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# the **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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## INVESTMENT

# Bois Forte look to invest in mystery business

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

Some band members balk at lack of disclosure in \$4 million venture

TOWER- Bois Forte leaders are asking Band members to weigh in with their opinions on investing approximately \$4 million in a new business venture without telling them what the business is, using financial

information that appears to have left out approximately \$130,000 in payroll expenses.

At a public meeting at Fortune Bay and on Zoom on Monday, tribal chairwoman Cathy Chavers deflected

direct questions about what the business actually entails because of a nondisclosure agreement between the tribal council and the seller. "We can't really give you the business details on that due to the confidentiality

agreement," Chavers said. "What you have in front of you is what you need to make the decision based on. It's the data. That's something we had that the owner strictly adhered to that we can't discuss that."

But numerous attendees pushed back, saying that it would be hard to provide an opinion without knowing what the business actually is. "it's going to be hard

See...**BAND** pg. 10



Cathy Chavers

## NORTH COUNTRY CULTURE

# Opera in a pickup truck



## Mixed Precipitation presents the Odyssey

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Mixed Precipitation presented their unique performance of the Odyssey last week, with stops at Carefree Living in Ely, the Tower Farmers Market, and Early Frost Farms in Embarrass.

The Tower Farmers Market proved a perfect match. The market was celebrating its annual children's day, so many families had stopped by and then stayed to watch the show.

The "pop-up" show was one act from their three-act main show. Lasting about a half hour, it was the perfect length for the

**The cast of Mixed Precipitation, and their puppets, above, crowd on the back of a pickup truck in Tower last week for their unique and non-traditional performance of the Odyssey. A giant paper-mache Cyclops puppet, right, was part of the play.** photos by J. Summit

audience, which ranged in age from babies to grandparents. The next day the group performed the full-length show to a larger crowd at Ericka and Jack LaMar's Early

See...**OPERA** pg. 12



## CORONAVIRUS

# St. Louis County recommends indoor masking

Move comes as county appears on CDC's substantial COVID spread list

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- St. Louis County health officials followed the lead of the state Department of Health on Monday by issuing a recommendation that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks in indoor public settings, after the county was among 30 in the state added to the "substantial transmission" list for COVID spread by the Centers for Disease Control.

"We're not completely surprised," said county Public Health Director Amy Westbrook of the upgraded CDC designation. "It means that we're in a place where transmission is occurring in a way that is very difficult to prevent and control just through regular everyday activity or what we're doing as a public health system. It's sort of unchecked, if you will, and that's concerning."

Westbrook said that the county's recommendation is in response to an immunization rate that falls

See...**COVID** pg. 11



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Preserving 'a strong sense of place'

Ott realty company works to revitalize Ely's downtown district

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY—Economic development in this city's downtown district is enjoying a real jumpstart by a small real estate company with humble beginnings. Alley A Realty was started in 2007 in Columbia, Mo.,

**MORE COVERAGE**  
Hundreds of jobs go unfilled in the Ely area **Page 9**

and the family's connection to northern Minnesota helped expand their vision.

Their mission statement is

**The former Tanner Hospital in Ely is on the Alley A Realty to-do list for renovation.** photo by K. Vandervort

simple: "We create and lease fresh and revived spaces in Downtown Ely."

See...**ELY** pg. 9



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## Community notices

### Correction

GREENWOOD- The *Timberjay* reporting on the Greenwood Annual Meeting incorrectly stated that Chairman Mike Ralston had asked the board to approve a request for a \$200,000 levy, which was not approved. At their July 13 meeting, a motion to ask for a \$200,000 levy was approved on a split 3-2 vote, with Supervisors Drobac and Lofquist voting against.

### 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, Aug. 12 from 4:30 - 6 p.m. Please give a \$20 cash donation at the door. Ruby's Pantry is sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango.

### Babbitt-Embarrass Class of 1970 reunion

BABBITT- The Babbitt-Embarrass Class of 1970's 50th reunion is scheduled for Sept. 10-12 at the Junction Inn and Suites. Graduates of 1970 and all those who were at one time a part of the class are invited. It is imperative to register by Aug. 10. Only 13 are registered so far and there must be at least 50 to hold the event. Call Sandra at 218-984-3305 to register and pay.

### Other Side of the Hill documentary showing and discussion on Aug. 10

VIRGINIA- A public screening and discussion of the newly-released documentary, *Other Side of the Hill*, is taking place on Tuesday, Aug. 10 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at Hope Community Presbyterian Church in Virginia.

*Other Side of the Hill* explores the impacts of climate change in rural Eastern Oregon, as seen from the eyes of local leaders on the ground. From innovative timber operations to large scale solar, this film amplifies the voices of rural communities often left unheard, and shines a light on stories of progress and hope. This documentary tells the story of discovering common ground in an urgency to address a changing landscape.

The documentary screening and discussion is presented by Iron Range Congregations Caring for the Earth and Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light. The event is hosted by Hope Community Presbyterian Church at 212 S Fifth Ave. in Virginia, downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.

### Third Coast Chamber Collective at the Lyric Center on Saturday, Aug. 21

VIRGINIA- Third Coast Chamber Collective (TCCC) is a group of emerging musicians from diverse backgrounds, devoted to promoting the transformative power of chamber music. TCCC artists perform internationally and have appeared in the world's most renowned concert halls such as Carnegie Hall in New York City, Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, Austria, BOZAR in Brussels, Belgium, Herkulessaal in Munich, Germany, Witold Lutoslawski Concert Studio of the Polish Radio Orchestra in Warsaw, Poland, and other venues.

The concert in Virginia will be at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 21 at the Lyric Annex, 516 Chestnut Street. TCCC, along with guest violinist Erik Olson, will play Wood Works, Nordic folk tunes arranged by the Danish String Quartet. Tickets for the concert are \$18 and must be purchased in advance at <https://our.show/lyric-center-for-the-arts/tccc>. Due to pandemic precautions, seating will be limited. More information about TCCC members is also available at the above link.

## ALS FUNDRAISER

# Ride, Raffle 'n Roll for ALS on Aug. 14



Riders pose for a photo at a past Ride, Raffle 'n Roll fundraiser. submitted photo

EMBARRASS- The Sixth Annual Ride, Raffle 'n Roll for ALS will be held at the Timber Hall in Embarrass on Saturday, Aug. 14. Registration is from 8:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Kickstands up at 10:30 a.m.

Breakfast is open to the public and served from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Cost is \$5.

There will be a 50/50 raffle, quilt raffle, rider raffle, games and lunch. T-shirts are available for \$20, printed by sponsor

Monsters Ink. There is a rider gift of limited edition pins while supplies last.

For more information, text Lisa Myers at 218-742-6272 or Travis Erickson at 218-750-8944. Proceeds benefit Never Surrender

Inc. This is a ride funding the Fight Against ALS through the 2022 Black Woods Blizzard Tour. Find the charity online at [www.NeverSurrenderInc.org](http://www.NeverSurrenderInc.org).

# Festival of Skalds held Aug. 14-15



Vikings spar at the last Festival of Skalds in 2019. file photo

ANGORA- The Festival of Skalds will

be held Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 14-15 at

8182 Carpenter Rd. in Angora. Gates will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Admission is just \$5 for ages 13 and up, kids 12 and younger are \$1 or free with the donation of a nonperishable food item.

Festival of Skalds celebrates skalds, the historians, poets, and storytellers of the Old Norse.

Join us for a fun-filled weekend of old Norse fantasy merriment.

Come dressed in ancient garb or modern

clothing. Festivities include traditional medieval games, olde world entertainment, axe-throwing, artisan makers and vendors of handcrafted wares, primitive archery and vendors of tasty morsels. Alcohol is prohibited at this event.

The festival is hosted by Iron Ranger Arts. More information can be found on the Iron Ranger Arts website at [www.ironrangerarts.com](http://www.ironrangerarts.com).

# Kinder Konzerts kits at Arrowhead libraries

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Library System will be providing Kinder Konzerts in a Bag kits to member public libraries to distribute from Aug. 1-31. These kits, developed by the Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra, contain everything needed for kids and families/caregivers to create a musical storytelling experience at home. The kits feature the book, *One-Dog Canoe*, written by award-winning Minnesota author Mary Casanova and illustrated by Ard Hoyt. These kits are geared towards kids ages 3-6 and their families/caregivers. Kits will be distributed at Babbitt, Cook,

Ely, and Virginia libraries as well as the Bookmobile.

Each location has a limited number of kits; feel free to contact your local library for more information. This program, created by the Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra and sponsored by Arrowhead Library System, was funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. To learn more about Arrowhead Legacy Events, please see our calendar at [www.alslib.info](http://www.alslib.info) or like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/alslibinfo](http://www.facebook.com/alslibinfo).



Artifacts from the Seitanemi housebarn will be on display at the Nelimark Museum. file photo

# Housebarn exhibit to open at Nelimark

EMBARRASS- Volunteers at the Nelimark Museum are working on a new exhibit that features items from the original Seitanemi Housebarn. Historian Terry Aldrich of Hibbing is generously lending

three of Alex Seitanemi's original handcrafted broad axes. Seitanemi men used the broad axes in the early 1900s to shape the logs when they constructed the housebarn. Aldrich said the three axes have handles that Alex Seitanemi crafted himself for his sons, Knute and Bill, to hew the logs for the building.

The museum is looking for more artifacts to add to the exhibit. If you happen to have any items that were purchased at the auction in July 2004 and would like to loan them to the museum, please call 218-984-2303 and we will consider adding them to the display.

The museum is specifically seeking various hand-made tools or smaller things of interest. Lenders will be given credit for saving a small piece of Embarrass Finnish history for folks to enjoy.

The Nelimark will be open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m. through Labor Day. A great time to visit would be during the Embarrass Fair, the last weekend of August.

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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, and in part by the MN State Fiddlers Association.

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CITY OF ELY

# Novak honored for service and leadership

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY – Longtime Ely Mayor Chuck Novak was honored for his service to the city Tuesday night at what represented his final city council meeting as the top elected official for the city of Ely.

Following a special election next Tuesday to fill the post, the election of Heidi Omerza or Roger Skraba as mayor will be canvassed at a special meeting prior to the Aug. 17 council meeting and Novak will step down from his brief stint as interim mayor.

“I would like to recognize Chuck’s service to the Ely community,” said Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski prior to presenting him with a crystal memento.

Novak served partial city council terms in 2005 and 2006 before serving multiple terms as the city’s elected leader in 2007-08. Since then he served three more terms as mayor before being appointed interim mayor earlier this year.

“With sincere gratitude



**Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski presented a memento of appreciation to outgoing Ely Mayor Chuck Novak Tuesday night.**

photo by K. Vandervort

for your faithful dedication, guidance and friendship, your selfless contributions of service over all the years have been valuable to Ely’s continued success. Thank you on behalf of the city council and city workers and on behalf of the citizens of Ely,” Langowski said.

“I appreciate Chuck’s dedication to the job,” he continued. “Another point that most people don’t realize is that Chuck has served on the city’s Charter

Commission since 2005 as well.”

At the Tuesday council meeting, the city’s financial audit for 2020 was presented, and Novak leaves his post as mayor with the city in positive financial shape.

“I’ve been around here long enough to remember times the city of Ely didn’t even have a fund balance and we had to pursue general obli-

gation. See **NOVAK...pg. 5**



LAKE VERMILION CULTURAL CENTER

# Art On The Lake fundraiser a success

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- The Lake Vermilion Cultural Center’s Art On The Lake fundraiser was a great success.

“We sold a lot of paintings and raised a nice bit of money for the building restoration project,” said Mary Batinich, ex-officio board member.

The fundraiser is one of two planned this summer, to raise funds to complete the restoration of the historic St. Mary’s Episcopal Church into a new multi-use cultural center.

See **LVCC...pg. 5**

**Right: Members of the Halunen family, who all left the show with new artwork. Bottom: Artists whose work was on display and for sale during the event.**

photos by J. Summit



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# OPINION

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## Editorial

### Get the shot

If you need any more reasons, the spread of the Delta variant should be the clincher

We suspect that the vast majority of *Timberjay* readers have already been vaccinated for COVID-19. As a newspaper, we've made a concerted effort to keep our region well-informed on the virus and have undoubtedly published more on the subject than any other paper in our region.

Like most of you, we at the *Timberjay* were excited back in May and June after the rollout of vaccinations seemed to quell the pandemic and allowed for the reopening of just about everything. We had hoped at the time that we had put COVID-19 in our rear-view mirror.

Yet as the past few weeks have demonstrated, both nationally and here in Minnesota, the new Delta variant of the virus is threatening a fourth wave of the pandemic that could well be among the worst. Indeed, in some parts of the country, particularly where vaccination rates are low, the Delta variant has led to spikes in infections that already exceed numbers from any previous point during the pandemic.

While Minnesota has seen a significant uptick in infections in recent weeks, we haven't seen the kind of outbreaks currently being experienced in states like Arkansas, Louisiana, and Florida. In some of these places, well under half of adults have been vaccinated, a fact that is allowing the virus to spread more quickly. Here in Minnesota, 70 percent of adults have received at least one dose of the vaccine. Yet even 30 percent of adults without vaccination is enough to sustain significant growth in the number of infections here in Minnesota, where case counts are once again rising quickly. That seriously threatens all of the progress that we've made.

As the Republican governor of Alabama recently put it as she watched the fourth wave fill hospitals there, "It's time to start blaming the unvaccinated folks."

While that stubborn subset of our population that refuses vaccination is a serious threat to our public health, we suspect that the blame game may only harden attitudes among the unvaccinated. We also know that messages in the media about the importance of vaccination go largely unheeded by vaccine skeptics. Health professionals have reported that family and friends can be the most trusted sources of information on the pandemic and the importance of vaccination, which is why we're urging all of our readers to reach out to friends and loved ones who have not yet been vaccinated, with some things to consider, such as:

►The unvaccinated population is not only allowing the Delta variant to catch fire here in the U.S., it is also increasing the likelihood that even more deadly and contagious strains will emerge. As we've seen, this virus is constantly evolving. If we all get vaccinated, we can snuff it out once and for all.

►Refusing vaccination is a threat to young children in your life. Since vaccinations aren't yet available for children under age 12, kids are especially vulnerable to infection. That's particularly true with the Delta variant, which is highly contagious and now accounts for approximately 90 percent of all COVID infections among children.

►Concerns about the safety of the vaccine are grossly exaggerated. Claims that they make people infertile or that the vaccines contain microchips or other such nonsense are nothing more than tinfoil hat conspiracy mongering. More than 4 billion COVID vaccines have been delivered globally since they became available. The number of individuals with significant negative reactions has been infinitesimal (you're more likely to be attacked by a shark this year) and no different from other vaccines that have been used widely for decades.

►The vaccines are well-tested and proven safe. Much has been made of the fact that the vaccines were developed more quickly than in the past, but that's a largely meaningless fact. Sure, it took four years to develop the mumps vaccine, (which is often mentioned by skeptics), but that was in the 1950s. That was 70 years ago. The advancement in our medical technology is light years beyond that era. Everything goes faster today.

Besides, researchers already had developed the mRNA technology used in the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines several years earlier, specifically to allow for the rapid rollout of vaccines in the event of a pandemic. What's more, government officials in the U.S. and elsewhere allowed pharmaceutical manufacturers to complete their testing stages simultaneously, rather than using a step-by-step process that takes more time. Companies could do that because they had assurance that the government would pay for their research efforts and purchase large quantities of those vaccines that were shown to be safe.

Armed with information, we hope everyone can make the right move and get vaccinated. It's the only way we'll truly get COVID behind us once and for all.



Joel Heller © 2021 HELLERTON.COM

## Letters from Readers

### Putting two and two together

Is the virus smarter than we are? The Delta variant, in comparison with the original form of COVID-19, is at least twice as infectious and twice as deadly. My brother lives in Arkansas where the vaccination rate is less than forty percent. Two weeks ago, a friend of his lost her son. He was twenty-four years old.

**Jim Ganahl  
Cook**

### Will we let nonsense win out?

The virus is winning out over human stupidity. Maybe it's genetic. Only the survivors among those who immigrated here reproduced. This led to what was truly our "Greatest Generation," who won out over the Great Depression and WWII. They were our parents and grandparents, who paid taxes and invested in education, parks, schools, and Social Security.

But the next generations didn't get culled so vigorously. And they started watching and believing Fox "News" and proved not only susceptible to, but preferring, nonsense. And they didn't like seeing people who didn't look

like them receiving government benefits, so they stopped paying taxes and preferred hating each other to figuring out how to work together to make the world better. The former guy - and what he represents - needs to be stuffed in a closet and the rest of us need to wake up and be responsible citizens again.

**Dave Porter  
Minneapolis**

### Zero-sum thinking hurts everyone

"THE SUM OF US," by Heather McGee tells a story that begins with draining swimming pools as a metaphor for racist zero-sum ideology. "Us against them" holds that one group's gain must be another's loss. Resistance to desegregation shut down public swimming pools to avoid integration. White people drain themselves of niceties rather than share them with black people.

A win-lose situation adding up to zero is a fixed-pie, zero-sum fallacy. Gain by one is loss to the other. Seeing "other" as the enemy makes progress possible only at their expense. Destructive competition harms not just the other, but yourself as well. Projection allows whites to falsely ascribe

attributes to blacks they do not want to own up to in themselves.

Zero-sum thinking prevailed in Colonial times as land and labor was seized, bought and owned. Even freedom for whites was a win-lose benefit. Elitists divided and conquered underclasses by ramping up racial resentment and hostility. During the 1860 election, they warned, if Lincoln were elected, white workers would have to compete with emancipated black workers.

The zero-sum paradigm was based on a lie that white progress was only possible with black enslavement and white dominion over barbarian heathen lands. Zero-sum bias posits that gains in jobs, housing, education and health care by minorities, mean less for white people. Pitting white against black is costly to everyone.

Black gains mean white losses is an insidious lie. Zero-sum competition to divide and block any collective action is the enemy to that which benefits all. The system and those who run it are responsible for outcomes that enrich few and impoverish many. Plutocrats have always understood that in solidarity "the sum of us can accomplish more than just some of us." Working together, we all prosper.

**Harold Honkola  
Roseville**

## THE FINE PRINT

### Is environmentalism a religion?

by PETER M. LESCHAK  
Contributing Writer

Fifty years ago at a fundamentalist Bible college in Texas we were devoted to Rapidographs, a brand of fine-pointed technical pen favored by architects. They enabled us to write comments in tiny, but readable, script in the page margins of our King James Bibles. Also popular were highlighters of various hues (or crayons, because they didn't bleed through the page) to mark key passages and color-code topics -- say red for prophecy, blue for prayer, etc.

As with much human performance, enhancing Bibles shaded

into rivalry. It became an informal standard of dedication and piety. Who had the most densely annotated and illuminated pages? In many classes the King James was a default textbook so we often had them open, affording opportunity to glance at your neighbors' augmentations and to display your own.

