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the TIMBERJAY

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BROADBAND SERVICE

Troubled telecom faces state review

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

Minnesota could become sixth state to reject LTD Communications

REGIONAL- The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) last week ordered an investigation of embattled telecom company LTD Broadband over concerns the small company may not be able

to deliver on its promise to deploy high-speed broadband fiber service to unserved Minnesotans, a move with major implications for the North Country. LTD was the surprise top bidder in the

Federal Communications Commission December 2020 auction, securing \$1.3 billion of Rural Development Opportunity Fund (RDOF) money over ten years to provide fiber-based broadband to

528,000 locations in 13 states where no such service was available or currently planned. That included \$311 million for 102,00 sites in rural Minnesota, including all of the awards for

northern St. Louis County that were candidates for development. (See accompanying map, page 9). LTD's winning bid gave them almost total exclusivity to develop broadband in those areas, as

census tracts deemed eligible for RDOF funding were not eligible for any other federal or state funding efforts during the ten-year term of the project. See...LTD pg. 9

OLD SETTLERS PICNIC



Booyah fun!



Old settlers, ranging in age from infants to 96-years old, gathered last Saturday at McKinley Park in Breitung Township for the annual community get-together which has been continuing for over 100 years. The booyah is cooked overnight in iron pots that date back to the earliest days of the picnic. Pictured (clockwise from top left) Steve Tekautz and Brian Anderson start serving the booyah. The meat and vegetable stew is ladled into pots which picnic-goers bring. Steve and Emily Majerle were part of the Friday afternoon vegetable-cutting crew; the two helped fill in at potato-cutting duty for Steve's father Sheldon, who recently passed away. Odin Picard turns his pot into a helmet while waiting in line. photos by J. Summit

CITY OF ELY

Council facing difficult budget work for 2023

Inflation, unanticipated expenditures, fuel costs depleted general fund

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – The city's budget committee released a proposed 2023 budget calendar Tuesday night and council members here were warned that difficult monetary decisions lay ahead in the coming months as the city works to set a maximum levy by the end of September and adopt a final budget and property tax levy by the end of the year. "It has been a particularly hard year for the city in the sense that we had unanticipated and unbudgeted purchases including a land purchase by the Trezona (Trail), fire trucks, ambulance garage property, and increased fuel prices," said budget committee member Paul Kess. "We area also negotiating (staff) contracts, and just general inflation. It is going to be a challenging year for our budget." A nearly two-hour budget committee meeting was held Monday night as council members and Assistant Treasurer Dan Smith discussed the challenges of balancing the budget next year. According to minutes from the meeting, the city's Capital Project fund decreased by more than \$2 million in 2021, and only about half of that spending was anticipated. The other decreases, according to Smith, can be attributed to airport projects, unbudgeted projects and budgeted project cost over-runs. It is anticipated that the Capital Projects fund will incur deficit spending See...BUDGET pg. 9

UTILITY COSTS

Commerce: Cut electric rate hike by 55 percent

Department joins Attorney General in opposing Minnestoa Power's proposed rate increase

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Financial analysts with the state's Department of Commerce (DOC) are recommending a sharp reduction in Minnesota Power's request for higher electrical rates for its customers in northeastern Minnesota.

In a detailed brief submitted to the state's Public Utilities Commission (PUC), DOC officials are recommending trimming Minnesota Power's \$108.3 million rate increase request by more than half. If that recommendation is ultimately approved by the Public Utilities Commission, it would reduce the company's total rate



increase to \$47.7 million. The DOC's recommendation is in line with a number of consumer groups and the state's Attorney General's office, which have also pushed back against

the Minnesota Power request, particularly over its impact on residential customers. The company's proposed increase of nearly 18 percent, if approved, would increase the typical residential customer's annual electric bill by about \$180. That's according to the Citizens Utility Board, a non-profit that is opposed to the rate increase, at least as proposed.

General service customers, such as most small businesses in the company's service territory, would pay about \$660 more per year, on average. Locally, the company's proposed increase would affect ratepayers in Tower, Soudan, and parts of Lake Vermilion's Pike See...RATES pg. 11



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EFFIE WESTERN SHOW Longest-running rodeo prepares for 67th year

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

EFFIE- Like most summer activities this year, higher prices for everything from gas to food have affected the rodeo circuit, but the chance to compete in the 67th Annual North Star Stampede in Effie the weekend of July 29-31 is evidently a priceless experience for a whole lot of cowboys.

“We’ve got a full slate,” said Cimarron Pitzen, whose family has run the popular open rodeo there in the same place for over six decades. “I was nervous with the way the economy is. There’ve been rodeos short on cowboys, because when you have all your money going into your gas tank and the dinner table, the first thing you’ve got to cut out is your entertainment. But we ended up with a pile of entries and some very good cowboys coming. One of the cowboys coming on Sunday in Andy Gingerich. He’s like number two on the Badlands Circuit.”

All the familiar fan favorites like saddle and bareback bronc riding, bull riding, steer wrestling, calf roping, and barrel racing will be on display at the country’s longest-running family-operated rodeo held continuously in the same arena. But this year’s rodeo features a new event, ranch bronc riding, which Pitzen believes fans will find an exciting addition. “This event goes back to the early days of rodeo where there really were no rules,” he said. “You’re riding with a ranch bronc saddle with a horn on it. They are wild broncs, and you just get on and hang on any way you can. It’s going to be a great added event for the spectators.”

Keeping the cowboys safe and entertaining the crowd between competitors this year will be pro rodeo clown Allan Dessel.

Holding the line

The North Star Rodeo has always been a family-oriented affair, and this year Pitzen is taking an extra step to keep it that way. Getting into the 67th edition of the rodeo won’t cost folks any more than getting into the 66th edition

did.

“We didn’t raise our prices due to the economy this year because we want people to be able to afford to come here and bring their families, bring their children and enjoy the weekend,” Pitzen said.

Single session tickets for performances at 5 p.m. Friday, July 29 and 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 30 and Sunday, July 31 are \$18 for adults and \$10 for children ages 6-13, and three-day passes are available at discounted prices of \$45 for adults and \$20 for children.

Folks with three-day passes also have the option of grabbing a spot in the campground, provided each person occupying a campsite has one.

“Right now they’re shaping up pretty good,” Pitzen said. “I got all the hay put up and it’s not real wet here. Hopefully it dries up here just a little more for rodeo time, and if it stays like it is, we won’t have any problems.”

Those who can’t make the main event on the weekend can still enjoy timed events like roping and barrel racing by attending slack day on Thursday, July 28.

“We get so many timed event contestants that it’s impossible to run them all during the main performance,” Pitzen said. “So we’ll run a lot of slack at noon on Thursday, probably 50-60 barrel racers and ropers. There have been winning times for the entire rodeo coming in Thursday during the slack. It’s one way of helping them out by getting them out of here, so they can get to another rodeo.”

Preparations for the rodeo have been underway for a couple of weeks, and while some of the faces may change from year to year, Pitzen never fails to come up with enough family, friends, paid help and volunteers to pull off an event just as successful as all those that have come before.

“It’s that way every year,” he said. “It’s a community-oriented event. It’s a great economic impact for this community and people love to see it. It’s just good old family entertainment, and we encourage people to come up here and have a good time.”

ELY EVENTS

Blueberry/Art Festival to be held July 29-31

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – Following a severe storm that altered the 2021 Blueberry/Art Festival, planning for this year’s edition of the Ely community’s major summer festival began back in January and will kick off next Friday, July 29.

With Mother Nature’s cooperation, more than 200 art, craft, and food vendors will fill Whiteside Park starting at 10 a.m. next Friday, and stay until Sunday, July 31 at 4 p.m. “They will be joined by thousands of visitors to our wonderful community,” said Ely Chamber of Commerce Event Director Ellen Cashman, who has spent hundreds of hours planning the event layout featuring many of the favorite vendors, plus at least 30 new ones.

“Our festival is a juried show, so each new applicant is reviewed by a panel of area artists and crafters,” Cashman explained. Those same jurors judge all the vendors on Friday morning and award the top three winners in both the art and craft categories.

“We are excited to have a very diverse group of artists and crafters including some fantastic ones from the Ely area,” she said. “We have Tom McDonald from Bear Island Art Factory who does recycled metal art, Dafne Caruso who does both jewelry and mixed media paintings, Ginny Stage who does embroidered textiles, Annette Mattingly who does pressed flower art, Ben Pawlak who features wood crafts, and many more.”

Several of the new artists are also from Ely, including Brian and Jill Siegel who work with mixed media and Nina Wray who creates beautiful pottery.

“Our food court is filled with



For the first time in Blueberry/Art Festival history, event pins are available at the Ely Chamber of Commerce and at the chamber's booth at the festival.

many popular vendors offering tasty treats including turkey croissants, fresh seafood, corn dogs, brats, cheese curds, authentic Mexican food, BBQ, waffles, funnel cakes, oriental food, and frozen yogurt,” Cashman said.

The Ely Kiwanis is in the pavilion again this year with their delicious blueberry pies, ice creams and sandwiches. The beer tent is also back this year, and the proceeds will go to support the Ely Fire Department and their activities.

Pengal’s Basswood Trading will have the Blueberry/Art Festival t-shirts, sweatshirts, and blueberry pop. “There truly is something for everyone,” she added.

Visit the Ely Chamber of Commerce booth for their first annual

Blueberry/Art Festival button. The buttons are only \$5 each and funds go to support the festival. Buttons are also available at the chamber office at 1600 E Sheridan St. in Ely.

The third annual Operation Blueberry event kicks off on Thursday, July 28. A map and list of participating businesses will be available on Friday, July 22. Some businesses are offering blueberry sales and specials, while others are doing special events. Maps will be available at the Ely.org website, at the chamber office, and at the chamber festival booth. The chamber booth will also have the coveted “Blueberry List” featuring blueberry art, crafts, food, and many other items offered by vendors at the festival.

ROCKING THE LODGING

All American Motel Tour to visit Tower Free concert on Wednesday, August 3 at the Marjo Motel

TOWER- Kelly Kidd and his “2022 All-American Motel Tour” will be at the Marjo Motel in Tower on Wednesday, Aug. 3 for a free concert at 6 p.m.

Kelly Kidd with Mike Kindel will perform classic country songs you’ll likely know and a few you wish you had known sooner. Everyone is invited to come and listen or sing-along to some acoustic country music.

The concert is sponsored by

Marit and Orlyn Kringstad and the Marjo Motel. Bring a lawn chair or blanket, and your own beverages and snacks. Parking is available at the Tower Harbor. Walk on the path that goes underneath the Hwy. 169 bridge to the Marjo. Parking is also available at the Your Boat Club marina.

In 2020 Kelly Kidd took a bold step amid the pandemic crisis and set out on a tour. With the conventional stages he normally

played being closed at the time, he reached out to motels, inns, ranches, and other independent hospitality venues between Los Angeles and Nashville and offered a live streaming show that helped showcase their property during a very hard time.

The American Motel Tour was a success and Kidd has continued the tradition since playing at over 50 locations across the country.

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Chisholm man nailed in highway drug bust

Three arrested under suspicion of involvement in the distribution of fentanyl

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Law enforcement officials seized more than a pound of what was believed to be the dangerous synthetic opioid fentanyl in a highway drug bust Monday morning in central St. Louis County.

The traffic stop took place along Hwy. 53 in Ellsburg Township, north of Cotton, after an ongoing narcotics investigation indicated that Trisco Rondell Cooks, 35, of Chisholm, was transporting illegal narcotics to the Iron Range from the Chicago, Illinois area.

According to a St. Louis County Sheriff's Office press release, Investigators assigned to the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force (LSVOTF) stopped a vehicle driven by Cooks on Monday and executed a search warrant. The vehicle was registered to "We Dat Rentals," a Chisholm business owned by Cooks. Investigators discovered



Cole Heyn

the suspected fentanyl, along with evidence of illegal marijuana use, during the search of the vehicle.

Cooks, who according to court records has multiple recent convictions for illegal use of marijuana in vehicles, was arrested and booked into St. Louis County jail without bail on charges of first-degree felony sale of a controlled substance and importing controlled substances across state



Chloe Villebrun

borders.

Two other individuals in the vehicle were identified as Cole Alexander Heyn, 24, and Chloe Ceanna Villebrun, 21, both of Hibbing. Both Heyn and Villebrun were arrested and booked on charges of controlled substance sales and possession. Heyn has three prior convictions in the past four years involving possession and/or sale of con-



Trisco Cooks

trolled substances. Both are being held without bail.

Multiple internet sources estimate the street value of one gram of fentanyl ranges from \$100 to \$200, making the value of Monday's bust roughly between \$50,000 to \$100,000.

According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, fentanyl is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times

stronger than morphine. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl is usually in either liquid or powder forms and is commonly combined with heroin, methamphetamine, and cocaine. Fentanyl was responsible for over 30,000 overdose deaths in 2018.

The Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force, formerly known as the Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force, is a multiagency effort consisting of members from the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, the Duluth, Hibbing, Virginia, and Superior Police Departments, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Minnesota National Guard Counter Drug Task Force.

Members of the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, the Eveleth Police Department K9 team, and Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension assisted with Monday's incident.

ELY SCHOOLS

ISD 696 considers active-shooter training for school staff

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – As school shootings continue to increase across the country, the risk of such a tragedy has not been lost on ISD 696 officials, and discussions have ramped up on conducting active shooter training for school staff here.

The Ely Police Department's emergency management director, Officer Bradley Roy, addressed the issue last week with the Ely school board.

School board chair Ray Marsnik opened the discussion, "We have been talking about getting ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuation) training for our teachers, and Officer Roy is certified to teach that program, but we're not quite ready to do that yet."

Roy said he obtained a cost quote of just over \$2,000 earlier this year to conduct the training.

He explained that the training consists of online training followed by in-person participation

“It costs nothing for you guys to have me come into the school to conduct the scenario training.”

Officer Bradley Roy
Ely Police Department

in real-life scenarios involving school teachers and staff with law enforcement officials. A first-aid class, with materials contributed by the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital, could also be part of the training, Roy added.

"This is a great program," Roy said. "It is sort of the pioneering response to (a school shooter or intruder) which focuses on having a proactive procedure. Once we get a School Resource Officer, that person would come in and teach students as well."

Roy, who was previously involved in active shooter training, said the ALICE training is a "blended model" with online training for teachers to pre-pre-

pare with basic knowledge.

