

**Inside:** High school sports... See /1B **COVID cases climbing...** See /3B Fall colors...See /4B

# IMBERIAY Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989 VOL. 32, ISSUE 39 October 1, 2021

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

# **Population slides in North Country**

St. Louis County remains stable as state population soars by 400,000

by DAVID COLBURN Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- While Minnesota has grown by more than 400,000 people in the past ten years, the North Country hasn't shared in that growth, declining instead by more than four percent, according to data just released by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The figures come from the Decennial Redistricting Data Set of the Census, used to determine each state's number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and for establishing the boundar-



ies for state legislative districts. The numbers are the actual counts registered by the Census, rather

than population estimates generated in non-Census years.

Minnesota was in danger of losing one of its congressional seats to New York but held on to all eight when the official 2020 population was set at 5,706,494. If there had been just 26 fewer Minnesotans or 89 more New Yorkers, one seat would have been lost to the Empire State.

However, with growth concentrated in the seven-county Twin Cities region, the size, shape, and location of state legislative districts will have to change

See...COUNT pg. 11

**\$1**<sup>20</sup>

#### 2021 ELY MARATHON



# Canoe portager shatters own record

Anthony Peter covered 26.2 miles in 4:23.20

by KEITH VANDERVORT Ely Editor

ELY-A sunny sky, cool temperatures and west winds greeted participants and their fans at the 2021 Ely Marathon races last weekend that returned after a year off in 2020 because of the coronavirus.

'We were really happy with the turnout," said organizer Wendy Lindsay. "We had lots more registrations than previous years. Race day went great and people were having a great time."

The premier event of this dis-

Anthony Peter, top, the 2019 Ely Marathon Full Portage winner, repeated his victory this year. At right, Jensen Sinclair, 14 months, with mom, Angie, wondered where all the runners were headed to. photos by K. Vandervort

tance-running celebration at the end of the road, the Ely Full Marathon (26.2 miles) Portage Division, took center stage again this year. The 2019 winner, Anthony Peter,

See...RUN pg. 12



#### CITY OF TOWER

## **Preliminary** levy shows 3% increase for Tower

by Marshall Helmberger

TOWER— The city council here voted on Monday to set its preliminary levy at approximately \$406,000 for next year, a three-percent increase over its 2021 levy. But councilors noted that they hope to hold the line on city taxing and spending when they determine the city's final levy in December.

Under Minnesota law, the council must set a preliminary levy in September. The final levy can't be higher than the initial figure, but it can, and often is, reduced as officials fine tune their budget for next year. The city is looking at considerable potential budget savings for next year on police coverage, which should provide "more wiggle room," according to council member Dave Setterberg. At the same time, clerk-treasurer Victoria Ranua advised the council to continue to rebuild the city's reserves, which were badly depleted due to incautious spending in the past.

Council member Kevin Norby asked whether the city could do more to retire its existing debt ahead of schedule. But Ranua said municipalities rarely seek to advance payments on debt because the interest rates they typically pay are very low. She urged the council to be more mindful in the future of the debt they incur, in order to keep debt from becoming unmanageable.

Councilors considered Ranua's initial

See...TOWER pg. 12

#### PET HEALTH

### Veterinarians overwhelmed by need for emergency care

by JODI SUMMIT

Tower-Soudan Editor

REGIONAL- There is a yelp, then a cry, then a panicked dog running back toward you with a nose full of porcupine quills. In most cases, this means a trip to the vet, and if it's the weekend, it means an emergency trip to the vet.

And if you are lucky

enough to live in the Ely area, a call to the Ely Vet Clinic will often set you up with an appointment relatively quickly, with a vet always on call.

But for many pet owners in northeastern Minnesota, this

Deficiencies put huge burden on small practices in Ely, Cook Dr. Jen Freking, DVM works at the Ely Vet Clinic, one

of the few pet care facilties in the North Country to offer after-hour and weekend care. photo by K. Vandervort

isn't the case.

Most Iron Range-area veterinarians have stopped taking after-hours and weekend

calls. Instead, they are referring clients to the emergency veteri-

See...**PETS** pg. 10





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October 1, 2021 THE TIMBERJAY

### **Community notices**

## Finnish Americans and Friends to meet Oct. 5 at updated time

HIBBING- Finnish Americans and Friends will meet at Grace Lutheran Church, 4010 9th Ave. in Hibbing, across from the movie theater, at 2 p.m. (not at 1 p.m. as previously stated) on Tuesday, Oct. 5. Tom Mattson will speak about his world travels.

#### Sons of Norway to meet Oct. 7

VIRGINIA- Sons of Norway, Haarfager Lodge 40, will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 7 in the Virginia City Hall club room. Jan Dzwonkowski will present the program: "Gnomes I Have Grown and Owned." Serving committee is Jan Dzwonkowski, Karen Lindquist, Laurie and Dave Olson. Due to COVID, the annual Fall Bazaar, including the meatball dinner and bake sale, have been canceled.

## Swedish meatball fundraiser for Care Partners, Oct. 12

VIRGINIA- Care Partners is having its annual Swedish meatball fundraiser on Tuesday, Oct. 12 from 3 to 6 p.m. at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Virginia, 306 S 2nd St. Cost for a meal is \$11, children under 5 eat free. All proceeds will directly benefit local individuals and families facing cancer or life-limiting illness.

The meal has options to eat in, take out, or curbside pick up. To make an order, text name and order between 3 and 6 p.m. to 218-780-3366. Pick up is at 2nd St. S entrance. Meatballs only can also be ordered for \$11/dozen with or without gravy; limit two dozen while supplies last.

If COVID-19 prevents the dine-in option, to-go and curbside pick up will still be available.

Tickets will be sold at the door. For more information, call 218-404-1411.

#### Lyric hosts writing workshop, Oct. 7

VIRGINIA- The Lyric Center for the Arts in Virginia is pleased to host author Brian Malloy for a writing workshop and book reading on Thursday, Oct. 7.

Minnesota novelist Brian Malloy is the author of "The Year of Ice", "Brendan Wolf", the young adult novel "Twelve Long Months", and a new novel about the AIDS pandemic, "After Francesco". Honors include the Minnesota Book Award, the American Library Association's Alex Award, and grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Jerome Foundation. His books have been a *New York Times* "New and Notable" title, a Booklist editors' selection for best novels of the year, and a national finalist for the Ferro-Grumley Award for LGBT Fiction.

Brian has taught creative writing and literature at Emerson College and is adjunct faculty in the MFA programs at the University of Minnesota and Hamline University. Born in Philadelphia, Brian has made Minneapolis his home since 1978. He serves as Education Director for the Loft Literary Center. The event at the Lyric is part of First Thursdays QC. It will begin at 6 p.m. and is a 90-minute creative writing workshop on "Starting Your Novel." This is a user-friendly session for beginning writers and those in need of a refresher and inspiration for writing a story. Participants can work on creating a basic plot outline and get to know their main characters.

Following the workshop, Brian will briefly read from his new novel, After Francesco, set against the AIDS pandemic in New York and Minnesota during the 1980s. After Francesco is an Oprah Magazine best of 2021 selection, a Publishers Marketplace 2021 Buzz Book, and an Apple selection for best book of June 2021.

Due to COVID safety precautions, masks are required for both the writing workshop and reading. There is no fee for the workshop, but pre-registration is requested by email to lyriccenter-forthearts@gmail.com.

Brian Malloy is a fiscal year 2021 recipient of a Creative Support for Individuals grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Minnesota State Legislature, and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

LIVE MUSIC

## Lost Forty to perform at VCC, Oct. 1



ELY - The Lost Forty is in concert at Vermilion Community College auditorium on Friday, Oct. 1 at 7 p.m.

Brian Miller and Randy Gosa bring history to life with songs and music as The Lost Forty revives and performs the Irish-influenced songs of men who roamed the Great Lakes region in the days when pine was king.

Anative of the northern Minnesota town of Bemidji, Miller teams up with Gosa, a Wisconsinite, to form the duo. Miller and Gosa have toured the United States with their own Irish traditional music groups. Together they mix a passion for north woods history and folklore with their love of arranging forgotten songs to bring to life this rich but under-explored music.

The event is sponsored by the Northern Lakes Arts

Association. Tickets, sold at the door only, are \$15 for non-members of NLAA, \$12 for NLAA members, \$5 for students, and free to VCC students with college ID. Masks must be worn for indoor events at VCC.

## Telephone and Internet assistance is available REGIONAL- Under also offers citizens who Lifeline provider or the Singletaxpayerhousehold

REGIONAL- Under the federal Lifeline program, telephone customers who qualify for certain assistance programs are able to receive a basic telephone service discount. The discount is a bill credit of up to \$9.25 per month. There is an additional discount of \$25 available to Minnesota residents who reside on federally-recognized Tribal lands.

This discount is available with landline service providers, broadband providers, and many wireless providers who offer free cell phones. Minnesota's Telephone Assistance Plan

also offers citizens who qualify for Lifeline a \$10 discount on landline phone service, which can be combined with the federal Lifeline credit for a greater discount.

"Staving connected."

"Staying connected through telephone service or the Internet is important for Minnesotans, whether someone may need emergency services, is working remotely, or has students who are distance learning," said Commissioner Matthew Schuerger. "If you or someone you know are having trouble affording telephone service or broadband, reach out to your

Commission's Consumer Affairs Office for help."

Additionally, Congress created a program to complement Lifeline called the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB). EBB provides eligible households up to a \$50/month discount for broadband services more for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Current Lifeline participants are automatically eligible, and, in most cases, they don't need to apply separately for the EBB, but they do need to select a provider and eligible EBB plan to receive the benefit.

Single taxpayer households with incomes at or below \$99,000 or joint taxpayer households with incomes at or below \$198,000 are eligible for EBB as are households that qualify for the free and reduced-price school lunch or breakfast programs.

To apply for benefits, contact your local landline or wireless Lifeline provider or the Commission. The agency can be reached at 651-296-0406, 800-657-3782, consumer.puc@state.mn.us, or visit the website at www.mn.gov/puc.

### **Spirit of Hospitality Award nominees announced**

REGIONAL- The Iron Range Tourism Bureau (IRT) is pleased to announce the nominees for the 10th Annual Spirit of Hospitality Awards. The awards, which began in 2012, were the brainchild of IRT board member Jane Serrano, and have been an annual fall tradition since the first awards banquet was held at Minnesota Discovery Center. Since then, the event has been held in different communities in the IRT service area. This year's awards event will be Sunday, Oct. 24 from 5-7 p.m. at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center. All nominees and a guest are invited at no cost; additional tickets may be reserved.

"We look forward to another successful event and are thrilled to be celebrating 10 years of recognizing excellence in tourism and hospitality," said Beth Pierce, IRT executive director. "A successful destination isn't just defined by the trails, attractions and amenities we offer – the icing on the cake is being welcoming, knowl-



edgeable about the area, and excited to introduce newcomers to everything the Iron Range brings."

All nominees will be interviewed by two judges, who will then determine a winner in each category. Winners receive a "SOHA" trophy and all nominees who attend the awards event receive a pin in recognition of their contributions.

"This industry has seen great changes over the last 18 months, and we're just happy to help put a spotlight

on all the people who bring so much to our area with their dedication and great attitudes," said Serrano.

There are 92 nominees this year.
The 2021 nominees are in our area include:
In the category of Behind-

the-Scenes: Judith Hammond, Kell's Kitchen; Rachel Indihar, The Wilderness at Fortune Bay In the category of Bartender:

In the category of Bartender: Jennilee Gubrud, Fortune Bay Resort Casino

Inthecategory of Guest Relations: Alton Barfield, formerly Fortune Bay Resort Casino; Jerrilyn Koslucher, Fortune Bay Resort Casino; Lois Pajari and Jill Vito, Cook's Country Connection.

To reserve tickets for \$15 per person (nominees and a guest are admitted free), or to sponsor the event in any amount, call Iron Range Tourism at 218-749-8161.



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# Scenic Rivers is now scheduling appointments for individuals to receive COVID-19 vaccinations at our medical locations following state eligibility guidelines. Supply is limited and call volumes are high, so we appreciate your patience. If you believe you meet the MN state vaccine eligiblity requirements,

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DEMOCRATIC PARTY

## DFL opens new outreach office in Ely

by KEITH VANDERVORT

Ely Editor

ELY - Dozens of supporters attended a grand opening celebration here last Sunday for the new office for the St. Louis County DFL Organizing Unit 03. The new headquarters is located at 1311 E. Sheridan St.

Prior to a ribbon cutting ceremony, featured speakers included State Auditor Julie Blaha, Minnesota DFL political director Alyse Maye Quade, and House District 3A representative Rob Ecklund.

The office is staffed by volunteers and will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, or to volunteer, call the office at 218-365-3444.



Minnesota DFL **Political Director Alyse** Maye Quade, and State Rep. Rob Ecklund cut a ribbon to officially open the DFL office in Ely on Sunday. photo by K. Vandervort

## DNR initiates contested case hearing on PolyMet

Managing Editor

the hearing back in April REGIONAL - The when it decided one of Department of Natural several legal challenges to Resources announced this PolyMet's permit to mine week that it has initiated brought by a coalition of a contested case hearing environmental and tribal to solicit testimony over litigants. The Supreme the use of a type of clay

as a tailings basin cap for the proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine, near Hoyt Lakes. In doing so, the agency opted for a narrow look at issues surrounding the proposed mine, rather than take the suggestion of the state's discharge of highly acidic Supreme Court to consider mine water from the tailings a wider range of issues in

facility.

administrative law judge. The high court ordered

the planned hearing, which

will go forward before an

Court found that the DNR, which issued the permit to mine in November 2018, lacked sufficient evidence to support the use of bentonite clay as a tailings basin cap. The clay cap was proposed as a means of reducing or eliminating the

Experts hired by the DNR had raised doubts themselves about the feasibility of the clay cap, describing it as a "Hail Mary type of concept" and "unsubstantiated wishful thinking."

Opponents of the mine had sued, arguing that the DNR should have held contested case hearings on several issues where they believed there were substantial factual disputes.

The high court, in its April ruling, had determined that the DNR had discretion to decline a contested case hearing over most of those issues. Yet, the court noted that the DNR had the authority to broaden the contested case hearing the court was ordering over the use of bentonite clay to include other issues that mine critics had raised. "DNR has the authority to identify the issues and scope of the contested case hearing," noted the judges, "and may decide to address issues raised by this appeal regarding the legal sufficiency of the permits."

The high court did not address the legal adequacy of the permit to mine, instead focusing on the DNR's discretion to hold, or not to hold, a contested case hearing, so several issues that the high court sidestepped in its April decision are likely to come back before the court eventually. Additional findings on those issues from a contested case hearing could potentially aid appellate courts as they wade through those issues in the coming months and years.

Mine critics expressed disappointment in the DNR's decision to limit the hearing to a single issue. "The DNR has once again side-stepped an opportunity to get additional information on issues of deep concern to Minnesotans," said Kathryn Hoffman, CEO of the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, one of the lead plaintiffs in the case against the DNR. "These include

Supreme Court had ordered hearing on plan to use bentonite clay to cap tailings basin the safety of the proposed dam, the plan to store polluted water and mine waste for hundreds of years after closure, and the risk to Minnesota taxpayers from cleanup costs. The Minnesota Supreme Court made it clear the DNR could have included all of these issues in this hearing, but DNR has chosen to exclude

them." The contested case hearing will provide all of the parties involved, including environmental groups, PolyMet, and the DNR the opportunity to submit legal briefs, documents, and call

See DNR...pg. 5

### **REAL ESTATE**





nace, upgraded elect., lg. deck, 24x26 heated garage, 30x54 pole bldg., drilled well. 80 acres of fields and mature timber. MLS #142038 \$279,000

COOK 11+ acres undeveloped w/views of Frazer Bay. Several flat and level bldg. sites w/potential for panoramic lake views. MLS #141098 \$74,900

COOK 1 BR home on 5 acres w/40x40 gar., bunkhouse and sauna. Well, full septic, outhouse and composting toilet. Near public lands. MLS #142215 \$69,000

LAKE VERMILION 7 acres on Anderson Isle in Frazer Bay. 1,990 ft lksh ready for you to build dream home/cabin. MLS #135079 \$245,000

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Pelican Lake, Orr-\$179,900 Pelican Lake cabin, sauna building, dry boathouse, 2 woodsheds and privy with 226 ft of shoreline. Electric to main cabin and sauna building. All buildings need some TLC. MLS#142280

Crane Lake-\$349,900 912 sq ft boat-access cabin on Rollick Creek. This cabin sits on 80 acres and has 450 ft of shoreline and is surrounded by public lands. Truly a gem for those looking for solitude, relaxation, and a wilderness adventure. MLS#14208

Ash River, Orr-\$98,000 Boat-access river property. 4.5 acres and 300 ft of shoreline. MLS#139141

Orr-\$449,000 51 undeveloped acres and almost one mile of shoreline on Pelican Lake. 24x40 cabin, sauna and storage buildings. Privacy and paths along the shoreline. MLS#141125

Cook-\$179,900 289 acre parcel of land near Lake Vermilion with Flint Creek running through. MLS#141043







4 October 1, 2021 THE TIMBERJAY

# OPINION

OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS;"

"CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW... ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

### **Editorial**

e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

## **Census numbers**

Area's population loss continues, but are the numbers accurate?

This week, we're reporting on population data from the 2020 census for a number of communities in our area and the results are alarming. Every one of the cities that we cover, including Tower, Ely, Babbitt, Cook, and Orr, lost population, in some cases by significant amounts, according to the data now available from the Census Bureau.