During one class we were scrutinizing the Book of Ecclesiastes, reputedly written by King Solomon, renowned for his wisdom -- and, some might add, his cynicism. I was sitting next to a young woman who was inscribing a page with a Rapidograph. Her penmanship was exquisite. I leaned over to peek at her work.

Next to the verse that reads, "There is nothing new under the sun," she had written: *But what about the rest of the universe?* Good question, and one of the slickest little heresies I'd ever seen.

At one stroke, she challenged Solomon, Biblical cosmology in general, and by implication the foundation of the college. Sure, all could be defended to the satisfaction of the faithful, but that wasn't the point of the Bible or that school. They existed to exhort and pronounce -- ex cathedra, to borrow a term from Rome. It wasn't the role of students to poke at fundamentals.

See **RELIGION...pg. 5**

## Learning to take time to relax and breathe

A month ago I retired from the position of program coordinator at the Ely Folk School, and I am just beginning to figure out how to use my time and energy differently. I am still involved in teaching, doing acupres-



**BETTY  
FIRTH**

kind of a free-fall, devoid of work. However, my days are freer of scheduled commitments and administrative details and stress, so my mind has had more room to roam about possibilities.

Since I am a curious and imaginative generalist, this is fascinat-

ing and dangerous territory, because possibilities are endless. Interesting new options or the resurgence of previous interests beckon seductively: try this art form, take that class, join this group, go visit out-of-town friends, renew neglected friendships here, jump in with some political action, swim and do yoga, take a trip, and on and on. Imagining any or all of those things takes nano-seconds mentally, where anything is possible and there's no

reality check about the time and energy required. It's so easy to get overcommitted, forgetting that among my many intentions is taking the time to breathe, read, write, meditate, and water the flowers with mindful attention, appreciating each new leaf and blossom. It's so easy to get wrapped up in a schedule of enticing things, which are all good, but leave me drained, wondering why I'm short of time to relax and breathe or focus on that writing I

meant to do. My extroverted self says, "Go for it, do it all!" but I have to honor my introverted self who is saying, "Whadda ya' tryin' to do, kill me?"

I've had some in-depth conversations with several people in the last couple weeks about the choices we make as individuals and within groups. (And how delicious that has been, to have the luxury of open, relaxed time, not worrying about the next thing I have to do, accomplish, com-

plete, arrange. I sometimes feel an internal impulse, a knee-jerk moment of nagging anxiety saying, "OK, get going, what's next, are you running late?" and I have to say to myself, "Relax! This is exactly what you're supposed to be doing."

There has been much said on talk shows and with friends about choices made and lessons learned during COVID. Some people were

See **RELAX...pg. 5**

**NOVAK...**Continued from page 3

tion bonding just to meet payroll,” Langowski said. “We’ve been through some bad times and we’ve been through good times. The mayor was always there helping to make a path forward. As an employee, I would like to thank Chuck and I appreciate the efforts he has put in on behalf of the city.”

Novak spent countless hours lobbying on the state and federal level for funding for Ely projects

and causes.

“Everybody knows who Chuck is, and everybody knows what city he comes from. That is important at both the state and federal level,” Langowski added.

“This has been a fun ride,” Novak said as he accepted the appreciation plaque. “I got in a lot of trouble at home for all the time I spent at the city,” Novak said as his wife, Nancy, looked on. “A lot

of calls come in at the last minute. And you go. I think we’ll be in good shape here in Ely. We’ll move on. Thank you.”

**Other business**

In other business, the council:

► Approved a \$15,000 taxpayer donation to partially fund a \$60,000 Pioneer Mine Memorial planned by the Ely Area Heritage Center. An \$8,000 donation from the Ely Arts

and Heritage organization, \$7,000 in additional donations, and an anticipated \$30,000 Arts and Cultural Grant from the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation will also be used for the project. While the donation is not in the city budget, Langowski said the Budget Committee will discuss funding for the donation next month.

► Received letters of intent to retire from Ely Utility Commission

employees Judy Niemela, Mick Shusta and Anthony Gornik. Langowski said that represents “nearly a century of experience” and the EUC will be looking at how to move forward. The employees all gave a six-month lead time to help with the transition.

► Approved offering the Equipment Operator II position to John Sjoberg.

► Approved a two-year legal representation contract renewal with Klun

Law Firm for 2022-23 for the current \$5,000-per-month retainer fee.

► Approved a temporary liquor license for the Ely-Winton Rod and Gun Club for Sept. 18 at Miner’s Dry for an ATV riders convention event.

► Approved the 2021-22 liquor licenses for the city pending receipt of proper fees and paperwork.

**RELIGION...**Continued from page 4

I was eventually disenchanted with the denomination, and I choose that verb carefully. Because when I joined that fellowship I was enchanted – beguiled by compelling narrative in league with imagination. It was like playing an interactive fantasy game, albeit with real world consequences. The New Testament gospels and the epic quest of Paul can be read as heroic adventure sagas, embellished by miracles, demons, empire, and mystery. When I read Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* I was struck by an impression that his story was a knock-off of the Bible, a quasi-religious tale inviting suspension of disbelief.

The latter is the first task of religion because most people do not readily see god(s). We tend to assign the tangle world a lot of weight and the benefit of the doubt. That’s reflected in sayings from religious disciplines. An Islamic hadith: “O messenger of Allah, should I tie my camel and trust in Allah, or should I leave her untied and trust in Allah?” The answer: “Tie her and trust in Allah.” A Christian proverb: “God helps those who help themselves,” or

from a popular song of World War II, “Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition.” But via strong anecdotes oft-repeated, and an invitation to imagine – that is, put yourself in the story – the amorphous spiritual sphere can solidify. You are also urged to practice: to pray, attend church, study scripture, and perhaps annotate your Bible with a Rapidograph. It’s not called indoctrination for nothing.

This is not a trivialization of religious belief. I acknowledge the unquestionable power of faith. As a once fervent believer, I attest to its impact. What *can* be challenged is the nature of that power – is it beneficial or harmful? Faith energized both Mother Theresa and ISIS, American slave owners and abolitionists, opposing sides in the horrific Thirty Years War, and so on. You make the call. I still have my heavily garnished Bible, but it’s a memento. I concluded that religious faith, both emotionally and rationally, was personally more negative than positive, and I’d devoted enough time and energy to that narrative – gave it a fair shake and realized it wasn’t for me. As with any endeavor, some people are just better

at religion – they have a talent or an aptitude for it that others lack. This proclivity doesn’t necessarily say anything about morality, charity, or kindness. But ethical behavior and its connection or non-connection to religious belief is beyond the scope of this essay.

My point here is that the tools and actions employed to render unseen spirits real and efficacious for people also function in other realms of human experience. It’s telling that a right wing criticism of the environmental movement is that it’s “a religion.” Fair point. It’s not that people concerned about ecological issues are nature worshippers in a literal sense (though some may be), it’s that the critics recognize the same forces animating the religious faithful also motivate environmental activists, and they apparently believe those forces belong exclusively to the godly. Not so. For example, you can’t see carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases any clearer than you can see god(s), but stories, imagination, and practice solidify those unseen chemical entities in the same way.

I hear the howls of protest from my fellow “greens”: *The effects of*

*climate change and other environmental problems are measurable.* Yes, but so are the effects of religious belief. (For example there is convincing data to support that regular church attendance improves health and longevity.) *But the anti-pollution movement is based on science, not faith.* Yes, but we non-scientists accept that on faith – I haven’t personally done the experiments or the research; rather, I believe the compelling stories I’ve read and heard about it, I imagine the results of human choices regarding the biosphere, and I practice citizen science by contributing observations and measurements to research data bases. It could be that I have a better knack for science than I did for religion.

I firmly believe that science provides a better path to a viable human future on this planet than does religion, but it’s pointless and counterproductive to denigrate those who don’t share your viewpoint and beliefs. For example, when some evangelicals assert that environmentalism is a religion, they mean it is demonic. Not helpful. What’s useful is to realize we all think, emote, and

live according to particular stories that resonate with us. The key to changing minds and behavior is to tell a better story. “The most powerful person in the world,” noted Steve Jobs, “is the storyteller.” When you ignite imaginations and establish practices, you can transform the culture. Teacher and screenwriter Robert McKee has written, “Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world.”

The beauty of stories is their power to blend us. For example, the July 4 holiday in this country is based upon the story of the Declaration of Independence and a chronicle of the events that led to it. It’s a summer party time, and nothing wrong with that. We don’t all view the history through the same lenses and filters, and we make up many tribes and factions, but most can agree on barbecues, parades, and fireworks, and that’s not trivial. What’s most important about the holiday is the gathering itself, but it wouldn’t happen without the story.

I hold up July 4 because of the obvious political/philosophical divisions in the country today that revolve around – to one degree or another – what

it means to be American. Those arguments originated with the nation itself and won’t be resolved soon, if ever. But it wouldn’t hurt to dial back the intensity, and in the cause of agreeing-to-disagree, of promoting civility and bipartisan listening, the formula is there: What’s the story? What is to be imagined? What do we practice?

When I recently opened my old King James Bible and flipped through the pages of fine-point notes and color-coded highlighting, I felt a pang of nostalgia – not for my theological studies per se, but for the simplistic worldview I supported at the time: it’s all in God’s hands, and I need not worry; study and be good. For better and for worse that is not my story now. There is something new under the sun – eight billion enterprising primates with appetites and abilities that are, in the context of the biosphere, god-like.

*Once upon this time, we are in our own hands...* That’s how the tale begins. Pick it up from there if you will.

**RELAX...**Continued from page 4

very disciplined and dug into that project they’d been wanting to do. Most people I heard about weren’t and didn’t, saying that they had lots of good intentions, were surprised they didn’t accomplish much at all, but also felt just fine about it, guilt-free. Many discovered that they really liked a simpler schedule, fewer commitments, more time at home, and more quiet time. Some I know took advantage of being mask-free by spending lots of time out of doors skiing, hiking, canoeing, biking, and kayaking. Others struggled, finding it very difficult to be isolated without the interaction and stimulation of co-workers, friends, and outside activities.

I worked throughout COVID, so I didn’t lose my schedule, but I know that some people who were untethered from their work routines found it disorienting, even when they were enjoying it. “What do I do next?” We are creatures of habit underneath it all, and the structure of our days can give us a sense of being anchored and centeredness.

Last fall I took a Folk School class on intentional journaling with a focus on planning retirement, which emphasized getting clear on what you want, your

dreams, your goals, and documenting your action steps along the way rather than just letting things happen to you. I found myself resisting doing that additional writing, planning, list-making and scheduling, when my days were already very work-ordered with daily to-do lists, yearning to be able to just go with the flow. Maybe I’ll try that dreams and goals journal again, to provide some accountability to myself for my intentions and actions, for I don’t want the days to evaporate into months and years, leaving me wondering where the time went.

A friend of mine is visiting this week with her husband. She lived in my duplex in the 80’s while pursuing her master’s degree in chemistry at the U of M. She helped me out with my home-based business, and sometimes we just had silly fun together. I played background music on my autoharp while she read organic chemistry texts into a tape recorder to assist students with visual and reading impairments. She threw on a coat over her pajamas to go with me to deliver my tax return before midnight into the waiting hands of the postal workers on the street

outside the Minneapolis downtown post office. We indulged in Haagen-Dazs ice cream, and she read favorite poems aloud from Emily Dickinson as I drove.

Susie was and is a quirky, creative, sensitive, deeply caring person. She was creative on all levels: in the lab, figuring out alternatives setting up experiments when the right equipment went missing, and at home, creating a quilt top without a pattern in one morning from fabric she had collected over time. She started cutting when she thought she had enough fabric pieces to do it. When I brought up the concept of right brain and left brain functions, she said that was a lot of hoey. I said to her, “You’re so balanced with abilities from both sides of your brain, you just can’t see it.”

She’s now a professor at Ole Miss, still loving science and teaching, an extremely dedicated educator and mentor to many students. She usually didn’t take much time to nurture herself, so she decided to take some art classes, doing abstract painting and later expanding with other materials and techniques. She sent me some small samples, saying, “I don’t think this makes sense to

anyone else. It doesn’t always make sense to me, but I love doing it. The rest of the world falls away when I’m painting.” She brought photos of the work she’s been doing recently that blew me away: beautiful, intriguing, complex, abstract compositions. Some are muted earth tones, some are bursting with color, and the small images lined up in a rectangle on her phone looked like an incredible, unique quilt.

She embodies the essence of creative adventure, pushing the limits of paper and paint and her own mind, without prefabricated expectations, keeping at it even when she felt silly. It has been a joy to see her artwork and to reconnect with this dear sister-from-another-mother who often sees, feels, and reacts to the world as I do and “gets me” as I do her. I will be sad to see her go, but I know our spirits will remain close, and her bold art explorations will continue to inspire me in my artwork and other life choices. Too many years pass between our visits, but she’s only 1,145 miles and 45 gallons of gas away, so I better jot down an intention in my journal for a winter trip to the south!

precautions. Visit [www.vermilionculturalcenter.org](http://www.vermilionculturalcenter.org) for more info.



*the*  
**TIMBERJAY**

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**LVCC...**Continued from page 3

“Lots of new people attended the fundraiser,” she said, “and we hope they will continue to support the project.”

The fundraiser was a sneak peek into the new-

ly-constructed Halunen Lobby, with its newly-restored stained glass windows, which encompasses the historic church building.

A second fundraiser is

set for Saturday, Aug. 28. A few tickets are still available for the dinner, auction, and live music program at the Tower Civic Center. Seating will be limited to allow for COVID safety

TOWER-SOUDAN HISTORY

# Tower Fire Hall fundraiser features Erie Mining history



**TOWER-** The Tower-Soudan Historical Society is holding a fundraiser as part of its efforts to raise funds for the exterior masonry rehabilitation phase of the Historic Fire Hall. The community is invited to attend a book presentation on Tuesday, Aug. 17, at 2 p.m. in the Tower Train Depot Coach Car 81. The renovated train car is air conditioned. Linda Haugen and her crew of volunteers will have an assortment of refreshments and desserts for you to enjoy.

Tickets are \$20 each and advance reservations can be made by contacting TSHS Secretary Linda Folstad at tshssecretary@gmail.com or by call/text at 218-750-0193. Payment can be made at the door by cash or check payable to the TSHS. Advanced reservations are appreciated so we can properly plan for refreshments.

While the roof on the 1895 Tower Fire Hall at 504 Main Street was replaced in July to preserve the historic building, more rehabilitation phases are needed to achieve the plan of historic preservation of the building and revitalization of Tower's Main Street. Not only serving as a history museum with the city's 1891 Ahrens steam-powered fire engine, which has been in storage for decades, as the featured centerpiece, the building tells the story of Tower and Soudan's vital role in the early development of the Vermilion

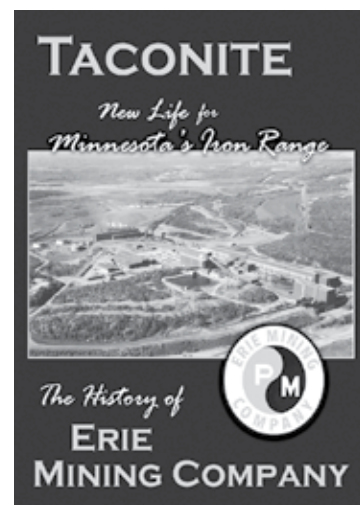
Range and Minnesota's iron ore mining industry that had a lasting impact on our region and helped to shape our cultural identity. It was a multi-purpose building housing Tower's city hall and jail, in addition to the fire hall, and moving forward it will serve not only as a museum, but will offer a destination gift shop for local artisans who work in historical trades, crafts and art forms, and a history educational center focused on the heritage of our Tower-Soudan-Lake Vermilion community.

"Ron Hein's leadership on the Society's Veterans Memorial Hall Advisory Board, as a volunteer contributing thousands of hours, his contributions to the success of the Society and its membership, his leadership as a military veteran, as a board officer and team leader on the book project, and his efforts to expand exhibits and programs that honor the service of the St. Louis County veterans, are unparalleled," said Joanne Coombe, Executive Director of the St. Louis County Historical Society. "His leadership has enhanced the Society's ability to house, preserve, and present military and civilian artifacts that directly reflect individual and collective historic contributions of the citizens of St. Louis County."

The Tower-Soudan Historical Society is pleased to offer this opportunity to learn about our local

## Taconite: New Life for Minnesota's Iron Range – The History of Erie Mining Company

Brigadier General Ronald Hein (Bvt), a retired Armor Officer in the Minnesota Army National Guard wrote this book to document the impact made by the Erie Mining Company on the Iron Range. Hein is the President of the St. Louis County Historical Society and a team member on the Erie Mining Company project, which tells the rich history of mining in Minnesota, including the industry's contribution to World War II.



In 2014, Hein initiated the project after visiting at a Christmas party. "This story is intended to keep the memory of Erie Mining Company alive and to serve as an inspiration to you, the next generation," Hein writes in the book. After initiation, this project was formally adopted by the St. Louis County Historical Society in a multi-faceted partnership. The book tells the story of mining and examines the vast amount of pioneering

work involved in developing an economically feasible method to mine and process a previously worthless low grade iron ore called taconite. By turning taconite into a high quality product, the development of Minnesota's mineral resources was made possible and ensured Minnesota's continued prominence as the major supplier of the iron ore critical to the nation's security and advancement of our standard of living.

All Minnesota schools, technical colleges, and universities, as well as libraries in the Arrowhead Library System, received a copy of the book. The book has been well received and recently was presented the 2021 Minnesota History Award by the Minnesota Alliance for Local History Museums. It also won the Mary Lee Spence Documentary Book Award from the Iron Mining Association.

Iron Range history, its communities and its people. Ron will give a 45-minute visual presentation about The Erie Mining History book with time for questions afterwards. The book will be available for sale by cash or check payable to TSHS. Fifty-percent of the proceeds from the sale of books will benefit the TSHS Historic Fire Hall Restoration Project.

**Week of Aug. 9**

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

Tower City Council- 5:30 p.m. on Aug. 9

**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 Aug. 17.

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 Aug. 10 at the town hall.

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

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

Vermilion Country School Board- Meetings posted online at vermillioncountry.org.

**Red Hat Belles to meet Aug. 12**

**SOUDAN-** The Northern Red Hat Belles will meet on Thursday, Aug. 12 at 12 noon at the Vermilion Park Inn in Soudan. A salad luncheon with dessert and beverage will be served for \$12. Please make reservations by Aug. 9 to Linda at 612-916-1918. New members and guests are always welcome.

**Mass schedule changes at St. Martin's**

Father Beau Braun, pastor at St. Martin's, announced the following changes to the Mass schedule:

- Masses:
- Sunday- 10:30 a.m.
- Wednesday- 9 a.m.
- Friday - 9 a.m.

