replacement HVAC remote-monitoring controller and updated software for City Hall and the Veterans Administration clinic at a cost of \$4,380.

► Allowed Police Chief Chad Houde to attend the 2021 Minnesota Executive Training Institute, Oct. 31-Nov. 4, in St. Cloud.

BAND...Continued from page 1

implementing programs and services came to an end as they used to be delivered to everyone in our communities and even our band members off the reservation.”

Chavers highlighted many of the challenges imposed by the pandemic, including concern for the tribe’s elders. She asked viewers to observe a moment of silence for band members who have died and those who have had to suffer through COVID-19 largely isolated and alone.

But Chavers also struck a tone of assertive encouragement.

“Native American people have always survived,” she said. “We are strong and resilient and have been for many, many years, hundreds of years. We will do everything possible to ensure that once we get more vaccine that all families and band members who want the vaccine will be able to get it. We must stay positive and help each other out and be patient and eventually hope that things will get back to a new normal, whatever that may be. It sure as heck will be better than what

we’re doing now.” Another theme running through her speech was a commitment to address longstanding issues of tribal government operations, acknowledging that there have been many shortcomings and criticisms from band members.

“We are more accountable and transparent than in the past – we’ve had the opportunity to do that through social media and upgrading technology,” Chavers said. “We have made the Bois Forte reservations stronger with our sovereignty in all areas of government, but as always, there’s still room to improve. One major change that we feel is needed, and this will be an ongoing change, is not quite visible yet to our band members. It is the need to change our old ways of conducting business when most things go the same way all the time and nothing changes, and

we become very complacent in our jobs. This is what is happening within the tribal government programs. We continue to have the same problems year after year after year with no resolve. We’re using band-aids rather than fixing the problem. We want to change that in the years to come. It’s going to take a step-by-step process and it may be slow, but we ask that you be patient.”

Chavers highlighted community meetings held to get input about C-Store operating problems and the tribe’s sex offender program and registry, saying she wants to gather still more input so that changes will be responsive to the needs and desires of the community.

Heightened public awareness of systemic racism in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and subsequent civil unrest was another

issue Chavers tackled.

“These events have brought (forward) the racial inequities that not only affect Black lives, but affect all lives, including tribal lives, Native lives. We know as a people that we are extremely underfunded in every aspect under our treaty agreements with the federal government. We (are) highest in the nation with health disparities, especially in our area – highest rates of diabetes, highest rates of cancer, highest rates of alcoholism, highest rates of incarcerated men and women in the state. We have the numbers and the facts, but we don’t have the funding. So, with that, we’re hoping that in 2021 it will be a better year for natives.”

Tribal council members also spoke,

and a new wrinkle this year was the inclusion of reports by tribal government department heads, something that stretched out the video presentation to two-and-a-half hours.

Chief Financial Officer Kim Greiner provided the greatest insight into the impact of COVID-19 on the tribe by going line-by-line through 44 separate grants, tax credits, forgivable loans, and philanthropic donations totaling \$17.9 million the band had received and the many diverse ways in which it was spent. She also highlighted numerous other activities and volunteer efforts that don’t show up on a financial ledger.

Noticeable by its absence was any information about the financial toll the COVID closures and restrictions have had on

the financial performance of Fortune Bay Resort Casino. While landmark dates and activities were noted, no accompanying data was given about their monetary impacts.

Chavers concluded her address with a call for unity in the face of continued adversity.

“Our state of the band is strong,” she declared. “We are going to be strong, we’re resilient. We will get through this together. But we must do it all together.”

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VACCINES...Continued from page 1

patients to receive a jab in the arm at the vaccine clinic held in the VCC gymnasium. Pipho, who doesn't drive, was accompanied by his caretaker, Linda Nelson.

"I've been waiting a long time for this day," Pipho said. "I am so happy to be here to be able to finally get my shot in the arm." He received the Pfizer vaccine and will return to VCC in several weeks to receive the second dose.

Pipho entered the makeshift clinic and was subjected to a comprehensive screening process. His temperature was taken and, with Nelson's help, he completed a medical condition questionnaire.

A series of vaccine stations were set up in the gymnasium to adhere to social distancing protocols.

"I never felt a thing," Pipho said following the jab in the arm containing the coveted vaccine. "I get flu shots every year and they never bother me. I am so glad to get this shot today."

All who received vaccine were monitored for allergic reactions with members of the Ely Area Ambulance Service standing by.

For now, EBCH is taking COVID-19 vaccine requests from those who are 65 and older, people with underlying health conditions that put them at a higher risk, and essential workers from a variety of



Volunteers in the Ely community, including Vermilion Community College law enforcement students, helped with the COVID-19 vaccine clinic at the VCC gymnasium. photos by K. Vandervort

health and public service roles.

"We contacted those community members in the order they were listed on our website's sign-up system," said Jodi Martin, EBCH marketing and communication team leader.

There are nearly 800 people signed-up on the EBCH waitlist.

"If you didn't get called this time, please know that our goal is to do our best to ensure that anyone in our service area who wants a COVID-19 vaccination gets one," she said.

The COVID-19 vaccination clinic was by appointment only and

no one was allowed in without an appointment, to comply with the Minnesota Department of Health's gathering restrictions and social distancing recommendations.

Dr. Julie Houle, a physician who works at the Ely Veterans Administration health clinic, volunteered to help at the vaccine clinic.

"We are part of a miracle here today," she said, as she prepared to administer vaccines. "I feel very honored to be able to serve these pioneers in our community today."

She admitted she was "a bit tearful" as she entered the clinic at VCC.

"This is just the first stage in fighting this virus," Houle said.

Chris Schneider, a pharmacist at EBCH, filled dozens of syringes from a group of vaccine vials.

"We have the Pfizer vaccine here and that means we will be repeating this process in about 21 days to administer the required second dose for these patients," he said.

Once more vaccine becomes available, EBCH will contact a second group of community members to receive the vaccine.

"We ask that the public be patient as we work through this process



Merlin Pipho of Ely, goes through a screening process prior to getting his first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine Saturday at Vermilion Community College.

and understand that we are a small healthcare system with limited staff resources," Martin said. "We will not be able to respond to calls inquiring about one's placement on the list. We encourage the public to take advantage of every opportunity they can to get a vaccination, including using the MyChart system if you are an Essentia Health patient or registering for the MDH pilot site in Mt. Iron."

St. Louis County Public Health Director Amy Westbrook had unsolicited high praise for EBCH and the Ely community during a

Tuesday interview with the Timberjay.

"I want to say that Ely-Bloomenson and the Ely community have just really come together," Westbrook said. "Ely-Bloomenson has been a great partner in getting vaccine out into the community and out into congregate care settings. They have run very smooth operations and they know how to run vaccination clinics. They're doing a great job. I really want to commend Ely as a community and especially Ely-Bloomenson hospital."