"The training scenarios, which I recommend, are important for learning," he said. "I also like to go into each classroom and breakdown (details) such as how to barricade a door and other scenarios. The training scenarios would take three or four hours."

The school district would be responsible for covering initial costs of gaining access to the online training portal, Roy explained.

"It costs nothing for you guys to have me come into the school to conduct the scenario training."

Board member Tony Colarich inquired how Ely teachers and staff would remain current on how

active shooter responses evolve.

"Typically, for the school to be ALICE certified, as many as 80 percent of the staff must be trained on a yearly basis," Roy said. I would recommend you treat this training like fire drill training. Be proactive. I would recommend conducting the scenario-based training at least once a year at minimum."

Roy noted that Lake County schools are certified, as well as ISD 2142 in St. Louis County.

"I know that Vermilion Community College (VCC) has been trained on it, they plan to re-up again, and the hospital here is trained. I am training our (law enforcement) agency right now, so we all know how to respond. The more systemic the better," he said.

Anne Oelke, K-5 principal, said school staff was last trained on intruder scenarios about five years ago.

"With changes in the superintendents here, they come in with different philosophies and perspectives on active shooters

and how to respond. It kind of died in the water after our first training. So, this is nothing new to some of our staff. We are on the verge of redoing this training," she said.

Roy said he will soon be participating in an active-shooter training in Babbitt, being conducted by the St. Louis County Sheriff's office.

"They are talking about having their teachers be involved as well," he said. "They are still weighing the pros and cons because it can be a traumatic thing even though it is just a training. But in the future, I would like to have one of the trainings here (involving St. Louis County law enforcement officials)."

Oelke added, "Most importantly, we need to communicate our plan on how we are doing this. We focus on our teachers and staff and training us first before we do anything with our students. That is where some of the concern and anxiety with our families comes from."

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Editorial

Fixing mental health

America has a problem. Do we have the politcal will to solve it?

We can do something about America’s mental health crisis. The only question is whether there’s the political will to act.

We know that resources matter, because resources can translate into the trained professionals needed to help those in crisis to find their way back to mental health — before it’s too late.

That takes money, which always seems to be in short supply when the issue is mental health. That’s one reason we were pleasantly surprised when Ely Mayor and legislative candidate Roger Skrabarecentlyrecommended that Minnesota devote a billion dollars of the state’s current budget surplus to mental health. We suspect Mr. Skraba will find more support for that idea on the other side of the political aisle than within his own party, but it was a welcome idea, nonetheless.

The lack of mental health resources in northeastern Minnesota is particularly acute, and it has consequences. One local mental health counselor, who works in area schools, recently told us of her efforts to find help for several area students experiencing mental health crises. In every case, openings for appointments were months down the road. When people, especially young people, are in crisis, they don’t have months to wait for help.

It isn’t just young people, either. We know of area families who have had adult family members in crisis, who were unable to get the help they desperately needed. Some of those cases resulted in suicide.

We see this same lack of resources affecting our emergency medical services. A significant number of 911 calls in the region are related to mental health and when those patients need transport to an in-patient facility, it means hours of driving for local ambulance crews, since such facilities either don’t exist here or are already bursting at the seams.

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased isolation that it created for many, has contributed to the problem, offering at least a hope that some of today’s mental health problems might be temporary. Yet, America’s mental health crisis has been building for more than a decade and has been evident in rising rates of death from suicide and other so-called deaths of despair, which include deaths from alcohol and drug abuse. The increasing number of such deaths is the main reason that the average lifespan of an American has

actually declined in recent years, the first time that’s been the case since the founding of the nation. Economic factors and the loss of opportunity for some has played a role in that. Toxic politics further add to the stress. Other indicators point to a growing despair that many people feel about environmental problems, from ocean pollution to climate change, and a sense of powerlessness over such seemingly intractable issues. Many Americans have the sense of a world and a nation that is spinning apart and rightfully fear an even bleaker future unless we can somehow muster the ability and the will to respond. For most of us, hope for a better future is a strong motivating force, one that helps keep our darker moments at bay. Loss of hope can feel like a bottomless black hole.

One new source of help for those experiencing depression, anxiety, or thoughts of suicide recently went online here in Minnesota and nearly two dozen other states. It’s a new three-digit hotline number, 9-8-8, that is supposed to quickly connect callers with a trained individual who can help.

It’s a start, but just that. Like other mental health hotlines, it’s like an emergency room. It may get the patient past an initial crisis, by treating symptoms, but it’s not a long-term fix for the underlying factors that are leaving so many Americans hurting. That takes a longer-term relationship with a trained mental health professional, something that simply isn’t available for most people in our region. We need to train many more and provide the funding necessary to enable them to serve all parts of the country. Mental health certainly isn’t just an urban concern. If anything, rural America is hurting even worse.

Ultimately, of course, we need to address the underlying issues that are fueling America’s mental health crisis. We have so much that needs doing in this country, that no one should feel a lack of opportunity. Addressing issues like climate change could generate much new, good-paying employment, while easing the angst over the issue that so many people feel.

Finding a way to turn social media to positive ends, rather than the falsehood and anger that seems to gravitate to such forums, could make a real change for the better. In the end, we can restore our mental health when we begin to take the steps necessary to restore our nation and our world.



Letters from Readers

Pete Stauber still using scare tactics

Pete Stauber’s use of scare tactics continues. His current false claim in his press release and in Congressional statements is that a ban on mining federal minerals on Superior National Forest lands in the headwaters of the Boundary Waters would harm, or even kill, iron mining or the taconite industry. It is not true.

The Iron Mining Association of Minnesota website includes a map of iron and taconite formations – the map shows no formations of federally-owned iron or taconite on federal lands in the withdrawal area. Further, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website map shows no iron ore or taconite deposits or formations in federal minerals in the withdrawal area.

There is more. The proposed federal legislation that would permanently ban sulfide-ore copper mining on national forest lands in the headwaters of the Boundary Waters reads: “The Chief of the Forest Service is authorized to permit the removal of sand, gravel, granite, iron ore, and taconite from national forest system lands within the area depicted on the Map if the Chief determines that the removal is not detrimental to the water quality, air quality, and health of the forest habitat within the Rainy River Watershed.”

A Biden administrative mineral withdrawal and a Congressional mineral withdrawal would have NO effect on taconite or iron ore mining or on steel production in America.

Stauber’s claim that the area of the proposed Twin Metals mine is “an industrial, working region of the Superior National Forest” is silly. In fact, the South Kawishiwi River and Birch Lake – ground zero for a proposed Twin Metals mine with its toxic activities and a vast surface infrastructure spread out over miles of shoreline area and woods – is an enormously valuable recreational and residential region. It features two heavily used Boundary Waters entry points; two popular Forest Service campgrounds; public boat launches; historic Forest

Service log buildings used by the community; Voyageur Outward Bound School; several acclaimed resorts; outfitters; houseboat rentals; and scores of homes. It is beloved by anglers, boaters, canoeists, hikers, hunters, and berry pickers. What you will not find is an industrial forest.

President Trump signed legislation banning mining on national forest lands in Montana to protect Yellowstone National Park and in Washington to protect the Methow Valley. His administration also banned mining on more than 100,000 acres in Oregon to safeguard critical watersheds. Republicans and Democrats united to ensure that those special places would be free from hardrock mining contamination. Tom Tidwell, U.S. Forest Service Chief in the Trump administration, said a mineral withdrawal in the Boundary Waters headwaters was more important than the three mineral withdrawals described above, and critical to ensuring the health of the canoe country. Stauber’s hostility to the Boundary Waters and to his constituents who fight to preserve the Boundary Waters, the most visited national wilderness in the nation, means he has failed us and the American people. His blind loyalty to a corrupt foreign mining company is wrong for northeastern Minnesota.

Becky Rom Ely

Voters should do their homework on sheriff’s candidates

The August 9 primary election is coming up soon. Voters will decide which of three candidates for St. Louis County Sheriff will move on to the November election. Since voter education is important, I’d like to explore one candidate - Chad Walsh.

The following are relevant definitions and some serious questions voters must ask themselves:

►DOA -- usually means “dead on arrival.” According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “having died

before getting to a hospital, emergency room, etc.”

►Question: Why would an arms dealer running for Sheriff of St. Louis County use a business name that has such terrible connotations? Have you ever had a family member who was “dead on arrival” at an emergency room? Check out Walsh’s business website by searching for “DOA Custom Guns.” Gun rentals are also available by clicking on the “Range” tab on Walsh’s site.

►Three Percenters “The Three Percenter movement is a subset of the larger far-right anti-government militia movement, organized primarily around intense fear and loathing of the U.S. federal government. Although fixated on the federal government, anti-government extremists use coded rhetoric that also expresses anxiety toward historically disenfranchised racial/ethnic/religious minorities.”

►Questions: Why would a candidate for Sheriff use an image from the Three Percenters’ logo in his business logo? Why would someone who identifies with a movement hostile to government want to be elected to a government job?

►Constitutional Sheriff- Under the entry “Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association,” on Wikipedia, this definition states, “Self-described constitutional sheriffs assert that they are the supreme legal authority with the power and duty to defy or disregard laws they regard as unconstitutional.[2][3] The movement is related to previous nullification and interposition notions.[1] and promotes such efforts.[4] It has been described as far-right by the Southern Poverty Law Center.[5]”

►Question: Do we want a sheriff who believes he can decide what laws to enforce and which ones not to enforce? Is it OK for a county sheriff’s authority to supersede that of every other level of government?

Message to voters: Do your homework before you vote. Elections have consequences.

Leah Rogne Gheen

After a century, sports finally rights a wrong

You know you’re getting older when something happens to which your first reaction is, “Well, I never thought I’d live to see the day when ...”

That was exactly my reaction to the news this week that the International Olympic Committee restored the records of first place in the 1912 decathlon and pentathlon



DAVID COLBURN

to one of the greatest athletes of all time, Jim Thorpe. I honestly never expected to see it.

Coupled with his phenomenal Olympic triumphs, his already legendary prowess in collegiate football and his star-quality play in basketball and lacrosse made Thorpe a national hero in 1912. Other athletes of

the day were suddenly measured by comparison to Thorpe. One example was Harvard football player Charles Brickley, who was described in national newspapers as the “Jim Thorpe of the Caucasian race” when he chose to enter the shot put in an AAU track meet in early 1913.

Sportswriters across the country fed the frenzy by speculating about Thorpe’s professional potential at a time when most pro sports were in their infancy. The humble Thorpe nearly quit football because the pressure of

celebrity was so intense in the months following his Olympic victories.

When he returned to his birthplace of Prague, Okla. and his Sac and Fox homelands in December 1912 for some hunting and quiet, national writers speculated about his future as a possible “Rockerfeller among red men” because he might capitalize, they said, on oil field developments there. A wire service article of the day even noted that, “In the interests of science, Thorpe has recently been

undergoing measurements on the theory that his development is physically that of just about the perfect man.” He was evidently perfect enough that at one point he was receiving up to 30 letters a day from women all over the world proposing matrimony, according to another report. Clearly, the public couldn’t get enough of Jim Thorpe in the months following the Olympics.

So the outcry was huge in 1913 when the AAU voided

See CENTURY...pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Are you supporting this disaster?

I subscribe to the *Timberjay* to keep up on the Northland, but the far, far left ideology is beyond comprehension. Going from Trump which was on the Republican ballot, but for the first two years of his presidency they were against him as much as the Dems and that cost them the Senate. And now we have two years under Democrat rule and you still have people supporting this disaster: printing \$\$\$ with NOTHING to back it, prices for EVERYTHING through the roof, NOBODY will to work when you pay them to stay home, mandates that have proven to be a farce, giving China a pass (Hunter, etc.), a Supreme Court Justice that doesn't even know how to explain her gender, TOTALLY open southern border while at the same time people flying in to the USA bending over to get permission to come in, NO respect from other countries, leaving hundreds maybe thousands in Afghanistan along with arming the Taliban, public schools teaching sex (perverted), AND it's been obvious that for years whatever the Dems are accusing the Republicans of is I am not defending the Republicans because they don't stand up against

this garbage like they should. Term limits would have hindered most of this stuff. People hated Trump's tweeting, but at least he did something as opposed to previous Republicans just doing nothing. I could go on and on now that the Dems have exposed most of their dirty laundry, but...

Gary Aubol
Virginia

Editorial on the court was right on

Once again I applaud the *Timberjay* for its editorial in the 7/15 paper entitled 'Umpires No More'. The editorial expresses my own thoughts that I share in this letter, just from a somewhat different perspective. Our two sacred founding documents are the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Our Declaration is cast in stone providing for our moral identity and describing who we are and what our aspirations are as a sovereign country. The document specifically refers to the equality of all men and our inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In contrast our Constitution, providing for methods of achieving these goals, is a working document subject to change in accordance with the will of the people for whom it was drafted and

by whom it was ratified. In reality we have two Constitutions. The first is the written one seemingly favored by the conservative wing of our High Court, particularly when it fits their political inclinations. The second is the unwritten version reflecting more the intent of those who drafted the document plus its understanding by those who ratified it. Recall, the Constitution was drafted in secrecy and distributed to ratifying convention delegates (the people) to be voted on without change. The Federalists were responsible for drafting the Constitution and getting it ratified, including Madison who would later reverse course and join the opposition Republican Party of Jefferson's. The Constitution had no Bill of Rights as drafted because Madison and other Federalists felt the enumeration of all these rights would be too laborious and unduly delay the documents ratification, which was paramount in order to establish a new government with authority to handle the pressing post-war issues of the day. The great compromise with the anti-Federalists was the promise to draft a Bill of Rights for consideration after ratification, which became the first ten amendments – the ninth specifying the list is not exhaustive such that other un-enumerated rights are still retained by the people. The High Court majority now appears to substantially ignore the ninth amendment denying the inherent rights of the people unless specifically enumerated in the Constitution. In the same vein it upholds enumerated rights based on their interpretation of the wording even when opposed by the people. The Constitution, as a working document, is intended to reflect the will of the people but instead now seemingly reflects the will of the High Court instead. Clearly that court holds too much power, especially when it's packed with Jeffersonian state's rights conservatives and libertarians who appear to allow personal religious beliefs to impact their decisions. If so, that stance would be a very un-Jeffersonian one since he spearheaded the separation of church and state. Awarding lifetime judgeships to the High Court is dangerous, particularly when it invites feebleness and senility to invade the court. It's also counter-intuitive and counter-productive in a dynamic society such as ours under a government of the people as opposed to one of the states. In short, whereas our Constitution is subject to revision in accordance with the will of the people as time and circumstances warrant, it appears the High Court majority now

views it as cast in stone, at least when it suits their politics. And whereas our Declaration is intended to be cast in stone lest we lose sight of our identity as a nation, the current High Court majority appears to view that document as being subject to their personal interpretation insofar as equality and liberty are concerned as well as what constitutes the pursuit of happiness. Whose happiness – there's or that of the people? Sadly I don't expect much change in the situation either from the people at large or their representatives in Congress since the High Court majority will probably declare such change unconstitutional. And who can stop them? Their ability to create havoc and mischief is unparalleled in this country when they become both players and umpires having control over the executive and legislative branches of government. In a word, it's unconstitutional.