Adoration of the Blessed Eucharist:

- Monday- 2-8 p.m.
- Wednesday- 8 a.m.
- Friday- 8 a.m.

Confessions are heard a half-hour before each Mass.

## BEST Baseball II Little League Minors go undefeated



**SOUDAN-** Eight, nine and 10-year olds from BEST Baseball Team II are walking proud after having an undefeated season, including winning their championship game on July 21. The players are from Babbitt, Embarrass, Soudan and Tower. Coaches were Nate Dostert, Annie Dougherty and Josh Nevala. Coach Dostert gave praise to Bentley Nevala who was the starting pitcher and attributed the team's success to good defensive play.

In the playoffs, the BEST II Team beat Mesabi East Black 5-0, Eveleth I 6-3, and Eveleth II 6-5.

**Pictured (from left): Back: Coach Josh Nevala, Coach Nate Dostert, Shaye Isham, Coach Annie Dougherty. Middle: Ayden Mickle, Kasen Dostert, Kayla Dougherty, Lanara Guenther.**

**Kneeling: Dylan Crego, Kooper Dostert, Nixon Levens, Bentley Nevala, Bentley Crego, Luca Sundahl. Front: Kaleb Gornick.** submitted photo

**St. Louis County Solid Waste Facility Area site hours**

<b>Northwoods Transfer Station</b> 9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt Summer Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: noon-6pm	<b>Cook Transfer Station</b> 2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm
<b>County 77 Canister Site</b> 2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp Summer Hours Tues: 1-6pm Thurs: 8am-1pm Sat: 8am-5pm Sun: noon-6pm	<b>Soudan Canister Site</b> 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am-5pm
<b>Embarrass Canister Site</b> 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30-4:30pm Thu: 10am-5pm	<b>Aurora Transfer Station</b> 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
<b>Household Hazardous Waste Facility</b> 5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	<b>Regional Landfill</b> 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

Summer hours effective April 15th through September 30th  
For solid waste and recycling information go to [www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle)

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

**Little Church meeting on Saturday, Aug. 14**

**VERMILION LAKE TWP-** The Little Church Committee will be meeting on Saturday, Aug. 14 at 10 a.m. at the church, located on Cty. Rd. 26, Wahlsten Rd. All are welcome to attend and the group is looking for people interested in keeping the Little Church preserved and maintained for the

**community.** The group sponsors a Men's Group, all are welcome, that meets every Thursday at 9 a.m. for coffee and conversation. Any questions, contact Len Hujanen at 218-749-2014.

**Have ideas to improve the Soudan park/rink?**

**BREITUNG-** Breitung residents who are interested on serving on

a committee to plan improvements to the Soudan playground and skating rink are invited to a meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 10 at 8:30 a.m. at the Soudan park pavilion. People of all ages are invited to serve on the committee from teens to seniors. The committee will plan and make a recommendation to the town board. The board will apply for grant funding in the spring. For questions, call Stephanie at 218-410-6001.

**History talks set for Aug. 9 and 24**

**TOWER-** Immigrants of the Northland will be presented by Karel Winkelaar at Sulu's Espresso Café patio on Monday, Aug. 9 at 7 p.m. Bring a lawn chair in case the patio fills up.

The Skala Bar Story

**NOW OPEN**  
Fridays  
4-6 PM  
at the  
Train Depot

will be presented by Randy Semo at the Good Ol' Days on Tuesday, Aug. 24 at 2:30 p.m. Randy will tell the story and treat you to a tour of the bar and its many secrets during the early years of lawlessness when Tower issued 22 liquor licenses.

**Tower-Soudan Class of 1966 to meet Aug. 8**

**VERMILION LAKE TWP-** The Tower-Soudan Class of 1966 will meet on Sunday, Aug. 8 at 4 p.m. at Neighbor's BBQ (the old Black Bear Café). All classmates and spouses are welcome to attend. Everyone will order off the menu. Please RSVP by calling Pat S. at 218-741-9225 or Faye T. at 218-753-4877.

## WINDOW INTO YESTERDAY

# Piano lessons: An Ely tradition

by DAVID KESS  
Ely-Winton Historical Society

"Have you practiced yet?" came the voice from another room. An all too familiar question to those who grew up in the '50s, '60s, and 70s.

Seventy years ago many Ely families had a piano at home, usually an old upright. Back then children were frequently subjected to weekly piano lessons. Some were visited by a teacher who came to their house. Most, however, went to the teacher's home for lessons. Some children opted out of piano lessons by taking up a band instrument instead, but many students actually played both the piano and another instrument.

Music was a big part of life in Ely, however, piano students are somewhat a rare breed now. Keyboards drew some interest for a while, but even those have waned. Pianos themselves are now hard to give away—even for free. Something has been lost along the way, I think.

Among the piano teachers from that earlier era were Clara Newgord and Bessie Van Dyke. Clara was a diminutive woman and wife of a local dentist. She came to each student's house. Bessie Van Dyke had been a music professor in St. Louis, Mo. when she got "the call" to come north to establish a mission in the wilderness. Her friend, chauffeur, and bookkeeper was Helen Bassnet. They bought and remodeled some buildings several miles west of



**Ely piano teacher, Ina Dunstan, also played the piano in dance orchestras on Saturday nights, and served as organist at Grace Lutheran for many decades.** photo courtesy of the Ely-Winton Historical Society

town, calling one of them "God's Tabernacle in the Wilderness."

The first lessons I remember from Mrs. Van Dyke cost \$.50. After nine years the charge went up to \$1.50! She and Helen also came right to one's door.

Dorothy Murphy was a graduate of the Peabody Institute in Baltimore. She had trained to be a concert pianist but was handicapped by a hearing impairment. Coming to Ely, she took on a few students, usually the more promising ones. Not surprisingly, her

standards were quite high.

About the same time, Evelyn Kivipelto took on some piano students who came to her home.

Undoubtedly there were earlier teachers. One was my mother's teacher, Helmi Lintula. She spent most of the lesson time in her home staying warm by the wood range in the kitchen. My mother thus learned to play by ear and not so much from sight reading.

As a graduate of the McPhail School of music Helmi knew the piano rep-

ertoire extremely well. She gave lessons in her house on Conan Street. Lesson times were carefully booked and you could not be late! She was a teacher who was both firm and friendly.

Another, Ina Dunstan, also played the piano in dance orchestras on Saturday nights, and served as organist at Grace Lutheran for many decades.

Nearly all students used the John Thompson series with the red covers, regardless of the teacher.

By the time she was in her 80s, Mrs. Newgord

moved to Wisconsin to live with her son. Bessie Van Dyke became ill and went to stay at her son's home near the Twin Cities. Filling the void were Marcia Homer and Bonnie Starkman. In more recent times Judy McClure took on a number of students. Bonnie and Judy are still at it.

The dreaded event in any piano student's life was a recital, which occurred once or even twice a year. Pieces were to be memorized. Flawlessly. I am not aware of what Clara Newgord might have done about recitals but Bessie Van Dyke used several different venues for her students' recitals. I clearly recall ones in Room 26 of the Community Center with a piano that was seldom in tune, at School #41 out in Vermilion Township, and at the now nonexistent Soudan School. My signature recital piece was "The Skater's Waltz."

None of us became Horowitz or even Liberace but we did gain a true appreciation of good music. One wonders what musical knowledge young people will have today without this background.

From its earliest years Ely families had a committed interest in educating children in piano and instrumental music. A strong musical program in the schools both with band and choir continues to this day. Maybe not so much with the piano.

An exhibit with interesting old piano music and pictures of piano teachers is featured in the Fine Arts Lobby at VCC until Labor Day.

## Tuesday Group

ELY – The Tuesday Group community lunch gathering meets at noon every Tuesday at the Grand Ely Lodge.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

➤ **Aug. 10:** David Doniger and Jessica Hellman, Climate Action - David Doniger is the senior strategic director of the Climate and Clean Energy Program of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Jessica Hellman is the director of the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment and the Ecolab Chair in Environmental Leadership.

➤ **Aug. 17:** Meet New Elyites.

➤ **Aug. 24:** David Backes, editor of A Private Wilderness: The Journals of Sigurd F. Olson.

## Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2021



a parched thirsty ground calling for the sky to burst to release its rain

## 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.  
**SUNDAY NIGHT AA -** Every Sunday, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, east side door.  
**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.  
**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION GED** - Study materials and pre-test available. Call 218-365-3359, or 1-800-662-5711.

### CAREGIVER

**SUPPORT GROUPS:** Babbitt: 3rd Monday of Month: 6-7:30 p.m. at Carefree Living  
Ely: 4th Monday of Month: 10-11:30 a.m. at Ely-Bloomenson Hospital

## OUR COMMUNITY

### Ely art gallery wins 'Operation Blueberry' contest

ELY – The first-place winner in the 2021 Operation Blueberry marketing promotion is Art & Soul Gallery. Started in 2020, the Ely Chamber of Commerce offered an alternative celebration of the city's annual Blueberry/Art Festival that typically would draw tens of thousands of visitors to the area.

"Operation Blueberry" according to event coordinator Ellen Cashman, was a way to give exposure to local businesses through special sales and promotions in an attempt to attract customers who may visit Ely. The 2020 celebration was canceled because of COVID-19 and the 2021 event was cut short when a fierce wind storm strafed Ely at the end of the first day of the festival.

The event was successful last year and continued this year. "We would like to thank the Ely businesses for participating in 'Operation Blueberry' this year," Cashman said.

Businesses were encouraged to create and display a banner advertising their special events. The winner receives a free membership.



**The Art & Soul Gallery won first place in the Ely Chamber of Commerce "Operation Blueberry" promotion.** submitted photo

The window judging was completed last week and joining Art & Soul Gallery in the winners' circle are, second place,

The Cabin, third place, Piragis Northwoods Co., and fourth place, Mealey's Gift and Sauna.

Because of the storm-shortened festival this year, the Chamber launched a virtual Blueberry/Art Festival online that runs through the end of August.

"We had a huge outpouring from the community and supporters asking how they can help our vendors," said Chamber Executive Director Eva Sebesta. "We asked vendors to tell us about their losses, and that way their supporters can reach out directly to help in any way they can." For more information, go to the Blueberry/Art Festival page at [www.ely.org](http://www.ely.org).

"And stay tuned for our Harvest Moon Festival, Sept. 10-12," Sebesta added.

Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust

**We are now accepting 2021 Arts Grant Applications**

for Individual Artists, Project & Youth Grants, Scholarships & Operational Funding

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

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS: 12:00 noon on Fri., Sept. 24**

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

Subscribe: 218-753-2950



### Timberjay photograph of Ely blight house used as example in Ohio

The leader of an Ohio civic association contacted the Timberjay last month to use a published photograph of a blight house in Ely as part of their blight reporting procedure campaign. "Would you please grant the Westwood Civic Association of Cincinnati, Ohio, permission to publish the picture on our website and e-letter as part of an announcement of procedures for reporting blight?" asked Kelly Hibbett. "I was going to use one from our neighborhood but didn't want to embarrass anyone. The house in your image looks like building construction that could be in our neighborhood and the problems are ones we also see." The house in question is located on West Shagawa Road and was the focus of a continuing blight enforcement procedure by the city's building official. photo by K. Vandervort

### Rotary Club 100th anniversary celebration and auction set for Aug. 14 in Whiteside Park

ELY – The Rotary Club here turns 100 years old this year, and will celebrate on Saturday, Aug. 14, at Whiteside Park. The annual Rotary auction fundraiser, live music, beer tent, food booths and more will be part of the celebration.

The club has put together a full day of festivities, according to President Todd Heiman. combining the special anniversary celebration with the 31st year of the auction that serves as the group's major annual fundraiser.

A large tent in Whiteside Park will

serve as home to the auction, while a separate beer tent will also be set up. Food vendors, including JR's Beef, are scheduled to be open by 11 a.m. Pat and Donna Surface will perform from 1 to 2:30 p.m., and again at 6:30 p.m.

As many as 100 items will be auctioned off as part of the live auction, while a silent auction will also take place, including a "buy it now" feature, Heiman said. The Ely Rotary Club is also selling 400 tickets at \$50 each, and returning half in the form of raffle prizes. A grand prize of \$7,500 and additional prizes of \$2,000 and \$500 will be drawn during the event, near the pavilion side of the park.

ORR CITY COUNCIL

# Council seals Dollar General variance denial

Alternative suggestion of conditional approval unworkable, as time limit for decision has expired

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

ORR- At a special meeting on July 12, Orr city council members rejected two zoning variance requests for a new Dollar General store on the former site of Wally's Auto Service, and at another special meeting on Monday they passed a required finding of fact resolution to make it official.

A request by Midwest MN LLC to modify the requirement that only 30 percent of a new development can be covered by impervious surfaces that cause rainwater runoff generated the most discussion at the July 12 meeting. Midwest MN wanted a variance up to 50 percent, an amount less than the Wally's Auto buildings and parking lot covered. But concerns were raised by both council members

and adjacent landowner Tony Norman about possible pollution from fluids leaked by parked cars, claiming that there was insufficient information in the site drawings and from Midwest MN representatives to determine if the stormwater system would be adequate. In his motion to deny the variance, council member Bruce Black specifically cited the insufficient stormwater system information as justification. The council voted unanimously to reject that and a second request to correct what appeared to be a typographical error in parking space requirements.

On Monday, council member Tom Kennebeck indicated he would be in favor of an alternative course of action.

"I still think we need to think about maybe approving it with conditions," Kennebeck said.

Black's reply was swift and firm.

"No," he said. "They weren't even prepared. They say the water's going to go through a swale, but we don't have any clue what the swale was. I understand what you're saying, but until an engineer can see that, because you and I probably can't figure that out, how are they going to treat the water?" "I understand that there are conditions," Kennebeck responded. "That's why I'm saying I'm not ruling out that they can present what we need." Black noted that the 60-day period in which the request could be considered had lapsed, and that Midwest MN LLC has the opportunity to reapply for the variances and submit additional information if they choose to do so. "You have to meet those conditions, and they did not meet the conditions,"

Black said.

Black then made a motion to approve the finding of fact. Council member Lloyd Scott seconded the motion, and there was no additional discussion. Kennebeck cast the lone nay vote and the motion carried.

The meeting was then adjourned, taking a little over five minutes to complete.

### Findings of fact

While the variance requests for the Dollar General store were related to the amount of impervious surface allowed and reducing the 100+ parking spaces required by the zoning language to only 30, only one of the five "conclusions of law" in the resolution dealt specifically with those.

The first item addressed the stormwater issue, stating that "applicants have not demon-

strated storm water runoff will not adversely affect neighboring property owners and their enjoyment or use of the property." The parking issue was not specifically addressed in the finding of facts. The final four items address an issue not mentioned in the opening facts section of the resolution as "use restrictions sought to be varied," namely the lack in the site plan of a 15-foot water main easement along the northern side of the property. The water main issue also was not discussed in the council's regular meeting on July 12 or included in the motion to deny the two actual variance requests. However, concerns about the water main and the easement had been raised in prior meetings, as well as in the special meeting on July 12. Midwest MN LLC had already indicated it would pay for the

work to relocate a portion of the water main, but this did not address the fact that site drawings show a proposed easement of 7.5 feet. Tony Norman, owner of the adjacent property, stated at the special meeting on July 12 that he would not agree to granting an easement on his property.

The water main easement situation would have to be resolved before a building permit could be granted. The resolution suggested the building could be reduced in size to allow for the easement. However, SEH Inc. engineer Dan Hinzmann, representing Midwest MN LLC, said at a prior meeting that without the variance to allow use of up to 50 percent of the lot for impervious surfaces the 9,100-square-foot building and parking lot could not be built.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### North Woods announces start of fall sports practices

FIELD TWP- North Woods School is gearing up for fall sports season with practices beginning on Aug. 16.

All participants must have a current physical on file before they can practice. Physicals must be renewed every three years. Players will be required to turn in MSHSL eligibility paperwork during the first days of practice.

Football players will pick up equipment and paperwork on Friday, Aug. 13 from 4:30 to 7 p.m. or Saturday, Aug. 14 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. The first day of practice for players in ninth through twelfth grades will be Monday, Aug. 16 from 8 a.m. to noon.

Seventh and eighth-grade players will begin practice on Monday, Aug. 23 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Practices for the volleyball team begin Monday, Aug. 16 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Cross-country runners will also have their first practice on Aug. 16 from 6 to 8 p.m.

All practices will be at the school.

### Trinity Lutheran to offer Vacation Bible School

COOK- Children in preschool through sixth grade are welcome to attend a three-day Vacation Bible School at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook.

Sessions will be in the mornings from 9 to 11:30 a.m. next Monday through Wednesday, Aug. 9-11.

Parents or guardians are asked to preregister their children. Forms can be picked up at Trinity Lutheran Church, or are available by sending an email to info@trinitycook.org.

For questions, please call 218-666-5965.

### Cook Music in the Park continues with local favorite

COOK- The Beefeater Brothers return to the gazebo stage in Cook City Park at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 11 for Music in the Park. David Pederson and Jimmy Laine will join Eric Pederson and Mike Randolph of the Beefeater Brothers to perform favorites from the 1950s and beyond.

St. Paul's (Alango) Lutheran Church will be serving burgers and brats. In case of rain, the concert will move to the Cook VFW. Upcoming performers include The Divas on Aug. 18, The Blenders on Aug. 25, Jaggedease Band on Sept. 1 and The No Notes on Sept. 8.

Music In The Park is made possible by the Cook Lions Club, Cook VFW Post 1757, the Cook Chamber of Commerce, the Cook Timberwolves Snowmobile Club, Northwoods Friends of the Arts, and free-will community donations.

### Readers and Rappers to meet Tuesday in city park

COOK- Readers and Rappers, a Cook area book club, will meet again on Tuesday, Aug. 10 at 1 p.m. at the gazebo in Cook City Park.

The book to be discussed is "American Dirt" by author Jeanine Cummins, a timely story of a mother and her 8-year old son who are forced to flee from a drug cartel and migrate from Acapulco to the U.S. It humanizes the undocumented immigrants and their journey to our border wall. It was an Oprah pick and best seller in 2020.

The moderator for the book is Claire Zwiig. Please bring your own chair. Refreshments will not be served.



Members of the acclaimed bluegrass band Monroe Crossing include David Robinson, banjo, Matt Thompson, mandolin, Derek Johnson, guitar, Lisa Fuglie, fiddle, and Mark Anderson, bass. submitted photo

## Monroe Crossing is NWFA benefit concert headliner

Beefeater Brothers to open for Aug. 19 event

COOK- They've toured the country from coast-to-coast, but Monroe Crossing is bringing its award-winning brand of bluegrass music to Cook for a concert on Thursday, Aug. 19 at the Cook Community Center.