STATE...Continued from page 1

Ehresmann on Tuesday. "It's heartbreaking that we don't have enough vaccines right now and that we don't have vaccines for everyone. We absolutely just do not have enough vaccine available."

However, a number of factors could reduce Ehresmann's time estimate.

A one-dose vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson could be approved by the Food and Drug Administration within the next few weeks, increasing availability beyond the two-dose Pfizer and Moderna vaccines currently being distributed. Johnson & Johnson's experience with other vaccines gives them the capability of ramping up production quickly, health officials say, and some have termed the one-shot vaccine a "game changer."

New goals issued by Gov. Tim Walz to have 90 percent of vaccines administered within 72 hours of receipt by providers has contributed to the increase in daily vaccination rates and facilitated the transfer of unadministered doses from the federal Pharmacy Provider Program to other providers to use.

But while Walz also announced on Monday that three large-scale permanent state community sites would open this week in Duluth and Minneapolis and another next week in southern Minnesota, neither Ehresmann or Health Commissioner Jan

Malcolm knew exactly when those sites would open or other operational details when questioned by reporters at Tuesday's press conference.

St. Louis County Public Health Director Amy Westbrook also had scant information about the Duluth clinic, as it will be operated by the state and not directly connected to her department. Westbrook said her staff is ready to assist with the clinic if asked.

The state health department has also launched a new vaccination locator map on its website featuring more than 100 community-based providers who received additional vaccine doses for seniors this week. While a press release from Walz said people should use the map to locate providers and contact them with questions, most already have waiting lists and established protocols for targeting high-risk seniors, and some are concentrating their efforts on patients 75 and older. The map will be updated weekly as more providers are added to the distribution list.

Meanwhile, online and call-in registrations for vaccination appointments for seniors at nine pilot clinics, including Mt. Iron, have been suspended, as more than 220,000 Minnesotans are now in the pool for random chances to get appointments for 6,000 doses administered weekly at those sites. Those

who have received their first vaccine shot at those sites already have second appointments scheduled and should keep them.

With rapidly changing circumstances and multiple groups of providers responsible for different populations, clear communication and coordination can be challenging, Westbrook said.

"There are multiple systems getting vaccine out so it is a coordination not only of resources but communication," she said. "I'm feeling like we as a public health system are getting enough information but it's changing so quickly it's taking time to get that communication out."

Scam warnings

Ehresmann took time on Tuesday to caution people to be wary of scammers who are trying to turn vaccine shortages to their advantage.

Given overwhelming demand for the vaccine, Ehresman warned about scams that are cropping up related to vaccine availability.

"We've had situations where someone appears to be calling from the health department where it's not accurate," she said. "We

do not want credit card or bank accounts, Social Security numbers, any of those things. You want to be on a list with your provider. You want to make sure that you've made it known that you're interested in being vaccinated, but that should never involve giving any of that private information out."

County info

Westbrook said that changing the eligibility criteria for vaccines resulted in about 40,000 seniors and roughly 5,000 educators and childcare providers being added to the groups being targeted, and she echoed Ehresmann's remarks about scarcity of vaccine doses.

"I really want to stress that we don't have enough vaccine for everybody who wants it right now," she said. "We've opened priority groups without increasing supply to meet demand. We're trying to be more efficient and effective at targeting vaccine and making sure it's getting out as quickly as possible."

Westbrook is encouraged that the various measures used to track the severity of the pandemic have declined to levels not seen since early

October, before the massive November-December spike, and noted a significant difference.

"That's when we were seeing our trends going up," she said. "Now we're seeing our trends go down. It feels like we're sitting in a better position, and I don't want to imply we're not in a good position, but people need to still be vigilant."

Westbrook expressed concern about the U.K.

and Brazilian coronavirus variants that have been discovered in Minnesota and the higher transmission rates associated with them.

"We as a community should assume that different variants are circulating in our community, and the recommendations remain the same for prevention."

New cases remained low across the North Country with only six reported last week.

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BOYS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies wallop Bigfork

Grizzlies rack up more than 100 points in blowout over Huskies

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP – By halftime of the Grizzlies boys home basketball game against Bigfork on Friday, North Woods fans had just

Left: The Grizzlies' Darius Goggleye goes up for jump shot under heavy pressure from a Bigfork defender.

photo by D. Colburn

three questions deserving of serious consideration: when would the Grizzlies hit 100 points, who would score the century bucket, and what would the final scoring margin be?

Comfortably in control 58-32 at the break, the Grizzlies opened the second half with a devastating 26-2 haymaker, hit the century mark on a Sean Morrison basket with 4:13 left on a running clock, and closed out

with a dominating 108-57 win.

Head Coach Will Kleppe was satisfied with the outcome, but he wasn't happy at all when Bigfork's Bradley Haley scored the Huskies' first basket on a wide-open shot underneath the basket on a play the Grizzlies had practiced preventing. Kleppe immediately called time out.

"We spent a lot of practice time covering what

they're going to do offensively and on that possession, we were confused and gave up a flex cut under the basket," Kleppe said. "That's something we had worked very hard on the previous two practices. It didn't transfer to the first possession of the game, that was a lot of frustration."

Kleppe said his team has shown a tendency toward

See **NW BOYS...**pg. 2B



NORDIC SKIING

Johnston, Devine top field

Ely girls take first, boys second in home skiathlon

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY— Senior Jasper Johnston and sophomore Zoe Devine each blew away their respective competition during the Ely Skiathlon, held last Thursday at Hidden Valley.

Devine had strong support from teammates Phoebe Helm, Ava Skustad, and Julia Schwinghamer as the girls racked up 391 points to take first in the team competition against Carlton-Esko-Cromwell and Two Harbors. C-E-C was second with 381 points.

The boys were edged by C-E-C, 386-384.

Johnston, who had missed some earlier meets as he competed in Midwest regional competition, was in usual form during the com-

See **SKIERS...**pg. 2B



Top: The Wolves' Gracie Pointer powers up a hill during competition at Hidden Valley last Thursday.

Above: Ely's Jasper Johnston led the pack by a wide margin.
photos by Liz Anderson

BOYS BASKETBALL

T-Wolves fall to Deer River, Eveleth-Gilbert

by JORDAN PRICE
Contributing Writer

ELY- The Timberwolves were outsized as they fell to Deer River 59-73 on Tuesday night.

Ely played well in stretches but a letdown late in the first half allowed the Warriors to take a 14-point lead into the break. Deer River extended that lead to as much as 25 points in the second half before a late Ely surge trimmed the final to

a respectable 13-point gap.

"Deer River was just too big and athletic for us tonight. We played well at times, but not good enough to get it done," said Head Coach Tom McDonald.

Joey Bianco scored 20 points, adding nine rebounds and five assists for Ely. Will Davies had 18 points and five rebounds, while Brock Latourell added 11 points.

In action last Friday, the Wolves lost a heartbreaker in Eveleth as the

Golden Bears slipped past them, 72-70 in a fast-paced match-up that marred Ely's previously undefeated record.