Jerry Brown
Buyck

We are failing future generations

It is 11:59 p.m. The younger you are, the more worried you need to be. This is not the time to be patient. Recently Senator Manchin again found reasons to single-handed-

ly kill a key climate action bill. Over 200 congressional staffers, most of whom helped craft the bill, and mostly young, sent a letter to senate and house leadership urging that a climate change bill must be passed, now. I have heard candidates for our Minnesota legislature and federal offices comment that addressing climate change will take time. That is not the necessary answer. The time to talk about and seek perfection is over. We need to take immediate and meaningful action, now! I'm afraid my generation is failing you, the youth, the future of our country and world, and my grandchildren. You can no longer tolerate my generation's dithering. You must take action, yourselves! Hold all candidates for climate change accountable. Demand that they acknowledge climate change as the number one, single most important issue, whether at state or federal level, facing our future. At political events ask what their sense of urgency is. If the answer is "It will take time", respond with, "Wrong answer! It must be addressed, and action taken, now! Will you commit to that?".

Keith Steva
Cook

CENTURY...Continued from page 4

Thorpe's amateur status and sent his Olympic medals and trophies back to Sweden because he had earned a small amount of money playing summer baseball. People knew other college athletes played summer baseball for money. Thorpe was held up by most as a true sportsman for readily admitting his baseball participation. The AAU came under heavy fire for its decision, but they held to a strict standard of amateurism, at least in Thorpe's case, and stuck to their guns. His medals and trophies were collected by the AAU and shipped back to Sweden, and the books were wiped clean of any record of his Olympic participation. Thorpe continued to have success and public acclaim in professional baseball and football. However, after retiring from sports, Thorpe had a difficult life, never holding any one job for long. In 1950 he was flat broke and was accepted by a hospital as a charity case for treatment for lip cancer. Thorpe died from a third heart attack in 1953. Nearly 30 years later, it was discovered Thorpe's Olympic titles and medals should never have been taken away. A newly discovered 1912 Olympics rule book explicitly stated

that any challenges to an athlete's amateur status had to be formally filed within 30 days of the competition. The revelation about Thorpe's baseball playing didn't come until six months after the games closed. Neither the AAU nor the Olympic committee had any standing to strip Thorpe of his titles and medals, yet they did so anyway, a move sadly reflective of the many injustices inflicted upon Native Americans throughout history. And Thorpe had personal ties to at least three of those injustices – forced migration, lack of U.S. citizenship, and the Indian boarding school system. Thorpe was a member of the Sac and Fox tribe, but he also had ancestors who were Menominee, Kickapoo, and Potawatomi. Two of his Potawatomi ancestors were part of the Potawatomi Trail of Death, a 600-mile forced relocation of over 800 Potawatomi people from Indiana to Kansas in 1839, during which over 40 people died. Thorpe won his Olympic medals competing for a country that denied him citizenship rights until 1917, when he apparently finally qualified under the Dawes Act of 1887. All Native Americans would

not receive birthright citizenship until 1924. Thorpe gained his sports fame while attending the flagship of Indian boarding schools, Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pa. It was the third such school he attended, after first going to the Sac and Fox school in Oklahoma (founded by the Quakers) and then Haskell Industrial Indian Training School in Lawrence, Kan. Thorpe was sent to Haskell and Carlisle by his father's choice, and ran away at least twice from Haskell. Thorpe arrived at Carlisle as a scrawny lad, about 5'7" and 127 pounds, there for an education, not sports. But his natural athletic ability was quickly discovered and blossomed as he grew bigger, leading to his rise to stardom on the football field and at the Olympics. But what kind of education did he get at the school that was at the foundation of the "kill the Indian, save the man" mantra of the Indian school system? Like so many collegiate athletes since then, was Thorpe ultimately used for Carlisle's benefit without receiving an educational benefit in return? Football was huge at Carlisle. They were recognized nationally for their play and commanded huge sums of money from other colleges who sought to add them to their schedules. After Thorpe turned pro, the program was subject to Congressional investigation in 1914 for financial abuses related to its sports programs, and the superintendent and football coach were dismissed. Disgraced and already on the decline, Carlisle was closed for good in 1918. Perhaps it was Carlisle, perhaps it was Thorpe's own shortcomings, it could have been anything that kept Thorpe from achieving little beyond his athletic success – more than a century after his moments of Olympic glory, it's all pure speculation. But still, I wonder. What's not up for speculation, however, is Thorpe's place in the firmament of the greatest American sports heroes. It never has been. Some argue that proclaiming him today as the sole winner of the 1912 Olympic decathlon and pentathlon competitions is merely an attempt to cleanse the record of an injustice that should never have happened, as it comes seven decades too late to do Jim Thorpe any good. I quite disagree. For thousands upon thousands of people, Native and non-Native alike, the

blemish on Thorpe's storied legacy has now been almost fully removed. After being forced to hand the titles over to the distant second-place finishers in 1913, and after the lame gesture in 1982 when the IOC gave Thorpe's family medals but refused to amend the official historical record to reflect Thorpe's performances, Thorpe has finally gotten a measure of justice. I, for one, am thrilled. It is an act and a moment to be celebrated. And while small and too late for him to appreciate,

ate, there's more to it than simply athletics, or at least there could be. Restoring Thorpe's status could also serve as symbol that it is not too late for present-day America to look closely at its past, recognize the wrongs that have been done to Native Americans, and take steps to acknowledge them and find ways to make amends. That would be a legacy for Thorpe even better than Olympic champion.

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Week of July 26

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 Aug. 10.

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

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

Breitung Town Board- 12 noon on July 28

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

Citywide garage sale set for July 30 in Tower-Soudan
TOWER-SOUDAN- A citywide garage sale in Tower-Soudan is set for Saturday, July 30 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Maps will be available in local stores.

If you'd like to participate, you can join the event on Facebook, send a Facebook message to Starbaby Candles, send your address to pbarnes@protonmail.com, or call/text 218-780-6806.

New exercise class for seniors offered in Tower
TOWER- Living Well Physical Therapy is now offering a weekly “Senior Strength and Balance Class” on Wednesdays from 12 – 12:45 p.m. with instructor Maty Erie. This is a group exercise class designed to improve strength and balance for senior citizens. The class is designed to be safe and fun while being personalized to an individual's needs and abilities. Cost is \$12 per class or \$75 for a 10-class punch card. No reservations are needed. Questions, call 218-481-7603.

The “Strength and Conditioning Class” continues on Tuesdays from 12 – 12:45 p.m. and Thursdays from 5:15-6 p.m. with instructor Wendy Anderson. This class is a fun, high-energy group workout with music. Activities include a variety of upper body, lower body, and core strengthening with cardio. Cost is \$12 per walk-in class or \$75 for a 10-class punch card. No reservations are needed.



Fridays
4-6 PM
at the
Train Depot
in Tower

FINE ARTS

Still time to visit Al Reller's art show in Ely

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

ELY- Al Reller is hoping his old art teacher from Bemidji State University (BSU) was watching.

“I took every art class they offered at BSU,” the Soudan artist said, “but I never did my senior show so I didn’t earn an art major.” Reller did rack up enough credits for majors in theater, history, speech, and English, and went on to teach English, speech, and theater at the high school level until he retired. This show, he said, should secure him another entry on his college diploma, though it is not certain what good that will do for someone who has been retired for quite some number of years.

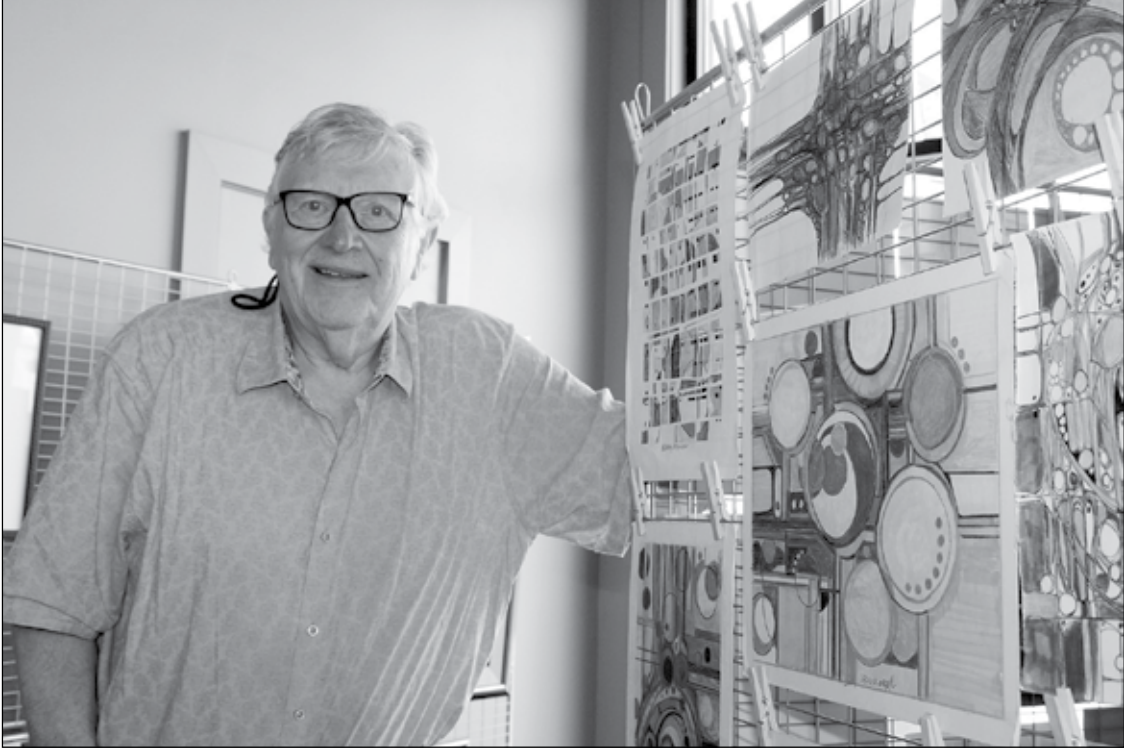
After graduating from high school at Littlefork–Big Falls, Reller went on to college. BSU was his first choice because a student could earn theater credits for performing in summer theater productions at the university’s Paul Bunyan Theater. He was so excited about the chance to do theater that he arrived at college too early for the summer session, and then was sent home until the theater classes actually started, one week later.

“I earned 92 credits in summer stock while at college,” he said (though to be honest, Reller is known to be a little hazy with facts).

Reller said he can’t remember why he decided not to have a senior art show while in college. He speculated that he got mad about something, or at someone, and decided not to show his work.

He was seen as a student with talent in the fine arts, and his professors suggested that he transfer to a school with a greater focus on fine arts.

“I was encouraged to transfer to the Chicago Institute of



Above: Reller shows some of his most recent work. Right: Al is introduced by his wife MaryBeth during the opening reception at the Ely State Theater lobby. photos by J. Summit

Art,” he said, “but it didn’t have a theater department, so I didn’t want to go.”

Reller’s art is on display in the Ely State Theater lobby through July 24. The show is titled “Road to Fosston,” based on an oil pastel drawing of a winding rural road in north central Minnesota, near where he grew up.

Reller said most of the pieces on display have been stashed and stored behind and under furniture at his home in Soudan.

“I was surprised at how much stuff had been tucked behind the sofa,” he said.

The pieces on display showcase his love of color and textures. Earlier pieces include needlework and needlecraft.



“I had bought a kit for my mom,” he said. “She wouldn’t do it, so I did.” Needlepoint was also a great way to wean himself off smoking, he said, since he couldn’t smoke while working on his projects.

While he did a lot of watercolor work in college, Reller said he now enjoys working with oil pastels and colored pencil. He enjoys drawing flowers (he is also

known for his amazing flower gardens), as well as many more abstract geometrical designs.

The show is sponsored by the Northern Lakes Arts Association and hosted by the Ely State Theater. The show is open now through July 24, whenever the theater lobby is open.

COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

Old Settlers raffle prize winners and thank-you

BREITUNG TWP- There were plenty of raffle prizes awarded, along with plenty of booyah, at last Saturday’s Vermilion Range Old Settlers Picnic. Winners of raffle prizes included:

Bob’s Standard gift certificate- Louise Gately

Vermilion Shear Image gift certificate for haircut- Mark Hoppa

Vermilion Golden Rule Lumber gift certificate- Jessi Moryn

Fortune Bay gift certificate for one-night stay- Kassie Hall

Soudan Store ice cream cone gift cards- Oldest guest Marge Zupancich; youngest guest Colton Lind; traveled-farthest Bob Peterson of Mesa, Ariz.; Paul Pishler; Judy Pishler; James Palo; Katherine Carlson; Richard Kitto; Robert Peterson; Dianna Sundahl

Harbor View Wellness Spa and Boutique \$10 gift certificate and a bag- Nancy Aho

Zups Grocery \$25gift cards and cooler with North-Wind Ice- Terry Tekautz

Zup’s Grocery \$25 gift card- JoAnn Peterson

Timberjay Lake Vermilion Book and gift subscription - Al Fredrickson

Pike River Products beautiful large canvas



and leather bag - Amy Chiabotti-Santelli

The Little Green Pantry Gift Basket- Wendy Savage

Ricks Relics adult gift basket- Tim Lind

Ricks Relics children’s gift basket- Cecelia Majerle

Tower Farmers Market gift basket with produce, gifts, and Bear Creek Acres gift certificate- Bernie Pelstring

Bruce Carlson 20 lb. cylinder of gas- John Milbridge

D’Ericks Liquor Store nine bottles of wine paired with Karl’s Bread and tea towels- Nancy Sundvick, Stephanie Ukkola, Krista Smith, Eunice Korpi, Frankie Planton Jr., Lee Marjerle, Jessi Moryn, Denny Greben, last bottle no name recorded



Nordic Home North color-changing mugs- Dave Lind, Joan Arborgast

Robin Majerle Norwex gifts- Laurie Anderson, Christine Torma, Karl Jonas

Anonymous Donor/ hunting knives- Cheryl McCarthy

Anonymous/rake: Lee Majerle

Anonymous/Vintage lawn chair: Amy Hinkel

Ubetcha Antiques & Uniques sign- Steve Tekautz

Ubetcha Word search book- Gary Torma

Ubetcha Mug with crossword book and gifts- Paula Housenga, Rolf Anderson

Ubetcha t-shirts with puzzle books- Beans Sundahl, Judy Sundahl, Melanie Mesojedec, Zia

Marge Zupancich was the oldest settler and Colton Lind was the youngest. Longtime Old Settlers Committee secretary/treasurer was honored for her service. James Hinkel picked out some bread to go with his booyah.
photos by J. Summit



Young from different families each won a bag), Harper Olson , Raven Rettke, Camdyn Olson

Children’s t-shirts- Sierra LeTourneau, Faith Mesojedec

Thank you
The Old Settlers Committee would like to thank the Embarrass Vermillion Federal Credit Union for the many reusable grocery bags used for gifts. Also, a huge thank you to all who donated prizes: Bob’s Standard, Vermilion Shear Image, Vermilion Lumber, Fortune Bay Resort Casino, Soudan Store, Zup’s Grocery, Northwind Ice, The Timberjay, Pike River Products, Little Green Pantry, Harbor View Health and Wellness, Rick’s Relics, Tower Farmers Market, Bruce Carlson/LP, D’Erick’s Tower Liquors, Karl’s Bread, Nordic Home North, Robin Majerle Norex, Ubetcha Antiques and Uniques, and those who donated gifts anonymously. And of course, thanks to all those who came to partake with us and made our day such a success.

Jonas, Sarah Flores, Vi Hildebrand , Jessica Lenci, Laura Majerle, Ari Picard, Robin Majerle, Lori Tomsich

Ubetcha Canvas Bag with travel mug and gifts- Cathy Wright, Frank Savage

Ubetcha shot glass with snow globe- Dena Suikonen

Ubetcha shot glass with Sasquatch - Dave Desannoy

Ubetcha sign and gifts- Tucker Majerle, Dan Mutka

Ubetcha gnome - Jerry Ruml

Gift bags- Kaela Mesojedec, Jessie Hinkel, Claire Jonas

Ubetcha’s Childrens bags- Odin Picard , Blake Mesojedec, Mark Rettke, Owen Ruml, Jack Young, Jack Young (remarkably there were two children named Jack

ELY SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT



Residents around the Ely school campus continue to endure rock blasting booms and ground shakes this week as the \$21.5 million facility building and renovation project sprints toward a Labor Day completion date. Ledge rock is being removed by dynamite to install underground water and sewer lines on the campus. photo by K. Vandervort

ELY FOLK SCHOOL

Hammer and tongs

Blacksmith class focuses on garden tools

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – Aspiring forgers experienced the transformative process of heating rigid metal to a bright glow and shaping it into useful garden tools last weekend at the Ely Folk School. The class was conducted by a master blacksmith artist from Duluth.

Paul Webster holds a Masters in experiential education and a Bachelor’s in English. He has taught 18 years in high school classrooms and was a light industrial trainer for 15 years. He is a founder of Forging Community, a blacksmithing school in Duluth, started in 2012.

He has been forging since 1988 and worked as the blacksmith for the Duluth Pack Store and the Frost River Trading Company doing classes and demonstrations. He has taught many community education classes and runs a limited apprenticeship program from his home forge, Greenfire.

He demonstrated common

forging techniques for making such tools as a trowel, fork, cultivator, or cooking utensil. “I focus on learning or reviewing the basics of forge management and safety,” he said.

This class was accessible to any level of skill. Whether you are ready to make your own pair of tongs or you are a beginner and eager to start learning with a brat fork, Webster caters to the class. Students went home with their new, homemade tools.

Students were required to wear rugged, non-synthetic clothing and tough boots. The Folk School provided aprons, gloves, safety glasses and earplugs.

Students also learned to use more advanced tools and techniques like drifting, riveting, basic grinding and tempering. “You can work with steels of various sizes and carbon content to make useful hardware that will last for generations,” Webster said.

For more information on classes at the Ely Folk School, go to www.elyfolkschool.org.



Paul Webster, a veteran blacksmith artist, high school teacher, and founder of the Forging Community in Duluth, was at the Ely Folk School last weekend teaching students the fine art of heating metal and shaping it into useful tools for around the garden or home. For more information on EFS classes, go to www.elyfolkschool.org. photo by K. Vandervort

Ely Police Department Activity July 1-15, 2022

Arrests/Citations

Hit and Run- Officers issued a citation for Driving after Revocation and no insurance.

Domestic Assault- Individual arrested for Domestic Assault and interfering with a 911 call.

Traffic Stop- Individual issued a citation for Driving after Cancellation and no insurance.

Complaints

Threats- Officers took a report of threats. This case was sent for charging consideration.

Animal Disturbance- Officers were contacted about a dog at the vet. Officers assisted with the process to get the dog released.

Child Neglect- Officers were contacted about a child being left at the park without supervision. Officers were unable to locate the child.

Crash- Officers responded to a two-vehicle crash with minor damage and no injuries.

Trouble Neighbor- Officers were contacted about loud music and construction equipment running. Officers educated the individual of local

ordinances related to construction.

Suspicious Activity- Officers were called about someone in the woods near a residence. Officers located the person and determined it to be a friend clearing brush.

Check Welfare- Officers were requested to check on an individual that may have been abused. Officers determined the person to be safe and in good health.

Public Assist- Individual let back into their residence.

Security Alarm- Officers responded to a security alarm and determined an employee set off the alarm.

Crash- Officers responded to a two-vehicle crash with minor damage and no injuries.

Medical- Officers assisted the Ely Ambulance with a medical.

Disturbance- Officers responded to a verbal argument between two people. Officers mediated the situation.

Open Door- Officers located an open door at a business. Officers were unable to locate anyone inside.

Public Assist- Individual applied for a

permit to purchase.

Information- Officers were informed about recreational vehicles driving at a high rate of speed around town.

Public Assist- Officers assisted a person get their items out of a residence.

Mental Health- Officers were contacted by a person experiencing a mental health crisis. Officers assisted with getting the individual to the hospital.

Found Property- Officers located found property. The property was returned to the owner.

Found Property- Officers located found property. The property is pending owner identification.

Paper Service- Officers served paperwork for a potentially dangerous dog.

Extra Patrol- Officers were requested for extra patrol.

Public Assist- Officers assisted an individual get fingerprints for employment.

Disturbance- Officers were called about a group of people arguing about use of a tennis court. The situation was resolved before officers arrived.

Crash- Officers responded to a two-vehicle crash with minor damage and no injuries.

Mental Health- Officers were contacted by a person experiencing a mental health crisis. Officers assisted the individual get to the hospital.

Animal Disturbance- Officers were called about a dog that got out of a vehicle. The owner was contacted and the dog was returned to the vehicle.

Unwanted Person- Officers were called about someone not wanting to leave a business. The individual agreed to leave when officers arrived.

Medical- Officers assisted the Ely Ambulance with a medical.

Water Emergency- Officers took a report of a canoe that was flipped over. Officers arrived and everyone had made it safely back to shore.

Animal Disturbance- Officers responded to a report of a deer that broke through a door and was inside of a house. The deer was located in the house deceased.

Public Assist- Individual let back into their residence.

Damage to Property- Officers were called

about damage to property around a residence. This case is under investigation.

Open Door- Officers located an open door at a business. Officers were unable to locate anyone inside.

Medical- Officers assisted the Ely Ambulance with a medical.

Disturbance- Officers responded to a verbal argument between two people. Officers mediated the situation.

Public Assist- Individual applied for a permit to purchase.

Attempt to Locate- Officers were called about a vehicle that had a child inside not properly strapped in. Officers were unable to locate the vehicle.

Assist Other Agency- Officers assisted a neighboring agency with a Domestic Assault.

Public Assist- Officers assisted an individual get fingerprints for employment.

Damage to Property- Officers were called about damage to property around a residence. This case is under investigation.

In Brief

Tuesday Group schedule

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:

- July 26: Meet New Elyites.
- Aug. 2: Northern Nights, Starry Skies: Preview of a PBS documentary.
- Aug. 9: Running for the Boundary Waters with Alex Falconer.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2022



a very big wind takes control over the night

scary sideways move

Libraries

Ely library

Hours: Monday — Friday, 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Closed on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays Phone: 218-365-5140

Babbitt library

Monday	10 am-6 pm
Tuesday	10 am-6 pm
Wednesday	10 am-6 pm
Thursday	10 am-6 pm
Friday	10 am-6 pm

Phone: 218-827-3345

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous
OPEN AA - 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely.
SUNDAY NIGHT AA - at St. Anthony’s Catholic Church is canceled.
ELY WOMEN’S OPEN AA - Every Monday at noon at Ledgerock Church, 1515 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, 5:30 p.m. Thursdays, Wellbeing Development, 41 E Camp St, 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

Cook Hospital celebrates \$1 million raised by Auxiliary

COOK- Few places have ever capitalized on the old maxim “One nan’s trash is another nan’s treasure” like the Cook Area Healthcare Auxiliary Thrift Shop.

Cast-off treasures have been snapped up by men, women, and children since the shop opened in 1954, and the nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollars have surely added up over the years to benefit the community through the Auxiliary’s ongoing donations to Cook Hospital and Care Center. The Healthcare Auxiliary’s main purpose is to promote and advance the welfare of the hospital and care center through approved fundraising activities, and the primary fundraising outreach is the operation of the Thrift Shop. The money donated goes directly toward the purchase of needed items for the hospital. For example, in 2020 they donated \$70,000 towards the purchase of new hospital beds.

This year the total amount raised by the Healthcare Auxiliary topped a whopper of a milestone, one million, a feat that was celebrated at the Auxiliary Appreciation Lunch in late June.

“Community support like this is the reason the hospital has survived. The dedication of the Thrift Shop volunteers is truly astounding. We are so grateful for their commitment to supporting us,” said Cook Hospital CEO Teresa Debevec.

What makes achieving the million-dollar milestone all the more remarkable is that the Thrift Shop is open only limited days of the week.

The shop, operating in its current location at 320 3rd St. SE since 2004, is on its summer schedule right now, Thursdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Healthcare Auxiliary and the operation of the Thrift Shop have showcased the Cook community’s willingness to help others. The store has been able to support both the hospital and also help community members in need.

Cook Area Healthcare Auxiliary President Kirsten Reichel said, “The Thrift Shop has been a mainstay of the community for many years and continues to thrive because of the great team of volunteers who have spent countless hours sorting, cleaning, arranging and



Attendees at the Cook Area Healthcare Auxiliary appreciation luncheon celebrated donations of over \$1 million to Cook Hospital and Care Center.
submitted photo

giving their all to create a great shopping experience for the many customers who come through our door. Support from local communities has also been key, with the seemingly never-ending supply of donated items that are brought to the Thrift Shop year-round.”

The Healthcare Auxiliary is able to continue its donations and help enhance the medical system in the Cook area through the support of local area residents.

HAPPY TRAILS

After nearly four decades, Cook forest tech calls it a career

Bergstrom leaves behind a legacy of hard work, laughs, and integrity

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- From a casual listen in at the July 9 retirement party for Department of Natural Resources Forestry Technician Terry Bergstrom, of Cook, one might have wondered if it will take him awhile to get the hang of the whole retirement thing.

“I’ll probably still do something on the side,” Bergstrom said. “We’ve got a few options. A couple of helicopter companies have been talking to me so I might work with them. Or we might come in and work part time for the DNR.”

However, if he needs a little help, he need only to look to his wife of 34 years, Joani, to set him on the right path.

“The grandkids, of course, are the best ‘to do’ coming up,” she said. “And hopefully we can get in some good long fishing trips.”

And of course, there’s always that “honey-do” list to consider.

“It’s enormous,” Terry laughed.

The party late Saturday afternoon at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade building marked the end of 39 years of Bergstrom

working for the DNR, the last 32 of those in Cook.

“Right out of school I got hired on for a hotshot crew and got into firefighting, and I’ve been doing it ever since,” Bergstrom said. “I got the first seven years on the hotshot crew and in the last 32 years, I’ve been here in Cook and working with helicopters is one of my main jobs and I do a lot of timber cruising in the wintertime. But in the summer, it’s mostly firefighting and helicopters. I’m also a Type 4 incident commander.”

Bergstrom noted that he’s seen a few changes in firefighting over the years.

“Where we used to put out fires with a pump can, now you’re doing a lot more aerial,” he said. “Where you carried a bladder bag, now I’m carrying a little computer with me. There’s a lot more people geared to computers than doing hard physical work. That’s just the computer age. That’s kind of part of the reason I’m retiring. I used to spend all my time off in the woods and now I spend over half the time behind a desk on the computer.”

Dana Frame supervised Bergstrom when he was at the forestry division office in Tower, and



Terry and Joani Bergstrom pose in front of the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade fire boat during Terry’s retirement celebration at the fire brigade building on July 9. Bergstrom has been with the DNR for 39 years, 32 of them in Cook.

photo by D. Colburn

recently retired himself. Frame had nothing but praise for his former colleague.

“We had a lot in common, fishing and things like that,” Frame said. “He was a good worker, didn’t give me any problems.”

But when pressed, Frame changed his answer slightly.

“Well, very minimal problems,” he laughed.

supervisor, and although he only supervised Bergstrom for a few years, his words were filled with nothing but praise.

“Terry’s been great. When you have someone like him who’s familiar with the area, who knows the work and everything there is to do, he was able to kind of show me the area and make sure that things ran smoothly during that transition,” Feldt said. “You never have to worry about a guy like Terry, and he sets an example for all the other people, too. He helped out a lot of private landowners around the area with their lands, and he did a lot of outreach, events and parades and at the schools. It’s a huge loss. I’m happy for him, he’s earned it, but I’m sad at the same time.”

Regardless of how Bergstrom spends his time, and he, too, is looking forward to spoiling those grandkids, it’s going to be a big change from a career that had him on-call a large part of the time. Bergstrom said he’s grateful for all the support he’s received from Joani over the years.