Northwoods Friends of the Arts is renewing its annual musical fundraiser with local talent as well, as Cook's popular Beefeater Brothers duo, Eric Pederson and Mike Randolph, perform with vocalist Anna Marie as the 6 p.m. warmup act before Monroe Crossing takes the stage at 7 p.m. Over the past two decades, Monroe Crossing has made more than 1,500 concert appearances throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, and has been inducted into the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame. Audiences are treated to old-fashioned bluegrass and gospel sound, as well as the lively stage presence of band members David Robinson, banjo, Derek Johnson, guitar, Matt Thompson, mandolin, Lisa Fuglie, fiddle, and Mark Anderson, bass.

The secret to the band's longevity and success? According to fiddler and lead singer Lisa Fuglie, "It's just plain hard work and dedication. We all share a

love for bluegrass music and for performing on stage. We appreciate every audience, large or small, and understand that we're there for them, not the other way around."

Concert goers will also have the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets to win beautiful gifts of merchandise, services and art donated by local artists and friends of the arts.

Advance tickets are \$20 and are available at the NWFA Gallery at 210 S River St. in Cook Wednesdays through Saturdays or by email at nwfamn.org@gmail.com. To order by phone, call 218-780-6510 or 218-750-1989. Tickets at the door are \$25.

The Cook Community Center is located on Gopher Dr. at the Doug Johnson Recreation Center.

NWFA nurtures the arts in Cook and the surrounding area in many ways, including hosting youth and adult arts programs and classes, arranging public concerts, operating a gallery featuring local artists, organizing the annual Cook Spring Art Expo and hosting community art-related events. Learn more about NWFA online at nwfamn.org and on Facebook.

## FRIENDS OF THE PARKS



Carrolle Wood looks on from behind as, from left, David Fultz, Ian MacDonald and Lawrence Gustafson assemble the pedestal for one of five new picnic tables that volunteers installed on Saturday at the Veterans Riverfront Park on N River St. in Cook. About a dozen people showed up to help, and two banners were also erected, one acknowledging the donation of CN Railroad to the project and the other identifying the park as a project of Cook Friends of the Parks.

photo by D. Colburn

### Area St. Louis County Solid Waste and Recycling Facility site hours

<b>Ash River Trail Canister Site</b> 11391 Ash River Trail Summer Hours Wed: 1pm-4pm Sat: 2:30pm-5:30pm	<b>Kabetogama Lake Canister Site</b> 10150 Gamma Rd Summer Hours Mon. & Wed: 9am-noon Sat: 10:30am-1:30pm	<b>Sturgeon Canister Site</b> 8380 Hwy 73 Hours Sun: 10am-4pm
<b>Orr Canister Site</b> 4038 Hwy 53 Summer Hours Tue: 9am-1pm, Thu: 2pm-7pm Sat: 8am-noon, Sun: 10am-2pm	<b>Portage Canister Site</b> 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Summer Hours Tue: 2pm-6pm; Thu: 10am-1pm, Sat: 1pm-3pm; Sun: 3pm-6pm	<b>County 77 Canister Site</b> 2038 County Rd. 77 Summer Hours Tue: 1-6pm, Thu: 8am-1pm Sat: 8am-5pm, Sun: noon-6pm
<b>Cook Transfer Station</b> 2134 S. Beatty Rd. Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm	<b>Regional Landfill</b> 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm	<b>St. Louis County Environmental Services Department</b>  <b>1-800-450-9278</b> Office hours 8-4:30 Mon. thru Fri. <a href="http://stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle">stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle</a>
<b>Household Hazardous Waste Facilities</b> 5345 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Tue, Sat: 8am-1pm	3994 Landfill Rd, Hibbing Sat: 8am-1pm	

Summer hours effective April 15th through September 30th



CITY OF ELY

# As hundreds of jobs go unfilled, Ely looks for answers in workforce shortage

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY – The acute labor shortage in Ely this summer continues unabated, and as local businesses struggle to even stay open with reduced staff, the city’s tourist industry is straining under the stress of too many visitors and too little service.

The city of Ely’s Economic Development Authority struggled to find the answers last week at their monthly meeting. In a conversation with Ely Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Eva

Sebesta, she said her organization is conducting a workforce survey among members to brainstorm ideas.

“We are looking to form a list of different options,” she said, “whether that could include internships, encouraging businesses to utilize the J-1 visa program, or other ways. We want to expend our time, energy and funds in the direction that our businesses want us to go. This is a time when we really need to look at thinking outside the box and (looking) at some non-traditional ways of

solving the workforce problem.”

Sebesta said the Ely Chamber has an online job posting board for its members.

“We have a place where the businesses can get their job listings out there, and we’ve had some success with that,” she said.

With the summer winding down, Sebesta said she is looking to help local businesses this fall plan for next year by presenting more options in the Chamber’s business development series.

Harold Langowski, Ely’s Clerk-Treasurer,

asked about any reluctance by Ely businesses to use the J-1 programs that allow for workers to come temporarily from other nations.

“Is it just an unknown for them?” he asked.

“I don’t think it is an unknown,” Sebesta said. “People have a general concept on how it works. They may be concerned about the amount of paperwork. That is one area that we can dive into.”

Langowski estimated that perhaps 100 to 200 local positions have gone unfilled this summer.

Sebesta related that

just one local tourism-related business, where her husband works, is down “five or six staff members.”

“That is a real struggle now,” Langowski said. “And as it gets tougher and tougher, summer by summer, many businesses struggle to stay open every day and it seems to affect our visitors. People go on vacation and want to go get something to eat and can’t find a restaurant open. I understand, and so does everyone in this room, why this is. This will have a detrimental effect.”

Interim Mayor Chuck

Novak suggested other initiatives that include hiring refugees.

“There is no solid program for that. You can’t get a program like that. It seems like nobody is interested,” he said. “We are in a dilemma. Where do we get our workforce from?”

Council member Paul Kess added, “Even if you had a workforce, they have no place to stay. Seasonal housing here is almost non-existent.”

EDA President Heidi Omerza added, “It is not a hopeless situation, We’ll keep moving forward.”

## ELY...Continued from page 1

Our vision is a growing creative community full of artists, entrepreneurs, businesses and restaurants that make downtown a place where people want to be.”

Alley A Realty’s Tanner Ott provided an update on the development company’s near-decade of projects at Tuesday Group this week. The session grew into a community brain-storming discussion on what is needed to continue the revitalization of this community.

Alley A Realty has been obtaining old, run-down buildings in Ely, and after extensive renovating and updating, will lease and manage the properties.

“We have a long-term horizon for getting a return on our investment,” Ott said. “We are committed to doing real quality work that will last.”

To put into words his love of the Ely area, Ott described the community as having “a really strong sense of place.” He described the character, culture, social opportunities, and unique history of Ely.

“How many places are there that you can drive to the gas station in the middle of February and meet a guy with eight sled dogs in the back of his pickup?” he asked. “That’s what I mean by a sense of place.”

The sense of history in Ely is also valued by Alley A Realty.

“Ely is a frontier town. They found iron, did a lot of logging, has tourism and so many subtle features,” Ott said. “There is a lot to draw from when we are doing our projects.”

Alley A Realty has worked on numerous projects over the past several years, including Insula Restaurant, Northern Grounds, Ely Historic State Theater, Potluck Kitchen store, Crapola, Healthy Families Chiropractic, Ely Folk School, Heavy Metal Sports and Catz Billiards, the Salerno building, the AFU building which is home to Range Mental Health and Ely Community Resource, and the former Pizza Hut restaurant that will soon transition from a former Tex/Mex eatery to Domino’s Pizza.

Alley A Realty even developed a downtown pocket park, or green space on Chapman Street. “It would be great if we could get an old Forest Service seaplane in this area to anchor a playground space for children,” he said. “We definitely want to add some more color and character to this space.”

The State Theater and adjacent Salerno building are one of the more visible development projects in town. Work continues on the facility. Plans for a café are in the works and a



Tanner Ott

basement lounge has been talked about. A new Airbnb recently opened above the theater, according to Ott.

Other Ely buildings, complete with dreams, plans and wishes, remain in Ott’s portfolio, including the former Tanner Hospital, the former Wilderness Outfitters or train depot building, the Portage Bar and the Jachich building on Sheridan Street, the Old Ford Garage, and the Pastika Building on Chapman Street.

Plans are in the works for Alley A Realty to begin a renovation project on the former Jachich building, right next door to the old Portage Bar on Sheridan Street, according to Ott. “This used to be a very popular spot, according to

old Elyites, for veterans returning from World War II,” he said. “What we like about this building is that renovation would not be a huge undertaking. It is about 1,000 square feet. It contains some neat finishes with old metal walls and ceiling. There is a hardwood floor that is worth refinishing. We believe there is a market in town for more small retail shops. It would be nice to have a store front up and running in Ely.”

The Tuesday Group audience shared ideas with Ott on what the community needs. Suggestions included women’s clothing stores, a shoe store, and indoor pickleball courts.

All agreed that additional workforce and seasonal housing is needed.

“That is more apparent this summer,” Ott said. “Some buildings on Sheridan Street could be used, but sometimes there is extensive cost in retrofitting with needed sprinkler systems, etc. The cost could get high.” He noted that the Tanner Hospital building could house many housing units.

Additional suggestions for more businesses in Ely from the Tuesday Group participants included a

Mexican restaurant, antique stores, a brewery/distillery, a café and more restaurants, an office supply and copy shop with creative workshop space, nail salon, and other ideas.

Ott revealed that the former JD Mills building, next to the State Theater, was just purchased by the Shulze Excavating Co. family.

“They plan to put in an antique store, and are also adding a realty office in there,” Ott said.

More art studios and maker spaces will soon be part of the second floor of the Salerno building, according to Ott. An industrial kitchen rental space was also listed as an improvement for the Ely community.

Ott introduced the idea of developing the old Ford garage area on Conan Street into a one-level condo area that could include green space or a commons area.

As the Crapola business expands into Brain Storm Bakery with plans to open soon in the former Plum Bun Bakery building, Ott said another organization is planning to use the vacated space in the former James Drug building, but he was not ready to reveal

any identity.

“There is a lot going on in Ely,” Ott concluded. “The hospital here is still planning for expansion. The school district is building. The Boathouse Brewpub is building a second-floor expansion. Look

around and you see so many people fixing their houses and businesses are looking to move here.” He praised the city of Ely as being a great partner and supporter for all the economic development taking place.

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[Vaccine Scheduling](#)  
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(218) 361-3297

[Tower Medical](#)  
[Vaccine Scheduling](#)  
415 N 2nd St, Suite 2  
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EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

# Tower Ambulance looking to update second rig

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

**TOWER-** The Tower Ambulance Commission will begin meeting monthly, instead of quarterly, starting in October, as the advisory group begins to look at options for updating the service's backup ambulance, a 2013 GMC 4500 with 109,635 miles on it. Ambulance Supervisor Dena Suihkonen also received permission from commission members to retire Rig 3, a 2005 Ford E450 with over 100,000 miles that is in poor condition. "The ambulance is worth maybe \$5,000," said Suihkonen, "and it will take more than that to fix it." The service's new ambulance, a 2019 Chevrolet 4500 with 18,961

miles, has been used for the majority of runs this year, said Suihkonen, and has been running great. But at times, the service is responding to two calls at the same time and requires two ambulances in working condition.

The backup rig does not have an auto-load cot system, and this can be difficult to maneuver safely for many of the current department members.

The new rig has the auto-load cot, equipment that is now required for new ambulances.

"It's a huge liability if we drop a patient or if an EMR hurts themselves loading the cot in or out of the ambulance," she said. This is mostly an issue if the patient is bigger than the emergency responders, which is often the case.

"When we take out that backup rig," said Suihkonen, "we are hoping that it's not a big patient or a long run."

Suihkonen said she had been looking into two options to solve this problem: either replacing the 2013 rig with a newer remanufactured ambulance that includes an auto-load system, at about half the cost of purchasing a new ambulance; or looking at using some of the ambulance subsidy dollars to purchase an auto-load cot for the current backup rig. The auto-load unit will cost close to \$30,000, she said, and may be compatible with a cot that the ambulance service already owns. Once purchased, the auto-load system would be moved into a new ambulance. "You don't find them

used because services keep moving them to their new units," she said.

"We really need to do more research," said Suihkonen.

The board decided to start meeting monthly, instead of quarterly, starting in October, to research these issues and then also decide if it's appropriate to use ambulance subsidy dollars to purchase equipment, instead of just the ambulance unit. Since these units are now required on new ambulances, they said, it may make sense to make this change.

"If it's a required piece of equipment, I have no problem with it," said Eagles Nest Township representative Larry McCray. "I just don't want to move into the realm of additional equipment."

The commission is going to need to consider replacing the 2013 rig at some point in the next few years, in either case.

The ambulance subsidy account currently sits at \$63,695, but only two of the area townships have made their annual contributions so far this year. At the current subsidy rate, the townships and city contribute about \$40,000 a year to this fund.

Commission members also agreed to the 2021 ambulance vehicle replacement aid agreement, basically with the same language as in 2020, with the same \$1.66 per mile payment into the subsidy fund by the city for any miles put on the ambulance during non-emergency transfer calls. The actual contracts need to be approved and

signed by the individual townships. The ambulance service did 17 transfer calls in the first half of the year, most of which were within a 30- to 90-mile radius, according to Suihkonen, and are only accepting transfer calls if there are two additional EMR's available on standby to take 911 calls while the other ambulance is out on a transfer. Suihkonen said most of the transfer calls are Medicare or Medicaid patients, and the reimbursement rates are much lower than for a private insurance patient, so these calls are not producing a profit for the service.

The service has recorded 226 calls for the first six months of the year, but 53 calls required no transport.

## BAND...Continued from page 1

to decide without really knowing the full extent of what the product is, and the volatility or lack of it," one member said. "I think we need some more information about the possibilities of the way things go with this."

"It's pretty hard to give you guys our point of view with such little detail," another said. "You're asking us to invest our future, invest our money, \$4 million dollars is a lot of money. And with such little detail about the business it's going to be hard for us to give you our standpoint on it. We can't research it, we can't look it up. Is this a gamble? Especially with the pandemic that we just went through here,

COVID, we've seen a lot of small businesses in this area closed down."

### Business info

The data Chavers referred to was a packet containing an executive summary of the proposed business purchase with 28 months of projected revenues, five years of an amortization schedule for an estimated \$4,075,000 20-year loan, and detailed financial reports for income, monthly balances, cash flow, and break-even analysis. Fortune Bay General Manager Jenna Lehti worked with the Small Business Development Center to develop the financials and created the executive summary.

Together with additional details provided in answers to questions, the following profile emerged:

► The business, valued between \$3.8 and \$5.8 million, has multiple locations in northeast Minnesota, but the exact number and cities where they are based were not disclosed.

► Five buildings would be included in the acquisition, although they were not described as business locations.

► The business employs six full-time and six part-time workers. Chavers indicated that management staff would stay on for up to five years or longer and did not know how long current

part-time staff would stay. Jobs could be available for interested Band members, although Chavers said she was unaware of any current members with management qualification for this particular kind of business. She said the band would look to provide the necessary training for promising candidates, facilitated by the continuing staff.

► Products sold by the business are "something that everybody needs at some point," Chavers said. The business has a favorable potential market index of 107, and there will be ongoing demand for its products and services.

► The business has competitors, including larger competitors in larger cities, but none close to it, Chavers said.

The owners are selling the business because they wish to retire, Chavers said, and they approached the Band with the idea of buying the business. "The business approached the tribe," Chavers said. "They wanted to offer it to the tribe first before opening it up to other members, because they see the tribe spending a lot of money in other areas where they could invest it in themselves if they purchase this business." Chavers and Lenti both reinforced that the Bois Forte tribal government buys almost \$200,000 of this business's products annually. "If we purchase this business, if and that's up to the Band membership, all Bois Forte reservation tribal programs and businesses would have to utilize these businesses," Chavers said. "So, basically what we're doing is we're paying ourselves for our goods."

### Financials

If the Band took over the business in September, projected net income before taxes for the final four months of the year is

\$78,651, according to the executive summary. Net income in the first full year of operation, called Year 2, would be \$275,885. For Year 3, the executive summary reported calendar year net income of \$448,278, a 62-percent increase over Year 2.

Those Year 3 projections, however, may be overly optimistic. A review of the business plan by the *Timberjay*, obtained from the Band's website on Tuesday, indicated that payroll costs of approximately \$120,000 may have inadvertently been omitted from the expense portion of the plan. That also reduced projected payroll taxes by nearly \$15,000. Combined, the omissions may have padded the Year 3 profitability by approximately \$135,000.

The *Timberjay* sent an email to Chavers inquiring about the possible oversight and inviting her to respond. The *Timberjay* did not hear back prior to presstime.

### Who will decide?

Throughout the early part of the meeting, Chavers repeatedly said the purchase decision would rest with Band members.

"We're not making the decision, it's up to the Band membership," Chavers said.

However, when asked later on what sort of response she hoped to get to the proposal, Chavers noted the traditionally low turnout for tribal elections and gave a qualified response as to how low feedback would affect her decision. "This is just me talking, I'm not talking for the rest of the (tribal council), but if there's not enough, like say, if 20 people respond, that's not appropriate," she said. "It would have to be a larger number for me."

In response to a question about how other tribal council members viewed the proposal, Shane Drift was the first to respond,

acknowledging the difficulty of Band members making a decision based on limited information.

"I'm kind of for it, and I'm kind of against it," Drift said. "If Band members tell me to vote no, I'll vote no." Council member Travis Morrison said he liked the idea of the business but would respond to the feedback from Band members. "I'm willing to walk away from it," Morrison said. "I'm on the bubble. I'm leaving it in your guys's hands."

Council member Peter Boney said he was in favor of the purchase. "I truly believe in my heart that for us to move ahead as a Band we need assets, we need businesses," Boney said. "I think it's a win/win. I think it's a good deal. I think we're going to benefit quite a bit from this, not only financially, but we're going to benefit by being neighborly."

Council member David Morrison also spoke favorably about the proposal.

"I'm really looking forward to moving ahead with this business," he said. "I know it's a hard decision for you to give us because we can't divulge what kind of business (it is). But again, you know, we have to keep trying, we can't sit back and let the world go by us. I see some little ones in here - that's who is going to benefit down the line. I'm in favor of this business venture." Band members have until 4 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 9 to submit their comments for consideration.

### Business clue

While tribal leaders stayed true to their non-disclosure agreement, their business plan's executive summary may have provided a clue as to the nature of the business under consideration.

The summary includes the following statement: This "industry includes about 21,000 establishments (single-location companies and units of multi-location companies) with combined annual revenue of about \$190 billion." A Google search by the *Timberjay* quickly revealed that the quoted text appears to have been taken verbatim from a Dun and Bradstreet profile page for the home center and hardware industry. Several other industries had similar numbers of establishments, but the home center and hardware store industry is the only one that also included \$190 billion in revenues.