Ely had a comfortable 12-point lead midway through the first half, but the Golden Bears clawed back and cut it to one before heading to the locker room. The two teams traded leads throughout the second half, turning the contest into a real

See **WOLVES...**pg. 2B

GIRLS BASKETBALL



Two tough losses for young Wolves

by JORDAN PRICE
Contributing Writer

ELY- The Rangers showed no mercy for the host Timberwolves here on Monday night, as they handed Ely a good old-fashioned shellacking, 90-27.

The Wolves struggled to secure the ball, allowing Mt. Iron-Buhl to score almost at will. The Rangers forced Ely into 34 turnovers on the night in a highly physical contest.

"We hope to be able to play like that as we progress and get better," said Head Coach Max

Above: Ely's Sarah Visser tries to work around a MI-B defender.

photo by J. Greeney

Gantt.

Bright spots were few for Ely, but Grace Latourell had a hot hand from beyond the arc, connecting on three treys on her way to a team-leading 12 points. Rachel Coughlin added eight points and Sarah Visser added five.

"Our goal is to challenge Mt. Iron-Buhl in the future," said Gantt. "It's a big-goal but one

See **GIRLS...**pg. 2B

Grizzlies split on the road

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- It was a mixed bag for the North Woods girls hoops team that ended on a positive note as they rebounded from a 58-35 loss to Deer River on Thursday to grab their first road win, 53-33, against Carlton.

The trip to Deer River was a trip into the unexpected, according to Grizzlies Head Coach Liz Cheney.

"I felt like we were prepared for Deer River and it was not what I expected it to be," Cheney said. "They have a pretty versatile team. Their post is a great athlete who plays inside and outside. And they were a really aggressive, tough defensive team."

The Grizzlies had trouble operating against Deer River's pressure defense, although Hannah Kinsey found her own solution inside by hitting on mid-range jumpers and put-backs on offensive rebounds to score a season-high 20 points.

"After playing Deer River it became really clear we needed more focus and work on getting our offense set up," Cheney said. "You can't set up an offense when you're at the half court line. Our defense is really coming around and our offense was struggling."

Carlton was 3-1 entering Monday's contest with a 38-point win over Silver Bay to

See **NW GIRLS...**pg. 2B

HOCKEY

Ely hockey squad facing COVID challenges

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – The Ely hockey team's COVID-abbreviated schedule was dealt another blow last weekend with the cancellation of two games, home and away contests with North Shore.

This marks the first but likely not the only winter sports contests for the Timberwolves to reschedule or drop entirely, as area school districts transition in and out of distance-learning and team quarantine protocols take effect as the coronavirus pandemic continues across the state.

The two-game series with North Shore varsity and junior varsity teams was called off late last week. The Timberwolves' home game against North Shore's junior varsity team last Friday was canceled, and the varsity game scheduled for Feb. 2 was rescheduled to Feb. 22, with the location to be determined, according to ISD 696 Athletic Director Tom Coombe.

"The North Shore Hockey team was (COVID) quarantined until Wednesday, Feb. 3," he

said.

Coombe's efforts to find another team for Ely to play at home last Friday were unsuccessful. "We had ice time and officials lined up so if there was a chance to play another team, we wanted to take advantage of the opportunity," he said.

Health experts have noted that ice hockey has a relatively higher incidence of COVID-19 cases when compared to other youth team sports.

When the Timberwolves did hit the ice, they traveled to Greenway on Tuesday, Jan. 26 and lost 10-0.

The Raiders took a 6-0 lead in the first period of that contest and scored two more goals in each of the remaining periods to give Ely their second loss of the season. Greenway had 74 shots on goal. Ely took six shots to the net, one each by Drew Marlot and Brady Eaton, and two each by Wes Sandy and Kole Macho.

Each team had six penalty minutes on three infractions. Ely was zero-for-three on power plays. Greenway scored two of three times with the one-player advantage.

Ely's schedule includes a home game on Saturday, Feb. 6, against Moose Lake. The puck drops at 2 p.m. The Timberwolves travel to Duluth Marshall on Tuesday, Feb. 9.

Mask exemptions

ISD 696 Superintendent Erik Erie discussed the face mask mandate for state school athletes at the weekly Ely Safe School Advisory Council meeting last Thursday.

The Minnesota State High School League is abiding by the mandate of the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) that requires all persons in youth and adult sports to wear a mask/face covering at all times, including practices, games or competitions.

Mask exemptions are granted for people who have medical or other health conditions, and disabilities or mental health, developmental, or behavioral needs that make it difficult to tolerate wearing a mask/face covering.

Those individuals seeking a mask/face covering exemption must obtain a written medical

exemption from a licensed medical professional provided to a school administrator. Activities administrators are required to keep mask exemption documentation on file at the school. Coaches must have a list of student-athletes who have exemptions.

Erie questioned if school teams should be participating in contests if some opposing team members were not wearing protective face masks.

Coombe noted that recent contests have taken place between the Timberwolves and Bigfork and Littlefork/Big Falls basketball teams.

"Bigfork had a kid who wasn't wearing a mask when they played here a couple of weeks ago, and it is my understanding that Littlefork/Big Falls teams have several exempt players, at least five or six, in their girls basketball program," he said. "It is just another piece of the puzzle that we are dealing with."

Erie asked, "It is fine that they have the exemptions, but do we make a choice, if they are not going to be wearing masks,

to play that team? Do we even have the choice to do that?"

Coombe said a school could opt out of a game.

"A school could pull out. The bottom line is, the team is within the rules with those exemptions. It would be up to the school or an individual if they wish to participate or not."

Coombe stressed that there needs to be a better system of notification by schools to their opponents if they have players with the mask mandate exemption.

"Bigfork just showed up here and said they had a player with an exemption," he said. "Now that we are into the season a bit, more people are aware of it."

He asked for more common sense by all schools to notify their opponents, in advance, of any players with the mask exemptions.

Coombe was not aware of any Ely athletes with a current physician-approved mask exemption.

WOLVES...Continued from page 1B

barnburner down the stretch.

"We had a hard time controlling their 6'6" center. We battled him, but just struggled to match up with him," McDonald said.

The Timberwolves tied up the game with eight seconds left on the clock with a three-point basket by Emmett Faltesek. The Golden Bears drove down the floor and airballed a three-point attempt, but it went right into another player's hands who put it in as the buzzer sounded.

Ely could have avoided the late disappointment as they struggled from the free-throw line all night, connecting on just 13 of 34 attempts.

"Our inability to hit free throws the entire game really

hurt us. It was a tough loss, but we fought hard," said McDonald.

Will Davies had a stellar night, leading the Wolves with 27 points and five steals. Joey Bianco, another force for Ely, had a well-rounded game ending with 18 points, nine assists, and seven rebounds. Harry Simons had ten points and five rebounds.

The Timberwolves will take on Mesabi East at home on Friday, Feb. 5 at 7:15 pm.