Tower's population declined by 14 percent, from 500 back in 2010 to just 430 as of the 2020 count. Orr saw a 25-percent decline, from 280 to just 211.

Cook and Ely saw smaller declines, with Cook dropping seven percent, from a population of 574 ten years ago, to 534 today, while Ely saw a 5.5-percent decline, from 3,460 to 3,268. Babbitt lost 78 residents, a 5.6-percent decline.

The Mesabi Range towns weren't immune, either. Eveleth lost 225 residents, or 6.4 percent, while Virginia lost 291 residents, a 3.5-percent decline.

If these numbers are accurate, they help to explain the continuing decline in school enrollments in our region as well as the chronic worker shortage faced by many businesses in our area.

There are, however, reasons to question the numbers in some cases. The latest census data not only points to a declining population in Tower, for example, they also indicate an astonishing number of vacant residences - a total of 79. Where those residences are to be found is anyone's guess. While there certainly are a number of vacant or seasonal residences in the community, no one seems able to identify how the census determined that more than a quarter of the city's housing stock is currently vacant at a time when demand for housing in the community is seemingly high. Housing is a key element in growing a community. If more than a quarter of the available stock in Tower is really sitting idle, it is a major impediment to reversing this troubling population decline. Determining how to fill vacant houses in our communities should be a major initiative.

We suspect part of the problem in communities across our region is a growing disinterest in participating in the census. Anti-government attitudes have been on the rise with many Americans, including many in this region. Some

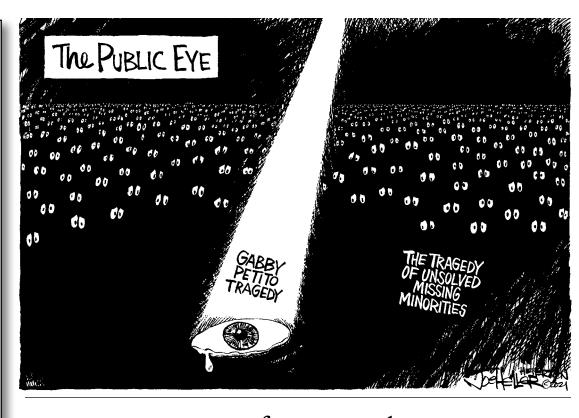
have complained that the census is an example of unwanted government intrusiveness. Yet, the decennial census was something that our nation's founders specifically mandated in the U.S. Constitution. It's as American as apple pie.

In fact, a census is critical to maintaining representative government. The population numbers established by the census determine our representation in both Congress and the state Legislature and if our population declines, our clout in Washington and St. Paul declines with it. As a state, Minnesota's population grew by about 400,000, or 7.6 percent over the past decade even as communities in our region, and other rural parts of Minnesota, lost ground. That will mean more representation, and more clout, for the Twin Cities metro region as a result of the upcoming redistricting. It's going to be tougher to make the case for addressing critical needs of rural Minnesota as more and more lawmakers represent suburban districts.

And, since many types of government funding are also based on population, the population declines highlighted in the latest census data mean our region will see less funding under such programs in the future. Residents of our communities should have considered that before they tossed their census forms in the trash.

If the latest census data is a true reflection of the population trends in our region, our community leaders should be asking what can be done to reverse the trend. At the current rate of decline, Tower's population would be just 369 nine years from now, when the 2030 census is completed. Orr's population would be just 174 and Cook would dip below 500 for the first time in more than a century.

It's worth noting that there were some population bright spots in our area. Lake communities, like Greenwood, Crane Lake, Fall Lake, and Beatty townships all gained population over the past decade as people recognized the quality of life such areas offer. Fall Lake saw its population grow by 12.9 percent. As we expand broadband into these areas, it's likely to encourage more in-migration, something this area desperately needs.



### Letters from Readers

#### Naming names on the Greenwood board

Last week's editorial in the Timberjay on Greenwood's secrecy couldn't have been more correct. The editorial did not name names when they referred "a majority of board members," but I will because it is important to know their names.

Carmen DeLuca, Paul Skubic and Mike Ralston are A new way for the the supervisors who believe they are above the law.

This trio strongly believes to never admit they are wrong, cause no harm to their voting block and get reelected at all costs. Even if the cost is their integrity. Their actions speak to that argument.

In every circumstance, this trio blames others for their problems. They don't seem to remember that when they point their finger at someone there are three more pointing back at themselves. Because of their self-serving decisions and taking the advice they receive from attorney Steve Fenske who is with the township's insurance company MATIT or board-hired township attorneys Couri and Ruppe of St. Michael, we are now without necessary insurance coverage. Any opinions from those attorneys that would put the township in the legal pickle we are in now need serious review. We all pay for these "legal opinions" from these attorneys and it is their opinions that may cost us more. When it comes to not allowing any other township supervisors besides Carmen DeLuca to attend fire department meetings, the trio shows their hand. That is to keep their voting block with the fire department. The last time I checked, all supervisors have oversight responsibilities over all township matters. I don't understand why these attorneys advise that it is legal and a good idea if only one supervisor attends the "top secret" fire department meetings. Would it not benefit the insurance company, by lowering their exposure to claims, if ANY supervisor or any taxpayer would

be allowed to attend and provide

oversight to the department that has had the most insurance claims costing MATIT and residents some serious money? I guess that makes too much sense. If this continues, the township will lose the minimal coverage they have now. Insurance companies share information. Who will want to insure us with this trio in place?

Jeff Maus Greenwood Twp.

### healthcare industry to fleece us

Recently a bill from my healthcare provider had an outof-pocket "co-insurance" charge of about \$50. A little investigative call to the provider's business office gave me an explanation: "We can charge this way (outpatient hospital billing) because state law allows us to and we are within the parameters of this billing allowance."

I stated that I went to their clinic, not their hospital. They said that because the clinic and hospital share the same "physical footprint" they are allowed to charge this way. "And," they said, "you can apply for financial assistance, and if you qualify, the charge will not be applied to

So, apparently because of some skillful lobbying by the healthcare industry, providers are allowed to charge higher rates because they want to and they can. Mind you, the recent remodeling of this Range hospital/clinic (Essentia Pines in Aurora) had three finance partners: the IRRRB (mine money), the USDA (taxpayer money) and a bank (investors money). So, that was not enough, so they just charge more to community members because they can and want to. Phone calls to both major providers here on the Range (Essentia and Fairview) revealed that both do this type of billing. The state deptartments of Health and Commerce indicated it is all within legal parameters. So, welcome to commercial healthcare 101, where the big boys get to make the rules while using

other people's money to build a bigger business. A conversation with one of the business office's agents revealed that she herself, a single mom, qualified for financial assistance even though she is working while raising children, and for me not to feel too badly about applying for a waiver.

How about charging within the guidance and limits of the premiums we pay for Medicare insurance and supplemental coverage? Or, the provider executives can perhaps take a pay cut from their six-figure incomes? Essentia is a privately-held corporation not beholden to any shareholders apparently.

Mark Roalson **Hoyt Lakes** 

#### How to lose the fight against COVID

The difference between China and the United States is the difference between collective responsibility and individual freedom. In fighting the virus, the strategy has been the same in both countries. Lockdowns. Quarantines. Contact tracing. Social distancing. Masking. Vaccination. Why, then, has the strategy been successful in China but not in the United States? Here's an example. In China masking mandates have been successful because cooperation has been strictlyenforced. Everyonewearsa mask. In the United States masking mandates have been unsuccessful because our compliance rate has been only fifty percent. The virus doesn't pay attention to individual freedom. Masking only works with one hundred percent cooperation.

Jim Ganahl Cook

Where the North Country Sounds Off!

## Let's brush up on some history

and estab-

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the Indian

Ocean pro-

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water route

Indigenous People's Day, aka Columbus Day, is coming up on Oct. 11, so let's take a peek into history. Born in Italy in 1451, Christofo Columbo began his career in 1477 as a merchant mariner for King John the 2nd of

Portugal. Spain was gaining

power on the seas, colo-

nizing Atlantic islands,

to Asia, accelerating trade. Mistaken European scholars thought the world was 20-percent smaller than previously believed, so they thought a shorter route to Asia existed by sailing west. Because of the newly invented printing press, Columbus read about it and was determined to find this more direct route which would lead to undiscovered lands and riches. After many failed

appeals for funding from Portugal, France, England, and Spain, in 1492 Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain agreed, seeing his venture as an opportunity to compete with Portugal, gaining wealth and power at a relatively small cost.

It was an era of ethnic cleansing. The Inquisition, a powerful office of the Catholic Church, had been set up in the 12th century to cleanse Europe and the Americas of heretics: initially Jews and Muslims and later Protestants. Jews were forced to leave or convert, but often burned at the stake anyway. In 200 years, 32,000 people were executed in Spain alone.

Famously, Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in 1431 in France. It was not a gentle time, and it was the environment Columbus lived in. In 1493, the Doctrine of Discovery clenched the deal for Christian conquest, sealing the fates of millions of indigenous people. More about that later.

It is rather mindboggling to consider the inaccurate, sanitized mythology about Columbus that has been taught as history in our schools and embedded in

our culture's psyche, even when Facebook, Twitter, cable channels, and internet blogs didn't exist to spread the lies. What makes it more remarkable is that all of Columbus's original journals, notes, and letters are still accessible in archives, in which he advocated enslaving the natives they met. Somanylies.Columbus

was given credit for figuring out that the world was

See HISTORY...pg. 5

October 1, 2021 THE TIMBERJAY

Letters from Readers

#### Lessons from the Little Rock Nine

On Sept. 4, 1957, nine black students arrived at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, making their way through the crowd of people who were shouting obscenities and throwing objects at them. Once they reached the door, the National Guard, called out by the governor, prevented them from entering the school. Even though the 1954 Brown vs Board of **Education Supreme Court** decision decreed school segregation unconstitutional, Governor Orval Faubus deployed the Arkansas National Guard to support segregationists. Later, on Sept. 29, the nine black students were admitted entrance to the school under the protection of the 101st Airborne Division of the National Guard.

These students were named the Little Rock Nine. Melba Pattillo Beal, one of the students, later wrote a book, "Warrior Don't Cry," in which she describes the physical and verbal abuse these students experienced as well as the courage that the students displayed in continuing to attend the school, despite the risks they faced daily. I would want students to read her book. To hear her voice. To understand her experience and the experiences of those others who faced serious risks to their welfare and safety each day.

In the summer of 1958, Governor Faubus fought to delay the decision by the federal court. He called together an extraordinary session of the state Legislature in August to enact his segregation bill, claiming that Little Rock had the right and freedom to oppose the federal decrees, and signed acts that enabled him and the Little Rock School District to close all public schools, urging the public to vote against integration since he was planning to lease public school buildings to private schools and educate black and white students separately. This referendum was blocked by the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, turning the Little Rock community against blacks, who became targets of hate crimes.

I think about this. As an educator, I enjoyed the process of creating lesson and unit plans. I utilized multiple resources. Books. Videos. Research. Independent projects. Debates. This is how students learn. This is how students gain a broad understanding and perspective of the history of this nation. There is so much to learn and understand.

under Hitler. Students were

Not just the memorization of facts, but understanding. Discussing. Investigating.

Researching.

Today the curriculum in our schools is under attack by groups of individuals who are strongly opposed to what they continue to call Critical Race Theory. Unfortunately, they are extremely ill-informed as to what CRT even is. It is NOT teaching about slavery. It has nothing to do with learning about segregation and the civil rights movement that ensued. It is not about learning about Emmett Till or Martin Luther King Jr. or reading poets such as Langston Hughes or Maya Angelou. It is not learning about the Tulsa Massacre or about Sundown towns. CRT is a construct taught in graduate schools in law and education as a research focus to assess the impact of racism in systems. It has nothing to do with the curriculum in our classrooms. Absolutely nothing.

The history curriculum is and must be developed by historians and history teachers, experts in the field. The curriculum is not one that should be dictated by personal bias or opinion of political pundits. This is not a political issue and must not be.

I recently read about education in Germany programmed to hate those not like them. The curriculum, which was highly controlled by Hitler, nurtured propaganda against those not like them, instead purporting a superior race. Books that were not aligned with the Nazi propaganda were destroyed and those

caught reading those books

were severely punished.

We must not go there. Reading is a bridge to understanding. The goal of education is to broaden students' knowledge and understanding of history. Critical thinking, meaningful discussions, respectful debates, researching topics, reading about those not like us, and understanding this nation's story from many perspectives is the way we develop well informed responsible citizens. That is what we do in our classrooms. This is what we must continue to do in our classrooms.

Instead of storming school board meetings, I urge individuals with concerns about the curriculum to talk to teachers. Talk to educators. Talk to experts in the field. Historians. Librarians. College professors. Knowledge and understanding are strength. Propaganda is a danger to the welfare of all.

**Ellie Larmouth** Tower

#### Freedom for some doesn't guarantee it for

"Freedom for wolves has often meant death to the sheep," said Isaiah Berlin, a British philosopher. Freedom for whom, to do what, deserves critical analvsis. The suffix "dom" in the word "freedom" derives from Latin "dominus," meaning master. Free to "lord over" or dominate suggests a different meaning of freedom.

Lord/serf, master/slave or employer/employee refer to economic systems that evolved into industrial capitalism. The dominant rich (takers of wealth) rank highest in the hierarchy and the powerless poor sit at the bottom. In between, "wannabees" carry the water for the rich and below them are exploited workers (makers

of wealth). Educational attainment should serve all to flourish in a democratic community, not confer rank as the "better sort." Hierarchical thinking elevates and venerates those at the top and rewards those serving their interests. Topdown rule shifts blame from systemic failure through division by dehumanizing and demonizing those at the lower rungs.

Constant sowing of

division and scapegoating the poor, minorities and immigrants distract from a failed system. Only bullies, ignorant and cowardly, rail against those least among us. Putdowns, blaming "others" and pummeling the poor tells less of victims and speaks volumes of mindless, craven and cruel perpetrators.

Power and wealth expand freedom to choose what you want to do and when to do it. Slaveholders and land-owners spoke frequently of the land of the free, while owning humans as property and stealing land from those labeled inferiors. Only egalitarianism levels the playing field for fairness and fair play to extend freedom for everyone.

History shows that unbridled capitalism was never designed to serve the masses but uses the masses, against themselves. Wannabes" identify with and aspire to wealth and power. Credentialed professionals too often become wolves cloaked in sheep's clothing to undermine the common good.

> Harold Honkola Roseville

#### **HISTORY**...Continued from page 4

round, when in fact that was common knowledge for educated Europeans at that time. Eratosthenes not only developed an understanding of latitude in 300 B.C., he also made the first estimate of the circumference of the globe and was accurate to within

Nor did Columbus "discover" anything. As most of us are aware, Columbus did bang into land in the Bahamas, possibly San Salvador, but was basically lost, thinking he was in Asia. Nor was he the first. Leif Erickson and possibly others from China and Africa had visited the Americas in earlier centuries. Columbus traveled around the Caribbean, where he tound about two million Taino, indigenous people who were friendly and welcoming, but not the riches he craved. He spent most of the time in Hispaniola, now called Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Over a few years and three voyages, he searched for treasures in vain, and as Governor, forced the locals to work on plantations and make quarterly payments in gold dust, which was impossible because there wasn't much gold on the islands. Those who failed to bring the required amount quarterly had their hands chopped off, a death sentence. It is estimated that within 60 years after Columbus landed, only a few hundred of 250,000 Taino were left on that

Queen Isabella refused a gift from him of 500 slaves as she felt they were now Spanish citizens and should not be enslaved; she returned the "gift." A Jesuit priest, Bartolome 'de las Casas, (later a bishop,) wrote that "The Spaniards are treating the Indians like excrement in a public square, and Columbus was at the beginning of the ill-usage inflicted upon them." He wrote about horrifying murders of adults and children, that the Spaniards treated as sport, and weirdly, "They hanged Indians by thirence for our Redeemer and the twelve apostles." It's hard for me to conceive of the twisted thinking that morphs murder into hon-

oring God. In 1493, Pope Alexander VI, a major political force, wanted Christians to quit killing each other and join together in the Crusades against Muslims. He declared through papal bulls (edicts) known collectively as the Doctrine of Discovery that all people had to serve the Christian kings, and that any Christian kingdom could claim ownership of all "discovered' lands that were controlled by non-Christians, that the lands would be declared "empty" and that non-Christian natives had no authority to rule themselves.

This isn't ancient history. The Doctrine of Discovery is considered international public law and has been cited in many laws and Supreme Court decisions in modern times, justifying oppressive treatment of indigenous people. The Pope has yet to renounce it, although many non-Catholic denominations have. The Doctrine changed the language of hierarchy and colonization from "the divine right of kings" to "the divine right of Christian kings." The intent also shifted from just stealing resources to stealing peoples' religion and culture, forcing assimilation.

Columbus was eventually arrested and returned to Spain in chains. He was stripped of his noble titles, but was released and his money returned. He did finagle one more trip across the Atlantic in 1502. He made it to Panama, just miles from the Pacific Ocean, but lost two of his four ships, damaged by storms and hostile natives, returning home empty-handed; he

died four years later. He did open up permanent contact and communication between the Americas and the rest of the world. The aim of Spain and other European countries at the time was to discover, possess, and colonize other lands and people, and extreme cruelty was par for the course during the Inquisition. Columbus was part of that era, but that is not reason to ignore the devastation that he left behind. We should ask ourselves, how was it so easy to whitewash (literally) the true history and disseminate misinformation in our

public schools? And yet we see today the clashes that are happening around the country and in our small town here with some people objecting vociferously to teachers presenting materials and instruction that provide multiple perspectives beyond the historical "party line" created to make

those in power look good. Indigenous Peoples' Dayisnotnationalyet.Many cities and towns celebrate it, including Minneapolis, and some states have officially adopted it to replace Columbus Day. Governors

**Cook Transfer Station** 

2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook

Mon: 10am-6pm

Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm

**Soudan Canister Site** 

5160 Hwy 169, Soudan

Hours Mon, Wed, Sat:, Sun

8am-5pm

Aurora Transfer Station

5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora

Hours

Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm

Tue, Wed:10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon

**Regional Landfill** 

5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia

Dayton and Walz have proclaimed the day, and Walz has said he will sign it into law if it comes to his desk, according to Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan, who is a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe.