“She’s had to put up with a lot of nights that I’m gone or listening to

the radio. She’s been a real trooper on that part.”

“We deserve a lot of credit,” laughed Joani. “No, I’m kidding. But it has been a whole family affair. When you’re on call you can’t do much, so you just have to rearrange your life. The family stuff, we just had to wait, and we made it up when he came home. It was good.”

More than 100 family members, friends, and colleagues who came from near and far took the obligatory break during the retirement meal for a round of plaque presentations and comments, followed by an impromptu string of commenters with stories to tell about Bergstrom. Some were inspirational, some were funny, but one got the feeling that some of the best stories were left untold, acknowledged only by a smile, a shrug of the shoulders, and brotherly silence.

“The people have been just awesome to work with,” Bergstrom said. “One thing I like in DNR is that most of these guys will bend over backwards to do anything for you. It’s been good camaraderie.”

Pickup Truck Opera to perform Aug. 4 in Cook

COOK- Cook’s Country Connection will host the first area performance of “Pickup Truck Opera Volume Two: The Magic Flute” on Thursday, Aug. 4 at 7 p.m.

Produced by Mixed Precipitation, the performance features singers, puppeteers, and instrumentalists in a futuristic reimagining of the classic Mozart opera.

“We’ll use the myths of Freemasonry and the Enlightenment to look at the conflicts of our time with joy and hopefulness,” said artistic director Scotty Reynolds.

The Pickup Truck Opera continues Mixed Precipitation’s 14-year tradition of outdoor theater extravaganzas, touring Minnesota communities in the late summer.

Check the Mixed Precipitation website, mixed-precipitation.org, and social media for possible weather days and information about other area

performances in Tower, Ely, and Embarrass.

Summer reading event in park to be held on July 28

COOK- Bring your blankets to the Cook City Park and listen to Smokey Bear at noon on Thursday, July 28. Staff from the U.S. Forest Service will give a short fire ecology presentation and read the Smokey Bear Story.

Everyone is invited to stay for reading, games and snacks.

Cook Public Library reminds all of our summer readers to bring their book logs into the library any time in August to receive a prize. There’s still plenty of time to read!

Disc golf tourney at Nett Lake to feature language

NETT LAKE- A 12-team, two-person disc golf scramble at Nett Lake at 5 p.m. Wednesday, July 27 will feature a novel twist. All hole names and scores must be spoken in Ojib-

wemowin.

Gift cards will be awarded for first and second place, and water and food will be provided. For more information, including a list of vocabulary words, go to the KBFT 89.9 FM Bois Forte Tribal Community Radio page on Facebook.

The Hutter Bunch to play park series this Wednesday

COOK- The Hutter Bunch, a group of local musicians who delighted northeast Minnesota audiences for years, will be featured at Music in the Park in Cook next Wednesday, July 27 from 6 - 8 p.m. at the park gazebo on River St.

Bring a lawn chair or sit in your car to hear this large diverse group of talented Iron Range musicians. Enjoy St. Paul’s (Alango) Lutheran Church refreshment stand selling burgers, brats and hot dogs. In case of rain, the concert will move to the Cook VFW.

Music in the Park

is made possible by the Cook Lions Club, Cook VFW Post 1757, VFW Post 1757 Auxiliary, Northwoods Friends of the Arts, and free-will community donations.

Church to serve summer favorite for monthly meal

COOK- Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook will be serving its monthly community meal on Thursday, July 28 from 4 - 6 p.m. The menu will be Sloppy Joe’s, corn on the cob, chips and dessert. The free meal will be drive-thru and open to the public.

NWFA offers early August classes

COOK- Northwoods Friends of the Arts is rolling into August with a full slate of free and affordable Curious and Creative art classes for young and old alike.

Free classes include:

Let’s Try Watercolor Kids!
Tuesday, Aug. 2, 10

a.m. to noon. Experimenting with watercolor for beginners. Lyn Reed, instructor.

Making Whistle Music with Clay

Thurs., Aug. 4 and Aug. 11, 10 a.m. to noon. A two-day class in which you sculpt a form to make a whistle with clay and glaze the whistle the second class. Lyn Reed, instructor.

Lino Print - Carve a Block in a Design

Saturday, Aug. 6, 9 a.m. to noon. Artist Lyn Reed, instructor. \$10 NWFA Members, \$20 non-members. \$5 material fee to instructor.

There are three ways you can register:

- Stop at the NWFA Gallery from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. The gallery phone is 218-780-7130.
- Call Alberta at 218 666-2153.
- Email nwfamn.org@gmail.com.

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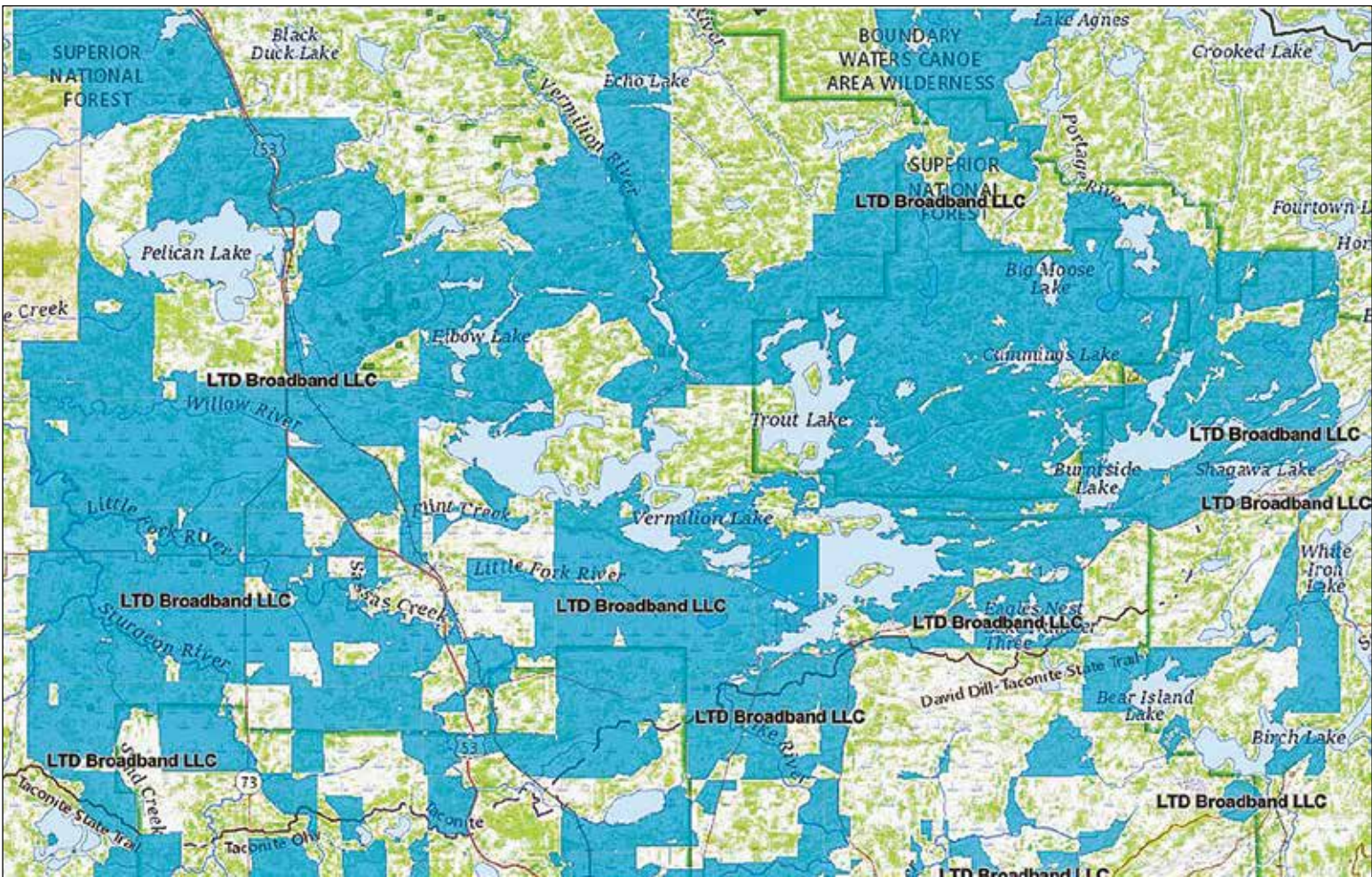
LTD...Continued from page 1

Winning bidders had two major tasks to complete before the dollars started to flow. First, they had secure designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC), a designation LTD received from the PUC last year. They also had to complete a more extensive long-form application, far more detailed and extensive than the ones submitted to qualify for the auction, which the FCC must approve for companies to receive the funds they were awarded. More than 18 months have passed since the auction, and LTD and four others of the top 10 largest RDOF winners have yet to have their long-form applications approved.

Meanwhile, LTD was denied ETC designations in California, Kansas and Oklahoma because of late filings last summer, and the FCC denied their appeal and decertified their eligibility to serve those locations. The Iowa Utilities Board dealt LTD another blow when it denied granting the ETC status for procedural flaws and inconsistent and delinquent compliance for its obligations relative to other service it provides in the state.

LTD’s problems and the delay in the FCC’s long-form application process have some industry insiders questioning if LTD and several other top-bidders will ever get final FCC approval and the money that comes with it, according to the online telecom publication *Telecompetitor*.

In a July 8 article, *Telecompetitor* quoted New Street Research Policy Analyst Blair Levin, saying, “The FCC appears to have very significant questions. It’s not that they lied or misrepresented themselves. But the commission doesn’t appear to have confidence that those enterprises will do what they said they would



LTD’s winning bid for providing broadband coverage in northern St. Louis County includes the areas shaded in blue.

do.” While working at the FCC, Levin led the team that wrote the National Broadband Plan.

Rather than reject LTD’s application outright, it’s possible the FCC could sit on it indefinitely, according to Fiber Broadband Association CEO Gary LTD’s winning bid gave Bolton, also quoted by *Telecompetitor*.

“The FCC has no statutory obligation to approve long-form applications,” Bolton said.

Minnesota action

Last week’s hearing of the PUC was prompted by a petition filed in May by Minnesota Telecom Alliance and the Minnesota Rural Electric Association that asserted LTD should lose its ETC designation because of numerous concerns that have come to light since that approval

was granted last year. They contended that LTD would waste taxpayer time and money, as the company has little experience with fiber-based broadband, and that holding onto the ETC designation would block local governments and other telecom providers from obtaining funding for subsidized fiber projects.

“Our petition, and the other folks who have appeared here as well, have laid out a number of facts and information that have come to light since your decision a year ago, which we believe gives you cause to initiate a proceeding to look more deeply and determine whether in fact [LTD] can meet those commitments,” said Dan Lipschultz, an attorney representing the trade groups. Lipschultz is a former PUC commissioner, serving

from 2014 to 2020.

But Andrew Carlson, an attorney representing LTD, was emphatic that the company’s performance relative to Minnesota has been problem-free, and that the company has already started building out its fiber optic network here despite having received no federal money yet.

“There is nothing about LTD’s performance as an ETC in Minnesota that has been called into question,” Carlson said. “Last year, the commission found that designating LTD as an ETC would be good public policy because it would allow \$311 million in federal funding to come to Minnesota. He said rescinding the company’s ETC designation would jeopardize those federal funds.

Carlson also argued

that the PUC would be setting a bad precedent if it decided to open a proceeding to review LTD’s designation as an ETC, as similar complaints against other companies could be filed by their competitors in an effort to reopen the broadband market for their benefit.

The Minnesota Association of Townships and four counties that would host LTD projects also filed written briefs in support of opening an investigation that could lead to the PUC revoking LTD’s ETC designation. A broadband consultant for LeSeuer County noted that the county has been passed over for funding through the state’s Border-to-Border Broadband funding because of LTD’s lock on some of the tracts they wanted to develop.

Assistant attorney general Kristin Berkland also supported moving ahead with an investigation.

“I don’t want Minnesota consumers to think they will get the benefit of \$311.8 million and then not actually see the benefit of that money,” she said.

In the end, the decision of commissioners to move ahead with a contested case hearing before an administrative law judge was unanimous.

“It’s in the public interest to at least begin to consider and initiate a proceeding about whether we should revoke LTD Broadband’s expanded ETC designation,” said MPUC Chair Katie Sieben.

The process is expected to take at least until the end of the year.

BUDGET...Continued from page 1

for 2022, Smith said. He is preparing a summary of recommended transfers from the Airport, Economic Development Authority and General funds to the Capital Projects Fund to cover the deficit.

The city fuel budget for 2022 alone is estimated to be more than \$28,000, or 32 percent, over the budgeted amount of \$88,400.

“As many of you are aware, we have a fund balance policy on assigned balances set at 50 percent to ensure that we don’t have to do tax anticipation bonding, like we’ve done a decade and a half ago,” said Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski. “With the fund

balance transfers due to capital projects, our goal is to always be above our fund balance policy. We will make slight adjustments in the next month.”

Recently, unanticipated expenditures for the city included \$150,000 toward the Ely Ambulance Service property purchase and \$25,000 to get a recently purchased used pumper truck for the Ely Fire Department ready to use. On the Budget Committee’s recommendation, the council also approved spending more than \$7,500 for a desk and office furniture for the Ely Police Department.

“And then the new Trailhead

Building project will add another one or two percent to our levy,” Kess added.

The budget calendar calls for department heads to submit budget worksheets to the treasurer by Aug. 8. The Budget Committee hopes to present a preliminary 2023 budget by Aug. 15. Reviewing requested budgets and setting spending targets for next year should be done by Sept. 19. Council members plan to conduct a study session on Oct. 25 to discuss the proposed budget for next year. The Truth in Taxation public hearing is scheduled Dec. 6.

Other business

In other business, the

council:

- Approved a recommendation from the Budget Committee to deny the distribution of federal American Rescue Plan funds to the Boundary Waters Care Center because the request did not meet the guidelines.
- Approved condition-

al employment offers to Daniel Mooers and Ryan Mahoney for the open patrolman positions on the Ely Police Department, pending background checks and psychological evaluations. Chief Chad Houde said he anticipates the new hires to start by early October.

- Approved a recommendation from the Airport Committee for a quote from Carlson Co. for a maintenance building heating system for \$14,190.

➤ Approved an in-kind request from the Chamber of Commerce for the 2022 Blueberry/Art Festival.