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CITY OF COOK

# Mayor fires latest salvo in HRA board dispute

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

COOK— Refusing to cede any ground to Cook Housing and Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Reed Erickson, Cook Mayor Harold Johnston forged ahead with his own resident member appointment to the HRA board last Thursday in a move approved by council members.

Erickson and Johnston have been at odds over how the resident member slot should be filled ever since Sharon Ratai submitted her resignation in mid-April.

“In my 2-1/2 years on the board I had hoped to make our buildings a better place for our residents to live out their lives. But that has not happened,” Ratai wrote in her April 15 letter to Johnston. “My hope is that a new board member will have the knowledge and courage to make that happen.”

Citing U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines, HRA bylaws, and past practice, Erickson posted notices for residents to submit applications for the position and submitted letters to the council naming a new resident board member, asking them to approve that person.

However, state law vests the power for making appointments to the HRA

board with the mayor, with the consent of the council, and Johnston has steadfastly maintained that the decision of who to appoint is his, not Erickson’s. Johnston initially wanted to reappoint Ratai at the June meeting, but council members asked him to defer the appointment to review additional applications and seek additional information about the process.

Johnston put the exclamation point on his position on Thursday by reaffirming his desire to reappoint Ratai.

“We have received altogether five applications, all of them good, I think, and qualified,” Johnston said. “But I still believe that Sharon Ratai is my choice for this. Despite the tradition of many years of this city council appointing residents, the HRA director has come up with a new wrinkle that we no longer have the power to do this. Well, this isn’t something they do in Virginia, this isn’t something they do in Hibbing, this isn’t something we have done.”

Johnston said he had a written opinion from city attorney Lara Whiteside and additional consultation with the League of Minnesota Cities which both affirmed his legal right to make the appointment with the council’s consent.

“So, I am still asking the council to approve my

choice,” Johnston said. “This is the only way we get control.”

When the question was raised if Ratai would be recognized as the new resident board member at the next HRA board meeting, Johnston agreed that there should be advance notification to the board and said he would write a letter for Ratai to take confirming she is the appointee.

“I don’t know whether he’s going to argue this point,” Johnston said, referring to Erickson. “He won’t win. He can’t possibly win. His protector, shall we say, at HUD, a person by the name of Laura Wright, supports him. We have some communication from her. But she is not an attorney.” Erickson provided the *Timberjay* with copies of HRA board and city council minutes from 2011 which appeared to show that two board members that year, current city council member Karen Hollanitsch and Karen Lind, were appointed by the HRA board and approved by the city council, as well as Wright’s response after reviewing those documents. “I can see that in the past the HRA Board decided on an applicant, and then sent a letter to the Mayor for acceptance. Your By Laws support this process,” Wright wrote. “I would bring this all to the HRA’s attorney. In my opinion, no

one should deviate from the process that has been used successfully for at least the last ten years. It was the accepted common practice.”

However, at Thursday’s meeting, Hollanitsch said that while the meeting minutes reflected specific actions, they were not an accurate reflection of how those decisions came about. In both her case and Lind’s, she said, they approached Johnston and the city about those position vacancies and had Johnston’s approval before the HRA board acted to affirm them as board members.

“I knew someone was leaving the area, so about two months before that person left the area I approached city hall to ask about what the process was because I knew the city appointed those board members,” Hollanitsch said. “I was really motivated to get that position. So, Mayor Johnston has assured me that I was appointed by him to be the next board member when the person left the area. When I attended that first meeting, I attended there because I had already been appointed by the mayor. The person who took the position the next month did the same thing. She had come to city hall and asked to be on the board. So that’s the way it actually happened.”

Council member Jody

Bixby also serves on the HRA board and elected to abstain from the vote on Ratai, which was approved unanimously by the rest of the council.

In other business, the council:

► Heard a complaint from an HRA resident whose pickup, equipped with handicapped license plates, Erickson reportedly had towed on June 22 from the lot when it was parked at an angle and occupied two regular parking spaces. It’s a practice allowed under state law when a handicapped parking space is not available. St. Louis County Sheriff’s Deputy Andrew Feiro investigated the incident on June 24, according to a police report provided by the resident. Feiro informed Erickson that the vehicle was legally parked and that state statutes took precedence over HRA rules, advised Erickson to remove the three-hour limit sign from the handicapped parking space, and that he should “pay for any costs as he was in the wrong.” Erickson agreed to cover the tow bill, but indicated the resident would have to get the truck on their own. Feiro reported that he took the resident to Waschke’s to recover the vehicle. While the resident claimed Erickson should be charged with “grand theft auto,” Feiro reported that no charges were filed

because the matter was resolved civilly.

► Received a copy of a letter from HRA residents sent to the FBI office in Minneapolis reiterating complaints previously made to the HRA board, Cook City Council, HUD, and others. Included in the letter was the recurring complaint of Erickson using listening devices in HRA security cameras to eavesdrop on residents. Bixby responded to that item, saying that the HRA board had received a letter from the company that provided and installed the cameras confirming that they are video-only and do not have microphones, a fact previously confirmed by the *Timberjay* through a demonstration of the system.

► Heard from city administrator Theresa Martinson that due to staff shortages the hours at Last Chance Liquors were being adjusted to 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

► Heard a progress report from council member Elizabeth Storm about new art installations downtown as part of the “It stARTS on River Street” project.

► Approved extending the appointment of interim ambulance director Karen Schultz.

## COVID...Continued from page 1

short of providing community-wide protection. “Because we are not at a vaccination coverage rate that is giving us herd immunity, we have to go back to our other interventions, which is in this case masking,” Westbrook said. “It’s really unfortunate because this is preventable, we have a vaccine that’s highly effective. People don’t want to go back to wearing masks. I don’t want to go back to wearing masks. The best way to get out of it is to increase our vaccination rate.” The seven-day case average in St. Louis County jumped significantly in July, from just 1 on July 8 to 14.1 on Aug. 2.

“With the Delta variant, we’re not any different than the rest of the state,” Westbrook said. “We’re seeing increased cases. All cases aren’t sequenced for the type of variant they are, but we’re seeing delta across the state, and we don’t think it’s any different in St. Louis County.”

State health offi-

cials said on Monday that the delta variant now accounts for 85 percent of new COVID cases, almost all occurring in unvaccinated individuals. But because the county roughly mirrors the statewide vaccination rate of 67 percent of people 12 and older with at least one shot, chances are that there won’t be a repeat of the runaway numbers of last fall and winter.

“It’s not quite as high as we were seeing last August and September,” Westbrook said. “I don’t think it’s going to increase to the point where we were last fall. That would be surprising to me. And we haven’t seen our deaths in our hospitalizations increase along with case rates, so we’re hoping that doesn’t come.”

In a county as geographically large as this, it’s also no surprise that vaccination rates are uneven. Westbrook said. “We do know that vaccination rates vary across the county and certainly within

different populations,” she said. “We target our vaccine interventions and opportunities, trying to make it as available and accessible as we possibly can across the county, with additional attention to those communities that are have a lower vaccination rate. Generally speaking, the central part of our county and southwest part of our county have lower vaccination rates.”

### New incentive

Trying to build on the 70-percent adult vaccination milestone, Gov. Tim Walz last week announced a new \$100 gift card incentive program to encourage people who haven’t to get vaccinated by Aug. 15.

“We have made so much progress to combat this virus,” Walz said. “We cannot give up ground now, especially with students returning to the classroom this fall. Getting paid \$100

to keep your family safe is a pretty good deal.” At a Monday press conference, state health commissioner Jan Malcolm noted that a family of five eligible-but-unvaccinated individuals could pocket \$500 if they get their first doses of vaccine between July 30 and Aug. 15.

Last week also marked the kickoff of a “Vax to School” vaccination campaign to encourage students and families to get fully vaccinated by the beginning of the school year in September. It takes five weeks from receiving the first dose of Pfizer vaccine, the only one approved for those 12 and older, to become fully vaccinated. “These vaccines work,” Walz said. “We’re preventing severe illness and reducing the spread of the virus with every vaccine we administer. Our students,

educators, and school staff deserve this level of protection as they head back to the classrooms this fall.” Over the next month, the campaign will highlight voices from educators, pediatricians, and parents on the safety and critical need to get eligible students vaccinated.

### Indicators rising

While Minnesota remains among the lower tier of states in the increasing number of new COVID cases, Malcolm said that the increase in counties on the CDC substantial or high transmission list going up from 14 to 44 was a clear indication that cases are again on the rise.

“Almost half of the cases in the last two months have been identified in the last two weeks,” she said. “Similarly, of all the hospitalized cases that have happened in the past two

months, just about a third of those cases have happened in the last two weeks.” There has been no significant increase in reported deaths yet, Malcolm said, but she cautioned that deaths naturally lag behind infections and hospitalizations, so the state could still see an increase. “We do share CDC’s concern about rising case numbers and about the importance of the Delta variant, and we have recommended that Minnesotans follow the CDC recommendations to wear masks when in an indoor public setting when you’re in an area seeing substantial or high rates of COVID-19 transmission,” Malcolm said. “But the best thing we can do is to make sure that we and our family members are vaccinated as soon as we become eligible.”



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OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

# Air quality remains poor due to numerous wildfires

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

REGIONAL – Hazy, smoky air quality in northern Minnesota has produced spectacular sunsets recently, but the unprecedented and significant conditions produced by numerous wildfires in the state and Canada remain a hazard

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) issued an air quality alert late last week for all of Minnesota. The poor air quality warning extended through the weekend until mid-week. The affected area included all of Minnesota, and the tribal nations of Grand Portage, Fond du Lac, Upper Sioux, Leech Lake, Red Lake, Mille Lacs, and

Prairie Island.

Numerous small wildfires continued to burn around the North Country this week. Officials with the Superior National Forest provided condition updates on Aug. 2.

►Bungee Fire was detected July 30 and is located south of Crooked Lake. It was approximately 1.5 acres in size. Access is difficult and all resources need to be helicoptered in. Eleven people were dispatched to the area last weekend.

►Vivid Fire, located east of Snowbank Lake, was also reported on July 30 at approximately five acres in size. Firefighters made good progress in the last few days and fire officials called this fire 100 percent contained by

Sunday afternoon.

►The Agamok Fire was located a quarter-mile east of the Kekekabic Trail in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The fire was called controlled and final mapping had it at 1.25 acres. It is no longer staffed.

►The Delta Lake Fire is 100 percent contained. The final size of the fire was reported at 62 acres. Crews completed hauling out hose and other equipment and have moved on to other fires. Aircraft will continue to monitor the area.

►Bear Creek and Phantom Creek Fires: The 10-acre Bear Creek Fire is located north of Mud Creek Road. The 3.5-acre Phantom Creek Fire is north of Wolf

Lake Road, on the east side of Lake Vermilion. Both fires are within the BWCA Wilderness. These fires are also 100 percent contained, according to SNF officials. Fire crews have moved to other priority fires.

►Fourtown Lake Fire, first detected on July 25, is in the current closure area within the BWCAW by Fourtown Lake. Current size is 265 acres. This week, fire crews on the ground continued to strengthen the west and northwest firebreak by removing vegetation and putting down hose lines. Monitoring by air continues.

►Sundial South Fire was detected on July 21 and still shows smoke and is currently

being monitored, though not staffed. This area is particularly inaccessible to fire crews due to the remote location and hazardous fuels.

►The Slowfoot Fire remains at a tenth of an acre and will continue to be monitored, but not staffed.

Across the border in Canada, the Quetico Provincial Park continues to manage several fires burning north of the international border from the BWCAW. Three of these fires have potential to spread across the border into areas near Crooked and Iron lakes. The Superior National Forest continues to monitor and assess these fires daily.

Two helicopters are committed to the Superior National Forest to perform

water drops as needed, according to officials. Two fixed-wing aircraft, called Fire Bosses, are available to help if needed. Officials requested the public not fly drones over the fire area as it is a safety hazard to aircraft and is prohibited. Air operations will stop if drones are detected in the area.

Closures remain in place on the Kawishiwi and LaCroix Ranger Districts adjacent to the Canadian border in BWCAW. For details, visit the Superior National Forest webpage at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/superior/alerts-notice>.

The closures will remain in place until fires near the border are not a threat.

## OPERA...Continued from page 1

Frost Farms in Embarrass.

Before the performance in Tower began, they explained that the opera would include songs sung not in English, but not to worry, their props included simple translations of the music, which featured pieces from Claudio Monteverdi's 1639 opera, Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria (The Return of Ulysses to his Homeland) blended in with music that you would find at a small-town carnival, including bluegrass tunes and some Dolly Parton favorites. So, imagine an opera, with music performed not by an orchestra, but by the instruments you'd find in a bluegrass band. There were opera singers wearing denim shirts and cowboy boots. And sometimes it was hard to decide who was smiling harder, the audience or the performers.

The set included both small and large paper-mache puppets, created just for this traveling show. There was the giant one-eyed monster Cyclops

and the many-armed creature Scylla. Smaller-sized puppets representing Odysseus and his crew sailed along on the back of the pickup truck.

This is the fourth summer that Mixed Precipitation has toured the Iron Range since its inaugural tour in 2016.

The opera company included professional singers and musicians, many well-known in the Twin Cities arts scene. But they all said they enjoy visiting the Lake Vermilion area in the summer. At least two of the performers had families with cabins on the lake, so they were very familiar with the area.

Soprano Momoko Tanno performed the role of Penelope. She has performed with Theater de la Jeune Lune, as well as with the Heart of the Beast puppet theater. Singer/actor Rodolfo Nieto, who has performed with the Minnesota Opera and Theater Latte Da, played Ulysses. There were banjo, cello, and fiddle players. Youth perform-



Mixed Precipitation presented their unique performance of the Odyssey last week at the Tower Farmers Market. The market was celebrating its annual children's day, so many families had stopped by and then stayed to watch the show. photo by J. Summit

ers Akane and Andrew Niemi, Momoko's children, played numerous roles. And local youngsters, Sova and Etta Meyer, joined the company for this Iron Range tour.

The show and summer statewide tour received major funding from the Minnesota State Arts Board. Theater organizers said such funding is essential to creating

paying jobs for Minnesota artists and allows them to bring free and low-cost art events to small towns and other non-traditional venues around the state. The performances often include food, and this year the offerings were a bit different due to the pandemic. For the farmers market show, audience members were given cookies on a stick, purchased from a

small bakery. In past years, performances included snacks of fresh vegetables grown right at the location

of the show.

Learn more at [www.mixedprecipitation.org](http://www.mixedprecipitation.org).

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## DEDICATION

### Longtime instructor reflects on changes in hunter education

Teaching methods change with technology, but volunteers still essential

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

**O**RR— When a person ages into their seventies, it's a given that they've left many things behind in their lives, and Dick Olson is no exception.

A Virginia native who graduated from Virginia High School in 1967 and went to junior college there for two years, Olson left the Iron Range behind when he moved on to study natural resources at the St. Paul

campus of the University of Minnesota. He left that behind to move to Cook to work for the U.S. Forest Service for a time, then left that job to work for Boise-Cascade. After 33 years, he left that job, too, and about 15 years ago he left Cook behind for a new home at Myrtle Lake.

But across the decades there have been a couple of things he's held onto, the most important being his wife, Pat. A teacher by profession, Pat married Dick in 1973, and together the couple

had two sons, both now in their 40s.

But there's a constant in Dick's life even longer than his marriage, one few can claim. For more than 50 years, starting when he was 18, Olson has been a teacher of hunter education courses. Initially certified as a National Rifle Association firearms safety instructor, he's going into his 51st season as an instructor for the Department of Natural Resources hunter education program.

Olson doesn't like to

**Right: Dick Olson accepts a certificate honoring his half century of volunteer service as a hunter education instructor.**

photo courtesy MNDNR

make a big deal about his longevity in the endeavor. He prefers instead to talk enthusiastically about the joys of introducing new generations to safe hunting and the changes in hunter education over the years,

See EDUCATION...pg. 5B



### Work/Play in dance

Reflections Dance Company to perform in Ely Aug. 12-15

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY - Dancers with Reflections Dance Company here are preparing pieces in various styles to be part of the multi-media show, "Work/Play," next weekend at Ely's Historic State Theater.

"This show is all about the work and play that people throughout time have done in the Ely area," said Director Molly Olson. "We center on the themes of work and play in the Northwoods. Dance styles from polka to tap dance, ballet to contemporary, and many more will be featured in the show, including tap, jazz, ballet, contemporary, and acro as well as jingle dance, men's traditional, Ojibwe medicine round dance, and woodlands style dance from the Bois Forte dancers."

"Work/Play" will be performed on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Aug. 12-14, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, Aug. 15 at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and available at Ely's Historic State Theater, or at [www.elystatetheater.org](http://www.elystatetheater.org).

All the dance pieces are

**Above: Ballet dancers from left, Sova Meyer, Brooke Pasmick, Cora Olson, Charlotte Hegman, and Gracie Pointer.**

**Right: Reflections Dance Company members front row, from left: Gracie Pointer, Charlotte Hegman, Molly Olson; second row, from left, Emily Dunn, Mattie Lindsay, Cora Olson, Brooke Pasmick, Moxie Lindsay, Ella Rue; standing, from left, Ellie Marshall, Abrielle Poppler, Crystal Poppler, Alison Poppler, Jessie Dunn, Lizzy Merriman, Sally Dunn.**

photos by T. Larsen

performed to live music performed to live music played by local musicians Irene Hartfield, Jef Cerniak, Joey Kenig, Andy Messerschmidt, and Beth Hokanson. The choir will include Karin Schmidt, Sarah Mason, Erin Bremner, and David Wigdahl.

"The show will also include dancers Dani Pieratos and Jordan Gawboy from Bois Forte along with drummers and singers," Olson added. Photos provided by the Ely-



Winton Historical Society will be projected onto the screen which will be partially lowered to leave space for the dancers to perform.

The show is dedicated to the memory of Olson's father. "He was focused on the intersection of work and play, and always tried to teach his children the importance of personal betterment through daily tasks," she said.

The show will also touch on the historical significance of work and play in the Ely area. Olson said the company will perform pieces highlighting work such as ice cutting, mining, logging, laundry, house cleaning, waitressing, military, railroads, carpentry,

farming, and office work. Play topics include polka, circle dance, singing, paddling, fishing, dancing, and playing music.

"This show incorporates many props to signify the many tools that are part of work," she said. "Audience participation in several of the pieces is encouraged but not required."

Rehearsals for the "Work/Play" began in earnest in June, but some dancers have been taking classes with Reflections Dance Company all year, and learning parts of the dances since last October, according to Olson.