We can honor the day in many ways: Learn the history of our town and home- who was there first? Read indigenous literature. I recommend "Everything You Wanted to Know about Indians but Were Afraid

which provided some of the information here. Join a celebration online or in person. Encourage the teaching of civics and history in your schools. Learn more yourself! Advocate for Indigenous Peoples' Day. Best of all, diversify the people you know in your own life, and enjoy the richness of people from different cultures.

to Ask" by Anton Treuer,

## *TIMBERJAY*

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### **DNR**...Continued from page 3:

and cross examine witnesses. The administrative law judge will then be tasked with drafting a report, which the DNR can then consider as it weighs a final decision on the issue of the clay cap. The process is likely to take several months to complete.

After that, the next steps remain hotly contested. DNR officials maintain that even if they choose to alter their permit, they can do so without a new permit application from PolyMet. Environmental lawyers contest that claim, arguing that the appellate courts reversed the permit to mine, which means it has effectively been wiped away,

requiring a new application process. That is likely to be another issue that the parties will address in an upcoming court battle.



#### INT LOUIS COUNTY **Area Solid Waste Facility** site hours

Northwoods Transfer Station 9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt Winter Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: 11am-5pm **County 77 Canister Site** 2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp

Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm

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

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

Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

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

#### Week of Oct. 4

#### Monday

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

#### Tuesday

Tower Area Food Shelf-Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:00 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is Oct. 19.

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

#### Wednesday

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

#### Thursday

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

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

#### Wheelchairs donated to Tower Loan Closet

TOWER- The Tower Loan Closet now has two wheelchairs to lend out, thanks to a donation by Sally Turk, who also donated some other home health care equipment. The loan closet is open by appointment by calling Joe Morin at 218-780-7306.

#### Correction

The photograph from the Embarrass Horse Show in the Sept. 24 issue, was a photo of Daycee Hardy with Pepper. The two earned a third-place ribbon in the Pony Halter Class. *The Timberjay* apologizes for the error.

#### Little Church Committee to meet

VERMILION LAKE TWP- The Little Church Committee will meet on Saturday, Oct. 9 at 10 a.m. The committee welcomes anyone and is always looking for people interested in keeping The Little Church preserved and maintained in our community. Men's Group meets every Thursday at 9 a.m. for coffee and conversation. All are welcome. The Little Church is located in Vermilion Lake Township on Co. Rd. 26/Wahlsten Rd. Questions, contact Len Hujanen at 218-749-2014.

#### St. Martin's to hold Christmas Bazaar

TOWER- St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower is happy to announce that they will once again be hosting a Christmas Bazaar. The event will be held on Saturday, Nov. 6 in the church social hall. They are in the early planning of the event and are now looking for local crafters to participate. The cost for a table is \$20. If interested, please contact Maryann at the rectory (218-753-4310) by Oct. 13.

TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY

## Ready for the last 1.2 miles...

Tower-Soudan Elementary marathon team finishes up their 26.2 mile running challenge

TOWER- Tower-Soudan Elementary sent 17 runners to participate in this year's children's Dorothy Molter Root Beer Run. Participating runners ran 25 miles before race day, and on Saturday completed the final 1.2 miles on the official Ely Marathon course, ending at the finish line in Whiteside Park. Finishers received a race medal, bottle of Dorothy Molter root beer, and a race T-shirt. In total, 50 young runners participated in the race.

The runners got a chance to "carbo-load" at a spaghetti lunch prepared by their teachers the day before the race.

Tower's fastest runner was Bentley Crego, who finished with an 8:51 minute mile pace. The fastest T-S girl was Audriana Olson, who finished with a 12:54 minute mile pace. Other runners included Harley Banks, Shenze Chavez, Calvin Childs, Kija Chosa, Dylan Crego, Kasen Dostert, Kooper Dostert, Ayden Mickle, Nai'Lee Moyer, Luca Sunsdahl, Jason Villebrun, Jayden Villebrun, Landon Wellander, Zaxton Wellander, and Trevor Zaitz.

The students were coached by teachers Jo Holen and Jacque Horvat. The Tower-Soudan Athletic Association sponsored all the T-S runners, paying their entry fees.





Runners get some extra nutrition the day before the race. Below Left: Harley Banks enjoyed the spaghetti lunch. photos by J. Summit Runners pose at the finish line. submitted



BREITUNG

## **Breitung makes offer to police chief candidate**

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA

SOUDAN- The Breitung Town Board has made an offer to Daniel Reing to serve as police chief for the township. The board decided to make the offer at their Sept. 23 meeting after he received a clean background check. The hiring is subject to a physical exam, psychological evaluation, and any other state requirements.

Base salary for the position is \$58,240. Additional benefits bring the yearly cost to the township up to \$91,829 according to information from the study done by the Breitung Tower Police Committee last spring.

Reing currently splits his time between working as an officer at the Eveleth Police Department, a special education teacher at St. Louis County Schools, and as an EMT for Cook Area Ambulance Service.

The Breitung Police Department shut down March 5 when former chief Dan Nylund resigned, and the reconstituted department will function differently under a new chief. The department will no longer have any on-call hours and will be limited to Reing's 40 hours each week and any part-time officers they may hire. St. Louis County Sheriff's office will respond to any emergencies during the times Breitung police are not scheduled.

Supervisor Chuck Tekautz and clerk Dianna Sunsdahl have been meeting with councilors from the city of Tower to negotiate a policing contract between the two communities.

#### **Parks**

Breitung received \$1,200 from the Tower Firemen's Relief Association for the purchase and installation of a small skating rink for beginning skaters at Soudan Park. Tomsich said that he will ask the Joint Powers Recreation Board for \$500 and Lake Country Power for \$1,000 to fund the remaining costs of the project. The rink will be housed under the Margaret Lilya Pavilion and have bumpers and lighting.

The board heard that the Soudan Park improvement committee met with a landscape engineer from JPJ Engineering. The engineer is putting together a master plan for the playground/rink area that will include new hockey boards, expansion and improvements to the warming shack, a path to the basketball and volleyball courts, signage, rink and playground lighting, additional swings, a toddler play area and more.

The board passed a resolution to apply for \$13,000 from the IRRR Downtown Streetscapes Program for the beginner skating rink, garden updates next to entrance signs, a solar powered traffic calming sign, four painted crosswalks, two bike

racks, two benches and a "Caution Kids Playing" sign. An additional application for \$45,000 from the IRRR Culture and Tourism Program would cover work

at McKinley Park including upgrading electrical hardware, landscaping, upgrading the boat launch pedestrian ramp, new decking for two docks and a new campsite map.

#### Trails

Tomsich reported that Breitung maintenance has been maintaining sections of bike trail that are on Tower property between McKinley Park and Hoo-Doo Point. Tomsich presented a worksheet detailing maintenance costs over the past eight years. Tomsich said he is trying to balance out who does what in the future and isn't necessarily seeking reimbursement for past costs incurred. Tomsich said going forward he'd like to enter an agreement with Tower that defines each community's responsibilities.

#### Other news

In other news, the board:

Heard a complaint about a vehicle on Main St. that is unreg-

istered and appears to be leaking fluids. The township will send a blight letter.

Heard there have been

multiple complaints about a flag on display at a home on Main St. for its public display of vulgar language. Supervisor Tekautz will speak with the homeowner.

➤ Heard that a party may be

the Historic Fire Hall located

interested in hockey boards; if the party does not take them the township will list the boards for

sale on Two Rivers Auction.

Heard that the 4th St. sewer project will take priority over the South St. sewer project in the event of an early winter.

➤ Heard from Supervisor Greg Dostert that he reported five addresses on Echo Point Rd to the St. Louis County Lodging Tax Board after hearing complaints from neighbors.

➤ Accepted the high bid of \$616 from Seth Leino on a 2003 GMC Envoy that was acquired via police forfeiture.

➤ Passed a resolution to increase the PERA pension benefit level for firefighters.

➤ Passed a resolution to accept donations made during the past year, including \$65 from Jackie Kangas for recreation, \$7,500 from the Bois Forte Band for fire assistance, \$50 from Tower Soudan Agency for the community picnic, \$2,500 from Stuntz Bay Association for road maintenance, \$400 from C&C Winger for the fire department, and \$1,200 from the Tower Fireman's Relief Association for the beginner skating rink.

➤ Passed a resolution to rezone property near the water tower from residential to multi-

The next meeting will be Thursday, Oct. 28 at 12 p.m.

#### LOCAL NOTICES

#### Tower-Soudan Area Singers now practicing at St. James; new singers are welcome

TOWER- The Tower-Soudan Area Singers will now be meeting at St. James Presbyterian Church in Tower on Monday nights at 5:30 p.m. beginning on Oct. 4. Anyone interested in singing with the group is en-

couraged to come and prepare for the Christmas concert. The winter concert is

at 2 p.m. in the Tower school gymnasium. All kinds of wonderful seasonal music will be presented and all kinds of seasonal baked goods will follow in the all purpose room. Freewill donations will be accepted

to defer expenses.

#### TSHS aluminum can drive fundraiser is still underway TOWER-SOUDAN- The

TOWER-SOUDAN- The Tower-Soudan Historical Society is starting an ongoing "Aluminum Can" collection drive. Funds from the cans donated

will go toward projects and the work of the Historical Society.

A fenced-in trailer is behind

next to the Tower Post Office on Main St. Please place your aluminum cans inside a garbage bag and place them in the fenced trailer. Other donations or memberships can be sent to TSHS, PO Box 465, Tower, MN 55790.



WINDOW INTO YESTERDAY

## Semer's Park beach, park formed in the 1940s

Ely-Winton Historical Society

"You be careful and watch out for the trains," our mothers would warn us. Back in the '50s and even early '60s, train tracks crossed near the D M and I R railroad depot. There were often several trains with ore cars either coming or going each day. In the summer kids often hopped on their bikes going across town and those tracks to get down to the beach at Semer's Park on Shagawa

This beach and park didn't happen until the 1940s. Prior the 1940s the swimming beach for Ely was located further east on Sandy Point on Shagawa. This attractive property was owned by the Oliver Iron Mining Co., who maintained a beach, a large dock, and a pavilion. Used for swimming and countless picnics, political rallies also found a home there. Families, children, and onlookers made frequent use of it.

Over 40 or more years, the property deteriorated and the mining company declined to make new major repairs. By1941 it was closed to the public. The city fathers had seen this coming and had thought about a swimming beach and picnic area a mile or so to the south. In 1916, John Semer had already donated land for a city beach and park. He stipulated that the park had to bear his family name even though it is thought



Semer's Park and Beach was originally a piece of abandoned land owned by the Oliver Mining Co. courtesy of the Ely-Winton Historical Society

he only visited Ely once. His interest in the area was first in mining claims in the area.

For years afterwards few improvements were actually made to what eventually became Semer's Park. It remained only an unimproved swimming beach, but by the 1930s plans were discussed for further development. The area first became "The Tourist Camp." A caretaker was hired by the city to be on duty 24 hours a day. He checked on the tourists, built fires, and kept the grounds clean and tidy. This proved to be very popular with summer visitors.

During the height of the Great Depression, the Works Progress Administration began hiring unemployed young men in building new public works projects. An auxiliary organization, the NYA or National

Youth Administration, was formed in 1938. Twenty Ely young men were hired to help construct stone buildings, a fire ring, and stone picnic tables at Semer's Park. By the fall, four stone fireplaces, one stone table, and the fire ring had been constructed by these NYA participants. Work on the stone kitchen was begun. Warren Childers and Leslie Cherne were among the first participants. They, and other young men, were taught the art of splitting stone and general construction.

At a city council meeting in May of 1939, it was agreed to also construct a municipal dock and sea plane ramp. The kitchen building was completed, followed by the bath house building in 1940. There is no mention of when that the stone restroom building on top of the hill was built but it must have

been about the same time. Playground equipment was added in 1943.

Three islands, Big Island, Little Island, and Snowball Island, eventually became a part of the park. They were acquired by a separate donation. Exploring them, since they were connected by bridges, was always a great adventure.

My personal story is about the kitchen building. It was a large open space with a large gas grill on each end. It could be rented for 25 cents a day. Before we had a lake cabin, my father took my mother, the four boys, and often some neighbor kids there for a pancake supper. His special recipe was to add some beer to the batter. We nicknamed the kitchen building as "Pancake House." I have not forgotten how good those pancakes were! The building still stands but is used now only for

Over the years, age and general wear gave the park a rather sorry look. In 2016, the Northern Bedrock group from Duluth, working alongside skilled local mason. Mike Braun, was engaged to restore the stone work. Northern Bedrock is an organization based in Duluth which is comprised of young people interested in restoring historic sites. They returned the next year to complete the work.

The buildings were also re-roofed. Bill Tefft, with volunteers from the Ely Field Naturalists, tackled the cleaning and painting that had been neglected. The well-worn playground equipment was also replaced that summer.

This year more improvements have been added. A paved trail now goes through the park and the grounds have been improved throughout. Semer's Park is now open for fishing, swimming, canoeing, boating, picnicking, camp fires, and snowmobiling. Anyone driving past will notice how full of activity the park is—young and old adults, children, and toddlers. Don't take my word

An exhibit of pictures, from the days of Sandy Point until the present, is featured for September and October in the Fine Arts Lobby of VCC.

Call the historical society office at 218-365-3226 for further information.

### uesdav Group

ELY - The Tuesday Group community educational lunch gathering meets every Tuesday at the Grand Ely Lodge.

Participants have an opportunity to order lunch.

For those interested in being a host, or who have a speaker suggestion, contact Lacey Squier by email at ElyTuesdayGroup@ gmail.com or call her at 218-216-9141.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

➤Oct. 5: Forest fire behavior and tree mortality with Lee Frelich.

➤Oct. 12: Building Awareness for Historical Change: The MMIW Movement in Minnesota with Sen. Mary Kunesh.

#### **Breathing Out**

by Cecilia Rolando © 2021



folks talking winter pack away all that's summer

fall palette changes

#### Libraries

Ely library

Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Closed on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays Phone: 365-5140

Babbitt library Monday Noon-6 pm Monday Noon-6 pm Wednesday Noon-6 pm Noon-6 pm Thursday Friday Noon-5 pm

#### Tuesday

Phone: 827-3345

### Support groups

Anonymous **OPEN AA - 7:30** p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely. **SUNDAY NIGHT AA** at St. Anthony's Catholic Church is cancelled.

#### **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

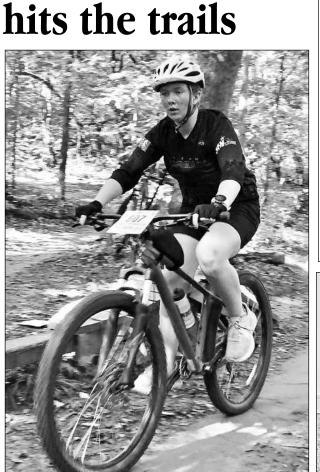
#### **EDUCATION GED** - Study materials and pre-test available. Call

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 Conference Room B

#### OUR COMMUNITY



**Team BOREALIS** 

### Youth mountain bike team competes at grade 6-12 level

REGIONAL - Three local riders from Team BOREALIS recently raced at the White Tail Ridge mountain bike trails in River Falls, Wis.

Team BOREALIS is a 6-12 grade mountain bike team serving youth in Ely, Tower, Babbitt and surrounding areas. Sanctioned by the Minnesota Cycling Association, a division of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association, Team BOREALIS is committed to providing opportunities for community youth to learn and grow as individuals and develop strength of mind, body, and character through cycling.

Chance Wavrin and

George Sponholz competed in the Junior High races while Rena Johnston represented the team in the High School races,.The event was held Sept. 18-19.

The team practices regularly at Hidden Valley and has opportunities to race throughout Minnesota during the fall. The team's next race is this weekend, Oct. 2-3 in Detroit Lakes, followed by a race at the Redhead mountain bike trails in Chisholm, Oct. 9-10.



Mrs. Jarecki and her third class at Washington Elementary School put on their smiles for a class picture last week during School Picture Day by Eric Sherman. photo by K. Vandervort



On those rare rainy days, recess is held indoors at Washington Elementary School in Ely. These first graders read a story, colored and made a kite last week. From left are Kaelyn Puzel, Ronda Puzel (Kaelyn's mom and school playground aide), Hadleigh Myers, and Anberlin Blomberg. photo by K. Vandervort



John and Lynn O'Kane, of Voyageur North Canoe Outfitters in Ely, recently helped the St. **Louis County Rescue Squad** update their equipment. They made the volunteer organization "a superb deal" on two new canoes, then donated the extras accessories to make them ready for immediate service. John O'Kane is shown with a new Wenonah Minnesota III-20, and a North Star Northwind 18. submitted photo

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

## Lions club has an offer someone can't refuse

Nearly 1,800 square feet of vintage Cook building with some roughs spots on sale for a buck

by DAVID COLBURN Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- It's something seen occasionally in the national media, a town offering insanely low prices on vacant buildings and homes as an incentive to attract new entrepreneurs and families.

Now the Cook Lions Club is on board with the phenomenon with an incredible deal that's a total steal at just \$1.