Right: Ely's Joey Bianco works the ball forward as he's double-teamed by Deer River defenders.

photo by J. Greeney



GIRLS BASKETBALL

Nighthawks notch a win over Mariners

BABBITT—The Nighthawks picked up their first win of the season here on Monday as they downed Silver Bay in a defensive struggle, 27-22.

Maizy Sunblad and Natalie Nelmark combined for 18 points to provide just enough offensive punch to put Northeast Range over the top. Sunblad has been hot from three-point range, and she added two from beyond the arc on Monday on her way to ten points for the match.

Other Northeast Range scorers included Else Bee, with four, Willa Koivisto with three, and Alexia Lightfeather with two.

NW BOYS...Continued from page 1B

slow starts this season and that he and his staff are still working to address that if they're going to win the tougher games ahead.

The Grizzlies got the message, bolting to an 18-4 lead that included several transition baskets initiated by their defense. North Woods defenders created 22 turnovers that led to 39 points in the game.

North Woods shot a scalding 61 percent from the field, and no one had a hotter hand than Darius Goggeley in the waning minutes of the first half. With about three minutes

remaining, Goggeley went on a 10-point spree that started with the senior forward leading the Grizzlies' fast break. Maneuvering within ten feet of the hoop, Goggeley added four more buckets without a miss before the buzzer. His 17 points for the game were second only to T.J. Chiabotti's 21.

"It was a nice game by Darius," Kleppe said. "When he gets the ball, we'll go to work. We have confidence in him that when he gets a ball in his hands – he's got moves, he's smooth, he's a good

finisher, you know, we want him to take advantage of that. And a big thing with Darius is that he runs the floor well."

While Kleppe has routinely used all ten varsity players this season, the bench crew was really in the mix this time, with every player logging at least 10 minutes of play. Davis Kleppe, Eric Aune, and Johan Burnett made their cases for more playing time on the defensive side of the ball.

"Some of our best defensive efforts came off the bench," Kleppe

said. "Everybody wants minutes, and some of those guys are really taking it to heart that if this is going to be their opportunity to prove themselves to get those minutes, they're doing it by being more aggressive defensively."

Brenden Chiabotti and Jared Chiabotti joined the other Grizzlies scoring in double digits with 14 and 12, respectively. No North Woods player scored fewer than six points.

Kleppe won't deny that he wants to score as many points as they can, but some upcoming

opponents have the talent necessary to slow down the running game, limit turnovers, and score with the Grizzlies.

Points are good, but defense appears critical for this team's overall success.

"We're not going to score 100 every game, that's for sure," Kleppe said. "If the flow of the game determines that we're only going to score 60, well, we'd better hold the other team to 50. That's where that whole defensive mindset comes back in. There are some great teams out there, there's

some great teams in this section. The whole focus now is that we have to take some points off of our defensive average. Good defense is a mindset. We're dedicating this whole week of practice just to getting that mindset right. We're going to see where we are in a couple of weeks with this and if the boys take it to heart or not."

The Grizzlies play at home on Friday against Littlefork-Big Falls before hitting the road for a Tuesday game at International Falls.

NW GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

their credit. North Woods kept the Bulldogs 22 points under their season scoring average in the Grizzlies 20-point win. The Grizzlies played tight man-to-man coverage that they extended full court for portions of the game.

"We never underes-

timated Carlton, but I was really proud of the girls," Cheney said. "Defensively the girls played a phenomenal game which gave them opportunities to have the ball more than they have in the last three games."

The Grizzlies cashed

in those opportunities for 55 points, with Madi Dantes and Talise Goodsky sharing scoring honors with 14 each. Both players were part of Cheney's adjustments after the Deer River game, with Goodsky getting a starting nod and Dantes taking on

primary responsibility at point guard.

"Madi's an aggressive offensive player, which puts her in that great position to be the offensive leader," Cheney said. "We came out strong right off the bat and had a 7-0 lead right away."

When Carlton got close, Cheney called a time out to make some adjustments and the team responded by going up 24-17 at the half. A halftime chat, intended to prevent another second-half lapse that the young Grizzlies have

been prone to, worked to perfection.

"Seeing how we came together and played last night, I'm really anxious to see if the fruit of our practice continues," she said.

North Woods will hit the hardwood again on Tuesday, Feb. 9 when they

SKIERS...Continued from page 1B

bined freestyle and classic competition in Ely on Jan. 28, finishing the course in just 20:15, a full minute and 36 seconds ahead of the second-place finisher, Benjamin Bauer, of C-E-C. Ely junior Gabe Pointer finished in 21:57, just six

seconds behind Bauer and nearly two minutes ahead of the fourth-place finisher.

Juniors Jon Hakala and Micah Larson finished in sixth and tenth respectively, but sheer numbers helped C-E-C hold the edge in the team

competition.

For the girls, Devine's finish of 25:31 topped her field by the exact same one minute and 36 seconds as Johnston. Halle Zuck, of C-E-C finished second, while Ely sophomore Phoebe Helms

came in at third with a time of 27:34. Skustad, a freshman, took fourth with a time of 28:59 and Schwingamer, a senior, finished in fifth with a time of 29:07. Sophomore Sydney Duncan, junior Gracie Pointer, and fresh-

man Claire Blauch took tenth, eleventh, and twelfth respectively.

The Wolves Nordic skiers were set to compete again on Thursday, at Giants Ridge, against Duluth Denfeld and Mesabi East in classic

competition. They'll travel to Duluth next Thursday, Feb. 11, for a skate competition against Duluth East and C-E-C. Both events get underway at 11 a.m.

GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

that is out there."

Monday's loss came on the heels of last Thursday's disappointing outcome in Eveleth. That

contest was closer and much more competitive, but the Wolves still lost, 58-44. Turnovers again proved costly for Ely,

although they seemed to improve their play in the second half.

"We played well in spurts, but their size was

tough for us," said Gantt.

Eveleth-Gilbert's Elli Jankila was unstoppable, scoring 24 points. Latourell was the leading scorer

for the Timberwolves with 13 points, while Taylor Gibney and Katrina Seliskar each added six points. Rachel Coughlin

added nine rebounds.

ECONOMY

Labor pool and job vacancies mismatched in rural areas

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Everyone knows of the devastating toll the coronavirus pandemic has taken on the state's economy overall but sorting out the ways in which COVID-19 has affected unemployment, the labor pool, and job vacancies in rural Minnesota is a more nuanced endeavor with some results that may be surprising.

Center for Rural Policy and Development Research Associate Kelly Asche shared his findings last month in a teleconference, and one issue at this point in the pandemic is atypical: unemployment is falling, but it's not because people are getting new jobs.

"People are dropping out of the labor force and that's a very unique trend," Asche said. "Even though unemployment is going down, that doesn't mean people found employment. It might be that people just said 'You know what, I give up, I'm out, I'm not gonna try.'"