They rehearse at the Ely

See DANCE...pg. 2B

## BOOKS

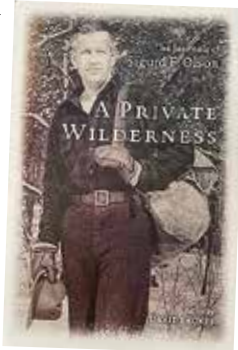
### Sig Olson in his own words

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

It's easy to imagine that for as accomplished a writer as the late Sigurd F. Olson, the words flow with ease and that publishers are always chomping at the bit for more. But a new book written

by David Backes and published by the University of Minnesota Press, reveals the years of struggle and doubt that Olson experienced as he worked to find his voice before becoming a renowned outdoors and nature writer.

"A Private Wilderness, the Journals of Sigurd F. Olson" highlights the fact that most of Olson's writings— his private thoughts regularly recorded for decades in his personal journals— have never before been published, until now. Covering a period running



See OLSON...pg. 2B

### Local writer sees life as a journey

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— For most of us, travel is all about the planning and the destination.

But for Tom Mattson, of Biwabik, it really is about the journey and the connections that he makes— relying often on serendipity— as he explores places where the average tourist rarely ventures.



In his new book, "Meeting Strangers, Making Friends: More Surprising Travel Adventures from the Minnesota Storyteller," Mattson offers more glimpses of worlds and

See MATTSON...pg. 2B



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## JUNIOR LEGION BASEBALL

## Ely team bows out of playoffs

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY – The Ely Junior Legion Post 248 team ran out of pitches last weekend and bowed out of the Eighth District Division II Northeast Substate playoff tournament. They finished the season with a 10-15 record.

A 13-5 double elimination loss to Taconite on Friday ended their season. Starting pitcher Logan Loe gave up six runs, three earned, on ten hits, two walks and two strikeouts.

“Logan ran out of pitches after six innings,” said coach Jim Wittrup.

Elliot Levens came in in the seventh and gave up seven earned runs on four hits, four walks, and a strikeout. Sammy Prijatel got the final out.

Jack Mathias led Post 248 with two hits, including two RBIs, followed by Preston Hines with two hits and one RBI. Drew Marolt added two hits.

“Sammy Prijatel also had two hits in the game and scored twice,” Wittrup added. Elliot Levens and Erron Anderson each had an RBI.

Earlier in the week, Ely came close to a playoff upset against Virginia in a wild

first-round game. One strike away from winning in the bottom of the seventh, Post 248 couldn’t close the deal as Virginia rallied to score the tying run, then added a run in the bottom of the eighth to pull out a 6-5 win at Veterans Memorial Field.

Post 248, the sixth-seeded host team for the eight-team tournament, enjoyed a friendly home team crowd last Tuesday, including many who came out for the Veterans Night tribute, during which veterans were treated to a free meal and beverage from the ballpark concession stand, courtesy of the Ely American

Legion Auxiliary.

Games continued all weekend, with teams and fans from Virginia, Esko, Cook County, Eveleth, Proctor, Cherry and Taconite in town.

Proctor beat Esko 6-4 in the title game Sunday afternoon, and advances to the state tournament this weekend at Montevideo.

Meanwhile, the Ely Senior Legion baseball team’s season also came to an end last week at Marble, where Taconite rallied to beat Ely 11-3 in the substate playoffs.

**Right: Sammy Prijatel connects for a hit.**

photo by K. Vandervort



## OLSON...Continued from page 1B

mostly between 1930 and 1941, Olson’s journals, reprinted here, describe the hopes, both realized and dashed, of an aspiring writer as he develops his skills and seeks recognition from publishers all while maintaining his academic position as dean of the Ely junior college.

Edited by Backes, who wrote the definitive biography of Olson, “A Wilderness Within: The Life of Sigurd F. Olson,” this latest publication reveals the degree to which Olson struggled with the academic way of life, and pushed back against what he saw as the tedium of life as a scientist. In the early 1930s, Olson was pursuing a master’s degree in zoology in Michigan, but his journals reveal his hesitation on the likely life path of a zoologist,

which was largely limited to wildlife management. “Game management, what an empty thing that will be. To get stuck somewhere in the country that I don’t care about working out graphs and tables. How I would hate it,” he wrote in December 1931. “I agree with Thoreau, I am not a scientist and never will be one. I am a mystic and a philosopher. I can never change that in me.”

Throughout his journals, Olson continually pines for his return to Ely. “I have everything I want up there,” he writes, figuring that between his writing and wilderness outfitting, he can pursue the life he wants to live. “Any university town would be the same to me,” he wrote. “Crowds, crowds, always the same mob of people, no chance to be alone with my

thoughts or with the things that I love best. I am more than ever of the conviction that only in one place can I be happy and that is in the north.”

Olson sketched out what he called “the solution” to his frustrations with his life’s direction to that point. “When you get back to Ely, buy yourself a piece of land across the lake, build a house of the type you want, have your dogs, perhaps a pony for the kids, ducks and chickens, a garden, canoe and decoys at the mouth of the river and a thousand other things that you can only half dream of in town,” he wrote. Written in 1931, those words seem a sort of balm to his growing displeasure over his academic pursuits up to that point.

While Olson was highly introspective, he

also found guidance in the words of others and his journals reveal a voracious reader, with a preference for spiritual or transcendental writers, such as William Burroughs and Henry David Thoreau. He also found a kindred spirit in Chinese scholar and philosopher Lin Yutang. “Whether I know it or not, I have steeped myself in Oriental philosophy and culture,” wrote Olson of Yutang’s writings, on Dec. 9, 1937. “In my writing of the future, that can always be a safe theme, a ground upon which to build everything I create.”

Olson largely dismissed what he called the “glitter of superficial pleasures,” and searched for deeper meaning and spiritual fulfillment through his experiences in the outdoors, particularly in wild places.

It would be a continuing theme throughout his life.

Perhaps because his journals reflect his most private thoughts, they offer a glimpse of Olson from behind the curtain, and the degree to which financial concerns regularly forced him to deviate from the path he wished to pursue. He frequently expressed his hopes to break into the higher echelons of magazine publishing, such as *Harper’s*, *Collier’s*, or *Atlantic Monthly*, which would pay much more than the hunting and fishing features he was writing for publications like *Sports Afield*, as well as allow him the freedom to pursue the longer form essays that these publications were known for.

While many friends in the business urged him to pursue fiction writing,

Olson struggled at best and was only comfortable as a writer when crafting the more philosophical tracts that filled his many books in his later years.

While his published works through the years provided a broad understanding of Olson’s philosophy to a wide audience, this latest work should provide the reader with a far deeper understanding of Olson as the aspiring writer, his insecurities, his longing for the North Country, and his journey to becoming one of America’s most influential outdoor writers.

It is available in hard cover on the University of Minnesota Press website at [upress.umn.edu](http://upress.umn.edu). The cost is \$29.95

## EDUCATION...Continued from page 1B

all with the hope that his enthusiasm for the pursuit might rub off a little bit and attract new instructors into the fold.

There’s always been a prescribed curriculum for the DNR classes, and like all instructors, Olson had to go through initial training and periodic refresher sessions. But for the majority of his years with DNR, no matter whom he might be sharing class responsibilities with, Olson said he liked being able to delve into a wide variety of topics in his classes.

“It was a broader program, to be sure,” he said. We’d have somebody come in and talk about

trapping, talk about bow hunting, talk about black powder. The St. Louis County Rescue Squad had representatives here so they’d come and talk about things like that. We covered the gamut. But then it evolved. The book changed so that it was just total firearms, which is fine, but we still tried to talk about some of the other things that weren’t covered in the book itself.”

Of course, Olson wasn’t married to the book, so his classes rarely went through the chapters in order as he rearranged things to suit his sensibilities.

And his students? Mostly they were kids he

was familiar with.

“There were probably only 25 to 40 kids that graduated from school in Cook, but I’d say almost every one of those kids went through the program, both guys and girls. One year we had more girls than boys,” Olson said.

His relationships with the kids, both preexisting and formed through classes, were an asset not only to classroom teaching, but to the hands-on experiences of the field days that accompanied classes, Olson said.

And along with the variety and relationships, Olson also had what he said was a benefit of teaching using real guns and ammu-

munition, something absent from today’s classes.

“I might talk about the different calibers, right, and the different shapes of the calibers. But you have to look at the base of the cartridge to find out what firearm you can shoot it in. They talk about it now, but that’s extremely important.”

Field days also included live fire practice with six rifles donated to the Cook group by the Turkey Federation, Olson said.

“That’s all you can put on the firing line anyway,” he said. “Each one of those kids has to be with an instructor. It’s always been that way.”

A significant change for hunter education in the area came about ten years ago when the Cook and Orr schools were merged to create North Woods School, Olson said. Combining hunter education courses seemed to be a natural extension of the merger, and so Olson, who had moved to Myrtle Lake by that time, found himself collaborating with fellow longtime instructors Tom Fink and Ed Franck in Orr.

“They used to go to Dennis Udovich’s game farm for their shooting, which was a better deal than what we had,” Olson said. “We’d go to a gravel pit. Dennis and Mimi, they’d

fix a little lunch for the kids, and then they got to shoot shotguns and clay pigeons.”

But along with a gradual decline in the overall number of hunters has also come a decrease in class sizes, Olson said.

“Between the two programs (in Cook and Orr) there was probably 60 people every year that took the classes,” he said. “I’m guessing now we’re probably about 25 or 30 with the schools combined, and I realize families have gotten smaller and other things like that. But there was probably 80 to 90-percent participation by the kids back in the 70s, 80s and 90s.”

## MATTSON...Continued from page 1B

cultures most of us will never experience. He does so by immersing himself in the lives of average people whom he meets and befriends along his travels to places that most Americans would probably fear to go. Cambodia, Myanmar, Uganda, Thailand, and Cuba are just a few of the stops on his seemingly lifelong quest to truly experience the far corners of the world. While Mattson may be a tourist, he avoids the tourist locales, the organized tours, or the all-inclusive resorts that keep First World visitors isolated from the people who inhabit such places.

From the high Andes to the remote kingdom of Bhutan, perched high in the Himalayas, to the jungles

of Guatemala, Mattson searches out real experiences with the friends he makes along the way, and shares it all in the engaging, fast-paced vignettes that fill the book. It’s his second travelogue, a follow-up to his debut work, “The Other Worlds: Offbeat Adventures of a Curious Traveler,” published in 2019.

Mattson knows how to paint a picture of life in a place that’s far off the beaten path, such as this from a journey through Central America. “A feast for the eyes meets me in Honduras,” he writes. “Cowboys herding cattle, a dead horse with rigor mortis in the middle of the road that forces the bus to swerve, and long

construction rebar trailing out the back of a pickup, leaving sparks on the road. A guard at a hotel reception counter works on a 12-gauge shotgun; the safety, he says, is stuck, hopefully in the off position.”

In Nicaragua, he takes a spill while sliding on a makeshift toboggan down the steep slope of Cerro Negro, a volcano that erupted out of a cornfield back in the 1850s. Later, he rides an inner tube, aided by local kids, through a deep and narrow canyon that no one other than locals even knew about until a few years ago.

While his journeys include plenty of adventure, it is the connections he makes with people along

the way that provide his most intriguing and sometimes surprising stories. Such as meeting Kunzang Choden, the adj, or “queen” of the Tang Valley, high in the mountains of Bhutan. Her family has governed this remote valley since the 1300s, and she represents the 20th generation of her family to do so. Choden resides in a four-story residence, which has become a kind of museum, the top floor of which is dedicated to housing thousands of Buddhist manuscripts. “At a picnic table outside this wondrous house, known as Ogyen Choling, guide Phuntsho, driver Dorji, and I enjoy a house-made lunch of fresh pumpkin soup and pears picked from a tree a few steps away.

As we finish our meal, my road-trip companions surprise me with news that the Queen of the Valley is now walking through the yard,” Mattson writes. “The queen, with wavy gray hair and carrying baskets, turns toward us and approaches. In beautiful English, she inquires where I am from. With a smile, she tells me her daughter attended Macalester College in Minnesota,” Mattson writes.

Choden inquires of Mattson’s writing and it turns out Choden is an author herself, including a book that compiles 22 separate Bhutanese tales of encounters with yeti, or abominable snowmen.

It’s more of the same wherever he travels.

Mattson is outgoing and keeps himself open to new experience, and the world has rewarded him with real connections and friends around the world.

While he longs to explore the world, he also looks forward to coming home to the Iron Range, which he says is one of the most interesting places he’s ever been. When he’s not at home on Lost Lake, near Biwabik, he spends time in his remote cabin in the mountains of Guatemala, or riding his motorcycle through the American West, and he writes about those experiences as well.

His books are available locally at the Piragis Bookstore in Ely, or online at Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

## DANCE...Continued from page 1B

Rec Center and in the basement of the First Lutheran Church. Olson stressed the “incredible” support the company gets from the community.

The production is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota

State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund, and with support from Northern Lakes Arts Association.

**Summer activities**

As part of their summer activities, Reflections

Dance Company also put on an arts day camp at Semer’s Park last month for ages 7-12 called “TMC Arts Camp.” The leaders of the camp were director Molly Olson, who is also a math teacher at Ely Memorial School, Tara Johnson who works as a

first-grade teacher at Ely Washington School, and Cora Olson, a senior at St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists.

“There were 25 participants who spent their week painting backdrops, making props, designing costumes, writing scripts, dancing,

singing, and rehearsing for a final show on Friday evening,” Olson said.

“They also created a beautiful banner thanking the firefighters for their service, which was presented to members of the crew stationed at Vermillion Community College,” she

said. “Family and friends of the campers were invited to view three short productions on Friday evening, which were luckily finished right before the storm hit, chasing all attendees either to their cars or into the shelter.”

TOWER

# Gundersen Trust Board asking for investment proposals from foundations, banks

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Tower's Gundersen Trust Board met with attorney Bradley Hanson, of Quinlivan and Hughes, on July 29 to begin the process of selecting a path forward for the trust's nearly million dollars in assets.

The board narrowed down their options, but any option they choose will first need to get approval from the city of Tower, then the IRS, a state court, and the Minnesota Attorney General.

The meeting was the first time trust members met with Hanson in person. The trust board hired Hanson earlier this year to work on options for moving forward that would increase the income from the trust, which currently is generating less than its expenses in a year, and not

returning any income to the city.

Hanson has been practicing law in the St. Cloud area for 35 years and specializes in trust and estate law. He currently represents the Brainerd Lakes Foundation as their general counsel.

"The trust is not working," said Hanson. "Not changing is not an option."

Hanson said that trust law allows a court to change a trust if it isn't fulfilling its original goal. The Gundersen Trust was formed to support the Tower community, so Hanson said getting the terms of the trust changed to better meet that goal should not be a problem.

Trust board members all seemed to agree that they were in favor of the idea of dissolving the current trust fund and moving its assets to a community foundation which would invest the funds and then distrib-

ute proceeds back to the city. This would free the city from the legal and accounting requirements currently in place, a not insubstantial cost, as well as from the liability that comes with overseeing A large amount of public money. The trust board in that case would then exist to determine how the trust proceeds are distributed each year.

Currently, proceeds, if greater than the rate of inflation, are divided between the city's general fund (75 percent), and community education and recreation in the Gundersen Forest lands (25 percent).

"You would terminate the trust because there is a better way to do it," said Hanson. "The trust's average investment return over the last ten years is only 0.6 percent."

The trust board, due to a court

See...TRUST.. pg. 4B

# Ely Rotary celebrating 100 years with an extravaganza at Whiteside Park on Aug. 14

ELY- Everybody is invited, as The Ely Rotary Club celebrates its 100th birthday on Saturday, Aug. 14, with an extravaganza in Whiteside Park.

There will be live music by Pat and Donna Surface, a live auction starting at 3 p.m., and a drawing for the winners in the \$10,000 CASH raffle at 4 p.m. Food will be available from JR's BarBQ, Woodfire Pizza, and Kettlemania Kettlecorn, as well as the Rotary Beer Tent.

Food will start at 11 a.m., music and beer start at 1 p.m. Come browse the auction items on display. There will also be a silent auction grouping. All the items can be viewed ahead of time online at Elyrotary.org.

At 3 p.m., Ely Rotary Club President Todd Heiman will emcee, with brief remarks by Ely Mayor Chuck Novak, as well as Rotary District Governor Keith Brokke. Auctioneers Craig Loughery and Shawn

Bina will then take over, selling off the items which have been donated by Ely area businesses. This is the main fundraiser for the club, which has given many items over the years to the city, as well as youth and other groups in the area.

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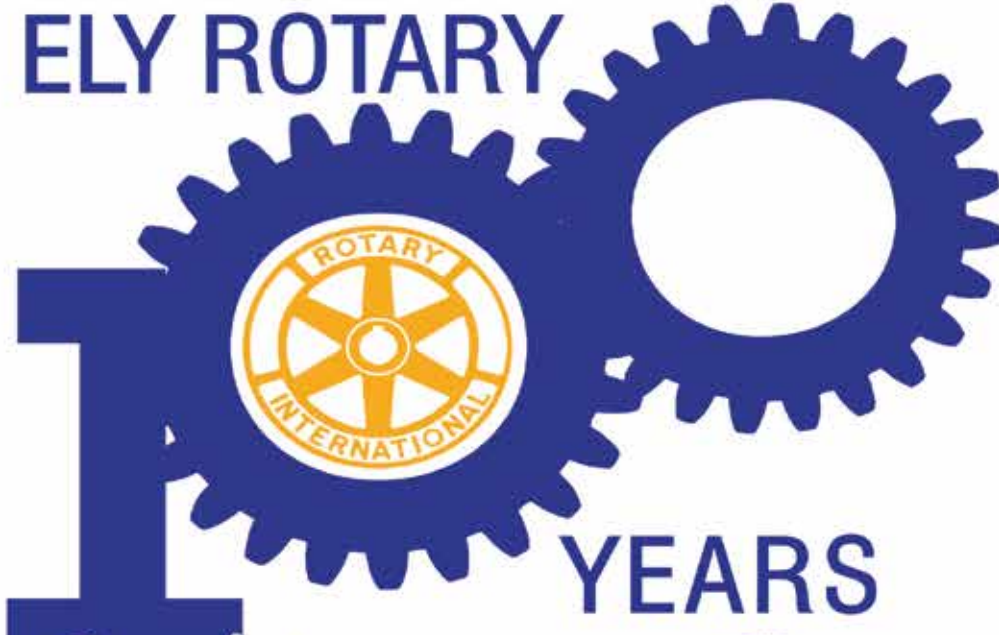
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The Attic Sale supports Tower's Historic Fire Hall restoration project.