It's an older building in an historic spot in Cook that needs more than a bit of tender loving care, and a buyer who understands that anything's a deal that costs only \$1 these days. Without a sewer connection or plumbing and associated fixtures, it's not going to fetch competition from get-rich-quick residential home "flippers." But for the right person with the right need. Lions Club President Steve Kajala is ready for you to play "Let's Make a Deal!" at 6 1st St. SE.

"We have our storage building, which was originally a church, and then became a thrift shop, and we've owned it for approximately 15 years," Kajala said.

Having gotten a sweet deal from the Cook Hospital Auxiliary all those years ago, the Lions are more than willing to do the same for someone

and we're willing to sell it for \$1, and we're going to cover the closing costs," Kajala said. If Kajala is the sales-

"We bought it for \$1

man, club member Jerry Storm is the historian. Standing in front of the well-worn building, listening to Storm describe the neighborhood is like taking a stroll through vestervear.

"It was the Mission Covenant Church way back when, and I'm not sure what year they left there, but this was kind of the central part of town," Storm said. "At one point the bank was right across the street, and the street out front there was the main drag, the main street of town at the time. There was a bridge there, the Lutheran Church was just down the block, the Catholic Church right across the street. Right across from our building was a power generator, way back before there was electricity everywhere. And next door to our building there's an open lot and there was an old house there, either a Sears or Montgomery Ward (kit) house. At one point that was used as a hospital."

The Lions have used the building for storing donated items for their popular rummage sales, the club's second or third largest moneymaker, Kaiala said. But carting sofas and refrigerators and such up the steps and through the door has become more challenging, and the club would like to find a used garage or a little piece of land so that loading and



This building at 6 1st St. SE in Cook has served the Cook Lions Club as a storage facility for about 15 years, but with the need for reconfigured space, the club has decided to sell the building for \$1. photo by D. Colburn

unloading isn't such a chore for a group of dedicated volunteers that, in Kajala's words, "are no longer spring chickens."

And in keeping with the barnyard banter, Kajala's not about to be the one to try to put lipstick on

"It's not in perfect shape anymore," he ad-mitted with a chuckle. "The foundation is cracking, the outsides are settling in, and the roof is going to need to be replaced different things.'

But the Lions are nonetheless hopeful someone might look at the place and see more than a dollar's worth of possibilities that make it the perfect investment for them.

For more information or to arrange a viewing, call Kajala at 218-750-

#### PUMPKINS ORR CHILI



Food was the subject of dual competitions in Orr last weekend. Above, runner-up Charlene Kowarsch and Orr Lions Club contest winner Bill Purdy show off their 119 and 233 pound pumpkins. Twelve pumpkins were entered with a total weight of 1,294.75 pounds.

The Orr Community Center was packed on Saturday for the 2nd Annual Tony Cornelius Chili Cookoff to raise funds for a scholarship in his name. After all the raffle prizes were gone, Blast From the Past, top center, won the People's Choice award for Chris Gabrielson and crew. Other category awards went to Sandy Wardas, Not Your Mother's Chili, top right: LeAn and Jim Hardy, Round of Applause, lower right; and Josh and Jessica Gaskell, Fire in the Hole. submitted photos









NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

## Kindness and respect is principal's wish for new year

FIELD TWP- The staff at North Woods School are very excited to be back for the 2021-22 school year and are already busy with offering our kids the best possible school environment and experience that we can offer. We are back "in-person" this year, but the COVID situation is still here. I must admit that after a summer that seemed relatively free from the concerns of the virus, it is frustrating to be dealing with COVID concerns after over a year-and-ahalf of disruptions to the school environment.

The reality for schools across the state and country is that COVID has put an incredible amount of stress on our people and systems, and the additional frustrations of a politically divided nation have made it literally impossible for us to make everyone satisfied with how we operate. Twenty-five years ago when I entered this profession, I never would have guessed how challenging working at a school would become. I

would have never guessed

that going to school would become this politicized. Then again, I didn't live through the 1960s.



VUKMANICH

I feel that the best solution is to echo what we try to teach our kids: Be kind and respectful, even if you disagree. One of the things we work on every day at school is teaching our kids kindness and objectivity. As adults, we can never forget that kids know what is going on around them. They see how we, the adults, act and respond. They are exposed to more media nowadays than ever in history

and have instant access

to the same information

that adults see. As David Bowie said in his song Changes, "They're quite aware of what they're going through." Adults, our kids are watching every move we make, so please be mindful. We need your support, your positivity, and your commitment to doing the best you can, just as we are. Teachers go into the profession to do the best they can to work with kids, and that is what we do, even when it is re-

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ally hard. Thank you!

Grizzlies athletes are hard at it, with football, volleyball, cross-country well over a month into their seasons. Our student athletes work really hard to be competitive and to represent our school and community with class. It is worth noting that our cross-country

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year. You might see them outside practicing around the school.

New to North Woods this year are Ms. Hazelton, math, Mr. Kubiak, band, and Ms. Spears, Indian Education. There will be additional articles featuring our new staff. Welcome to our team at North Woods School!

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## Ely school district continues with face mask mandate

<u>by Keith Van</u>dervort

ELY - As ISD 696 administrators continue to monitor dramatically rising COVID-19 case rate data in the Ely area, revisions to the Safe Learning Reopening Plan for the current school year continue to be made.

Superintendent Erik Erie and the administrative team met with the Safe School Learning Plan Advisory Council last week to review plan topics and language, including the campus-wide face covering requirements recently implemented as a public health precaution to keep the schools open and students in the classroom.

Erie asked school board members Monday night to review the draft and propose any changes so the plan can be distributed to district families.

"In early July, when we were planning for the (upcoming)school year, our biweekly (COVID-19) case rate was at 1.24 (per 10,000 people)," Erie said. "Next week it is estimated to be at 65. We are now at 47.68."

#### **Maximum levy set**

In a special school board meeting Monday night, a proposed property tax levy for 2021 was set by unanimous vote at \$2,215,911 as the preliminary maximum amount.

This represents a 6.6-percent decrease (\$157,564) from the 2020 levy of \$2,373,475.

The budget and final property tax levy for next year will be approved by the school board in December.

'We are approving the maximum levy," said board chair Ray Marsnik, "which means that it can go down, but cannot go up."

Superintendent Erik Erie said the lower tax levy next year is "mostly from prior year adjustments" especially related to students counts. "We are estimating what our student count will be two years from now," he said.

Total Taconite Production Tax adjustments show a 30.3-percent decrease for next year, from \$91,806 to \$64,031.

As far as vaccinations for coronavirus, the Ely school district encourages but does not require the practice. A vaccination clinic is being scheduled for this fall on the school campus, according to Erie.

"The vaccination rate in northern St. Louis County is at 66.85 percent. In Duluth, it is at 73.66 percent," he said. "That

means as much as twothirds of our population in the northern part of the county has been vaccinated. For Ely students, ages 12-18, it is at 41 percent."

Other school districts in northeast Minnesota are also working to mitigate COVID-19. Amid relentless and vocal pushback from some Rock Ridge district residents Monday

night, that school board voted 5-4 to require face masks on their campuses.

"Hibbing and Cook County recently went to face mask requirements," Erie said. "Other districts by Duluth are also going that route. We are not alone in doing that."

COVID-19 outbreaks are more likely in schools that don't require students and staff to wear masks, new data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows. Two studies released last Friday support the CDC's recommendation for universal indoor masking in schools, according to reporting from

One study in Arizona showed schools with no masking requirement were about 3.5 times more likely to have a COVID-19 outbreak than schools that had a universal masking requirement. A second study showed counties across the U.S. where schools required mask use also had less transmission of the virus in the community in general.

Unlike last year when

federal, state and county governmental entities mandated public health measures to help curb the spread of COVID-19, no such direction exists this school year, leaving districts to make their own decisions amid surging Delta variant

CDCandtheMinnesota Department of Health have made recommendations "but they are not a policy-making body," Erie

Board member Tony Colarich noted that ISD 696 superintendent Erie "makes the call" on Ely school safe learning plans and he "signed off" last year on giving Erie the authority to pivot and make changes as community and school COVID conditions change,

'Since then, nobody thought that we would be into a year or two of COVID and nobody knows what will happen next year or the following year," Colarich continued. "I would recommend that information that comes from the (safe school learning plan) advisory committee is vetted by the six (school board)

directors, with due diligence by the six directors, and be voted on by the six directors. To me, that would be a good policy and would be the right way to do it. The (school)board would make the call on these decisions and would vote on it.'

He requested that his policy change be on the agenda of the next business meeting on Monday, Oct. 11. Board chair Ray Marsnik agreed to honor Colarich's request. In order for the motion to advance for discussion and vote, Colarich would need support on his motion.

Last month, all the other school board members voiced their agreement with the ISD 696 administration's public health face mask mandate, and have been in support of the school's response to the coronavirus pandemic. Four school board member votes would be needed to rescind the board's current policy, and to replace the administration's safe learning plan authorization and put the responsibility on the school board.

#### **COUNTY SCHOOLS**

## ISD 2142 stays the course with optional face masking policy

by DAVID COLBURN

Cook-Orr Editor

CHERRY- While the boards of neighboring school districts engaged this past week in oftentimes heated debates about mask mandates in hopes of containing the spread of COVID-19 among students and staff, the atmosphere couldn't have been more different at the ISD 2142 school board meeting at Cherry on Tuesday.

Perhaps aware that more than 100 Rock Ridge district patrons turned out Monday for a school board meeting at which a universal mask mandate was passed, ISD 2142 officials were ready to accommodate a large crowd in the school's cafeteria if one materialized. It never did.

A review of the masking policy wasn't on the board's agenda, and only two parents showed up to voice their support of the district's masks optional policy during the public comment period.

Superintendent Reggie Engebritson, who reported last week that all schools in the district have had confirmed COVID-19 cases, summed up the district's status to the board with a single sentence.

'We know that we are in a pandemic, we're living with the virus, but we are managing and keeping kids in school," she said.

No board members asked for any additional information.

And although there was no discussion of changing the district's policy of encouraging masking while making it optional, two North Woods parents took the opportunity to voice their support for continu-

Janelle Driscoll, who said she has two daughters who attend North Woods, read from an email she sent to district officials.

"I would like to begin my message by saying how pleased and blessed our family is by your leadership this last year, the way you saw the whole picture rather than just being scared, the

way it seems other districts may have been. I, along with many I've spoken with, have appreciated your position on keeping our kids in school and allowing for the freedom for parents and guardians to determine what learning environment is suitable for their children. Allow us and our children to continue the inalienable right to decide for our own children's health. My children have the right to not be masked and be provided education in person."

Caitlyn Bangs told the board that of the approximately 120,000 cases among school-age children reported in Minnesota since the start of the pandemic, only two have died. Cancer, caraccidents, suicide, homicide heart disease drowning, flu, and pneumonia all have higher death indices

than COVID-19. "Death is always tragic," she said, "but the statistical reality is that this virus presents an extremely low risk to our children and is not worth the level of panic that many would like us to think."

Bangs cited a CDC report released last week detailing a study comparing pediatric COVID rates in schools with masking requirements versus those without.

"While the headlines would make you think they found overwhelming evidence in favor of mask mandates, the actual statistical advantages of mask mandates were so small as to be almost non-existent," she said.

The Timberjay reviewed the CDC report and discovered that the authors actually did report statistical significance in school mask requirements

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being associated with lower daily COVID-19 cases rates - one child in 6,127 for schools with mask requirements versus one child in 2,869 for those without. Computed on the basis of a rate per 100,000 students, the question of the practical impact of mandatory masking in a school the size of North Woods based on this study's results may be a valid one, but the authors cited four limitations to the study and stated that because of a small sample size their results "might not be generalizable."

Bangs also mentioned a recent report that 770 schools across Minnesota have reported cases of COVID-19 thus far this school year.

"That's a lot of schools. That's a lot of COVID," Bangs said. "Many of these schools have mask requirements, which by their own admission is not very effective," she went on to claim. "ISD 2142 is not an anomaly. That is the norm right now. Delta is contagious and yet ultimately non-life threatening to children. The current plan espoused by Dr. E. (Engebritson) and the board

is the right way to handle it." Meanwhile, after the meeting, Engebritson declined a request from the Timberjay for current information on the incidence of COVID-19 at North Woods, Tower-Soudan, and Northeast Range schools. While Engebritson provided percentages of total student enrollment affected last week, she said the district would not be providing such information anymore, preferring to focus instead on efforts to keep students in school and learning. She indicated that the procedures to notify parents and staff of relevant cases at their schools were working

Districts are not required to release information about COVID-19 cases to the public, and the Minnesota Department of Health also does not report case numbers for individual districts. MDH does list the names of schools with five or more active COVID cases on its COVID situation report webpage, updating the list weekly. Although North Woods reported at least six cases last week, no ISD 2142 schools were included on the Sept. 23 list, as MDH goes through a verification process before adding schools to the list.

#### Taxes hold the line

District business manager Kim Johnson presented preliminary projections to the board indicating that she expects little to no change in the district's tax levies once the state Department of Education releases its final guidance. Johnson's estimate projects the district could see a \$16,000 decrease in receipts.

'This is based on the best information I have right now," Johnson said. "It may be on either side of that a little bit, but it's going to be pretty darned close.'

As is standard practice at this point in the budget cycle, the board unanimously approved a tax levy at the "maximum amount," which will be determined after MDE finishes its calculations. Johnson noted that doing so preserves the district's flexibility as the work on next year's budget continues.

In other business, the board:

Ethnic Creations

>Formalized approval of a cooperative agreement for Northeast Range students to play football with the Ely school district which was initiated before the season started because NER did not have enough players to field a team.

➤On the recommendation of Engebritson, declined to reopen enrollment in response to inquiries from parents in Ely and Hibbing seeking other schooling options for their children after both districts adopted universal mask mandates. Open enrollment closed on Sept. 1, and Engebritson said staff preferred having enrollment fixed at this point for planning purposes.

➤ Approved the purchase of three ten-passenger vans with a total cost of \$122,046. Johnson said the expense would be part of the 2022-23 budget but that the order needed to be placed now in order to receive them by next July, given current issues in the automotive industry.

➤ Hired Hana Wiseman and Michelle Plath as paraprofessionals at North Woods and Doug Workman as a paraprofessional at Tower-Soudan.

➤ Hired Jani Jordan as a part-time preschool teacher assistant at Tower-Soudan.

➤ Hired Malita Kletschka-Spears as an individual education interventionist at North Woods.

➤ Hired Daniel Squires as a bus driver and Elizabeth Burton as a substitute van driver at North Woods. It was noted that additional drivers are still needed in the district, and that there is a sign-on bonus of \$1,500 for full bus route drivers, half paid at hiring and the remainder paid after six months of employment.

➤ Hired Muriel Deegan as a student and family advocate serving both Tower-Soudan and Northeast Range. The position was recently renamed from "social worker" to more accurately describe its function. Hiring requirements and job responsibilities for the position remained the

➤ Accepted resignations from Tower-Soudan paraprofessional Naomi Hess, North Woods preschool teacher assistants Emily Baraga and Michelle Plath, and Tower-Soudan continuing education coordinator Cara Harksen.



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**10** October 1, 2021 THE TIMBERJAY

ISD 696

## Walls and roof ready to go up at Ely school project

by KEITH VANDERVORT

ELY – Steel roof joists are on the construction site, and precast wall units will delivered and placed next week for the \$20 million building and renovation project for Ely schools.

A new senior project manager for Kraus-Anderson took over the project this week. Todd Erickson updated the school board Monday night during a monthly study session.

As the new building that will link the existing Memorial and Washington schools takes shape, construction managers are in the midst of re-identifying and re-prioritizing the components of the second bid package, rejected last spring because of exorbitant material and labor cost estimates.

That second bid package is now split into Bid Package Three and Bid Package Four and will "hit the streets" for construction companies to bid on next month and in January, according to Erickson.

Meanwhile, the Early Childhood Family Education area, located in the southeast corner of the Washington school, was completed and turned back over to school officials on Monday. "We have a few minor touchups to complete, but they are good to go," he said. He showed photographs of the new bathrooms and cabinetry in that new area.

A temporary concrete road was constructed though the middle of the work site to handle the weight of the crane needed to set the precast wall units, Erickson said.

Some high school and elementary classrooms are already occupied. The school's new heating plant, located on the south end of the Memorial building, will be ready to fire up next week, according to building officials.

'We are five months into a 15-month project and are about one-third completed," Erickson said. "We've spent about 10 percent (\$2,128,523) of the budget on that first third of the project."

A contingency fund of \$975,000, is being used to pay for unexpected, delayed and reworked portions of the project. Nearly half of the fund is already depleted. Erickson said. Some of the components of the rejected Bid Package Two that were pulled into Bid Package One to keep the project on course were completed through the contingency fund.

Erickson explained why the scope of the project was modified.

"The new addition between the Memorial and Washington buildings grew by 5,000 square feet from the original plans. At a conservative \$200 per square-foot cost estimate, that added about one million dollars to the project," he said.



Steel roof truss components were delivered to the Ely school building project last week. Look for a 350-ton crane to start placing precast wall panels next week. photo by K. Vandervort

A budget misalignment of about \$700,000 on added building features and space add-ons was not realigned or value engi-

"COVID-related price and supply chain issues increased many costs across the board," Erickson added. "We are still getting almost daily updates on steel and aluminum pricing."

The project's Bid Package Two no longer exists and is replaced with two separate construction package components. Erickson said about \$3.310.000 remains in the budget to complete the two re-scoped bid packages.