COVID-19 accelerates previously existing challenges as people drop out of the labor market

Many people dropping out of the labor market have done so because of family needs, such as needing to stay home with children who are distance learning, Asche said. In interviews of people in northeast Minnesota, he discovered that some of those in an aging workforce had a different reason. Faced with a job loss as they neared retirement age, dealing with the difficulties of getting hired at an advanced age, and fearing the possibility of greater possibilities to COVID in a work environment, many chose to retire early.

And so, somewhat unexpectedly, because people who aren't looking for work aren't counted in unemployment calculations, there's scant difference between the percentage unemployed now and the percentage at the end of 2019.

"It's not as severe as I thought I would see," Asche said.

Asche broke down the shrinking labor pool numbers by region, and the picture wasn't

pretty for employers in this region looking for new hires.

"The northeast is the worst," Asche said. "They have about 4.6 percent less people participating in the workforce in November 2020 than they did in January 2020. That's a significant loss of people participating that left the labor force."

The labor shortage shows up when you take a look at job vacancy rates. Although there has been some loss of jobs, there is still a relative abundance of openings.

"Anything, honestly, over three percent (of job vacancies) means there's a pretty significant need for workers, and you can see all of our regions are way above three percent," Asche said. "Before the pandemic, the job vacancy rate in northeast Minnesota was 5.6 percent. From September through November of 2020, the rate of vacant jobs dropped to 3.1 percent, but was still historically high, and therefore doesn't indicate any

less pressure to find workers."

The problem, that has existed in the past, will exist well into the future, and has been exacerbated by the pandemic, is a mismatch between the jobs people lost and jobs employers are trying to fill, Asche said.

Throughout the state, pandemic job losses have been highly concentrated in the services and hospitality industries, Asche said. This unemployed labor pool can't make an easy transition into the occupations and careers where employers are clamoring for employees.

The greatest need in northeast Minnesota is for healthcare practitioners and technicians, according to Asche. Food preparation and serving is the second-highest occupational need and a better match with the available pool, but healthcare support, office and administrative support, and sales and related occupations aren't.

Employment needs vary throughout rural Minnesota.

Occupations in production, transportation, computers and mathematics, and management jobs that made top-five lists in other regions didn't show up in northeast Minnesota's greatest needs.

"It becomes clear pretty quickly that there's not good alignment right now when we're looking at occupations," Asche said.

Rural Minnesota boasts some of the best wage increases in the state and employers use wages, and sometimes health insurance, to try to attract new employees from other areas, Asche said. However, long-term solutions to a long-term problem will need to include robust regional workforce development programs and improved access to training and education opportunities that will equip workers to compete for jobs outside of their former occupations, he said.

"Beekeeping and More" sponsored by Fond du Lac TCC

Virtual conference set for Saturday, Feb. 13; registration fee is only \$10

CLOQUET- Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, in partnership with the Northeast Minnesota Beekeepers Association, is hosting a virtual symposium called "Beekeeping and More!" on Saturday, Feb. 13, for anyone interested in learning about beekeeping as a hobby or as a commercial enterprise. This year's Virtual Symposium will open at 8:45 a.m. and classes run from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. Pre-registration is required as the Zoom links to the day's presentations will be emailed to registered participants.

The first Beekeeping and More workshop held in 2016 drew more than 150 beekeepers and the event has kept growing, making it one of the largest beekeeping workshops in Northern Minnesota. Session topics include equipment, general troubleshooting, beginning beekeeping, hive health, and bee behavior.

"This year we are very grateful to continue our Bee Symposium virtually," said Courtney Kowalczyk, Director of the

Environmental Institute at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College "With the support of world-renowned researchers such as Dr. Marla Spivak and Dr. Thomas Seeley, we will be able to offer a wonderful symposium that will share cutting edge research with our community."

Dr. Marla Spivak is a MacArthur Fellow and McKnight Distinguished Professor in Entomology at the University of Minnesota. She bred a line of honeybees, the Minnesota Hygienic line, and is now initiating a new breeding program to select bees that can defend themselves against diseases and parasitic mites. Dr. Spivak's current research includes studies of the benefits of plant resins (propolis) to honeybees, and the effects of agricultural landscapes and pesticides on bee health.

Dr. Thomas Seeley received his Ph.D. in 1978 from Harvard University, where he studied with Bert Hölldobler and Edward O. Wilson. He joined the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior at Cornell

University in 1986. In recognition of his scientific work, he has received the Alexander von Humboldt Distinguished U.S. Scientist Prize, been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, received a Gold Medal Book Award from Apimondia for The Wisdom of the Hive, and been elected a fellow of both the Animal Behavior Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His most enduring honor, though, is to have had a species of bee named after him: Neocorynurella seeleyi.

Joseph Coffey, member of the Northeastern Minnesota Beekeepers Association and owner of C & C Apiaries, will introduce people interested in beekeeping to the science and craft of beekeeping, how to get started, the history and language of beekeeping, and pests and pathogens.

Jessica Helgen from the University of Minnesota Bee Squad will talk about lessons learned from the hundreds of hives that they manage in the metro area. Jessica will share information on

colony health trends and give examples from their apiaries on the habits of healthy hives and varroa mite transmission.

The sixth annual "Beekeeping and More!" Symposium is presented by Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College through support from a USDA-NIFA grant and in partnership with the

Northeastern Minnesota Beekeepers Association. The workshop is part of Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College's Environmental Institute and Extension programs. Registration is \$10 for this year's symposium. Pre-registration is required, available online at <https://bit.ly/3ahMKB6>.

For more informa-

tion, contact Courtney Kowalczyk at 218-879-0862 or via email at courtneyk@fdltcc.edu. Additional updates will be posted to the official Environmental Institute at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College Facebook page.

Death Notices

William B. Mollard

William Brown "Brownie" Mollard, 78, of Mt. Iron and Lake Vermilion-Cook, died on Friday, Jan. 29, 2021, at Waterview Woods in Eveleth, after a courageous battle with thyroid cancer and dementia. He was in the care of East Range Hospice. At his request, no service will be held. Memorials can be made to the Cook Lions Club, c/o Mark Eyre, 2672 West Vermilion Shores Road, Cook, MN 55723. Family services are provided by Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Fraser Mollard; children, Kerry Mollard and John Mollard; grandson, Dylan Hilton; and a few cousins.

W. Roger Metsa

W. Roger Metsa, 79, of Alango Township, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, at his home. A memorial service will be announced for a date this spring, with burial at the Alango Cemetery. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his son, Adam (Gretchen) Metsa of Buhl; grandchildren, Mialynn, Ezra and Emma; sister, Kathy Ikola of Trout Creek, Mont.; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Carolyn J. Begich

Carolyn J. Bastianelli Begich, 89, originally of Eveleth, moved on to peace on Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021. A memorial service will be held in July 2021 in Eveleth. The date will be announced in the future. Carolyn was loved and will be missed by many family members and friends. She was preceded in death by her loving husband of 67 years, Joseph Begich.