# August 14 - Whiteside Park Annual Ely Rotary Auction

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**JR's BBQ - Wilderness Woodfire Pizza  
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Pavilion & Surrounding Area - Open To All**

Obituaries and Death Notices

**David B. Pavlich**

David Brian Pavlich, 67, of Tower, died on Thursday, July 22, 2021, at Vermilion Senior Living in Tower, of complications from acute myeloma leukemia. The family would like to thank the staff at Vermilion Senior Living and Michelle Schloesser for their compassion and care for Dave. A Memorial Mass was held on Wednesday, Aug. 4 at St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower with Father Beau Braun as

celebrant. Inurnment followed in the family plot at Lakeview Cemetery in Tower. Family services were provided by Bauman-Vermilion, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower. Dave was born on May 22, 1954, at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Chicago, Ill., the son of Jack B. and Evelyn Pavlich. He graduated from Morton West High School in 1972. After graduation, Dave followed in his father's footsteps and became a

plumber in Chicago (Local Union 130). He was the youngest foreman to work for Litvin Plumbing, a pioneer in high rise construction plumbing. In 1987, Dave graduated with honors with an Associate in Arts degree from Morton College in Cicero, Ill. Dave was an avid hunter and fisherman and loved Northern Minnesota. His happiness was being at the family home, Logar Dom ("Logger's Home"), on Armstrong Bay of Lake Vermilion.

He will be remembered for his trademark cowboy hat and his cheerful "Good day!" greeting. Dave is survived by uncles and aunts, Russ and Theresa (Pavlich) Berg and Anthony and Agnes (Pavlich) Yapel; and many cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by parents, Jack and Evelyn (Kasper) Pavlich; and older brother, Jack Pavlich Jr. of Mesa, Ariz.

**Dennis M. Keith**

Dennis Myron Keith, 63, of Virginia, died on Wednesday, June 9, 2021. A celebration of life was held on Wednesday, Aug. 4 at the Lion's building in Olcott Park in Virginia. Memorials are preferred to Fairview Hospice. Family services were provided by Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home. He is survived by his wife, Shelley Lenka Keith of Virginia; children, Justin (Jess Crayne) Keith of

Virginia, Katie Alto of Virginia and Allisen (Trevor Nelson) Keith of Virginia; siblings, Robert (Rudeen) Keith of St. Cloud, Roger (Julie) Keith Jr. of Forbes, Renae (Daniel) Stahl of Virginia, Vickie (Todd) Anderson of Embarrass and Jodi (Gary) Ulman of Mt. Iron; sister-in-law, Linda Keith of Tower; grandchildren, Jarron Alto, Izaiah Alto and Sophia Keith; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

**TRUST...Continued from page 6**

order issued in 2018, restricted the trust's investments to governmental-guaranteed options that are returning less than a percent per year in interest, and which are not expected to return higher amounts in the near future. Community foundations, over this same time period, are returning closer to five percent, even after charging investment fees of approximately one percent per year, research by the trust board has shown. While the community foundation option appears to be the board's first choice, they decided to also look at a second option, which would involve asking the court to revise the investment restrictions on the fund and then find a professional investment

arm of a bank to manage the money. The board approved moving forward with a request for proposals (RFP), drafted by board treasurer Steve Wilson with input from Hanson, that will be sent to three Minnesota-based community foundations, as well as to two area banks that have trust divisions. The RFP asks for details on what strategies and investment options would be used, what type of fiduciary structure would be involved, how the institutions would interact with the trust board, and what other types of support the institution could provide. The board is asking for responses by Sept. 3, and then will meet on Sept. 16 to review the proposals. The board will need to present their decision

to the Tower City Council for approval, tentatively at their Oct. 11 meeting, before beginning the legal process needed to make changes to the trust. **Trust history** The trust, created by a court order in 1992, began with \$398,929 in income from the sale of lands in the Gundersen Forest, land donated to the city by Martin and Elizabeth Gundersen. These lands included many tracts of shoreline property throughout northern St. Louis County, but not adjacent to the city limits. The city decided to sell these parcels, which they did not have the capacity to manage, but to keep forested lands adjacent to the city limits. During the trust's first ten years, beginning

in 1993, distributions averaged around \$22,000 a year. In 2001 and 2002, an additional \$297,923 in land sale income was added to the trust. The trust, as of the end of 2020, is valued at \$991,490. In the most recent ten-year period, the trust only gave out grants in two of the ten years, totaling a little over \$11,500.

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- Location: Herb Lamppa Civic Center, 402 Pine Street, Tower, MN 55790
- Free- No cost to attend.
- COVID Guidelines will be followed.
- RSVP by calling 218.365.3221 or with Klun Law Firm's Receptionist

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Brigadier General Ronald Hein (Bvt), retired Armor Officer in the Minnesota National Guard, is the President of the St. Louis County Historical Society in Duluth.

All proceeds benefit the Historic Tower Fire Hall Restoration Project

**Important DATE!**

**AUCTION**  
Saturday, August 14

**MIKE "IVORY" PATNAUDE ESTATE**  
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TOWER PLANNING AND ZONING

# Permit approval for new RV park subject of hearing

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

Tower Planning and Zoning to meet Aug. 10 to discuss conditional use permit

TOWER- About two dozen Tower residents, mostly from Mill Point, attended a public hearing here on Tuesday to voice their concerns about a proposed new RV park, planned for Pike Bay, just west of the Standing Bear Marina. Project proposer Justin Renner is seeking a conditional use permit for the facility and the hearing, conducted by the Tower Planning and Zoning Commission, is required as part of the permit process.

The board will meet again on Tuesday, Aug. 10 to discuss what conditions to add to a potential permit and prepare findings of fact that it can forward to the city council. The planning and zoning commission can recommend action on the CUP application, but the city council has the ultimately decision-making authority.

Findings would establish the basis for a decision on the CUP, which would include whether the project meets the standards of the city's ordinance. The permit would also be an opportunity for the city to establish conditions on the project to address concerns raised by neighbors.

Tony Jeffries, a planning consultant hired by the city, said

that city zoning clearly allows the establishment of a RV park in the area now owned by Renner, but he urged the commission not to make a decision at Tuesday's meeting. "The commission is willing and ready to move on this, but this evening may not be the best time to do that," he said.

Chris Ismil, part of the development team at the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, said that the board should research conditions set on CUPs for other area RV park projects. Renner is seeking development assistance from the IRRR for his project.

Mill Point Plat residents, who are situated on the opposite shore of the river on Pike Bay, expressed concerns over noise, increased boat traffic, and screening. They are also concerned about a second, much closer RV park owned by Dave Rose, now under construction, which is adjacent to their plat.

Renner told them that the exact placement of the RV sites will be determined by the costs and feasibility of doing wetland mitigation. His 58-acre site, while mostly level and open, has a large percentage of wetlands due to soil composition,

with about nine acres considered high ground. If financially feasible, he said, they are looking at moving the 12 sites closest to the lake back from the shoreline.

"The further back from the lake would be the best as far as noise," said Joan Broten, speaking for residents of Mill Point.

"Mill Point Plat residents want good development," she said, "and we want it done right. The current [Rose RV Park] isn't being done right and is affecting our neighborhood."

Broten said she and her neighbors aren't sure if they can trust that this new RV park will follow city ordinances and that the city can effectively manage the process.

Broten also asked if it was possible to do a study to determine the capacity for RV parks in the immediate area.

While many of the Mill Point Plat residents in the audience said they agreed with Broten's concerns, others in the audience expressed support for the project.

Al Kirkpatrick said he would like to reassure everyone in the audience that he has worked with Renner for years, and that Renner is "100-percent willing to do what is right."

Tod Van Norman, who manages Your Boat Club marina, which is adjacent to the Renner property, said they are looking forward to working with Renner.

"He has a great plan," Norman said, although he also said the project needs to be done right to protect the environment.

Barb Rinne said that the discussion had been very helpful.

"I support Justin's project," she said. "It looks like he is off to a good start."

Renner said he is hoping that his customers will use the marina facility at Your Boat Club for docking and lake access, though his plan does include local docking. He said the shallow waters on Pike Bay in front of his property are not ideal for boat launching, so using the East Two River access makes more sense.

Ismil talked briefly about the economic impacts the IRRR has seen with other RV parks they have helped fund, including the new Black Beach Campground in Silver Bay. The increased local traffic from that business, he said, helped create enough demand to sustain a local grocery store, as well as a new restaurant and gas station.

Whether or not Renner's project could connect to city sewer is still an open question. They city has requested quotes on extending its sewer main, and the IRRR has expressed interest in helping to fund the project, but whether or not it will be financially feasible is yet to be determined.

Ismil urged the planning and zoning board to move forward on the CUP as quickly as possible, because the IRRR will be meeting in late August or early September, at which time it would consider granting funding for a sewer extension. Renner has already secured bank financing for his project and is working with an engineering firm on other details, such as wetland mitigation and septic planning. The IRRR is a funding partner on the project, said Ismil, and can assist with funding for infrastructure and wetland credits.

Renner is hoping to begin work on the project this fall and be ready for business next summer.

TOWER BREITUNG WASTEWATER BOARD

# RV park gets tentative green light for sewer hook-up

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

Drier weather, progress on I and I has opened up some additional treatment capacity

TOWER— The Tower-Breitung Wastewater Board gave a preliminary green light last week to a request for a sewer connection for the proposed Renner RV park, now planned for development just west of the Standing Bear Marina.

The RV park presents a long-sought opportunity for the city to possibly extend water and sewer to a portion of the community that is currently unserved by utilities, with potential financial assistance from the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation. But cost may prove prohibitive based on the initial engineer's estimates.

Developer Justin Renner said he's been in the process of designing a septic system for the RV park due to the limited wastewater treatment capacity still available from the joint municipal sewer system maintained by Tower and the town of Breitung. But recent work to reduce inflow and infiltration, or "I and I," along with at least a year of be-

low-average precipitation, has significantly reduced flows to the system, opening up room for an additional connection.

"We identified I and I as a priority the past year," said Matt Tichel, who manages the system for the wastewater board. Tichel said there appears to be capacity at this point for the expected flow from Renner's 49-unit RV park. Depending on capacity, the new water and sewer line could serve other businesses and the county public works facility accessible off of Marina Drive.

Renner had been in touch with the IRRR about possible development funding for his project. Chris Ismil, with the IRRR's development team, attended last week's wastewater meeting and confirmed that a sewer and water connection would be a qualified project. "We fund campgrounds and RV parks all over," said Ismil. "We have a strong tourist-based economy as well," he added, noting that Silver Bay has seen a substantial economic

boost from its new RV park, known as Black Beach Campground, located on Lake Superior. "It's been huge," said Ismil, noting that it's attracted new local businesses and created higher demand for housing.

While the IRRR is open to funding a sewer connection, Ismil said the agency would not provide assistance for the construction of a septic system. Nor, according to Ismil, would the agency be likely to consider funding a sewer extension without the benefit of a new business or other development attached to the project.

"So, the opportunity is now," said Renner.

Tichel questioned who would own and operate the sewer extension and he noted that flows from the park could vary considerably depending on how Renner devises the collection system on his own property. He said that McKinley Park generates about 240,000 gallons of wastewater a year, compared to 900,000

gallons for Hoodoo Point Campground, even though Hoodoo Point hosts only a few extra RVs. In the case of McKinley, Tichel noted that the campground managers collect waste water regularly and deposit it into a central dump, which is then pumped to the treatment ponds, so there is little or no I and I. Hoodoo Point uses an underground collection system, which appears to experience considerable I and I. The campground flow and all that I and I was added to the municipal system in 2018 when the city opted to extend a sewer connection to the facility.

Renner said he'd be open to considering any number of alternatives, adding "as long as it's reasonable."

TEDA Director Marshall Helmberger said the city would likely own the sewer line up until the connection point with Renner's property. Beyond that, however, Tichel said the city should require a development agreement

that spells out standards for installation and operation of the infrastructure. He said the wastewater board had been assured, when members agreed to the hookup of the RV park under development by Dave Rose, that his 33-unit facility would have a development agreement. So far, however, no agreement is in place, Tichel noted.

The issue led to more discussion about the need to expand the treatment capacity of the current municipal system. Tichel said the issue has been talked about for a long time, but he acknowledged that the wastewater board is seeing legitimate requests based on real projects. But he noted that Breitung has been hesitant to invest in more wastewater treatment capacity to fuel development in Tower. Board member Tim Tomsich said Breitung had become part of the wastewater joint powers board assuming that

demand would be evenly divided between the two communities.

But Ismil challenged that view. "You are viewing this as if Tower and Breitung are separate," he said. "When you formed this, it no longer was Tower and Breitung. It was one community."

After more discussion, Tower representative Dave Setterberg motioned to give preliminary approval for a sewer connection, with several contingencies. Among them is approval from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as well as a development agreement.

Meanwhile, the city is investigating the possible cost for a sewer and water extension to the Renner RV park. Depending on the project's affordability, the city would then need to apply for development assistance from the IRRR.

The wastewater board will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 18, at 11 a.m.

## NOTICE

### Range Cooperatives, Inc. Annual Shareholders Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the Annual Shareholders Membership Meeting of Range Cooperatives, Inc. The meeting will be called to order at:

**6 PM on Monday, August 16**  
at Range Funeral Home Fellowship Hall,  
911 16th St North, Virginia  
(Please note time and location.)

• Registration and Lunch will be served from 4:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. in the Range Funeral Home Fellowship Hall.  
• The regular business meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in the Range Funeral Home Chapel.

Regular business will be transacted at this meeting, which will include presentation of reports, election of directors, and any other business that may come up.

The speaker will be Marshall Blaukat CPA, audit manager of CarlsonSV.

David Stanaway, President  
Michael Boyd, Secretary

## History Talks on Main Street

Learn about the history, culture and early development of the Tower-Soudan-Lake Vermilion Area

### The Jingle Dress

Adrienne Rose Whiteman

Learn about its origin, protocols, two styles of jingle dress and the spiritual importance for the Native community  
**Thursday, August 5 at 2 PM**  
Tower Train Depot in Coach Car 81 (Air Conditioned!)

### Immigrants of the Northland

Learn about the immigrants who settled our area  
Karel Winkelaar, Presenter  
**Monday, August 9 at 7 PM**  
Sulu's Espresso Patio on Main Street

### The Skala Bar Story

Learn the secrets of the Skala Bar during Tower's early days as the first city on the Iron Range and the days of lawlessness  
Randy Semo, Presenter and Tour Guide  
Good Old Days on Main Street  
**Tuesday, August 24 at 2:30 PM**

Free - No cost to attend

Get your copy of the Tower-Soudan-Lake Vermilion Self-Guided History Tour Map at the History Talk events. You can explore our area's historical places of interest on your own time!

**Worship In The Park**

Please join Grace Lutheran for the Annual Service in the Park

**Sunday, August 22, 9:30 AM**  
at Whiteside Park, Ely

Treats will be provided. Bring your beverage and your own chair, sit back, listen as Cornerstone band plays and Pastor Eric Thiele shares the Word.



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# PUBLIC NOTICES

## City of Tower

Annual Disclosure of Tax Increment Districts for the Year Ended December 31, 2020

TIF District Name:	Tower Tax Increment District #2
Current net tax capacity	14,445
Original net tax capacity	391
Captured net tax capacity	14,054
Principal and interest payments due during current year	31,390
Tax increment received	22,283
Tax increment expended	30,405
Month and year of first tax increment receipt	July 2007
Date of required decertification	12-31-2032
Increased property tax imposed on other properties as a result of fiscal disparities contribution *	0 **

\* The fiscal disparities property tax law provides that the growth in commercial-industrial property tax values is shared throughout the area. In a tax increment financing district, this value sharing can either result in a decrease in tax increment financing district revenue or a tax increase for other properties in the municipality depending on whether the tax increment financing district contributes its share of the growth.

\*\* Amounts displayed here indicate that the district did not contribute its growth in commercial-industrial property tax values and represent the resulting increase in taxes on other properties in the City for taxes payable in 2020.

Additional information regarding each district may be obtained from: Orlyn Kringstad, Mayor  
PO Box 576 Tower, MN 55790  
(218) 753-4070  
clerk.treasurer@cityoftower.com

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 6, 2021

# King Crossword

## ACROSS

- 1 Glitz partner
- 5 Body powder
- 9 Use a straw
- 12 Andean land
- 13 Jannings of old films
- 14 Travail
- 15 Former Cubs slugger
- 17 Tolkien creature
- 18 Porgy's love
- 19 Witherspoon of "Wild"
- 21 Inventor Nikola
- 24 Pugilist's weapon
- 25 Yard tool
- 26 "CSI" procedures

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					32		
33			34					35			
							37				
38	39					40	41				
42				43	44				45	46	47
48				49					50		
51				52					53		

- 30 Egg (Pref.) one
- 31 Topped with froth 48 Mine material
- 32 Picnic dessert 49 Sunrise direction
- 33 Like ghost towns 50 Counterfeit
- 35 Dog's treasure 51 Petrol
- 36 Cambodia neighbor 52 Obligation
- 37 "What the Butler Saw" playwright 53 Meditative practice
- 38 Ink stains
- 40 Onetime "This Old House" host Bob
- 42 Back talk
- 43 "Georgia on My Mind," for
- 7 Fleur-de- — Martinez
- 8 Gem's feature 29 Beheld
- 9 Ideal place on a tennis racket 31 Heeded dental advice
- 10 Charged bits 34 Feedbag morsel
- 11 Seeger or Sampras 35 Obstreperous
- 16 Verily 37 Flamenco cheer
- 20 Jargon suffix 38 Online journal
- 21 Walked (on) 39 Turkish money
- 22 Roof overhang 40 Expansive
- 23 Aspen attractions 41 — -bitty
- 24 Notoriety 44 Greek cross
- 26 "— you're told!" 45 Discoverer's call
- 27 Rebel Turner 46 Pester
- 28 Ex-Yankee 47 "Today" rival, briefly

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## STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF ST LOUIS SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION

Filed in District Court State of Minnesota Court File No. 69VI-PR-21-82

Amended NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR

## FORMAL ADJUDICATION OF INTESTACY, DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP, APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Estate of Raymond Richard Yahrmatter, Aka Raymond R. Yahrmatter Aka Raymond Yahrmatter Decedent

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on August 25, 2021, at 8:45 a.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at 300 5th Ave. S, Virginia, MN 55792, Minnesota, for the adjudication of intestacy and determination of heirship of the Decedent, and for the appointment of Judith Ann De Cuellar, whose address is 32048 Prairie Lake Dr., Grand Rapids, MN 55744 as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the

Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

If you have an objection to this case, please contact Court Administration at 218-221-7560 option #8 for further instructions as these hearings are currently held remotely due to the pandemic.