Bid Package Three will go out to contractors in October and will include the removal and replacement of the existing HVAC systems in the campus heating, cooling and air handling system, new mechanical controls, an entire new low-voltage system that handles such things as intercoms, clocks, fire alarms, burglar alarms, and building access controls, window replacement project completion for the two existing buildings, and a new fire suppression system in the Memorial building attic area to bring the building up to code. Bid Package Four will

likely go to contractors in January 2022 and will include the boys and girls locker room relocation and completion, as many as eight toilet room revisions and upgrades (sinks, ceiling, lighting, paints, mirrors and tile patching as needed) and one new toilet room addition on the main floor of the Memorial building, classroom and science room remodeling (doors, paint, lighting, drop ceilings, etc.), and a fitness room revision in the existing lunch room area.

#### Other topics

At the prompting of school board chair Ray Marsnik, Erickson addressed perceived construction safety concerns pointed out by a district resident in a recently-published photograph.

"There are a few things here that are incorrect," Erickson said. "This is not gross negligence. The load is not required to be secured on a forklift. There was a (spotter) watching."

Erickson highlighted steps taken at the construction site to maintain safety.

"We talked to the contractor that is in the picture. We talked to all our other contractors. We put signage on all the gates that says no construction activity is to occur between 7:40 and 8:05 a.m., and in the afternoon we have a window

from 2:40 to 3:05 p.m., he said. "The gates are locked during these times. We have addressed it on site. We have addressed it with our corporate office. I don't see safety violations in the photograph, but I wasn't there.'

Marsnik reported that he talked with the school district's lobbyist, Jeff Anderson, with the Costin Group, who indicated that a failed sales tax exemption proposal for school construction materials will be re-introduced in the state legislature in the upcoming session. "If that goes through, we could have a savings of about \$500,000 on this project," he said.

KA and city officials continue to address the water lead problems. Karl Larsen, of Architectural Resources Inc., said the source of the lead in the water has not been fully determined.

"All the fixtures were tested in the entire school and all of the numbers came back high," he said. "When that happens, it tends to lead to the cause being the actual water supply into the building and not necessarily the pipes within the building."

He continued, "We are trying to determine if it is the street service from the public utility, or within the pipes in the school. Once we have that determination, we can dial in the solution."

Additional test results should be available to be analyzed this week.

year, over 80 percent were

between 19 and 24 years of

age, and almost 85 percent

of the applicants were

consists of six semesters of

classroom and laboratory instruction, with a focus

on hands-on learning, fol-

lowed by three semesters of

clinical training where stu-

dents choose from as many

as 60 two-week rotations

in the Veterinary Medical

Center at the U of M, and

at off-site clinical partners.

practice in rural areas," said

four-year veterinary degree

is \$131,400 for in-state

students, Moen said. "Last

year we provided over

\$600,000 in scholarships,

and many students received

additional competitive-

ly-awarded scholarships

given by industry and the

MN Veterinary Medical

repayment programs for

students who practice at

least half-time on farm

**Vet Tech program** 

at Vermilion

There are also loan

A shortage of veteri-

Foundation."

animals.

the U of M's Moen.

"The goal is to attract

The tuition cost of a

re students who want to

The U of M program

female.

#### **PETS**...Continued from page 1 -

nary service, BluePearl Pet Hospital, in Duluth.

"After-hours vet care is in a crisis," said Chip Hanson, who operates the Ely Vet Clinic. "Due to an overall shortage of vets on the Iron Range many nights only the Ely Vet Clinic and Blue Pearl in Duluth are available for after-hours emergencies, and many times the Duluth clinic has been overwhelmed as well and has had to refer cases to the Twin Cities.'

John Fisher, from the Vermilion Veterinary Clinic in Cook, agrees

"I do after-hour calls almost every weekend," he said, "I did one emergency call last weekend."

But Fisher said his clinic doesn't always have a veterinarian on call, and in that case, they have to refer clients to Duluth.

Fisher said, in his experience, people calling after hours often just need advice, and the visit can wait until Mondays.

"But then we are just swamped on Mondays," Fisher said.

While vets are typically highly motivated to help animals, balancing that desire with the physical and mental limits of such a high demand for care can be overwhelming.

We have been getting crushed with emergencies in the last two years and the majority of those emergencies are not our clients," Hanson said. "Handling emergencies for people and their pets can be very rewarding, and we all enjoy the actual work, but the number of hours and dedication it requires makes it hard to maintain a good work/life balance.'

Fisher said they are also seeing a lot of out-oftown calls from as far away as International Falls and Hibbing.

Hibbing recently lost a practicing vet, Fisher said, and Hanson said one of the vet clinics in Virginia recently had a vet who retired, leaving a single vet



photo by K. Vandervort

to run the business.

Veterinarians across the state have been seeing increased caseloads, and many have stopped taking new clients. This is an issue facing the vet clinic in Ely.

'We haven't been able to accept new clients for a year," Hanson said.

Fisher said they have accepted a lot of new clients, but they are now finding it increasingly difficult to take time off from the job. One of the veterinary

services in Virginia advertises their "new client wait list" on their website and directs people to BluePearl in Duluth for urgent or emergency care.

And due to a staffing shortage, BluePearl, which used to provide care five weekday evenings and both days on the weekends, is

now closed on Tuesdays.

"On Tuesday nights," Hanson said, "It's us or Minneapolis.'

"I have a crazy-dedicated crew," Hanson said. "In the last two years we have struggled to find time to sit down for a moment or eat lunch. At times it is overwhelming."

The five full-time veterinarians in Ely often work two hours after closing to keep patient records up-todate. This is in addition to putting in their share of after-hours and weekend on-call hours.

Each vet takes a week as the "on-call vet," Hanson said, and because this now means they are often working late into the night, that vet is only on part-time during the day during that week, which has put added pressure onto the other working vets.

And keeping up with

the emergency call volume, which has averaged 25 to 30 visits a week this past summer, is tough on the staff, according to Hanson.

Fisher said all the vets in the area are short-staffed right now, and their workload has been increasing. His office has two full-time vets, along with his wife Robin, who works parttime as a vet and the rest of the time managing their practice.

"Practice volume is the busiest we have ever been,' he said.

Getting a call through to a local vet clinic during regular business hours is often a challenge, especially on a Monday. This reporter had to call multiple times to get a call through to Cook, getting busy signals four times before getting through a few minutes after their regular closing time.

#### **Expansion** isn't the answer

Expansion is not an easy option either. "Our building doesn't lend itself to an easy expansion, and building an entire new facility is just very hard to make financially feasible," Hanson said. "Even with very low interest loans it is hard to see how you maintain decent salaries and pay the mortgage."

"And if the money could be found, then we would have to address the issue of actually being able to attract new talent to staff the facility. All of the vet clinics on the Range have struggled over the last decade to attract veterinarians and trained vet tech talent. I, as a business owner, have been very lucky in that regard and have managed to find incredible people to work at the Ely Vet Clinic," Hanson added. The shortage of emer-

gency veterinary care also is also felt in the Twin Cities metro area.

Martin Moen, from nary schools the previous the College of Veterinary

Medicine at the University of Minnesota said they have been seeing multiple days of closures and long waits for appointments also.

"It is very stressful for owners who are watching their pets suffer and there is nowhere to take them," he said. "In our case, the issues are primarily driven by a shortage of veterinary technicians Ithink we currently have 18-20 open technician positions in our hospitals, which really limits the number of patients we can see in a day."

"The vet tech training program in Ely is highly valued," he said, "but the need is huge."

#### **Rural vet shortage**

A shortage of small animal veterinarians, especially in outstate Minnesota, is a problem the University of Minnesota Veterinary School is working to solve. The problem is particularly acute in areas with a strong

farm economy. The USDA has identified 35 Minnesota counties where there is a shortage of veterinarians who can care for farm animals. But there are fewer programs available that target the shortage of small animal veterinarians who are needed in northeastern Minnesota.

There are 32 schools in North America that train veterinarians, including the University of Minnesota. Admission into the program is highly competitive, with the U of M averaging nine applicants for each of the available 100 spots in the school. The university also has a new program with South Dakota State University, serving approximately 20 students, where students start their education at the campus in Brookings, S.D., and complete their third year of instruction and clinical rotations (fourth year) in

nary technicians is being address locally by a twoyear degree program at Vermilion Community College. The five-semester-long program includes a mix of basic science and practical hands-on courses. "Enrollment in the program has been good," said Veterinarian Peter

Hughes who oversees the program at VCC. "But we did not hit our cap of 24 students this year; we had 20 on opening day.' "Job placement has been good,"he said."I think

everyone who graduates and wants to be working in the field is working in the field."

Of all the students who applied to veteri-

in a redistricting process that will in all likelihood end up in the courts.

#### **North Country**

Every small city in far northern St. Louis County showed a drop in population, in some cases by significant margins. Tower's population declined by 14 percent, from 500 back in 2010 to just 430 as of the 2020 count. Orr saw a 25percent decline, from 280 to just 211.

Cook and Ely saw smaller declines, with Cook dropping seven percent, from a population of 574 ten years ago, to 534 today, while Ely saw a 5.5-percent decline, from 3,460 to 3,268. Babbitt lost 78 residents, a 5.6 percent decline.

**Surrounding townships** reflected differing trends. Both Beatty and Greenwood townships, which encompass Lake Vermilion, experienced population growth. Greenwood went from 939 in 2010 to 1,041 in 2020, an increase of 102, or 10.9 percent. Beatty's population increased by 46, from 372 to 418, a 12.4-percent jump. Up at the border, Crane Lake Township grew from 82 residents in 2010 to 98 in 2020, a 17-percent increase. In northern Lake County, Fall Lake Township experienced growth as well, increasing by 12.9 percent, to 630 residents, up from 549 in 2010.

Breitung Township, by contrast, lost 75 residents, falling from 605 in the last census to 530, an 11.5percent drop. Nett Lake, an unincorporated township, saw its population drop from 319 to 264, a slide of 17.2 percent. Meanwhile, losses were much less on a percentage basis in Leiding and Morse townships. Leiding lost just one resident, to sit at 399, while Morse lost 25 residents, a decline of two percent. Orr's drop of 56 people to a total of 211 was 21 percent.

The Mesabi Range towns weren't immune, either. Eveleth lost 225 residents, or 6.4 percent, while Virginia lost 291 residents, a 3.5-percent decline. Meanwhile, Hibbing remained largely stable, dropping just 0.9 percent. Mt. Iron was the lone standout, gaining nine residents over the decade.

The declines in the North Country and on the Iron Range didn't affect the county as a whole as St. Louis County had a net gain of five people to 200,231.

#### **Legislative districts**

The impact of overall

state population growth and shifting proportions of the population from non-metro to metro areas will certainly influence the makeup of state legislative districts in this region as the process of redistricting gets underway.

Current Senate district boundaries were designed to average 79,000 people in each district. With an additional 400,000 people in the state, each of the 67 districts will have to increase by about 6,000, to about 85,000 residents. With flat or declining population in much of the North Country, that means area legislative district will need to expand geographically to encompass more people.

Senate District 3, a seat currently held by Sen. Tom Bakk, I-Cook, has 78,948 people, about 6,000 residents short of what it will need to meet the representation standards under the latest census. Senate District 6, a seat currently held by Sen. David Tomassoni, DFL-Chisholm, is about 7,500 shy of the 85,000person target at 77,524. Neighboring Districts 2, 5, 10 and 11 are also short of the 85,000 mark from about 3,500 to 6,000 people each.

With much of the state's population growth centered in the metro region, the number of legislative seats in the metro region will need to grow, largely at the expense of rural districts. Greater Minnesota will ultimately see a loss of seats and moderately diminished political clout. The same holds true for seats in the state House of Representatives, where a district represents half of the population living in a given Senate district.

According to an analysis by Minnesota Public Radio, once district lines are adjusted to equalize population, the net result will give voters in fast-growing areas comparatively more weight in legislative elections, with a modest shift in political power to the Twin Cities metro.

This could end up helping the DFL, which tends to do better in the metro and worse in greater Minnesota — though not all growing districts are represented by Democrats and not all shrinking districts are represented by Republicans. Overall, Democrats hold 38 of the districts that as of 2019 estimates were too large, against 22 for Republicans. Among the too-small districts, Republicans hold 42 to Democrats' 32.

Every state redistricting effort since 1966 has ended up in the courts, and given current political divisions between Republicans and the DFL, the process will likely end up there again. State statute sets an absolute date of Feb. 15, 2022 for this round of redistricting to be finalized in time for the 2022 election cycle.

#### **Trend to continue**

The findings of the 2020 Census are consistent with projections from the Minnesota State Demographic Center that indicate population levels in Greater Minnesota have leveled off and will see a slight decline over the next 30 years.

MSDC projects that growth of the overall state population will slow markedly, adding only about 900,000 people by 2053. However, the seven-county Twin Cities metro region will increase by 924,000 residents, while Greater Minnesota will shrink by 27,000.

Of even greater concern

is the decline MSDC projects for St. Louis County. By 2050 the county could see its population of 200,000 cut by nearly half.

The MSDC summary report does not provide in-depth analysis of economic factors that could contribute to such a precipitous drop, but instead focuses on three main forces that shape population change - birth, death, and migration.

The fastest-growing group of Minnesotans will be those age 65 and over, and that scenario is reflected in the projections for St. Louis County. As populations shift proportionally older, birth rates decline as well. MSDC indicates that population growth in upcoming decades will be driven largely by migration to the seven-county Twin Cities metro area, skewing the age balance in that area younger.

However, all is not necessarily doom and gloom for the county and North Country in the report. MSDC notes that there are "pockets of Greater Minnesota that will see some

increase," including "some areas known for outdoor recreation," a hallmark of this area. While the report doesn't specifically mention

this area, it does indicate that the north shore of Lake Superior is one of the areas where growth, rather than loss, may occur.

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**12** October 1, 2021

**RUN** ... Continued from page 1 –

#### THE TIMBERJAY

41. of Mounds View, broke his own course record. He finished in 4:23.20, shattering his old record of 5:00.01. Peter won a custom Northstar canoe for his efforts.

Three others of the five finishers also broke the five-hour mark. Nick Gardner, of Ely, came in second with a time of 4:32.03. Jacob Bendel, of Proctor, was third in 4:32.30. Ben Gardner, also of Ely, was fourth in 4:53.15.Brian Stenholm, of Olivia, finished in 6:30.40.

"This was the first official race of its kind and is registered with the Guinness Book of World Records," Lindsay added.

In the Half-Marathon Portage event, there were four finishers. Craig Sinclair, of Waconia, was first with a time of 3:03.24, followed by Marc Barringer, of St. Claire Shores, Mich., 4:03.52, Kristy Goetsch, of Merrill, Wis., 4:42.18, and Claire Butchkoski, of Decorah, Iowa, 5:12.59.

In the Ely Marathon (a Boston Marathon qualifier event), Andrew McNamara, of Goodhue, repeated as winner with a time of 3:09.02. He finished the 2019 race in 2:52.13. Lisa Smith, of Hibbing, a repeat half marathon winner here, came in second in the full marathon this year with a time of 3:10.46.

'There were 125 full marathon finishers this year; that's the most ever," Lindsay said.

The Boundary Waters Half Marathon had 314 finishers. The winner, Brad Ryland, of Minneapolis, broke the course record with a posted a time of 1:16.56. Jamie Blumentritt, also of Minneapolis, was the first woman to cross the finish line, in ninth with a time of 1:31.15.

The Ely Outfitting Co. repeated as Full Portage Marathon Relay Team winners with a time of 5:18.21. They won in 2019 with a time of 5:08 10. The only other team this year, Middle Aged Midriffs, from Iowa, finished in 5:28.11.

In the Half Portage Marathon Relay Team race, Team Hubbell City, from Minneapolis, won in 3:09.26. Four teams participated in that event this year.

The 1.2-mile kidsmarathon, coined the Dorothy Molter Root Beer Run, included area youth who ran 25 miles prior to race day and finished out the last 1.2 miles of the marathon route to reach the official marathon finish line. Wyatt Devine was the boys

winner with a time of 8:32, followed closely behind by girls winner Mattie Lindsay in 8:39. There were 51 kid racers this year.

"We also broke a record this year with 356 volunteers," Lindsay said. "That is huge for Ely. It is so nice to see everyone come together to make this a community event."

The 2022 Ely Marathon is scheduled for Sept 29.



The 2021 Ely Half Marathon Portage race winner, above, was Craig Sinclair. Andrew McNamara, below, left, repeated as winner of the 2021 Ely Marathon with a time of 3:09.02. Lisa Smith, below, came in second in the 2021 full marathon in 3:10.46. photos by K. Vandervort





### **TOWER...**Continued from page 1

proposal to keep the city's levy as is for another year, but they agreed there was no harm in setting a preliminary levy slightly higher. "You can lower it but you can't increase it," noted council member Joe Morin. "Based on that, it wouldn't be unreasonable to set it a bit higher now and lower it before the final levy is set in December."

Setterberg agreed that the council would have a better idea by then of how well city spending tracked with the 2021 budget.

Norby finally made the motion for a three-percent increase in the levy, and noted his intent to cut that when the final levy is certified.

#### **Clerk-treasurer pay** package approved

The council also gave unanimous approval to a compensation package for Michael Schultz, who the council tapped at their prior meeting to be the city's new clerk-treasurer.

With medical and PERA contributions, the total compensation package comes to \$77,435 for 2021, a number which would be prorated for the roughly two months he is expected to work in the calendar year. Schultz's package comes in just slightly lower than the compensation package for the current clerk-treasurer.

According to Morin, Schultz has seen the proposal and has indicated a start date of Oct. 25.

After approving the compensation package, the council approved a motion to tender the offer to Schultz via a letter that Ranua will prepare.