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SULFIDE MINING

BWCAW protection bill advances in House

Legislation by Rep. McCollum would expand the mining buffer zone

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — Legislation that would significantly expand the mining protection zone around the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness was referred to the full U.S. House by a party line committee vote on Wednesday.

The legislation, authored by Minnesota Fourth District Rep. Betty McCollum, would prohibit sulfide-based mining on federal lands within an area of approximately 225,000 acres of the Superior National Forest, located within the upper reaches of the Rainy River watershed.

The vote, which came after more than seven hours of testimony and debate on the bill as well as a slew of poison pill amend-

ments by Eighth District Congressman Pete Stauber, now sends the measure to a House floor vote to be held sometime later this year.

The votes in the House Committee on Natural Resources were contentious and the debate was heated at times as Republican members of the committee, including Stauber, argued in favor of the jobs that the proposed Twin Metals copper-nickel mine could create were it to move forward and accused the majority Democrats on the committee of engaging in “a war on Minnesota mining” that threatened the country’s access to domestic minerals and eliminated high-paying jobs for rural residents.

Stauber said the bill “directly threatens our mining industry, our union workforce, and our communities’ livelihoods.”

Stauber, who has used misleading arguments on this issue in the past, again claimed that McCollum’s bill would enact a “de facto ban on taconite mining,” a claim that is at odds with the geological realities of the area affected by the measure.

McCollum denied the charge. In fact, none of the federal lands included in McCollum’s mining buffer zone expansion includes any known economically significant reserves of taconite and neither McCollum’s bill nor a proposed 20-year moratorium on new mineral leasing in the same area, would impact any existing or new taconite mines that might be proposed in the foreseeable future.

The *Timberjay* questioned Stauber’s office on the apparent discrepancy between the congressman’s

rhetoric and the known geology of the area subject to the bill, but Stauber’s office did not respond.

Democrats on the panel, meanwhile, argued that the failed record of sulfide-based mining across the country, combined with the water-rich geology of northeastern Minnesota, all but guaranteed that the Twin Metals mine would pollute downstream waters. That includes portions of the 1.1 million-acre BWCAW, which is well-known to hold some of the nation’s purest surface waters and has helped generate a sizable local economy based on outdoor recreation. Opponents of the Twin Metals mine, many of whom own and operate local businesses that cater to wilderness visitors, have argued that their livelihoods are threatened by the prospect of a mining

operation located upstream of the wilderness.

Committee chair, Democrat Rep. Raul Grijalva of New Mexico, argued that the legislation was about balancing values and interests. “This isn’t about miners. It’s about a mining industry that has an inordinate amount of power,” he said. He added that, too often, the interests of the mining industry win out over broader national concerns, like environmental protection, but that should not be allowed to happen when it comes to the Boundary Waters.

The U.S. Forest Service has sought a 20-year mineral leasing moratorium on the same lands, citing concerns about the potential environmental impacts to the BWCAW. The Biden administration recently canceled two expired mineral leases in

the same area, both of which were held most recently by Twin Metals, which had proposed to construct an underground copper-nickel mine and processing facility about eight miles south of Ely. That project is now on hold pending the outcome of a legal challenge to the Biden administration’s decision on the leases.

McCollum said the Forest Service’s concerns about the project were documented in a two-year study that the agency was close to completing when it was halted by the Trump administration.

She held aloft a copy of the study, which was fully redacted by the administration before its release. “The Trump administration made a craven political decision to mine at any cost,” she said.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Ely native to UM Board of Regents

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

REGIONAL - Tadd Johnson, from Ely, was appointed to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents last week. He is the first Native American to be appointed to the Board since it was established more than 170 years ago.

Johnson, 65, a member of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa now lives in Duluth. He retired last month as the University of Minnesota’s first senior director of American Indian Tribal Nations relations, a job that he said came about in 2019 when he complained to new President Joan Gabel that the University needed to do more to consult with tribes.

He’s also a former professor, tribal attorney and tribal court judge. He still serves as senior advisor on government affairs for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

Johnson will represent the 8th Congressional District on the Board. He

replaces David McMillan, who resigned to be interim chancellor at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

“My passions are giving a voice that hasn’t been heard from before, and making sure that the 8th District and the University of Minnesota Duluth are well represented on this board,” Johnson said.

Johnson said the University of Minnesota has lagged behind other universities in teaching about tribal issues at its law, public policy and business schools. He said it’s also important for Native Americans to be represented on the governing board of a University that was built with funds generated from land taken from Native people.

“There’s an old saying, if you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu,” Johnson said. “For many, many years we were on the menu, as the Board of Regents and other universities were using Indian land to build their endowments. It’s an honor to be finally

sitting at the table.”

Johnson said he’ll likely seek an appointment to a full six-year term when this term expires next February.

“I am proud to appoint Regent Tadd Johnson – the first Native person ever appointed to this board,” said Governor Tim Walz in announcing the appointment. “With a background in leadership, education, and deep understanding of government on all levels, he brings a wealth of higher education expertise to this group.”

“Regent Tadd Johnson will give a voice to the many Native students who have been underrepresented for too long,” said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. “This historic appointment is made possible by the continued advocacy from tribes, community members, and leaders across the state to see representation at every level. As a University of Minnesota alum, I couldn’t be more proud of this appointment.”

Football coach named at VCC

ELY – A change in leadership is coming this fall for the Minnesota North College, Vermilion Campus football program, as Richard Brooks was recently named head coach.

Coach Brooks returns to Vermilion where he coached on the 2008 Conference Champion/State Runner Up Ironmen Football team.

Coach Brooks holds a Master of Education in counseling from Prairie View A&M University.

Brooks brings more than 25 years of defensive and special teams football coaching and recruiting experience to Vermilion, including coaching positions at Alabama State University, Bethune Cookman University, Alabama A&M University, Mississippi Valley State University, Alcorn State University, Tuskegee University, Coahoma Community College, and Texas Southern University.

He said he is excited to return to Vermilion and provide leadership to students in pursuit of their academic and athletic goals.

“My philosophy is that academic achievement and character development are the first priorities, followed



Richard Brooks

by a winning record,” he said. “Students who play for me learn the game, the value of a quality education, and how to be respectful, ethical, and moral young people.”

He continued, “I am able to coach and relate to diverse young people across all spectrums. I am a coach who is about the betterment of young people to help them become responsible, productive members of our society.”

For those interested in playing football for Minnesota North Vermilion Campus follow this link <https://www.vcc.edu/athletics/recruit-me>.

MNC-V football starts Aug. 15. The season opener will be Sept. 3 at Ely Memorial High School Stadium.

BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

Town board updated on summer projects

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

SOUDAN - The Breitung Town Board got an update on summer projects, along with some preliminary discussion of projects needed in 2023, at a special meeting on July 14.

Chairman Tim Tomsich talked about possible funding sources to include a wider shoulder on the about-to-be reconstructed Stuntz Bay Rd., which is a popular walking path. While the DNR is covering the cost

of the road project itself, the funding will not cover wider shoulders. But because the road passes through former mine land, it might qualify for a grant from the mine land reclamation program overseen by the IRRR. The township is also hoping that program would help pay for some of the engineering costs on the project, which are not being covered by the DNR, and are estimated to be around \$51,000.

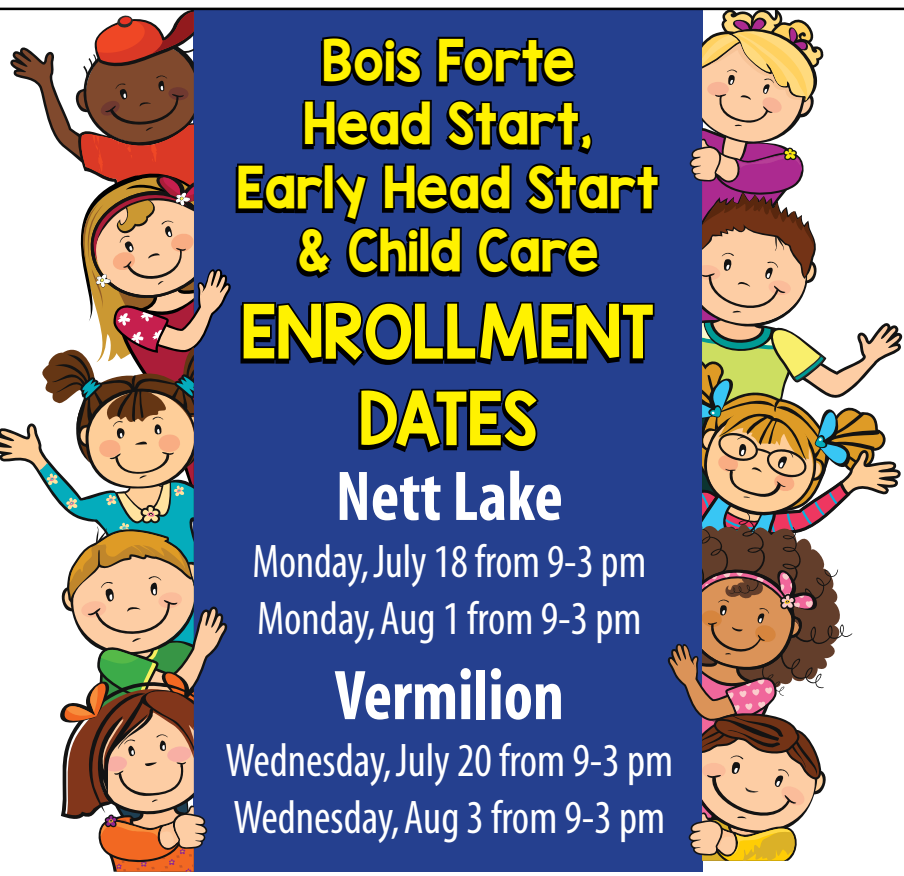
The township is not ready to make a decision on how to replace the two light poles at

the hockey rink that fell during the June storm. The township insurance policy will not cover the replacement cost, Maintenance Supervisor Tom Gorsma told the board. The board will see if there is grant funding available from a St. Louis County recreation funding program. The township also expressed concern that the other light poles at the rink may be at risk.

Gorsma told the board the new township dump truck will be delivered soon. The board passed a motion to ask for bids on the old truck, with a minimum bid of \$32,000. Bids will be opened at a special meeting on Aug. 11.

The board approved about \$8,000 of repairs on the township’s grader, which includes purchase of two new front tires and front end and axle repair work. The board also approved the hiring of election judges for the August primary and November general election.

The board’s next regular meeting is Thursday, July 28 at noon.



Bois Forte Head Start, Early Head Start & Child Care ENROLLMENT DATES Nett Lake

Monday, July 18 from 9-3 pm
Monday, Aug 1 from 9-3 pm

Vermilion

Wednesday, July 20 from 9-3 pm
Wednesday, Aug 3 from 9-3 pm

For a pre-enrollment form, please contact Christine Lundemo or Vondalee Carr at (218) 757-3261, opt. 3

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RATES...Continued from page 1

Bay, which are served by Minnesota Power. It would not affect ratepayers in the city of Ely, which purchases electrical service from Minnesota Power under a separate contract.

In assessing a rate increase request, DOC officials stated that the PUC is supposed to use a two-part test that balances the interests of ratepayers for adequate, efficient, and reasonable service, with the company's need for sufficient revenue to meet its cost of service.

As the DOC points out, the burden of proof lies with the company requesting a rate adjustment.

In the case of Minnesota Power's latest request, the DOC found that the evidence the company provided failed to make the case.

Minnesota Power has argued that the rate increase is needed to offset higher costs associated with the company's transition to renewable sources of energy as part of its EnergyForward initiative. During a hearing held Tuesday, Josh Skelton, the company's COO, noted that customers have demanded cleaner energy and that the proposed rate increase reflects the cost of that investment. "We've grown our renewable sources to 50 percent today and plan to meet 100 percent by 2050," said Skelton.

Yet, as DOC officials delved into the details, it turns out that much of the company's proposal appears unrelated to the company's energy transition.

The DOC analyzed a long list of projected revenues and expenses that Minnesota Power had provided as part of its rate filing. The DOC analysis found that the company had consistently underestimated future revenues, in part through demand projections for the taconite industry that the DOC found to be

unreasonably pessimistic. Minnesota Power relies heavily on a number of large, industrial customers, like wood products plants and taconite processing facilities, so changes in demand from those sectors can significantly impact the company's revenues.

But the DOC didn't buy the company's claims of a sizable decline in taconite production and cited other sales forecasting methods that agreed with the department's higher, alternative revenue forecast.

The DOC also found that the company had forecasted higher costs in several areas, including wage compensation, health benefits, pension obligations, and depreciation, which the DOC did not see as credible. While Minnesota Power suggested a rate increase would allow for additional, needed hiring, the DOC noted that similar claims by the company had not panned out in the past. "The company made similar hiring claims during the 2017 rate case, but

instead of hiring additional employees, it reduced its workforce and pocketed \$67.9 million," noted the DOC in its brief to the PUC. "Given this history of overpromising and under-spending, the best predictor of Minnesota Power's actual 2022 test year compensation expense is the company's past behavior."

At the same time, the DOC concluded that the shift to renewable energy may not be as big a driver of the company's cost increases as it suggests. The DOC noted that Minnesota Power has recently reduced its own generating capacity by 33 percent, in part by retiring the expensive and labor-intensive Boswell Energy Center in Cohasset, one of Minnesota Power's few remaining coal-fired power plants, which helped the company trim its workforce. The company is currently transitioning away from burning fossil fuels to produce electricity and, in so doing, is relying more on third parties, like Manitoba Hydro and independent wind-energy

producers for its generating capacity. "The upshot is that Minnesota Power is serving less demand, and doing so using less labor-intensive resources," noted the DOC.

In addition, the DOC found that Minnesota Power was requesting 100-percent recovery of the expenses it incurs to promote economic development in its service territory. The DOC noted that such a request is contrary to past practice, since the PUC has typically only allowed 50 percent recovery of such costs. While expenditures to promote economic development can provide a public benefit, such efforts also benefit utilities by growing their customer base.

At the same time, the DOC urged rejection of a Minnesota Power proposal to adjust rates automatically based on the company's sales to large industrial users, an idea the company is calling its "large power true-up plan." The DOC found that the plan would

have provided no savings to residential customers over the past ten years and said the idea runs counter to the purpose of a rate case to ensure stable rates that meet the needs of both customers and the company. The DOC analysis called the true-up plan "bad policy and a bad deal for customers."