She is survived by her daughter, Rebecca and husband, Bob Heye of Spring, Texas; sisters, Janice Nelson and Sandra Voydetich; and several nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews of the Bastianelli and Begich families.

James M. Pinckney

James M. Pinckney, 63, of Ely, passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021, at Essentia Health St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. Funeral arrangements are pending with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

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Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

WINTER SEVERITY

Mild winter could help whitetail recovery

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Below average snowfall and record mild temperatures so far this winter should have whitetail deer in recovery mode depending on conditions over the next several weeks. While whitetail deer are well-adapted to cold and snow, the North Country deer herd can experience significant mortality during the harsh conditions of winter.

The Department of Natural Resources gauges that impact through

the use of its winter severity index, or WSI, which uses a combination of temperature and snow depth to estimate the impact winter will have on the region's deer population.

So far this winter, the deer have had it easy, according to Tom Rusch, DNR wildlife manager in the Tower work area.

"Deer are in excellent shape going into the latter half of winter," said Rusch. "White-tailed deer have been fairly unrestricted by snow up to this point, and unrestricted movement increases access to food sources and

Right: A young deer browses on a dogwood shrub. Mild temperatures and below average snowfall have left North Country deer in good shape with at least half the winter now in the rearview mirror. file photo

survival." The limited snow also gives deer an advantage against wolves, their primary predators other than humans.

While the first half of winter was

See **DEER...**pg. 5B



SILENT SPORTS

Classic cross-country

A return to North Arm Trails reminds me why they've always been my favorite

Maybe it's that I'm getting older. For most of the past 15 years I had all but given up classic cross-country skiing in favor of skate skiing. It's more exercise and it's a lot faster— and I like to go fast, or at least used to.

For me, the ski season didn't really arrive until late winter, when the warming sun and milder temperatures create the crusted snow. I've written about my adventures skate skiing many times over the years.

But last year, I took up classic skiing again, and it's reminded me not only that classic skiing is fun, it's also plenty of exercise (especially for someone who just turned 60). It's also brought back the opportunity to ski my all-time favorite trail network, the North Arm Trails, up the Echo Trail north of Ely.

Starting from a trailhead just across the road from

Camp du Nord, located on Burnside Lake's North Arm, this network of trails extends a total of 42 kilometers and visits ten lakes, most of them within the Boundary Waters. Because the trails enter the wilderness, these are "user-groomed" trails, which are the kind I like. There are identifiable ski tracks, but not the deeply-set kind that make you feel like a train on a track. With Camp du Nord right across the road, the trails see enough use that it's rare to have to break trail.

There are trails for every level of experience here, from flat and easy lake skiing to rugged trails justifiably rated as "most difficult." The longest section rated most difficult is the 5.7 kilometer Ole Lake Loop, which doesn't start until about three and a half kilometers from the trailhead. It's my

See **SKIING...**pg. 5B



Top: Skiing through miles of pine forest along the North Arm Trails.

Above: Skiing through a pair of huge pine snags along the Ole Lake Loop, one of the most challenging portions of the North Arm Trail network.

Right: A selfie at the sign marking entry into the Boundary Waters. Most of the trail system is located within the federal wilderness area.



Outdoors briefly

Latest snow improves area trail conditions

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Three to four inches of fresh snow that fell this past weekend has left area trails in the best shape so far this season. Whether you're interested in skiing, snowshoeing, or snowmobiling, the trails are in generally good shape around the area.

The Taconite snowmobile trail is now listed in good condition from Grand Rapids to Ely, while the Arrowhead Trail is listed in fair condition, with a few troublespots around high ledge rock outcrops near Ban Lake. The DNR reports a 1 to 4-inch packed base on both of the trails, which form the backbone of the trails system in the region.

Cross-country ski trails in Tower were freshly groomed after last weekend's snowfall and are now in very good condition. Trails at Bear Head were mostly groomed and were listed in fair condition ahead of last weekend's snow.

Most locations in northern St. Louis County currently have anywhere from 10-14 inches on the ground. Little fresh snow is forecast over the next several days as very cold temperatures are expected to dominate the weather picture over the weekend and through at least the middle of next week.

DNR deer goal setting process starts Feb. 8

REGIONAL— Minnesotans interested in deer populations on the Iron Range can take an active role in shaping deer population goals during an open public input process starting Monday, Feb. 8 through Feb. 28.

The Department of Natural Resources sets deer population goals — how much of an increase or decrease is desired in a deer population in a particular deer permit area — as part of managing the state's deer herd. The goals are being updated on a staggered basis in multiple deer permit areas (176, 177, 178, 119 and 132). The population goals established in this process will provide direc-

See **INPUT...**pg. 5B

Fishing reports

Ely area

Lake trout fishing picked up late last week and continued to improve throughout the weekend. Anglers reported catching lakers in 20-40 feet of water with blue and white bucktail jigs tipped with a minnow or gulp minnow as the most successful technique. Dead bait laid on the bottom accounted for almost half of the lakers caught over the weekend, so be sure to set out tip ups!

Stream trout fishing was a little slow, but steady for anglers. Anglers focused their time early and late in the day, as they are finding trout are most active during those times. Small panfish jigs tipped with soft plastics produced the most consistent bite, but spoons tipped with wax worms also accounted for their fair share of trout caught. Panfish activity was

very slow last weekend. Anglers are struggling to find active crappies during the day and had very limited luck catching them after dark. Anglers targeting sunfish reported better luck, but also said it was slow overall. These anglers caught sunnies along weedlines in 10-15 feet of water with small jigs tipped with wax worms.

Eelpout have begun popping up in anglers' fishing reports. Anglers have been finding them deep in 30-50 feet of water right now and the bite largely remains after dark. Anglers have been using heavy glowing eelpout jigs, loaded up with smelt or sucker minnow chunks and pounded on the bottom.

Walleye anglers have remained few and far between, and the painfully slow bite is likely to blame.

Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors, Ely

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday				Saturday				Sunday				Monday				Tuesday			
6 -13				-5 -26				-11 -27				-6 -19				2 -18			
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.
01/25	15	-14	0.00	01/25	13	-19	0.00	01/25	15	-14	0.00	01/25	5	-15	0.00	01/25	11	-17	0.00
01/26	9	-16	0.00	01/26	8	-20	0.00	01/26	3	-15	0.00	01/26	7	-15	0.00	01/26	6	-17	0.00
01/27	11	-27	0.00	01/27	9	-30	0.00	01/27	6	-22	0.00	01/27	1	-27	0.00	01/27	9	-30	0.00
01/28	5	-27	0.00	01/28	2	-30	0.00	01/28	0	-27	0.00	01/28	12	-27	0.00	01/28	2	-30	0.00
01/29	18	-25	0.00	01/29	15	-27	0.00	01/29	14	-27	0.00	01/29	28	-9	0.00	01/29	16	-26	0.00
01/30	26	6	0.00	01/30	25	-8	0.00	01/30	25	-10	0.00	01/30	28	21	0.00	01/30	26	-6	0.00
01/31	27	24	0.09 2.6"	01/31	27	21	0.19 2.5"	01/31	27	22	0.24 3.2"	01/31	28	21	0.00	01/31	27	22	0.16 2.4"
Total 0.29 48.2"				YTD Total 0.50 34.4"				YTD Total 0.60 48.2"				YTD Total 0.19 NA				YTD Total 0.25 37.1"			

SKIING...Continued from page 4B



favorite section of the network, with dramatic overlooks, giant old pines, and challenging hills. When I skied it in January, it was even more challenging, since it appeared only two skiers had been on it all season. All but breaking nearly six kilometers of trail through up and down terrain certainly provided a workout.