#### **Mayor's resignation**

The council also began the process of filling the vacancy left by the recent resignation of Orlyn Kringstad as mayor. Kringstad, who presided over Monday's council meeting until the final agenda item, ceremoniously handed over

Setterberg and offered extended comments on his two and three-quarters years as mayor. "I immensely enjoyed it... mostly," he said, noting that his first year in office was "a little gruesome."

"I'll never forget my first day, when I got a call from the bank president saying we were overdrawn by \$20,000," he added. He told the council that he would be writing each of them a personal note of gratitude and would also write something to residents, "thanking them for the privilege of presiding over the council." He also said he would like to receive a "certificate of attendance," for not missing any meetings while he was mayor.

He said he intends to refocus on economic development in the community and asked to be appointed again to the Tower Economic Development Authority and to the Gundersen Trust.

The council took no

requests, but the council did approve a motion declaring a vacancy on the council. While Setterberg is designated as acting mayor, Ranua explained that the title doesn't mean he automatically becomes mayor in the event of the mayor's resignation. The city's ordinance provides no guidance on a process for replacing a council member, but in recent years, the council has opted to advertise and take applications from interested persons. Setterberg urged council members to think about how they would like to proceed and talk with others in the community about possible additions to the council.

The council would have the option of appointing a member of the current council to the position. Setterberg suggested that the council talk to former council members or mayors to see if they would be willing to serve again.

But least one person was ready to offer his services. Cade Gornick, who said he had moved back to the Tower area about two weeks ago, told the council he'd be willing to serve as mayor. He said he knows lots of people in the area and thinks he'd be good at the job. Councilors thanked him but took no immediate action on his suggestion.

#### Other business

In other action, the council:

➤ Heard from Mike Ostlund and Larry McCray, of the Eagles Nest Fire Department, about the possibility of a regional consortium to address emergency preparedness. Ostlund, who works in emergency management for Hennepin County,

also serves as the director of emergency management for Eagles Nest. He noted that Eagles Nest had already taken considerable steps forward in emergency preparedness, but said a regional approach, that would include neighboring townships and the cities of Tower and Ely, could be a more effective approach.

Ostlund said he wasn't sure how such a consortium would be structured, but he hoped to start a discussion on the topic. The council took his comments under advisement and hopes to bring the issue back for more discussion on a future

➤ Agreed to look into leasing a new grader if the existing grader is not worth repairing.

➤ Discussed but took no action on the possible sale of the former police vehicle.





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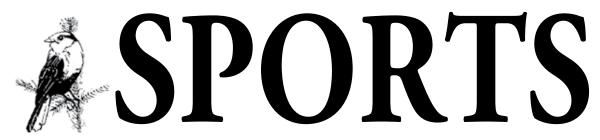
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**FOOTBALL** 

## Grizz grind out win over Barnum

by DAVID COLBURN Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The North Woods Griizzlies used a kickoff return and a relentless ground game to pull away from the Barnum Bombers in the second half on Friday, to improve their record to 2-2 with a 28-14

Jared Chiabotti electrified the home crowd when he received the second-half

### North Woods now 2-2 on the season

kickoff at the 30-yard line, broke through the Bombers' coverage, and outraced everyone to the end zone for a touchdown that put the Grizzlies up 14-0.

"We knew we were getting the ball back after halftime. I told the guys 'Let's make some moves,' let's put one on the board here," Grizzlies Head Coach Joel Anderson said.

"Jared made a couple of nice moves, the guys blocked it very, very well, and he found the open hole. Next thing we know we're up 14."

It was the second North Woods touchdown in about 30 seconds of elapsed game time. T.J. Chiabotti closed out the first half with a 14-yard touchdown reception from Ty Fabish with only 19 seconds remaining, **Right: The Grizzlies** Jared Chiabotti sheds a last desperate Barnum tackler en route to a 70-yard kickoff return touchdown.

photo by D. Colburn

and Jared Chiabotti hauled in a two-point conversion pass to put the Grizzlies

See **FOOTBALL...**pg. 2B



VOLLEYBALL

## Ely dumps Grizzlies in three sets

by Marshall Helmberger

Managing Editor

■LY — After three weeks on the road, the ◀ Timberwolves were happy to be home and they gave their fans a convincing three-set win over North Woods to celebrate.

"We were so ready to play on our home court tonight," said Ely Head Coach Megan Wognum.

After a few initial jitters, the Wolves set the pace beginning midway through the first set and they kept their focus throughout the match, winning 25-18, 25-16, and 25-15. "We

We were so

ready to play on

our home court

tonight.

**Ely Head Coach** 

Megan Wognum

were able to find our rhythm in the second half of the first set," said Wognum. "Once our passes were put on target, we were complet-

ing the plays."

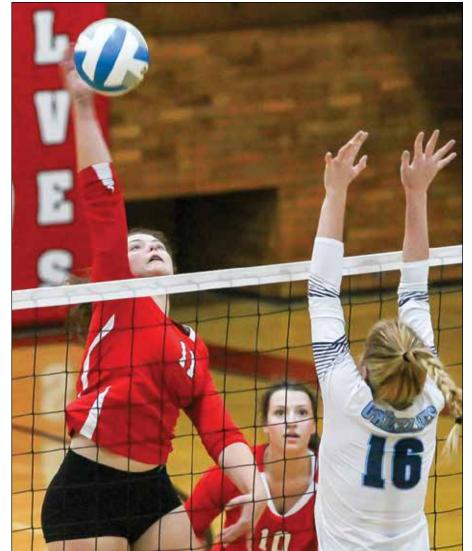
It was a different story for

the Grizzlies, who had suited up just seven players for Thursday's contest, one less than they had fielded in a game against Cherry earlier in the week. The shortage of players created some matchup issues for the Grizzlies.

"Ely had a very tough offense," said North Woods Head Coach Kandi Olson. "We had to adjust our front row to accommodate their strong middle hitters. I ended up putting Morgan Burnett in that middle spot to help us out in the blocking department."

The current North Woods player shortage is putting increased pressure on those team members still able to play, notes Olson. "Considering that everyone has basically had to shuffle to a new position almost daily, they've

See VOLLEYBALL..pg. 2B





Ely's Rachel Coughlin reaches high for a kill attempt, while the Grizzlies' Addy Hartway jumps up for an attempted block. Ely's Kate Coughlin looks on.

Ely's Kate Coughlin and Kellen Thomas team up to block a shot from the Grizzlies' Angelina Lilya

photos by J. Greeney

**VOLLEYBALL** 

## Wolves continue to win

Duluth Marshall is Ely's latest victim

by Marshall Helmberger Managing Editor

ELY— The Timberwolves continued to lay down a gauntlet for opponents here on Tuesday as they crushed Duluth Marshall in straight sets, 25-8, 25-18, and

"It was a great game," said Ely Head Coach Megan Wognum, who has watched her team consistently outperform their competition all season.

The Wolves showed their increasing depth against the Hilltoppers, as seven players recorded kills on the night. Junior Rachel Coughlin led the way with nine kills, along with seven digs and three ace serves. Her sister Kate was close behind with five kills, four digs, and three aces, while senior Kellen Thomas added four kills, four digs, two blocked shots and a pair of aces. Adding to the mix were senior Raven Sainio, with four kills and five aces, and junior Madeline Kallberg with four kills. Senior setter Katrina Seliskar tallied 27 assists, three kills, and two aces, while senior Charly Flom posted eight digs,

four aces and a kill. "It was nice to have everyone

chip in," said Wognum. Ely had another strong outing at the Virginia tournament on Saturday, falling only to Hibbing

See WOLVES...pg. 2B

**FOOTBALL** 



## **Another tough outing for T-Wolves**

In third straight blowout loss, Ely falls 50-0 to Cherry

by KEITH VANDERVORT

ELY-TheTimberwolves'

troubles on the gridiron continued last Friday as they

**Left: Harry Simons** looks for running room during Friday's contest with Cherry.

photo by K. Vandervort

fell 50-0 to Cherry, dropping their record to 1-3 on the season. It was the third straight blowout loss for the struggling Ely squad.

"Offensively, it was not a good game for us, said Coach Louis Gerzin. "Cherry was big up front and we were outplayed on the line of scrimmage.'

The Tigers all but shut down the Timberwolves' offense, allowing just three Ely first downs in the contest. Quarterback Mason Davis threw for 31 yards and freshman running back Gregg Rohr caught a 15-yard pass, but there were few other offensive highlights to mention.

Cherry, now 4-0, scored 30 points in the first quarter and took a 36-0 lead into halftime. The Tigers scored twice more in the third quarter before putting in the bench to finish the game. On defense, Davis led

the Timberwolves with 12

See ROUT...pg. 2B

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#### VOLLEYBALL

## **Grizzlies competitive in Virginia tourney**

Cook-Orr Editor

VIRGINIA- Four matches in a day was a tall order for a short-handed North Woods volleyball team at a tournament in Virginia last Saturday, but the Grizzlies hung tough while compiling a 1-3 record.

Only seven players were available to suit up for varsity, giving North Woods Head Coach Kandi Olson limited options as she deployed a makeshift lineup with players in unfamiliar posi-

What was familiar was their first foe, Cherry. North Woods had beaten the Tigers 3-0 earlier in the week when they had eight players suited up, but this time it was Cherry that got the win. After losing the first game 25-19, the Grizzlies bounced back for a tight 25-23 win. North Woods pushed the Tigers to the brink before losing the third game, 18-16.

"That last game could've gone either way," Olson said.

The Grizzlies came out ready to roll against Eveleth-Gilbert, taking the first game 25-21, but dropped the match by losing the next two, 25-20 and 15-9.

In-district foe South Ridge was up next and became the Grizzlies' lone match triumph of the tourney. The first game was a thriller that pushed into overtime. with North Woods coming away with a 27-25 win. The Panthers couldn't keep pace in the second game as the Grizzlies won 25-20.

"Having a couple of close losses but knowing we could have gone either way with those matches, it was nice to pull off the win against South Ridge," Olson said.

North Woods closed out the day against Cromwell, once again refusing to go down without a fight. Cromwell took the first game 25-20, but the Grizzlies flipped the scripts in the second, winning 25-19. North Woods fell

just shy of winning its second match of the day, losing the finale

"I was very happy with the play of all of our players, especially since they've never really played together in those position," Olson said. "I was impressed with how well people just worked around each other and communicated with each other so that we could get a little bit of offense going throughout the day."

Serving proficiency was a key element that kept the Grizzlies in the hunt the entire day, Olson noted.

North Woods was on the road

on Tuesday for a match at Cook County and was scheduled to return home on Thursday to take on Northeast Range.

#### Dig pink night

When South Ridge comes visiting on Monday, Oct. 4, Olson hopes the Panthers are greeted by an overwhelming wave of pink as the Grizzlies stage "Dig Pink" night to raise breast cancer awareness.

Fans are encouraged to wear pink that night and participate in fundraising events to benefit local cancer support groups. Olson said there will be a raffle for donated gift baskets and a 50/50 drawing, and possibly other things orga-

#### **SWIMMING**

## NER tops Chisholm for first win of the season

by KEITH VANDERVORT

CHISHOLM - The Northeast Range High School girls swim team won their first meet of the season at Chisholm last Thursday. The Nighthawks beat the Bluestreaks, 56-36.

NER's Morgan McClelland took first in the 200 Freestyle with a time of 2:21.72, followed by Anna Larson in second in 2:25.85. Lily Tedrick posted a first-place time of 1:07.51 in the 100 Butterfly. McLelland and Lauren Olson finished first and second in the 500 Freestyle with times of 6:47.77 and 7:20.71.

The Nighthawks' relay team of Tedrick, Kelly Thompson, Anna Larson and McClelland finished the Freestyle Relay 160 in 1:27.80 just ahead of the Chisholm team at 1:27.81.

Alli Krekelberg finished first in the 100 Breaststroke in 1:30.29. The NRE relay team of Tedrick, Anna Larson, Thompson and McClelland finished the day with a first-place finish in the 400 Freestyle in 4:18.74.

Coach Cheri Debeltz said, "The girls are doing fantastic. All of them are gaining confidence and experience at every meet. The coaching staff is pleased with how well everyone is doing so far this season."

The Nighthawks competed at the Soderlind Invitational at Duluth East last Saturday, Sept. 25. They finished in ninth place with 110 points. Tedrick posted a third-place finish in the 200 Individual Medley with a time of 2:34.24, and a fourth-place finish in the 100 Butterfly in 1:11.13. Krekelberg was 25th in the 100 Butterfly with a time of 1:34.90. In the 100 Freestyle, NER's Thompson was 11th in 1:04.88, followed by Anna Larson in 12th in 1:05.69. Grace Sundell was 18th in the 500 Freestyle in 7:22.69.

The Nighthawks 200 Freestyle Relay team of Tedrick, Anna Larson, Thompson and Esther Anderson finished fifth in 1:57.06. Esther Anderson finished 13th in the 100 Backstroke in 1:18.48. Alli Krekelberg was 20th in the 100 Breaststroke with a time of 1:33.48. In the 400 Freestyle Relay, the NER team of Tedrick, Thompson, Anna Larson and Anderson was ninth in 4:25.12.

NER was led by Tedrick individually and as part of a relay team against seven other schools on Saturday, Sept. 18 at the Hibbing Invitational. The Nighthawks finished in seventh place with a team score of 135. Grand Rapids took home first place with 608 points

Tedrick finished fifth in the 100 Butterfly with a time of 1:09.43. In the 100 Individual Medley, Tedrick posted a fifth-place time of 2:32.17. Northeast Range swimmers, Tedrick, Kelly Thompson, Anna Larson and Morgan McClelland finished fourth in the 200 Freestyle Relay with a time of 1:54.73. The same NER relay team took sixth in the 400 Freestyle Relay with a time of 4:14.69

At Denfeld on Sept. 16, the Nighthawks scored 76 points against the Hunters with 92 points.

Nighthawks swimmers swept the 200 Freestyle event, led by Tedrick with a time of 2:14.81, followed

by McClelland with a time of 2:24.63, and Larson in third with a time of 2:29.43. Tedrick also took first in the 100 Butterfly in 1:09.45.

In the 100 Backstroke, Esther Anderson won first place in 1:17.80, followed by Maggie Dammann in 1:20.80. Babbitt swimmers Tedrick, McClelland, Larson and Thompson won the 400 Freestyle Relay in 4:08.21

Rock Ridge visited NER on Sept. 14. Against the Wolverines, the NER team of Anderson, Thompson, Tedrick and McClelland took first place in the 200 Medley Relay with a time of 2:14.44. Thompson won the 50 Freestyle in :30.31. Tedrick won the 100 Butterfly in 1:10.34. In the 200 Relay, Tedrick, McClelland, Larson and Thompson combined for a winning time of 1:57.57. Rock Ridge had a team score of 54. NER posted 40 points.

The Nighthawks were scheduled to travel to Two Harbors Virginia this week. NER's next home meet is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 19 against International Falls.

#### VOLLEYBALL

## Nighthawks take third at Virginia tourney

by Marshall Helmberger

Managing Editor

VIRGINIA — The Nighthawks finished third in the Virginia Varsity Tournament, held here on Saturday, and was the only Class A squad in the championship bracket.

The Nighthawks made it to the top bracket after dumping Cromwell in the opening match, 25-17, 25-21. They followed up with another win, this time in three sets against Virginia, 25-19, 18-25, and 15-11.

The Nighthawks had plenty of help from senior standout Hannah Reichensperger, who dominated at the net throughout the tournament, notching 59 kills and 23 blocked shots on the day.

But the Nighthawks faced a bigger challenge from Cloquet, which edged Northeast Range in three sets, 25-20, 19-25, and 14-16. The Nighthawks followed up with a win over Hibbing, 25-17, 25-13, to clinch third place.

Several Nighthawks players had strong performances during the tournament. Natalie Nelmark tallied 23 kills, 26 digs, and two blocks, while Thia Lossing posted 25 digs and three kills. Audrey Anderson added 16 digs and five ace serves, while Danica Sundblad notched 25 digs. Setter Maizy Sundblad tallied 81 assists and 13 digs. Reichensperger also added 32 digs.

#### FOOTBALL...Continued from page 1B -



Leaving a sprawling Barnum defender behind, T.J Chiabotti runs for another North Woods score.

photo by D. Colburn

up 8-0.

Barnum answered with a five-yard scoring plunge by Caden Sheett to cap a 60-yard scoring drive six minutes into the third quarter, and Hayden Charboneau threw to John Stevens Jr. for the conversion to cut the North Woods lead to 14-8.

T.J. Chiabotti ripped off a 30-yard run at the end of the third quarter to take the Grizzlies into Barnum territory, then scored on a 15-yard run and two-point conversion to extend the lead to 22-8. A 38-yard scoring romp by Chiabotti with 1:48 remaining gave North Woods a 28-8 cushion.

Charboneau connected with Willie Richardson on a 22-yard touchdown pass with :27 remaining to account for the 28-14 final.

Anderson said the Grizzlies' success hinged on the play of the offensive

"Our offensive line played spectacularly," Anderson said. "They opened up holes so that we could get six or seven yards a carry. Overall we outmuscled them and that started to wearthem down, especially in the second half."

T.J. Chiabotti picked up 203 yards on 30 carries, and Jared Chiabotti had six rushes for 16 yards.

Things were tougher in the passing game, where Fabish was just three-of-11 for 33 vards and two interceptions, with no completions to his wide receivers.

"Hats off to Barnum, they played a fantastic football game," Anderson said "They covered our receivers incredibly well. There was very little window for a passing game."

Ethan Byram anchored the defense with five tackles, three assists, a sack, and two tackles for losses. Eric Aune also collected five tackles and three assists, and Olin Nelson figured in the mix with four tackles and four assists.