In total, the department found that Minnesota Power had underestimated revenues and overstated its expenses by just over \$60 million, which prompted the DOC's recommendation to trim the proposed rate increase by approximately 55 percent.

Public hearings

As part of the rate filing, Minnesota Power and its regulators are required to hold public hearings to allow ratepayers to comment on proposed adjustments. A hearing held Tuesday attracted only a single brief comment from a member of a local electrical workers union, who thanked Minnesota Power for past employment.

The PUC has received some written comments, the vast majority from older customers on fixed incomes, who are adamantly opposed to the rate hike. Virtually all of the dozen or so comments cite the current inflation and the impact of the COVID pandemic as reasons to oppose the rate increase. Such reasons prompted the PUC late last year to reduce Minnesota Power's interim rate hike for residential customers from 14 percent to seven percent when it took effect in January.

All of the hearing comments plus the reports from intervenors like DOC or the Citizens Utility Board will become part of the case record and will factor into further recommendations from administrative law judge James Mortenson, who is overseeing the rate case proceeding. The PUC will ultimately take the entirety of the record into account in determining their final order in the case, which could come sometime later this year.

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HIGHER EDUCATION

Scholarship programs would slash cost of attending Minnesota North College

HIBBING - We have heard it all too often, finances and time are the two biggest impediments to students enrolling and being successful in college.

In addition, the North Country is in the midst of a critical workforce shortage all throughout the region.

That is why Minnesota North College, the State of Minnesota through the legislature, and St. Louis County have partnered to decrease the financial need of entering students and in turn meet the critical workforce need of the future.

The Workforce Development Scholarship program and the St. Louis County Mineral Royalties Scholarship program are significant opportunities that could slash the cost of attending Minnesota North College approximately in half.

Workforce Development Scholarship

The Minnesota Legislature has provided funding for hundreds of \$2,500 scholarships at the 30 community and technical colleges of Minnesota State in the high-demand fields of: Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Health Care Services, Information Technology, Early Childhood Education, and Transportation.

Students are awarded \$1,250 in fall and \$1,250 for the spring semester. They must be a Minnesota resident, fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and must maintain nine-plus credits and a 2.0 GPA at the time of disbursement.

Scholarships will apply to academic year 2022-2023

student accounts.

Brenna Erickson, a nursing student at Minnesota North College, who currently works as an Emergency Room Technician at Fairview Range, said of the Workforce Development Scholarship program, "The Workforce Development Scholarship program really helped to alleviate the financial burden of tuition and course fees. This enabled me to focus more on my classes and furthering my career in healthcare. I felt relieved to not have to stress about covering the cost of school and could let myself be excited about continuing my education."

Mineral Royalties Scholarship

Recipients must have

received a high school diploma or equivalent while they were a resident of St. Louis County.

Preference will be given to students pursuing educational pathways in designated degree programs that may lead to direct employment opportunities in the region. Scholarships are awarded on a first come basis.

Another nursing student, Julie Sweep, said, "As a non-traditional student, the St. Louis County Mineral Royalties scholarship helped me go back to college after losing my job due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Without it, I wouldn't have been able to complete the prerequisites that enabled me to be accepted into MN

North College's Nursing program. I am so grateful!"

Alexis Maki, of Duluth, said of her scholarship, "I am so grateful for the St. Louis County Mineral Royalties Scholarship. When I received the scholarship I truly did not know how much this scholarship was going to help me until about a month later. I applied for the scholarship because the application was so easy and simple. I thought any funding will help me pursue a career as an electrician."

She continued, "About a month after I started school, I had a house fire, total loss, and the scholarship helped me so much I did not have to worry about school costs. I have completed my first year of

electrical maintenance at Minnesota North College with straight A's, and I am the only female in the program. I'm hoping to get a job with IBEW Local 294, or IBEW Local 242 after I complete the program.

These scholarship programs change lives, and there are still scholarship dollars available.

The priority deadline for Fall Semester is July 25, 2022.

Please visit, www.minnesotatenorth.edu and click on "admissions & aid" for more details and to apply to Minnesota North College then you will be eligible to apply for the scholarship programs also located under "admissions & aid".

BLUEBERRY WEEKEND


Blueberry Bazaar hosted by Ely Senior Center

ELY – Visitors to this community are invited to shop in air-conditioned comfort during the 2022 Blueberry Art/ Festival at the Blueberry Bazaar, held at the Ely Senior Center, 27 S 1st Ave. E, July 29-31.

As many as 20 vendors will be selling a variety of goods and hand made items including Ely collectibles, fish decoys, Tupperware, Watkins products, Color Street Nails, sugar-free chocolates, cards and plaques, yard games, coasters, solar lights, wind chimes, sun catchers, beach glass, crochets, scrubbies and towels, tumblers, t-shirts, key chains, gemstone and wire trees, diamond art, thrift store goods, and antiques.

In addition, members of the Senior Center will have a table featuring hand-

made items such as hand-loomed rugs, Christmas gift tags and gift card holders. Refreshments will be available.



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LOOKING BACK

It was everyone’s favorite hangout

Dave Anderson recalls the Marttila family and their legacy on Tower’s Main Street

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- While everyone who has lived in Tower for any length of time has stories about Marttila Drug, over 60 area residents got the chance to learn more about the Marttila family’s long ties to Tower during a talk sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Historical Society.

Dave Anderson, a descendent of the Konst Marttila family, has been researching his

family and their more than 100-year history as business owners on Tower’s Main Street.

Konstantin “Konst” Marttila emigrated from Finland in 1890, just shy of 20 years old. He entered, as did so many during that time, at Ellis Island in New York, and first settled in Marquette, Mich.

“We think he was a miner,” said Anderson, which would explain why he decided to move to Tower, sometime before 1897.

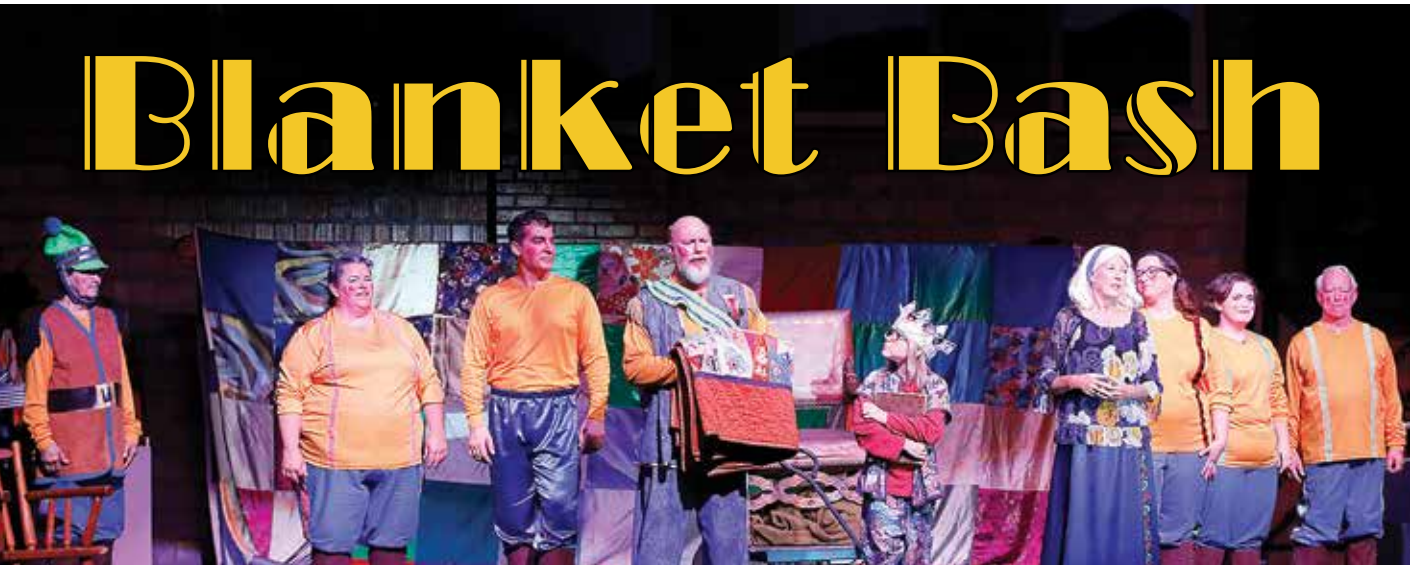
His naturalization papers

Right: “Konst” Marttila behind the counter of his confectionary and variety store in 1945. The shop was a popular place in Tower when it sold candy, milk shakes, comic books, and other delights.

Courtesy T-S Historical Society

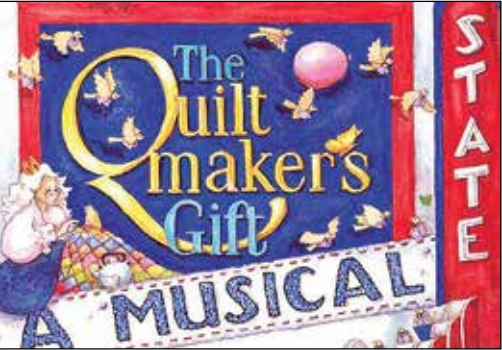
showed he was living in Tower in 1897, and it noted he was an “out-standing Finnlander.” Someone named Charles Johnson signed

See MARTTILA...pg. 4B



COMMUNITY THEATER

The Quiltmaker’s Gift plays to packed houses in Ely



Scenes from a recent performance of “The Quiltmaker’s Gift” at Ely’s Historic State Theater. Clockwise from top left: Actor Vince O’Connor reads to fourth-grader Andy Weise; Karin Schmidt, as a sleeping bear and quiltmaker Lissa Miller share a quiet moment; the entire cast performs a number; Chorus King Ian Lah sings “I Don’t Mean to be Mean,”; the king and the quiltmaker talk in a tree; Andy Weise holds a sword while accompanied by the chorus; the logo for the musical.

photos by K. Vandervort



MUSIC & CULTURE



Chaz Wagner performs as part of a drumming circle earlier this year. file photo

Wagner wins grant for drumming and singing outreach

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Thanks to the ongoing efforts of a Bois Forte Band musician and a grant from the Northland Foundation, youth in multiple area communities have the opportunity this summer to learn traditional Ojibwe singing and drumming.

Chaz Wagner is known to many as an on-air personality at Nett Lake’s KBFT 89.9 Bois Forte Tribal Community Radio and the creator of Native rock band War Bonnet, and he regularly participates in drum circles at Bois Forte powwows and ceremonies.

But this past February, Wagner gave up the radio gig to become an education specialist with the Indian Education program in the Hibbing School District.

Once there, Wagner began looking for external resources to support his activities. He contacted the Northland Foundation to inquire about their Maada’ookiing grant program, which works to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities by providing funding for a variety of activities to tribal citizens in their service area.

“I was going to try to use it for the school, but they told me I couldn’t use it for that,” Wagner said. “But I had these drum classes already going at the school. I had the idea that I could continue on through the summer utilizing part of this grant and instead of just doing it in Hibbing I could go to other communities and teach people about the drum and how to sing, especially youth.”

That idea resonated with the

See GRANT...pg. 4B



Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

WILDLIFE SURVEYS

Vermilion loon count shows decline in adults

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

A total of 32 loon chicks sighted, a number close to average

LAKE VERMILION—Volunteers here recorded a total of 193 loons during the annual loon count, a hefty decline over last year’s numbers and the lowest overall count in several years. This year’s survey, conducted July 13, was held on the count’s rain date, which appeared to reduce the number of volunteer counters, from a more typical 65-75 counters,

to just 53. That could have accounted, at least in part, for the count’s lower tally, which represented 48 fewer loons than last year. This year’s count was also down almost 40 loons from the ten-year average. Volunteers found a total of 99 loons on the lake’s west end, with another 94 loons spotted on the east side. Wildlife surveys are inherently “noisy,” which

means considerable variability is to be expected, even with a stable population. That’s one reason that wildlife researchers emphasize the importance of multi-year trends over year-to-year variation. An example of that variability was seen on Pike Bay, where counters recorded zero loons. Whether that was simply a fluke or

See LOONS...pg. 3B



A resting loon on Lake Vermilion. The latest loon survey recorded 193 loons on the lake, including 32 chicks. file photo



WILD FOODS

Berry Bonanza

It’s the best berry year in several years. Get out and take advantage

After back-to-back berry busts, it appears the summer of 2022 is headed for a berry bonanza, and that’s good news for bears and berry pickers alike.

Credit last year’s drought. Just as last summer’s extreme dryness helped spark drifts of aspen fluff back in June, it also prompted many berry-producing plants—like juneberries, blueberries, and chokecherries—to kick their production into overdrive.

The late spring likely helped as well, particularly with blueberries, which can often be damaged by early June frosts if they’ve flowered too soon. Cool springs help guard against that possibility by slowing the development of the plant’s flowers until the danger of hard frosts is past.

This year’s juneberry crop appears to be exceptional, with many bushes practically drooping with the ripening fruit. While they may be known as juneberries, these plump, tasty berries typically don’t ripen in the North Country until July and they’re at peak ripeness right about now. Your best bet for finding a good haul of these berries is along some of the area biking and walking trails, roadsides, or field edges, where the bushes



MARSHALL
HELMBERGER

are able to get better sunlight. Juneberries are a great picking option for folks who don’t like the bending and stooping required to pick the lowbush blueberries found in our region. You can pick juneberries standing up and I’ll often even use a ladder to get the berries that are otherwise beyond reach.

Juneberries are a bit dryer than blueberries, so they’re a good addition to a blueberry pie, since they help make it a little firmer.

If you’re holding out for blueberries, you can find plenty of ripe ones now, at least in the higher terrain. Blueberry bushes will grow in sun or shade, but if you want berries in any quantity, they need some sun. Around here, that means recent clearcuts (of black spruce or jack pine, especially) or rocky outcrops where trees are more scattered.

Rocky outcrops can be good, when it rains. Last summer’s drought fried all the berries in the high terrain, but this year we’ve had just enough timely rain to make for nicely-plump berries. It is still a bit spotty on the outcrops this year, and I suspect that has to do with the intensity of last year’s drought.

See BERRIES...pg. 3B

Above: It appears that the area is experiencing one of the best blueberry crops in the past few years. Last year’s drought prompted many plants to kick seed production into overdrive and that means this year’s berry crop is looking plentiful.