Most parts of the network see considerably more traffic, so the conditions are usually fast and fun. The trail climbs steadily from the trailhead, but soon enough levels out, although there are few places, other than lake surfaces, that I would call flat. The forest is dominated by mature red pine, much of which was planted, either artificially or through natural regeneration, in the wake of harvesting in the early twentieth century. While much of it is within the Boundary Waters, it's part of the 75,000-acre Burntside State Forest, which was well-managed for pine back in the day and the results of that management are evident today.

The center of the trail network provides a labyrinth of loop opportunities, virtually all rated easy or more difficult. For the more adventurous, the network offers much longer loops that visit wilderness lakes like Coxey Pond and Cummings Lake on the west, or Slim, Rice, Hook and Keneu Lake to the north. I've encountered slush before while skiing on some of these lakes, so be aware that's always a possibility.

Don't even think of trying to cover all of this network of trails in a day. I've skied there many times and haven't yet taken advantage of all of its many possibilities.

Also be aware that there isn't much cellular coverage up there, so be prepared to address any emergency issues that might occur on your own. I always bring a pack with survival stuff, some food, and water. When you're venturing into the wilderness, don't expect rescuers to save the day if you get in trouble.

An overlook from the Ole Lake Loop, with a portion of Silica Lake visible in the background.

photo by M. Helmberger

One of the best things about the North Arm Trails is that they make great hiking trails as well, so they're usable all year round. Just remember that, winter or summer, you should fill out a day use permit at the self-serve kiosk at the trailhead. It helps let the Forest Service know how many people are using these trails—and that provides data to support the continued maintenance of this spectacular trail system.

If you haven't explored these trails yet, think about a visit soon, perhaps after we warm up from our weekend Arctic blast. Take the Echo Trail about ten miles north to the North Arm Road, or County Rd. 644. From there, it's a little over two miles to the trailhead, which is located on your right, across the road from Camp Du Nord.

DEER...Continued from page 4B

mild for deer, conditions could become harsher in the weeks ahead, and that could start to push the WSI higher. Even so, it has a long way to go to be considered a burden for deer. The index gains a point for each day with a temperature of zero or below and for each day with a snow depth of 15 inches or greater. Right now, according to Rusch, snow depth ranges from 12-14 inches in northern St. Louis County, so any significant additional snow would push snow depths above 15 inches, which begins to restrict

deer movements. Snow depths in northern Lak County are already above that threshold, although the snow remains light and fluffy, which is easier for deer than dense or crusted snow.

While temperatures were record mild in December, January, and the first few days of February, that was forecast to change dramatically by the weekend, with several consecutive days of subzero highs and nighttime lows that could push 30-40 below zero across the North Country.

Even so, the WSI readings heading into the season's first real cold snap remain remarkably low, with fewer than 20 points, all for subzero temperature readings. Any winter that finishes with a WSI below 50 is considered a mild winter, while values above 120 are considered severe. Here in far northern Minnesota, a 120 reading is close to average, while 160 or above is generally considered severe.

INPUT...Continued from page 4B

tion for management in each goal-setting block for a 10-year period, with a midpoint review at the five-year mark.

This year, to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission and support social distancing measures, the DNR is shifting to online-only engagement, rather than in-person workshops.

"We're adapting with an online format," said Barbara Keller, DNR big game program leader. "We're excited to see how people engage with this topic, and encourage anyone who has an interest in deer management to give feedback on future

deer population trends in the areas where they live, work and recreate."

This is the second year of a four-year, statewide process, with several geographic blocks addressed each year. This year focuses on blocks in northeastern parts of the state.

For additional information and on-line input go to:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mammals/deer/management/population.html>

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EMPLOYMENT

POSITION OPENING

Ely Public Schools Paraprofessional (2 positions)

Ely Public Schools is looking for two Paraprofessionals for the 2020-2021 school year; background check required.

Qualifications include:

- ▶ AA Degree or two years of college required
- ▶ Preferred experience working with school age children
- ▶ Evidence of ability to work cooperatively and communicate effectively in a collaborative setting.

Application available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us

A complete application must include the following:

- ▶ District Application
- ▶ Resume
- ▶ College Transcripts
- ▶ 2 letters of recommendation

Return materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email mwognum@ely.k12.mn.us

Starting Rate of Pay: \$16.57/hour

Hours: 6.5 hours/day

Deadline to apply: open until filled.

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 29 & Feb. 5, 2021

SEEKING PART-TIME MANAGER ELY-WINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Ely-Winton Historical Society, located in the Fine Arts wing of Vermilion Community College, is seeking a manager for the day-to-day operation of the Ely-Winton Historical Society office and museum. Duties include responding to oral and written communications received, overseeing the Society's artifacts, displays, videos, books, and festivals, coordinating research with the public, grant writing, and communicating with both Vermilion Community College and the Ely Chamber of Commerce. Computer literacy a must.

Compensation: Rate of pay will start at \$12.00 per hour. Average hours: 20 hours per week. There will be a three-month probationary period after which the rate of pay will be determined.

Anticipated date of hiring is April 1, 2021

For more information or to submit a resume, contact Margaret Sweet, Ely-Winton Historical Society, c/o 1900 East Camp Street, Ely, MN 55731. 218-365-3226 or 218-827-2386, or email ewhsmuseum@gmail.com

Resumes will be accepted if emailed or post-marked by March 15, 2021.