The Grizzlies were scheduled for a long road trip this Friday to take on another team of Bombers, winless Braham. Against common opponents, Braham is 0-2 against Deer River and Chisholm, while the Grizzles beat Chisholm but lost to Deer River. The Grizzlies will be back home on Thursday, Oct. 7 against Mille Lacs.

#### VOLLEYBALL...Continued from page 1B

been very flexible and tried to do their best every time they go out there," Olson said. "You can't ask for more than that."

Several Ely players had big nights, including junior Rachel Coughlin, who notched eight kills, ten digs, three blocked

shots and two aces. Her sister Kate added ten digs, two kills and a pair of aces, while senior Kellen Thomas posted four kills, three digs, and two aces. Fellow senior Charly Flom tallied three kills and four digs, while Annikka Mattson added four aces. Senior setter Katrina Seliskar added 24 assists, two kills, six digs, and a blocked shot.

North Woods stats were unavailable as of press time.

#### **WOLVES...**Continued from page 1B

in two close sets. "It was an excellent day of volleyball," said Coach Wognum. "We were strong all around defensively and offensive-

After losing to the Bluejackets 25-21, 25-23, the Wolves overpowered South Ridge in three sets,

25-14, 23-25, and 15-8. Rachel Coughlin had a big match, notching 12 kills and 14 digs. Kellen Thomas added seven kills, nine digs, a blocked shot and an ace, while Kate Coughlin added eight kills and eight digs. Senior setter Katrina Seliskar added 33 assists, seven digs, and three aces.

The Wolves went on to top Cherry in the third match of the day, 25-21, 25-23. Thomas led the charge with eight kills, five digs, and two aces, while Kate Coughlin posted five kills, seven digs and an ace. Rachel Coughlin added

four kills, seven digs, and blocked two shots, while Raven Sainio added five kills and three digs. Seliskar posted 26 set assists. The Wolves made short

work of Virginia in the final match of the tournament, topping the Blue Devils 25-15, 25-15. Thomas

posted nine kills, while Rachel Coughlin added four kills and six digs. Junior Madeline Kallberg added five kills, two aces,

and blocked a shot. The Wolves are set to take on Northeast Range in Babbitt on Monday. They're back home on

Tuesday to host Lakeview Christian. Both varsity matches get underway at 7 p.m.

#### **ROUT...**Continued from page 1B

tackles. Senior linebacker Eddie Prijatel, playing with a cast on his left arm and still nursing a broken hand, brought down 11 Cherry ball handlers. Harry Simons added 10 tackles, while Jakson Hegman and Deegan Richards each posted eight tackles. Chase Sandberg had seven tackles, and Brady Eaton added four. Injuries continue to

plague the Wolves, as junior halfback Jason Kerntz was sidelined for the game. Senior defensive end Alec Cook suffered a shoulder injury early in the Cherry contest."Alec came back in for a series, but sat on the bench the rest of the night," Gerzin said. "Hopefully we will be at full strength this week."

The Timberwolves travel to Cromwell/ Floodwood on Friday and return home on Oct. 8 for a Homecoming game against Cook County. Ely has a week off on Oct. 15, when they would have played Northeast Range,

and closes out the season on Wednesday, Oct. 20 at North Central.

October 1, 2021 **3B** THE TIMBERJAY

#### **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

## Ely seeks more state bonding to finish trailhead building

Elv Editor

ELY - The multi-milliondollar trailhead project and west end development vision here was on display last week for the Minnesota State Senate Capital Investment Committee as they toured the North County to get a first-hand account of critical infrastructure projects.

Following a tour of the Lake Vermilion Soudan Underground Mine State Park to listen to Department of Natural Resources funding requests, the senators and staff members, traveling in style in a chartered luxury touring bus, missed the street on the west end of Ely to drive up to the trail head facility. They likely missed the turn because nothing was there.

Instead of an eye-catching, architecturally modern welcome center to service three converging recreational trails on the edge of town, the visitors were greeted with metal folding chairs and a city of Ely dump truck displaying drawings and artist renderings in the middle of a vacant gravel parking lot.

"We really hoped you would be here today touring our brand-new facility," said Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski.

The first phase of the ambitious development project received \$1.5 million in state bonding last year. Street and site

Wastewater treatment plant renovation also a high priority



Ely Mayor Roger Skraba addressed the legislators and local officials during the bonding tour. photo by K. Vandervort

work, utilities and other infrastructure work was completed.

"We went out for bids (on the building) last spring, and as many of you know, construction costs went through the roof," he said. The city is asking for another \$1.5 million to construct the building.

According to Ely Mayor Roger Skraba, city officials hoped to use the initial bonding allocation to complete part of the building phase but are not allowed to do so under state rules.

"You can't do the site work and then hope you get the money somewhere else for the rest,"

So, the city continues their bonding money search amid uncertainty that the legislature will even pass a bonding bill next year. Ely is seeking upwards of \$4 million to complete the west end development project. The other \$2.5 million is needed for an additional phase that includes a stalled expansion of the Elv-Bloomenson Community Hospital and Pattison Street extension west of Central Avenue to make way for workforce housing, development of the former city garage area, and a new ambulance service facility. "We are looking at rebid-

ding the (trailhead building)

project," Langowski said. "Obviously, we can't rebid it unless we know we have the funding in

Skraba added, "If you can't give us the whole \$4 million, we need the \$1.5 (million)."

The trailhead facility will service the Mesabi Trail (for biking and hiking), Prospector Loop (for ATVs), and the Taconite Trail (for snowmobiles).

"All three trail systems would meet right here in one convenient location in close proximity to our business district," Langowski said. He noted that the city of Ely recently legalized ATV operation on all city streets. "The whole community has embraced the trails. We want visitors to come to Ely."

While the Senate Capital Investment Committee was in town, Ely officials took the opportunity to lobby for funding to complete the nearly \$10 million wastewater treatment plant renovation project to meet newly-updated mercury standards.

Langowski said \$7 million in MPCA grant funding coming to the city does not quite meet the price tag. The Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board and St. Louis County Community Development Block Grant programs could be additional funding sources, he said, "and we are looking at federal sources too."

Langowski added, "We have until March of 2023 to lower our mercury limit, and we need to do a pretty significant upgrade to our plant.'

The project is set to go to out for bids next week. "This is a priority project for our community. We have to meet that requirement," he said.

While in Ely last Wednesday, the legislative visitors also toured the International Wolf Center to look at their asset preservation project, and Vermilion Community College to consider their classroom building, design and renovation project

## No end in sight to latest COVID surge, state officials say

by DAVID COLBURN Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Measures of the Delta-driven spike of the COVID-19 pandemic in St. Louis County have hit their highest levels of the year, reaching marks similar to those seen in the runup to last fall's massive November/December spike.

The numbers are beyond troubling to County Public Health Division Director Amy Westbrook, who on Tuesday issued a written update describing the challenges the county

"Area hospitals have been at capacity for weeks and have had to divert patients. Westbrook said. "Schools and long-term care facilities are dealing with outbreaks and having to quarantine. Even with approximately 120,000 of our 200,000 residents now vaccinated, more people are getting sick now than a year ago at this time."

Westbrook said that in addition to having 80,000 unvaccinated, people fewer people are following recommendations for masking in indoor settings and avoiding large gather-

The start of school

has also contributed to the rise in cases. Aubrie Hoover, a county health specialist who works directly with schools on COVID mitigation strategies, confirmed for the Timberjay on Tuesday that the biweekly case rate for schools in northern St. Louis County to be officially posted on Thursday is 65, and will go up again the following week, as it lags behind other measures due to data checking protocols. That's within two points of the measure logged for the first two weeks of November 2020, one which would have recommended a shift to full distance learning.

'We are just a few weeks into the 2021-22 school year, with in-person instruction, and with an average of 20-30 new cases in schools being reported every day, we already are seeing two important trends," Westbrook said. "In school settings where vaccination rates are highest, the transmission rates are lower. And even in school settings where vaccination rates are low, transmission rates are lower if there are layered strategies such as masking, social distancing, and good ventilation."

Many school districts in the region have responded to the surging numbers by re-evaluating policies regarding universal masking. Ely imposed a mask mandate immediately prior to the start of the school year and has reported only two COVID cases to date. School boards for Hibbing and Rock Ridge districts have implemented universal masking requirements in the past week in response to situations in their dis-

Others are leaving in place optional masking policies. Chisholm's school board deadlocked on a universal masking policy on Monday, leaving their optional policy in place for now. ISD 2142 school board members did not consider any change to the district's optional masking policy on Tuesday, nor did they discuss the current district situation, although all schools in the district have reported COVID cases.

Countywide, 41 percent of eligible students aged 12 and over have been fully vaccinated, according to Katie Albert, who coordinates vaccinations for the county.

Hoover said that she "keeps an active eye" on school cases, and if she identifies a particular group where COVID cases are spreading, such as a classroom or a sports team, she recommends a two-week period of masking among all members of the group.

With the expiration of the state of emergency declared last year by Gov. Tim Walz, the state Departments of Health and Education lost their ability to impose any mandated COVID mitigation

strategies, but Westbrook emphasized that the recommendations should not be taken casually.

"They aren't just suggestions, they're strongly encouraged, strongly recommended," she said in a Tuesday interview with the *Timberjay*.

State Health Commissioner Jan Malcolm said on Friday that a hoped-for plateau in the COVID surge statewide has not materialized, as she reported almost 3,000 new cases for the previous day. She noted that every county in the state is now in the CDC's category of "high transmission."

"We continue to have grave concerns about the impact of this latest wave on our hospitals, longterm care facilities and health systems," Malcolm said. "This wave of cases is not going away any time soon. We're all beyond tired of this pandemic. We're tired of the fear, the frustration, and the uncertainty. The best way to make things better is to do our part, individually and as communities, to slow transmission."

#### **Vaccinations**

All the health officials cited above were in agreement that the number one thing people should do to help is get vaccinated.

Weekly doses administered rose briefly in August as people became more concerned about the highly infectious Delta variant, and also as eligible students in public schools and colleges and universities prepared to return to classes. But vaccination rates tapered off during the first three weeks of September, averaging about 50,000 per week statewide and including both first and second doses.

"We continue to plead with people to get vaccinated," Westbrook said. "Vaccines are safe and remain our best defense against COVID-19."

Albert said that 68.4 percent of those 12 and older in the county have received at least one dose of vaccine.

"When we started seeing the Delta virus, there was definitely an uptick," she said. "At this point that's not the case anymore. It's just really slowly creeping along.'

In addition to the standard vaccination protocols, federal approval came last week for booster shots for those who

Pfizer vaccination, albeit with some confusion as the authorization worked its way through the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control. Albert said that she

received the two-dose

didn't see any issues with delivering booster shots in the county, and provided additional clarification about who should get a

People 65 years of age and older and residents of long-term care facilities who received their second shot of the Pfizer vaccine at least six months ago should get a booster, as should anyone 50-64 with an underlying medical condition, Albert said.

However, Pfizer booster shots will have limited impact in longterm care facilities, where 90 percent of residents received the Moderna vaccine, due to its greater ease of administration by pharmacies contracted to deliver vaccinations in those settings, according to state health officials.

Two other groups may also get Pfizer booster shots, Albert said, those 18-49 with underlying medical conditions and cupations or institutional settings put them at higher risk of contracting COVID.

those 18-64 whose oc-

"Have a conversation with your primary care provider," Albert said. "Talk to your provider if you're questioning it and see what their thoughts types

Some COVID testing kits, particularly rapid tests and athome test kits, are in short supply in the northern part of the county, but Westbrook said that the state is still offering free home test kits online through the MDH website. She also noted that the turnaround time for results once the kit is received at the lab is about eight hours.

#### **Local data**

New weekly cases reported by the state last Thursday held discouraging news for Orr, which had an area high of 18 new cases, the only zip code monitored by the Timberjay with a double-digit increase. Five new cases were reported in Tower, two in Soudan, nine in Cook, eight in Ely, and five in Embarrass.

### Obituaries and Death Notices

#### H. Roger Lamppa

Herman Roger Lamppa, 88, of Virginia, originally of Embarrass, passed away on Wednesday, Sept. 22, 2021, at Waterview Pines in Virginia. A funeral was held on Wednesday, Sept. 29 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower with a reception following in the church basement. Pastor Liz Cheney officiated. Arrangements were with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Joan; six children, Robin (Barb) Lamppa of Fargo, Jeena Hughes of Glenwood, Judy Janke of Blaine, Jody Lowther

(Bill) of Golden, Colo.,

Ryan Lamppa of Santa Barbara, Calif., and Jaclynn (Dale) West of Minneapolis; brother, Fred (Karen) Lamppa of Britt; nine grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

#### Anthony T. Galazen

Anthony "Tony" Tyler Galazen, 22, of Cook, died on Monday, Sept. 20, 2021, at Waterview Pines Nursing Home in Virginia, after a long battle with Juvenile Huntington Disease. No services are scheduled at this time.

He is survived by his mother, Lorrie Lappi of Cook; father, John Galazen of Buyck; sister, Ylonnda Galazen of Virginia; maternal grandmother, Charlotte "Dottie" Gallagher of Cook; paternal grandmother, Donna Galazen of Bayfield, Wis.; maternal grandfather, Bob Lappi of Cook; and many aunts, uncles and cousins. Tony touched the lives of many and will be sadly missed by all.

#### Terry A. King

Terry A. King, 74, of Wichita, Kansas, formerly of Orr and Virginia, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021. Visitation will be at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 9, followed by a Celebration of Life at 2 p.m. at Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook.

#### Russell G. Gabrielson Russell G. Gabriel-

son, 68, of Orr, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2021. A Celebration of Life will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 2 at the Orr American Legion in Orr. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service. A luncheon will follow the service. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook.

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**OFF-ROAD RECREATION?** 

## **Eagles Nest residents unhappy with ATVs on township roads**

ATV club incorporates county roads into new Prospectors Loop

by Marshall Helmberger Managing Editor

EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP— As ATV use increases in the North Country, some residents here are crying foul. That's especially true in the wake of the annual Ride and Rally sponsored by the ATV Association of Minnesota and the Prospectors Trail group, which brought large numbers of riders to the area Sept. 17-19.

"We're in growing pains with ATVs, just like we saw with snowmobiles in the early days," acknowledged state Rep. Rob Ecklund during a Sept. 21 meeting of the Eagles Nest Town Board. Ecklund was present, in part, to address concerns raised by residents here about ATV trails that had suddenly appeared in the township without input from the community.

Ecklund said he's focused his energy on obtaining funds for ATV trail construction as a way to help diversify the region's tourism sector. "The hospitality industry is looking for something for the shoulder seasons," Ecklund said, and he urged those concerned

See ATVs...pg. 5B



ATVs drove along the Bear Head State Park Road past the Eagles Nest Town Hall during the recent Ride and Rally sponsored by the Prospectors Trail ATV Club and the ATV Association of Minnesota. photo by J. Summit

TIS THE SEASON

Here in the North Country, we get to enjoy three fall color seasons. The first up are the red maples, which were at peak this past week in much of the area, sporting countless shades of red, orange, and yellow. Then come the our last burst of color before the grays of November. It's the best year, so get out and enjoy all that the North Country has to offer! Timberjay staff photos











#### Outdoors briefly

#### **Youth deer hunt** set for Oct. 21-24

REGIONAL -Minnesota's youth deer season will continue statewide for its third year, starting Thursday, Oct. 21, through Sunday, Oct. 24. The season coincides with statewide teacher workshops, so many Minnesota students don't have school during the youth season.

To participate, youth must be 10-17 years old and have a deer license. Participant numbers are not limited and there is no special permit, so parents should purchase or obtain a regular deer hunting license for the youth who will be hunting.

An adult parent, guardian, or mentor must accompany youth ages 10-13. All youth hunters and mentors must follow blaze orange/pink clothing requirements. Adults may not hunt, unless they are in an area open during the early antlerless season and have the corresponding license.

#### **Turkey season** starts Saturday

REGIONAL - TheMinnesota fall turkey hunting season offers hunters a challenge and another way to experience the outdoors in October. Fall turkey season is open from Saturday, Oct. 2, through Sunday, Oct. 31.

Hunters are allowed to take one turkey of either sex during the fall season. Fall turkey hunters may use a crossbow, firearm or archery equipment afield; however, hunters who are hunting both turkey and deer with archery equipment must observe the deer archery season restrictions on their equipment.

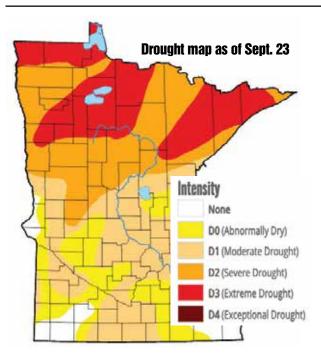
#### **Hunter walking** trails available

REGIONAL - The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources maintains hunter walking trails as easy ways to travel by foot through wildlife management areas, state and federal forests, and other public hunting lands. Hunter walking trails

wind through prime habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock, wild turkey and white tailed deer. There are more than 600 miles of hunter walking trails meandering throughout the northern half of the state. Many of the trails are gated, allowing foot traffic only, and offer easy access to parking lots. The DNR offers a

hunter walking trail tool that provides information on trail locations by name and county. Hunters can also call area wildlife offices for information about the trails, as well as hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities and tips.