Dated: July 21, 2021 BY THE COURT Robert Friday Judge of District Court

Amy Turnquist Court Administrator Chelsea Opdahl, Deputy

Attorney for Petitioner Angela E. Sipila Sipila Law Office LLC 412 1st St S Virginia, MN 55792 Attorney License No. 024501x Telephone: 218-741-5000 Fax: 218-741-5000 Email: ange@sipilaw.com

Published in the Timberjay, July 30 and Aug. 6, 2021

## KUGLER TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING, BUDGET MEETING, and NOTICE OF CLOSING OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Kugler Town Board will hold their regular monthly meeting, budget meeting, and the closing of their annual meeting on Thursday, August 12, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at the Kugler Town Hall.

Christopher Suihkonen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 6, 2021

# EMPLOYMENT

## POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Substitute Bus Drivers

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for substitute bus drivers for the 2021-2022 school year. A background check is required.

- Qualifications include:
- Minnesota Class B driver's license
  - Minnesota School Bus Endorsement
  - Minnesota Passenger Bus Endorsement
  - Must have good driving record
  - Pre-employment drug test required

Application available at: [www.ely.k12.mn.us](http://www.ely.k12.mn.us)

A complete application must include the following: District Application

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

Rate of Pay: \$18.36/hour

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 6 & 13, 2021

## POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Substitute Custodians

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for substitute custodians for the 2021-2022 school year. A background check is required.

Application and full job description is available at: [www.ely.k12.mn.us](http://www.ely.k12.mn.us)

A complete application must include: District Application

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

Rate of Pay: \$15.70/hour

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 6 & 13, 2021

## POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Substitute Cafeteria Aides

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for substitute cafeteria aides for the 2021-2022 school year. Training will be provided. A background check is required.

- Qualifications include:
- 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](http://www.ely.k12.mn.us)

A complete application must include: District Non-Licensed Application

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

Rate of Pay: \$13.72/hour

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 6 & 13, 2021

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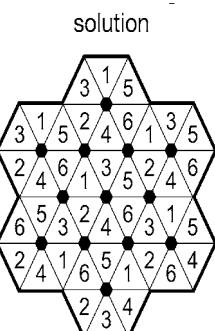
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# EMPLOYMENT



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PT RN or LPN (\$4,000 Sign-On Bonus)

**Adult Day Services**  
PT ADS Assistant

**Dietary**  
PT Dietary Aide/Cook

**Activities**  
Casual Activities Assistant

**Environmental Services**  
FT Housekeeper  
Casual Laundry Aide  
Casual Housekeeping & Laundry

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# Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
Northwoods

## BEARS AND HUMANS

# Food storage order now in place on the Superior

Visitors to the national forest, including BWCAW, must be prepared to protect food packs from hungry bears

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

REGIONAL -All visitors to the Superior National Forest, including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, now need to store their food properly to help protect wild bears and humans alike.

A food storage order, initiated July 30, is the result of increases in human-bear interactions with negative outcomes.

Superior National Forest wildlife biologist Cheron Ferland said the rise in interactions is the result of a number of factors. "We finalized a new bear action plan this year which calls for more systematic reporting, so

we probably have more reports being submitted, but this by itself doesn't account for the increase. It's also because there are more visitors on the landscape and the

“This is bear country, people are going to see black bears.

**Cheron Ferland**  
SNF wildlife biologist

fact that we are in an extreme drought, which has led to a poor berry crop," Ferland said.

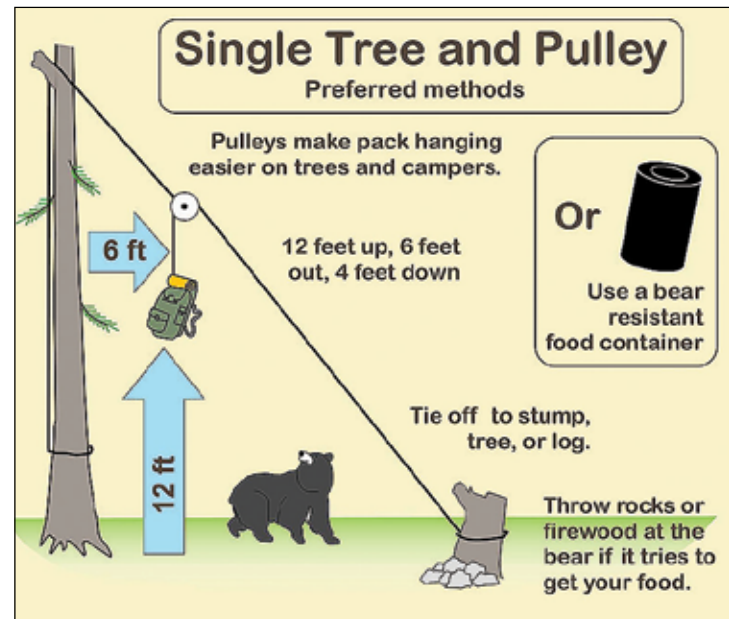
This year, the National Forest

has asked the public and employees to report any and all bear interactions. The reports include bears at individual campsites, digging in dumpsters at campgrounds or other facilities, and stealing backpacks.

Forest officials also point out that not all reports of interactions with bears are negative or a cause for alarm. Reports may also include general bear sightings to help biologists better understand bear travel patterns in the Forest.

"This is bear-country, people are going to see black bears. They live here. That's not concerning to me, but bears at dumpsters, lingering at campsites and stealing

See BEARS...pg. 9B



## MANAGING WILDLIFE

# DNR sets goal for more deer

Proposed increases range from 25 percent in permit area 177 to 75 percent in permit area 119

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The Department of Natural Resources has set new population goals for whitetail deer for portions of the region, and the new targets call for increases across the board.

It's all part of a statewide goal-setting effort that focused this year on three regions, among them what's known as the Border Uplands/St. Louis Moraines management block. The block includes several deer permit areas (DPAs) in northern and central St. Louis County, including 119, 176, 177, and 178.

The new goals call for increases in the deer population in all four of those DPAs, ranging from a 75-percent increase in 119 to 25-percent increases in 177 and 178. DPA 176 would see a 50-percent increase under the plan.

The new goals could well lead to tighter bag limits in the near-term for hunters in these areas. DNR wildlife managers use the goals each year when setting bag limits and when deer populations remain below target, hunting regulations, including allowable harvest, are typically more conservative. The DNR is expected to announce the bag limits for permit areas across the state later this month. Licenses for the upcoming deer seasons,

**Above: An eight-point buck in velvet was working the shore of the Pike River Flowage, near Tower, recently.**

photo by M. HelMBERGER

**Right: The area in purple is part of the latest deer goal-setting. The area in green is slated for goal-setting in 2022.**

including archery, regular firearms, muzzleloader, and the special youth hunt are now available online or wherever such licenses are sold.

The goals set for the local DPAs appear to reflect the attitudes expressed by hunters more than landowners. As part of the goal setting, the DNR sent surveys out to roughly 500 hunters who had previously hunted in a given DPA, along with approximately 425 landowners. While results varied considerably by DPA, landowners expressed considerably less enthusiasm for higher deer numbers than did hunters.

Indeed, in some permit areas, like 177, where the goal calls for a 25-percent increase in deer numbers, 52 percent of landowners indicated they wanted the deer herd to remain the same, while an additional 11 percent indicated they wanted a reduction in deer numbers. Only 37 percent expressed support



for an increase in the whitetail population.

Yet 71 percent of deer hunters in the permit area expressed an interest in seeing more deer, compared to just 25 percent who want the population to hold steady.

In permit area 176, 54 percent of landowners indicated they wanted to see deer numbers remain the same, or decline, while 46 percent expressed support for an increase. Landowners in DPA 178 expressed similar views.

In both areas, however, just over three-quarters of hunters indicated support for an increase in the deer population.

Landowners and hunters

alike agreed on the need for more deer in DPA 119, located in far northern St. Louis County. The deer herd has been well below previously-set goals for some time, limiting hunters to bucks only for the past several years. Wildlife managers indicate that a decline in quality winter habitat, combined with some harsher-than-average winters over the past several years, and ongoing wolf predation, has kept deer from recovering

in that permit area.

The survey also revealed a significant level of dissatisfaction among hunters, particularly from hunters in permit areas where deer numbers are known to be well below goal. In DPA 119, 69 percent of hunter respondents indicated they were dissatisfied with the number of legal bucks they were seeing, while an additional 17 percent indicated they were somewhat dissatisfied. Hunters in DPA 176 expressed similar views, while hunters expressed somewhat more satisfaction in DPAs 177 and 178.

## Wildflower Watch

This week's featured flower  
**FIREWEED**



Few wildflowers are more ubiquitous in the late summer in the North Country than **Fireweed**, *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, which is in bloom all across our area from mid-July through August.

The four-petaled, magenta flowers of the fireweed open progressively on a long spike, which gives this species a much longer period of bloom than many of our wildflowers. Fireweed also typically grows in patches, providing that distinctive wash of color along roadsides, fields, and wood edges. Its seeds develop in long narrow pods that open later in the summer to unleash many cottony-tufted seeds that are easily spread by the wind. That's one reason that fireweed is such an effective pioneer species in the wake of disturbance. It is aptly named for its habit of quickly repopulating areas that have burned, for example.

## Fishing reports

### Ely area

Walleyes seem to have slid out a little deeper this last week. Anglers continue to report finding the most consistent bite in 10-13 feet of water, quite shallow for this time of year. Those seeking walleye here have been doing so with spinner rigs, jigs tipped with leech or crawler and even slip bobbers and a leech. Anglers looking for trophy walleyes have been trolling deep diving crankbaits during the evening hours, 20-30 feet down, over deep water.

Bass anglers continue to report excellent bass fishing on many area lakes. Early morning topwater bite remains excellent for both smallmouth and largemouth bass. Here whopper ploppers, pop-r and torpedoes have been very effective on smallmouth, but for largemouth bass anglers have been having better luck fishing frogs in thick cover. As the sun gets up, throwing in-line spinners, spinnerbaits and soft plastics keep anglers busy catching fish.

Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors, Ely.

**WEATHER**

**Ongoing drought is a major one, but not yet historic**



**A nearly dry Littlefork River trickled under Cook's River Street bridge this week.** photo by D. Colburn

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**  
Managing Editor

**REGIONAL**— The next several weeks could well determine whether the ongoing drought across Minnesota shifts from serious to the kind of historic drought experienced back in 1988. “We might go there,” said Kenny Blumenfeld, with the state climatology office in St. Paul. “We might be starting to get close to that if we don’t get some rain soon.”

Drought is a weather phenomenon that can sneak up on you, noted Blumenfeld, and a drought’s true extent and duration only becomes apparent after it’s run its course. In the middle of it, “you’re blindfolded,” acknowledges Blumenfeld.

Right now, however, it’s a major drought, one that is continuing to worsen. As it stands, said Blumenfeld, it’s the kind of drought the state could expect to experience once every 15-20 years, but exactly when it becomes something more historic might not even become clear until later, since there is often a lag in the recognition of drought.

While climatologists use a number of indicators to distinguish a drought from a dry spell, Blumenfeld notes that those criteria don’t always give consistent answers. “Certainly, some indicators are suggesting that the drought is quite advanced and extreme,” he said. Up until recently, however, he said soil moisture in most parts of the state was still pretty good.

Water levels, which have plunged across the area since late June, are among the more obvious signs of the drought here in the North Country. And data released by the Department of Natural Resources this week puts river flows in the region at close to historic lows. While long-term river level data isn’t available for most smaller Minnesota rivers, the levels documented this week are the lowest in more than a decade.

The Littlefork River, for example, was running at just 40 cubic feet per second. Even at the river’s Q90, a low level that is reached, on average, only ten percent of the time, the Littlefork should be flowing at 90 cubic feet per second (cfs). The usually larger Vermilion River is down even more dramatically from its typical flows. As of this week it was flowing at 48 cfs, or barely one-third of the river’s Q90 of 129 cfs. In a typical August, both the Vermilion and Littlefork rivers should be flowing at about 350 cfs.

The Basswood River, which normally flows at about 940 cfs in August, is down to just 179 cfs, or less than half of its Q90 of 362 cfs.

The Vermilion River’s low flow hasn’t yet had a major impact on Crane Lake, which normally receives considerable inflow from the river. “We’re sitting pretty good right now,” said Jerry

Pohlman, at Nelson’s Resort on the border lake. While there’s little water entering the lake right now, Pohlman said dams that control the water level are currently closed, which is helping to sustain water levels, at least for now.

Meanwhile, there’s little indication of major relief in the offing. While the extended forecast shows a few chances of light showers or scattered thunderstorms over the next two weeks, even if those chances deliver as predicted, the drought is likely to worsen. “You need about an inch of rain a week just to keep pace right now,” notes Blumenfeld. While much of the state was running drier than normal into the spring, it was the moisture deficits in June and July that pushed the drought into the severe to extreme range. Making that up will require at least a month of well above-average rainfall, noted Blumenfeld.

While there’s no sign of a major change in the current rainfall pattern this month, Blumenfeld said the shift from summer to fall may be the state’s best chance for emerging from the drought. “When the season changes, you almost always have a weather shift,” he said. “The question is, does it change to a pattern that is favorable to precipitation here, or whether we’ll continue in a drought pattern. If we don’t get precipitation by then, September and October could be a tricky time,” he said.

**LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST**

from NOAA weather

Friday				Saturday				Sunday				Monday				Tuesday			
<b>75 53</b>				<b>73 57</b>				<b>78 59</b>				<b>81 56</b>				<b>76 53</b>			
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.
07/26	86	49	0.00	07/26	86	46	0.00	07/26	84	56	0.00	07/26	82	50	0.00	07/26	86	48	0.00
07/27	86	50	0.08	07/27	87	47	0.12	07/27	82	56	0.38	07/27	81	54	0.00	07/27	85	51	0.36
07/28	85	54	0.00	07/28	83	51	0.00	07/28	82	52	0.00	07/28	79	59	0.00	07/28	83	52	0.00
07/29	79	57	0.18	07/29	78	56	0.08	07/29	80	57	0.00	07/29	75	55	0.00	07/29	77	60	0.16
07/30	77	43	0.00	07/30	76	40	0.00	07/30	76	50	0.00	07/30	81	45	0.00	07/30	76	42	0.00
07/31	81	45	0.18	07/31	82	41	0.16	07/31	80	50	0.00	07/31	75	55	0.00	07/31	81	49	0.22
08/01	76	43	0.05	08/01	78	41	0.00	08/01	79	52	0.00	08/01	75	48	0.00	08/01	78	43	0.00
Total			8.43	YTD Total			8.85	YTD Total			10.01	YTD Total			12.38	YTD Total			12.50

**Outdoors in brief**

**Deer season details now available**

**REGIONAL**— With the release of the online version of the 2021 Minnesota Hunting and Trapping regulations handbook, you can read up on what’s new to prepare for this year’s deer hunting season. The handbook is now available on the DNR website and printed copies of the handbook will be delivered to hunting license vendors the first week of August.

Hunting licenses for the upcoming seasons are now available at any DNR license agent, by telephone at 888-665-4236, or online. Archery

deer season opens Saturday, Sept. 18, and regular firearms deer season opens Saturday, Nov. 6. Bag limits for the individual deer permit areas are expected to be announced later this month.

**DNR simplifies bear bait registration**

**REGIONAL**— Beginning with the 2021 bear-baiting season, hunters no longer need to use email addresses to register their bait stations. The use of email addresses had caused registration issues in the past.

Effective this year, hunters will simply need to provide their first and

last names, date of birth, and their DNR customer number. Outfitters will need to provide their first and last names, date of birth and license number, and identify whether they are a master bear outfitter or a resident bear outfitter.

See the “Bait stations” section on the DNR bear hunting webpage for links to register baits. The registration site will be live before the bear-baiting season begins — and for about two weeks after it ends — but hunters may not begin baiting until the baiting season begins on Friday, Aug. 13, and may not bait after the bear season closes on Sunday, Oct. 17.

**BEARS...**Continued from page 8B

packs is. Once they get a reward, or food, they will keep doing whatever it takes to get that reward again,” Ferland said.

If a bear becomes a nuisance and continues interacting with humans, the bear will be dispatched. “We don’t want it to get to that point, and we want to limit the number of bears that are considered a nuisance. That’s what this food storage order is all about — taking proactive steps,” Ferland added.

This year, there are several areas with reoccurring bear sightings and interactions on the National Forest. Areas include Rose Lake, Duncan Lake and Daniel Lake on the Gunflint Ranger District; the Moose Lake Chain and several campgrounds including Birch Lake, Fall Lake and Fenske Lake on the Kawishiwi Ranger District; and Agnes Lake on the La Croix District.

The food storage order requires visitors to properly store food unless in the process of eating, preparing or transporting food (i.e. bringing fish caught in a nearby lake to a campsite or carrying food down to the beach for a picnic). Proper storage reduces the chance of bears being rewarded

when at campsites, trails, portages, landings or other recreational areas. Proper food storage can be done in two ways:

► Using a bear canister or bear-resistant container and placing it 50 feet away from your tent on the ground (preferred method) or;

► Hanging your food pack at least 12 feet above the ground at all points, six feet horizontally from any pole or limb and four feet vertically from any pole or limb. Please be mindful of the weight of your pack while hanging it to avoid breaking branches and damaging live trees.

In addition to proper food storage, there are other actions that visitors can take in bear country that help keep bears wild, alive and healthy, including:

► Making sure anything with a scent is properly stored. This includes, but is not limited to, toothpaste, wrappers, lip balm, soap, petroleum products and lotion.

► Disposing of fish remains at least 200 feet from any campsite, portage, trail and shoreline.

► Packing out cooking grease; bears are attracted to the grease you leave behind in the firepit. For

locations mentioned above, consider bringing foods that do not create grease.

► Packing out all food scraps, including fruit and vegetable remains.

► Packing only the food you need for your trip. The less potent the better.

► If dumpsters are full, take your garbage out with you; please don’t leave it outside of a secure container.

It is up to everyone to do their part to help prevent bears from becoming habituated and subsequently a nuisance or dangerous. Taking proactive bear aware measures can limit negative visitor experiences and potentially save a bear’s life.

Last year the National Forest implemented a food storage order for a limited number of lakes in the Wilderness on the Gunflint District. This year, officials are enacting a food storage order for the entire Forest. If you have questions about bear resistant food storage, please call the Ranger District closest to you or visit the Forest Service’s website.

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**CLEAN**

- Boats, trailers, and gear
- Remove all weeds, mud, and hitchhiking contaminants from axles, wheels, undercarriage, motor, prop, nets, and gear before leaving boat landing

**DRAIN**

- Water from boat, bilge, motor, and live well
- Remove drain plug and open all water draining devices
- Trash unused bait

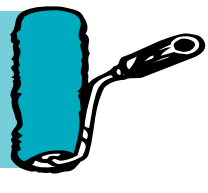
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Answers

S	W	A	M	I	S	A	P	E	M	A	S	H	A	M	E										
I	O	D	I	N	E	N	I	L	I	C	E	D	C	E	L	E	B								
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