*An Equal Opportunity Employer
Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 22, Feb 5, 19 & March 5, 2021*

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY Office Assistant

- ▶ Part-time
- ▶ Flexible schedule
- ▶ 2+ years of customer service experience
- ▶ Knowledge of Microsoft Office software



Email or send resume with cover letter to: marylee.erickson@klunlaw.com; Klun Law Firm, PO Box 240, Ely, MN 55731. 215

PUBLIC NOTICE



CITY OF TOWER OPENINGS

Gundersen Trust Blight Officer

Apply at:
<https://cityoftower.com/positions-available>

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 29, 2021

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

Assumed Name:
A-FAB Carpentry
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS:
8468 North Ahlstrand Road, Tower, MN 55790
NAMEHOLDER(S):
Michael Thomas Olin, 8468 North Ahlstrand Road, Tower, MN 55790

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature

would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

Dated: December 21, 2020
SIGNED BY: Michael Thomas Olin
MAILING ADDRESS: 8468 North Ahlstrand Road, Tower, MN 55790

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 29 & Feb. 5, 2021

FUNERAL SERVICES

Range Funeral Home



Virginia 741-1481 Hibbing 263-3276
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Super Crossword

Answers

R	A	N	C	O	R	A	T	E	D	I	R	T	B	E	I	N	G	S		
O	M	E	R	T	A	H	O	N	O	R	E	E	A	L	G	O	R	E		
C	A	P	E	O	F	G	O	O	D	H	O	P	E	A	M	E	L	I	A	
K	N	A	V	E	F	E	L	L	S	N	A	N	O	T	T	E	R			
S	A	L	A	F	E	D	S	T	R	I	A	L	B	R	I	E	F	S		
				S	I	G	N		W	E	E	D		I	B	E	T			
T	I	E	S	T	H	A	T	B	I	N	D	I	V	S		A	S	H		
A	M	B	E	R		A	R	T		A	C	E		H	A	R	P	O		
M	A	O		Y	A	L	T	A	M	U	S	H	R	O	O	M	C	A	P	
S	C	O	T		P	E	A	S	I	N	S		R	H	E	A				
S	K	I	R	T	A	R	O	U	N	D	T	H	E	I	S	S	U	E		
				P	U	L	P		D	E	C	O	E	E	O		S	N	A	P
J	E	R	S	E	Y	S	H	O	R	E		A	D	D	U	P		I	S	O
L	L	O	Y	D		O	U	R		O	W	E		O	A	T	E	S		
O	F	T		T	U	G		A	S	T	E	R	O	I	D	B	E	L	T	
				M	O	A	T		S	T	A	T		P	O	S	E			
A	L	B	U	M	J	A	C	K	E	T		M	O	T	S		T	G	I	F
M	O	R	S	E		T	O	I	L		D	O	P	E		S	T	E	N	O
I	C	I	C	L	E		A	N	I	M	A	T	E	D	S	H	O	R	T	S
S	A	B	L	E	S		S	N	E	E	R	E	D		H	E	R	M	E	S
S	L	E	E	T	S		T	Y	R	A	N	T	S		H	A	S	S	L	E

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Secondhand
- 5 Sphere
- 8 Halt
- 12 DVR alterna-tive
- 13 Greek X
- 14 Authentic
- 15 Sheltered, at sea
- 16 Hare's defeater
- 18 Japan's main island
- 20 Comic Phyllis
- 21 California wine valley
- 23 Zero
- 24 Enchilada holder
- 28 Plate
- 31 — jiffy
- 32 Fix a stub-born shoe-lace
- 34 Rowing need
- 35 Sulk
- 37 Harasses
- 39 Male cat
- 41 Tater
- 42 Wall plaster
- 45 Warren Commission subject
- 49 Bullring VIP
- 51 Lotion addi-tive
- 52 Yemeni city
- 53 Scrap
- 54 Anger

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12					13				14				
15					16				17				
18				19			20						
				21			22		23				
24	25	26					27		28		29	30	
31									33		34		
35			36			37				38			
			39			40			41				
42	43					44			45		46	47	48
49							50			51			
52											54		
55							56					57	

- 55 Got up
- 56 They're between dos
- 10 English river
- 11 Equal
- 17 Can metal
- 19 Locks
- 22 Chorus mem-bers
- 24 Quarterback Tebow
- 25 Yoko of music
- 26 States of ecstasy
- 27 LaGuardia and Logan, e.g.
- 29 Perched
- 30 Day fractions (Abbr.)
- 33 Ostriches' kin
- 36 Dawn-of-mammals epoch
- 38 Name of many English kings
- 40 Longtime record label
- 42 Celebrity
- 43 Big fuss
- 44 Smell
- 46 Winged
- 47 Corporate symbol
- 48 Profound
- 50 Raw rock

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EMPLOYMENT



OPEN POSITIONS

10 Fifth Street SE Cook, MN 55723

Care Center
PT Nursing Assistant (wage starting at \$16.36/hr - Sign-On Bonus)

Environmental Services
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Hospital/ER
3 PT Registered Nurse (wage starting at \$34.06/hr - Sign-On Bonus)

Information Technology (IT)
PT Information Specialist

Activities
PT Activities Assistant

TO APPLY:
www.cookhospital.org/join-our-team/

More Info? Contact Human Resources

218-666-6220
humanresources@cookhospital.org

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

			9	7	6		4			
2			1	3					8	
	7						2	1		3
	1				5		8			2
7		5				9			4	
9				2	3					7
	5				7	4	6			
	9	3				8			7	
4				6					5	1

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Bearville Township

Board of Supervisors Meeting

The February 9 Board of Supervisors Meeting will be held at the Bearville Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. Masks are required. Due to social distancing, in-person attendance by the public will be limited. **Online access to the meeting will be available. Please contact Kathy Cressy, Clerk if you would like to attend. 218-376-4495 or bearvl@frontiernet.net.**

Board of Audit

Bearville Township Board of Audit Meeting The Bearville Township Board of Audit is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bearville Town Hall. This meeting will consist of auditing the books for the year ending December 31, 2020 and preparing proposed levies to submit to the Annual Town Meeting.

March Board Meeting

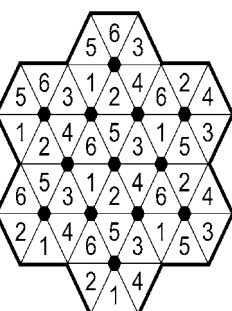
The Bearville Township Board of Supervisors March meeting is re-scheduled to Tuesday, March 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bearville Town Hall. Masks are required. Due to social distancing in-person attendance by the public will be limited. **Online access to the meeting will be available. Please contact Kathy Cressy, Clerk if you would like to attend. 218-376-4495 or bearvl@frontiernet.net.**

Kathy Cressy, Bearville Township Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 5 & 12, 2021

Get Results!

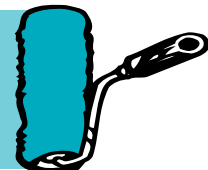
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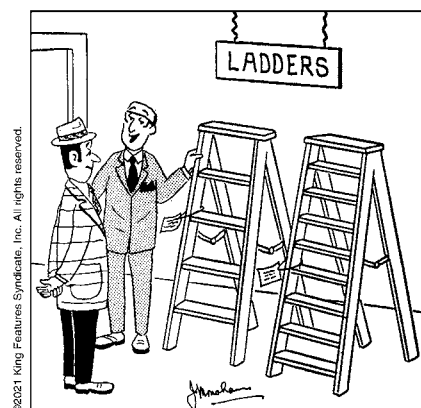
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"This one's _____."

SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

- Creak
ORGAN
- Wild
FLARE
- Lone
LOSE
- Blunt
CREDIT

TODAY'S WORD