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**CLIMATE** 

### **Rains reduce fire danger but** drought continues in area

by Marshall Helmberger Managing Editor

REGIONAL — Recent rains have lowered the fire danger across the North Country, but have barely impacted the longstanding effects of the region's drought. Much of northern St. Louis, Lake, and Koochiching counties remain in extreme drought while in other parts of the region the drought is listed as severe, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Since April 1, much of the area is currently at or below the tenth percentile for precipitation and that lack of precipitation has left stream and lake levels extremely low. While the recent rains improved water levels somewhat, the amount varies considerably by watershed. The Vermilion River remains

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at an extremely low level, of just 24 cubic feet per second, or cfs. That's less than ten percent of the river's average flow for September of 267 cfs.

By contrast, more substantial rains that fell in the Cook and Orr areas last week have helped to boost the flow in the Little Fork River, at least temporarily. As of Monday, the DNR was reporting that flow in the Little Fork had jumped to 155 cfs, up from 37 the week before. That's the only watershed in the region that is currently considered in the normal range for this time of year.

The Basswood River, near Ely, remains at a near-record low, with a flow of 104 cfs, up from 99 the week before. Normal late September flow in the Basswood River would be approximately 750 cfs.

### LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

**Friday Saturday** 

Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Emb. Hi Lo Prec. Sn. 85 63 09/20 86

Ely

09/20

09/21 70 49

09/23 68 31 0.00

31

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63 69

71 59

09/26 62 YTD Total

29 0.00

	<b>62 43</b>					
Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.			
09/20	85	63	0.12			
09/21	67	50	2.05			

70

62

09/23 67 39 0.00



Hi Lo Prec. Sn.

0.00

0.00

52 0.84

45

50

Orr

09/20 75

09/23

09/26

63 72

73 61

63 75

**Monday** 

**Tuesday** 

from NOAA weather



Tower Hi Lo Prec. Sn. 09/20 85 65 09/21

70

68

58

62

09/24 71 35

09/22 09/23

09/26 6 YTD Total

### ATVS...Continued from page 4B

about increasing ATV use to get involved in trail planning. He noted that he had recently earmarked \$250,000 in state funds for ATV trail planning across the state. "That's my role," he said. "I can get the money for the trails, but once the money is allocated, it is up to local communities to develop the trail systems."

Yet some township residents questioned their ability to do so. Barb Soderberg complained it hadn't worked that way in Eagles Nest. "You say we should go to meetings and get involved, but this latest Prospectors [trail] route showed up two days ahead of the ride. We could never be part of the planning. There were no meetings about it.'

Township officials had expressed concern about the situation as well and had voted in early September to close a township road to ATV use once they learned it had become part of a main route developed by the Prospectors Trail club. That route, labeled as Trail #4, connects Tower and Ely, mostly using existing snowmobile trail segments. The club has sought to continue use of the Taconite Trail as it passes through Bear Head Lake State Park, but that idea has faced pushback from the Department of Natural Resources, parks and trails advocates, and Eagles Nest residents, who oppose the use of ATVs in the state park. The impasse has pushed the ATVers onto county roads in the township that are used regularly by township residents for walking or biking, and residents say they're concerned about having to share the road with ATVs that drive too fast, make too much noise, and kick up dust on the mostly gravel

At the recent town board meeting, another resident voiced concerns similar to Soderberg's. She said during the recent rally, large numbers of ATV users were using township roads. "There were so many people racing up and down Bear Head State Park Rd. and they were louder than heck," she said.

Town board supervisor Kurt Soderberg, in a statement to the *Timberjay*, said he had heard similar complaints from residents along Trygg Road. He said the supervised rides were "very responsible and controlled," but that the behavior of riders changed significantly later in the day. "Excessive speed, irresponsible driving, doing donuts on a private driveway, riders getting lost and needing directions," stated Soderberg. "If today was an example of what we will have for the foreseeable future, Trygg Road residents will be very upset and willing to

fight this route by the DNR and St. Louis County."

Another resident voiced her concerns at the meeting. "ATV clubs are threatening the peace and quiet of Eagles Nest," she said. "I'd prefer that they leave our township alone."

That view wasn't unanimous, however, as some in the large audience in attendance at the board meeting voiced support for ATVs and their own right to use them. "Please don't take our fun away," said one resident, who noted the ride and rally is only once a year and that most riders appeared respectful.

But another resident suggested that the conflict between township residents and ATVs was likely to grow along with the number of riders drawn to the area. "There's a big ATV campground being built at Vermilion State Park and there's talk of it becoming a national ATV destination," he said, and he agreed with Ecklund that the ATVs aren't going away and that room will need to be found for them to ride. "But they shouldn't be on residential streets," he said. While he agreed that planning is important, he said there hasn't been much evidence of it to date. "To me, when trails just show up on a map, that's not planning."

#### Fishing report

#### Ely area

Walleyes seem to be confused by the very unusually warm temps this last week. Walleyes still have yet to set up in classic fall locations. Best reports are still largely coming from shallow water. 6-12 feet of water and jig and minnow has been best. Reports from anglers of trolling still being very effective, continue to come in also.

Smallmouth bass fishing has been excellent for many this last week. Anglers are finding smallies setting up on mid-lake humps near deep water. Here smallies are crushing large minnows tipped on a jig. Depth depends largely on the lake you're fishing, but 20-30 feet of water has been most commonly mentioned.

Pike anglers reported excellent fishing just before the last warmup, but during this warmup the bite seems to have cooled off. When the bite was good, anglers were catching pike with large suckers fished under a bobber or with spinnerbaits and large spoons. Anglers are finding big pike near neck down areas of bays, near river mouths and large rocky points.

Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors, Ely.







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Published in the Timberjay, Oct. 1 & 8, 2021

#### **POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Paraprofessional**

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for a Paraprofessional for the 2021-2022 school year; background check required.

- Qualifications include: ➤ Associate's Degree/equivalent or Para Pro
- > Preferred experience working with school age children
- Evidence of ability to work cooperatively and communicate effectively in a collaborative

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

- A complete application must include the fol-
- ➤ District Application Resume
- College Transcripts

Certification

➤ 2 letters of recommendation

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

Starting Rate of Pay: \$16.90/hour

Hours: 6.5 hours/day

Deadline to apply: October 8, 2021; open until

Published in the Timberjay, Oct. 1, 2021

#### **PUBLIC NOTICES**

#### Bearville Township **Accepting Bids for** Snowplowing (Cedar Lane)

Bearville Township accepting bids for 2021/2022 snowplowing of Cedar Lane area-Beatrice Lake contract. Route would begin on the Snake Trail at the point where St. Louis County stops plowing (formerly Robertson's), 1.45 miles to Beatrice Lake Forest Road, .4 miles of Beatrice Lake Road to Cedar Lane, .48 miles of Cedar Lane, from Cedar Lane .8 miles of Beatrice Lake Road ending where Echo Lane meets Beatrice Lake Road (approximate total distance 3.1 miles). Plowing must begin when there is a 4" snowfall, and road must be kept open the entire season. The snowplowing seasonal contract would be in effect from November 1, 2021 until May 1,

2022. Requesting bids for the entire season. A Certificate of Insurance is required upon acceptance of the bid. Please contact Bearville Supervisor Gene Baker: 218-301-9343 or Kathy Cressy-Clerk: 218-376-4495 or bearvl@frontiernet.net for more details and map. Sealed bids must be received by October 8th to be considered and will be opened and awarded at the October 12th Board of Supervisors meeting (meeting starts at 6:30pm at the Bearville Town Hall, 13971 Hwy 22- 1 mile East of State Hwy 65). Mail sealed bids to: Bearville Township Snowplowing bid, c/o Kathy Cressy -Clerk, 62949 County Road 557, Cook, MN 55723. Bearville Township reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Published in the Timberjay, Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2021

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#### POSITION OPENING **Ely Public Schools Paraprofessional**

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for a Paraprofessional for the 2021-2022 school year; background check required.

Qualifications include:

- ➤ Associate's Degree/equivalent or Para Pro Certification
- Preferred experience working with school age children
- Evidence of ability to work cooperatively and communicate effectively in a collaborative

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

A complete application must include the fol-

- ➤ District Application > Resume
- College Transcripts2 letters of recommendation

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

Starting Rate of Pay: \$16.90/hour

Hours: 6.5 hours/day

Deadline to apply: October 5, 2021; open until

Published in the Timberjay, Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2021

#### **Charter School Administrator** Vermilion Country School Tower, MN

SALARY: PER ESTABLISHED PAY SCALE (AVAILABLE BY REQUEST)

POSITION OPEN UNTIL FILLED

FULL JOB DESCRIPTION POSTED AT WWW.VERMILIONCOUNTRY.ORG

SEND COVER LETTER AND RESUME to: Jodi Summit, Board Chair, jsummit@vermilioncountry.org, or call 218-753-2950.

QUALIFICATIONS: Minimum 4-year degree in relevant area. Administrator licensure or coursework preferred but not required. Experience with charter schools and school leadership. Experience/interest in innovative learning and creating a democratic school environment. Ability to write/manage grants, interact with state agencies, VCS authorizer, and all stakeholders. The board envisions this to be a .50 position, with a possibility of the remainder of the position to be filled with a teaching, special education, or other assignment up to a full-time basis.

The Vermilion Country School is a grades 7-12 charter school that opened in the fall of 2013. It is located in Tower, on the shores of beautiful Lake Vermilion, in the heart of Minnesota's North Country. The school serves a multicultural student body of 30-35 students, with an innovative program learning model that is uniquely-adapted to this remote community. For more information, visit our website at www. vermilioncountry.org

The Vermilion Country Administrator will assist in several aspects of program development and implementation while working side-by-side with our staff to oversee the educational programming. Our school's staff oversees day-today student management. The administrator is responsible for guiding our staff to reach our school goals, and will report directly to the school board, and act as our administrator of record for MDE and our authorizer.

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FT Radiologic Technologist

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**Activities** 

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#### Social Studies Teacher .5 FTE

Vermilion Country School in Tower, MN is seeking to hire a .5 FTE Social Studies Teacher for the 2021-2022 school year. Position can be combined with other openings. Position open until filled.

Application material would include a cover letter, a resume, and license.

Only electronic applications will be accepted. Please send application material to: jsummit@vermilioncountry.org

#### **Part-Time Paraprofessional**

Vermilion Country School in Tower is seeking to hire a Paraprofessional for the 2021-2022 school year. This half-time position may be combined with other openings (office assistant) and will remain open until filled. For more information, please email jsummit@vermilioncountry.org or call Jodi Summit at 218-753-2950





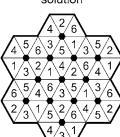
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## Weekly **SUDOK**l

PERSON

### by Linda Thistle

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

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:** ◆

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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# \*TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

Considerations of personal privacy, time and resources prevent the newspaper from investigating ads placed in the classified section. If you respond to an ad, we urge you to use the same care and prudence that you would use when conducting business in any other situation.

#### **AUTOMOTIVE**

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#### HAIR CARE

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#### **HOSPICE**

VIRGIE HEGG HOSPICE PARTNERS can provide help for patients and their families in ways such as: comfort care, massages, last wishes and more. For more information, contact Program Director Becca Bundy at 218-780-5423 or vhhpdirector@gmail.com. This ad is paid for by Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners.

#### **SUPPORT GROUPS**

AA OPEN GROUP MEETINGS- in person meetings, Wednesdays & Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, 915 E Camp St., Ely

MS SUPPORT GROUP- meets the second Friday of the month at 1 p.m. at the Babbitt Municipal Building, senior room. Open to all. For information contact Mary at 218-827-8327.

ORR AA meets Tuesdays at 8 p.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Church, Orr.

ELY CO-DEPENDENTS
MEETING- Fridays at noon-St.
Anthony's Church Classroom 3-Use west side entrance. For more information go to coda.org

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS-Meetings every Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Virginia.

BABBITT AL-ANON- meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the upstairs of Woodland Presbyterian Church.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP-Are you troubled by someone's drinking? Al-Anon Family Group is a community-based mutual support program for the friends and families of alcoholics. It is confidential and open to anyone affected by someone else's drinking. Hope Lutheran Church in Embarrass hosts an Al-Anon group on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. 218-984-2037.

VIRGINIA WOMEN'S AA MEETING- Ladies by the Lake. Tuesdays at 12 noon. Peace United Methodist Church 303 S 9th Ave, please use side door and parking

OPEN MEETING-Thursdays at 7 Woodland Presbyterian Church, Acacia Blvd. and Central Drive

ELY WOMEN'S OPEN AA MEETING- Every noon at Ledgerock Community Church, 1515 E Camp St., Ely

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH DRUGS, give yourself a break. There is a way out with the help of other recovering addicts in Narcotics Anonymous. We have been there. For meeting or other information call 218-728-3199. (Narcotics Anonymous is a non-profit organization.)

HIV/AIDS? For confidential compassionate local support call the Bural AIDS Action Network tollfree 1-888-647-RAAN(7226).

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS-East Range meetings and information, call 218-749-3387 or www.district8online.org

AA FRIDAYS- 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 262 E Harvey St., Ely. Meets in the basement.

Find lt Here

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Line classifieds cost 30¢/word, \$6.00 minimum. Classified ads can be run a second time at half price (private parties only). We now accept payment by Visa, Mastercard, AmEx, and Discover. Call your ad in to 218-753-2950. Display (boxed) classifieds are billed by the "inch"- please call for prices and information on discounts.

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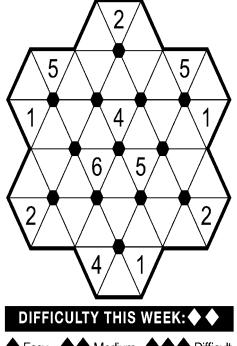
#### **HELP WANTED**

HELP WANTED-NEEDED- full-time or part-time at Melgeorge's on Elephant Lake. WEEKEND CABIN CLEANERS also needed. Call 218-374-3621. tfn

AGE 55+ WORKERS NEEDED Orr Office. Contact Green View at 651-639-1913. 10/22v

# by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



◆◆ Medium ◆◆

#### Weekly SUDOKU

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### Answer

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



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56 Baba au -

cake)

Albert

60 Direction of

sunrise

62 Explosive

63 Actor Holm

65 NYT staffers

66 "You think I

didn't already

know that?"

a hip-hopper

72 Put down, to

**75** Hoppy brew

77 U.S. spy gp.

petri dishes

86 Sturdy — oak

88 Geography

78 Gelatin in

76 Ltd., in the

U.S.

to)

stuff

59 Declare

(alcoholic

**57** Sportscaster

torage and dockage Boat and pontoon rental

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### **Super** Crossword

### 99 Popular

Christmas

hymn

102 Paramount

103 Suffix for

hexa-

104 Canonized

Mile.

106 Title song

lyric fol-

lowed by the

first words

answers in

this puzzle

111 Group that

had a #1

106-Across

122 Most parched

123 Small finger

**126** Precipitates

pellets

in from

abroad

127 Brings

128 Human

**DOWN** 

hit with

118 Be a pilot

119 Gory film

84 By — of (due 125 Restlessness

of seven

61 Crack pitcher 105 Note below la

#### **ACROSS**

- 1 Prickly plant 7 Seaport in Argentina
- 14 Aim high 20 Musician
- using reeds 21 The Who's
- "The Kids Are
- 22 "Frozen"
- studio 23 Less pudgy
- 24 Bertie created by
- Wodehouse 25 Piddling
- 26 Like adults
- 28 "Oops, I'm at fault here"
- 30 Angeles
- Paulo,
- Brazil 33 Hairy "Add-
- cousin 34 Locker-room motivator
- 39 Is distressed over
- 46 Declare
- France
- 50 Looked like

53 Ontario

23

26

126

- 47 Opposite of 60-Across, in
- 48 Pantry insect 49 Java holders

metropolis

55 Loses control

- class spinner 89 Like the sky's 91 A long time from now
- - - - chief Kofi
      - 98 Last Greek letters
- 94 Sound off
- 95 Sendai sash 97 Former U.N.
- 1 Pepsi, e.g.
- 2 Cain's sibling
  - 4 Crystal-hitting
  - sound
- 3 Fuel that can get shoveled
- 41 Actor Bert

10

- 37 Seduces

error

17 Actress

18 Smell

15 Noon nap

16 Exam for jrs.

Swenson

terrible

19 Brontë's

Jane

29 Outward

31 Passable

35 Justice

32 Fall seasons

34 Out of style

27 Stir-fry pan

- hosted a show

42 Ram into

- longtime NPR
- 38 Gets older 39 Ballet skirt

- 40 Diane who

- Kagan 36 Entreaties
  - - 79 Extort from 80 The "A" of
      - James A. Garfield 81 Shortstop

22

128

- Pee Wee 83 Large town 85 "Correct me
  - "Nana" 120 Dada artist Jean
  - wrong" 15
    - 18

24 25 28 27 29 33 36 40 41 47 48 49 53 58 69 66 67 68 70 80 76 79 85 86 | 87

#### 46 50 82 89 94 99 101 104 105 106 107 108 109 113 114 115 116 117 110 119 122 120 | 121 123 124 125

127



for short

"Falcon

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hopeful

71 Journalist

72 Messing

of "Will &

marriage

Grace"

69 Contest

64 Alicia of

played by Tom Hanks 90 Toasted

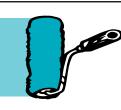
92 Playwright

- William 93 Bungled 96 Nuptial ring
- 100 "OK already!" 101 Safe place
- **102** Weep 105 Feudal workers 67 Stable feed
- 106 Flaps one's 68 Fey of "Date gums
  - 107 Demonic 108 Trig topic
- 109 Grab hold of 70 Investor Carl 110 Italian wine town Marve
  - 112 Lift to test the weight of
- 73 Relative via 113 Obama cabineteer 74 Spa hot spot Duncan
  - 114 Arena level 115 Meadows 116 Gas brand in
  - Canada 117 Anna of
  - 121 -- cone





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