Right: Ripe juneberries just waiting to be picked.
Below right: Picking juneberries in Soudan.

photos by M. HelMBERGER



Wildflower Watch

This week’s featured flower
YELLOW LOOSESTRIFE



Wet meadows, ditches, and the edges of beaver ponds are good places to find **Lowland Yellow Loosestrife**, *Lysimachia hybrida*, whose inch-wide, bright yellow flowers stand out this time of year.

Look for the five-petaled flowers that partially droop at the end of long stems that emanate from the leaf whorls. The flower centers are often ringed with a rusty red color, although that’s not always the case.

The leaves, narrow and pointed, grow in whorls of four along the stem. Unlike purple loosestrife, this wildflower is native to our region.

Outdoors briefly

Lost Lake SNA to host interpretive paddle

REGIONAL— Would you like to explore the Lost Lake Peatland Scientific and Natural Area with an experienced local naturalist? Then sign up now for an interpretive paddle on Lost Lake on Sunday, Aug. 14, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Bring your own kayak (or canoe) to Lost Lake and join SNA naturalist Arika Preas on an interpretive paddle around Lost Lake. The event will offer a peak into the SNA to try to catch a glimpse of some of the plants and animals that call the peatland home.

Advanced registration is required, and the event will be capped at 20 attendees. To register, please email arika.preas@state.mn.us. So all visitors feel safe and welcome, please consider wearing a face covering when unable to maintain six feet of physical distance. Life jackets are required and participants are urged to dress for the weather, including appropriate footwear. There are no maintained trails or facilities on the site.

To reach the public access on Lost Lake from Tower, take Hwy. 169 west to the Y, then travel 1.25 miles west on Hwy. 1, to Cty. Rd. 476 (Holter Rd.). Go one mile north to Cty. Rd. 458 (Roberts Rd.) and park in the gravel lot at the road’s end.

Anyone with questions can contact Arika Preas by phone at 218-735-3971.

HELP AVAILABLE

DNR offers forest management help for private landowners

REGIONAL—The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has resources and foresters available to help landowners manage woodlands damaged by recent storms. “Seeing trees down in your woods and coming up with a plan for cleanup can be overwhelming,” said Jennifer Teegarden, cooperative forest management outreach specialist. “Be sure to take advantage of the help the DNR can provide to you.”

The DNR has cost-share funds to help affected woodland owners remove downed and damaged trees and to reforest their woods.

A DNR forester can assess the damage and help develop a project plan to manage woodlands. The forester may also be able to help a timberland owner to enroll in the DNR’s cost-share program designed to help property owners improve their woods. Additionally, foresters can discuss the benefits of getting a Woodland Stewardship Plan as a way to meet woodland goals, improve the health of the woods, and enroll in tax incentive programs.

Storms are one way nature helps rejuvenate the landscape. Often, strong winds blow down unhealthy or decayed trees in a forest, creating openings for younger, healthier trees that can benefit wildlife. Leaving some downed trees in woods can create wildlife habitat.

A timber harvest to remove downed and damaged trees can make woods safer and more accessible for future recreation and management activities. A timber harvest also is a way to keep woods healthy, meet woodland ownership goals, and make woods more resilient to future storms.

A professional forester can appraise timber, help find the right logger, and monitor harvest. A DNR forester can either help with a timber sale or connect woodland owners with a professional forester who can provide assistance.

Visit the DNR’s Forest Stewardship page on the DNR website to learn how the DNR works with private woodland owners, get information about cost-share, and to find an area forester.

BERRIES...Continued from page 2B

In areas with very shallow soil, which is typical of outcrops, the blueberry bushes were killed or damaged to the point where they’ll need to recover before producing any berries again. But where the berry bushes survived, this year’s production is well above average.

I’ve yet to check some of my lowland blueberry spots, mostly because the berries there typically don’t ripen until late July or early August.

And it’s still way too early to think about chokecherries, which I normally don’t pick until late August or September for wine making. From what I’ve seen, it looks like a bumper






crop.

Come mid-September, it’ll be time to check our cranberry locations. It’s been several years of lackluster production so we’re keeping our fingers crossed.

The good berry year isn’t just a windfall for human pickers. According to Jessica Holmes, the new Tower DNR area wildlife manager, the number of nuisance bear complaints has fallen pretty dramatically in recent weeks. It appears the bears are finding that the living is easy when the berries are hanging plump and juicy.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
																								
81 56					74 52					72 50					77 56					77 54				
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
07/11	79	61	0.27		07/11	79	61	0.15		07/11	80	60	0.31		07/11	70	59	0.13		07/11	79	60	0.60	
07/12	72	52	0.15		07/12	73	49	0.15		07/12	70	54	0.11		07/12	73	54	0.30		07/12	70	49	0.19	
07/13	76	55	0.14		07/13	74	48	0.57		07/13	76	54	1.04		07/13	75	52	0.50		07/13	73	54	0.54	
07/14	76	44	0.00		07/14	75	42	0.00		07/14	73	48	0.00		07/14	73	48	0.00		07/14	75	42	0.00	
07/15	76	48	0.00		07/15	75	48	0.01		07/15	75	48	0.01		07/15	82	54	0.00		07/15	75	46	0.00	
07/16	86	54	0.00		07/16	86	43	0.00		07/16	83	56	0.00		07/16	82	57	0.00		07/16	84	53	0.00	
07/17	83	59	0.00		07/17	85	52	0.00		07/17	82	62	0.05		07/17	86	63	0.00		07/17	83	53	0.00	
YTD Total				12.25	YTD Total				14.73	YTD Total				14.78	YTD Total				NA NA	YTD Total				18.52

LAKE VERMILION

VLA conducting extensive water testing

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

LAKE VERMILION—Members of the Vermilion Lake Association will soon have a better understanding of the water quality here after the lake association’s board approved an extensive lake water testing effort. The sampling will focus on areas with significant inflow, such as near the Pike or East Two rivers, and will go well beyond the usual level of testing conducted periodically by state agencies, such as the Pollution Control Agency or the Department of Natural Resources.

“All together, we’ll be testing for 20-some different chemicals and anions,” said Craig Beveroth, who is spearheading the project for the lake association. Most state agencies are typically testing for only three or four different pollutants, plus pH. “We’re testing for aluminum all the way to zinc,” said Beveroth. A more complete list includes calcium, chlorides, nitrates, sulfates, total suspended solids, and manganese.

Volunteers gathered water samples from several locations, including the Pike River and East Two River outlets, Stuntz Bay, Big Bay, Frazer Bay, Wakemup Bay and Niles Bay, as well as near the Trout Lake portage.

The testing project isn’t cheap. The VLA board approved an \$8,600



Lake Vermilion is known for its scenic beauty and good water quality. The Vermilion Lake Association is hoping to keep it that way.
file photo

budget late last year and Beveroth expects the effort will cost most of that— and that doesn’t include a considerable amount of volunteer time and travel costs associated with the project. But Beveroth said the results, which he hopes to have available by the association’s Aug. 6 annual meeting, should help to set a solid baseline that will enable the club to track changes over time and identify possible sources of future pollution.

Beveroth said the testing could help to identify any existing hotspots for pollution. He noted that the Pike River, which used to be a significant source of sulfate pollution and the East Two River, which is a major

source of both phosphorus and calcium, are two locations to which they’ll pay particular attention.

The East Two River has long been the discharge point for treated wastewater from the Tower-Breitung Wastewater Board’s sewage ponds in Breitung Township. “The wastewater board has been very cooperative,” said Beveroth.

The lake water sampling was done on June 28 in 16 different locations all together and association volunteers got the samples to the testing lab the next day. The *Timberjay* hopes to publicize the results once the lake association makes them available.

LOONS...Continued from page 2B

reflected other factors is unclear.


While total loon numbers were down, the number of reported loon chicks was about average, with 32 reported from among 47 identified loon pairs. That was just one chick fewer than last year.

A total of 67 adult loons were

identified as singles.

Lake Vermilion has long been home to the largest documented loon population on any lake in Minnesota. It’s 365 islands and hundreds of miles of shoreline, much of it undeveloped, provides exceptional nesting habitat for loons.


Loons are good indicators of water quality because they need clean, clear water to catch food. They are also sensitive to disturbances such as lakeshore development and contaminants like mercury and lead in their environment.



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MARTTILA...Continued from page 1B

as a witness for Konst. Anderson speculated it may have been the same Charles Johnson whose “ghost sign” featuring an advertisement for Best Coffee, still marks the west side of a brick building (former barber shop) on Main Street today.

Konst opened his first store in 1903, but Anderson said he found the first evidence of the store in an advertisement in the Tower newspaper in 1908. The ad showed the store sold games, books, and musical instruments. That store was located on the south side of Main Street. By 1910, Konst was advertising “hot soda” and soft drinks, along with a confectionary and cigars. Hot soda is just what it sounded like, warmed-up fountain soda, Anderson said.

Konst married his wife Fanny Harma sometime between 1904 and 1911. Fanny would have been 16 in 1904. Fanny never worked in the store, because she never had learned English. In 1912, the couple welcomed twin daughters, Martha and Anderson’s grandmother Ellen.

In 1911, Konst opened the store in the building that later housed Marttila Drug (the current location of Ubetcha Antiques). Among the treats sold there was Duluth Ice Cream (now known as Bridgeman’s). That ice cream is now remembered from a “ghost” sign uncovered on the side of the building when current owners Charlie and Victoria Carlson installed new siding last year. They



left the old sign, which is now showcased on the west side of the building.

Ice cream was a mainstay of the store, and by the 1940s, the store was being operated by two of Konst’s children, Walter and Martha, who started making their own ice cream, a tradition continued into the late 1980s.

“They would stay up late to make the ice cream,” Anderson said. “And they had to drive to the Twin Cities to get all the ingredients.”

Konst and Fanny lost their two youngest children, Billy, age three, and Helen, age six, in a boating accident in 1926, when a “rich guy from Chicago” hit the smaller boat the Marttila family was riding in, on Lake Vermilion.

“My grandmother Ellen was always worried she would die young, like her younger siblings,” said Anderson.

Martha and Ellen both graduated from the University of Minnesota with degrees in teaching in 1935.

A few years later, Walt graduated from the University of Minnesota



Above left: Dave Anderson talks about the history of the Marttila family during a recent History Night talk in Tower.

Above: The Marttila family, including Konst, Fanny and their five children, two of whom would die in a tragic boat accident shortly after this picture was taken.

Above right: A ghost painting from the early days of the Konst confectionary, which was revealed and preserved after the building was resided by the current owners, Charlie and Victoria Carlson.

with a degree in forestry, but then either enlisted or was drafted into WWII. He went on to fly 31 successful missions from the Grafton-Underwood Airbase in England as a B-17 navigator. The 5’3” airman was given the nickname “Shorty.”

The twins, Martha and Ellen, both started teaching once they graduated from college. Martha taught at the school on the Vermilion Reservation, and then in Tower-Soudan, retiring in 1973. Ellen taught for five

years in Ely, but she was forced to retire in 1940 when she married Pela Anderson. At the time there was a state law that did not allow married women to be employed as teachers, said Anderson.

After the war, Walt returned to Tower with an English bride, Verena, and a son James. Verena’s mother also moved to Tower with the couple.

In 1946, Konst passed away, ten years after the death of his two youngest children. Walt and his wife



Verena took over the store, with help from Martha when she wasn’t busy teaching.

After a few years, Walt went back to the University of Minnesota and earned his degree in pharmacy in 1955.

In 1958, the old store was moved half a block to make room for their new store, the city’s first (and only) pharmacy. The store opened on April 10, the same day Walt’s daughter Anne (Marttila) Wiermaa was born.

Martha worked part-time in the store while she was teaching, and then full-time after Verena died in 1971. In later years, Walt and Martha lived in the large, sunny apartment upstairs of the drugstore.

When asked about his favorite memories of the store, Anderson said when he was a child, his sister Cheryl Groth, Aunt Jill Phillips and he would really enjoy the milkshakes made by the wonderful employ-

ees Walt and Martha had working at the semi-circular lunch counters.

“Martha would also give us the unsold comic books and magazines that had their covers removed for return to the distributor,” he said. “We always had plenty to read back then. As an adult, I enjoyed bringing my children to visit Walt and Martha in their huge modern mid-century apartment above the drug store.”

More stories about Marttila’s can be found in “Lake Vermilion: Memories of the Early Days,” in a chapter titled “It was Tower’s Favorite Hangout.” The book was written by Marshall Helmberger and published by the Timberjay. It is available at the Timberjay in Tower, Piragis Second Floor Books in Ely, and several area businesses, and online at www.timberjay.com.

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GRANT...Continued from page 1B

Maada’ookiing grant proposal reviewers, who awarded Wagner \$2,500 for the endeavor. He held his first event of the series at Bennett Park in Hibbing on July 12. “Having it at places where people are around, if they hear it they can come on

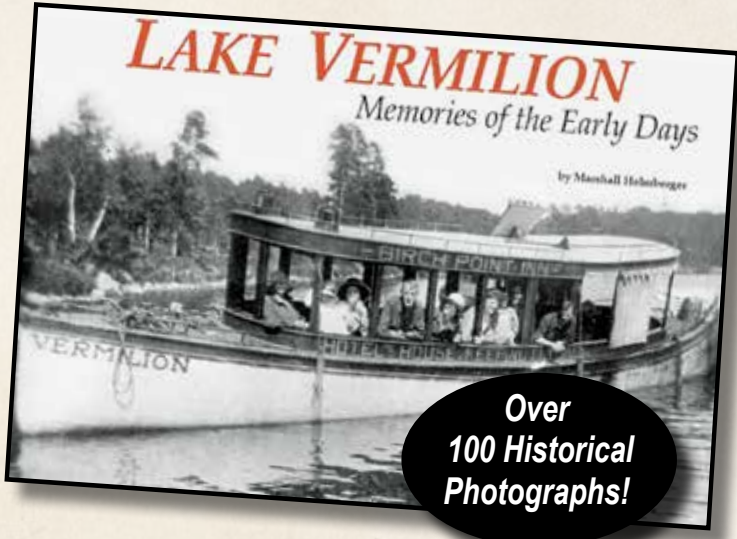
over and ask questions and see what’s going on. It draws curiosity,” Wagner said. “Part of the plan is to reach people who normally wouldn’t be around things like this because there’s a need in urban areas where Indigenous people live. This is all Indigenous land, and it always will be.” Rain likely dampened the turnout for that first event, but Wagner did attract some people who were in the park, including a Native kid playing basketball who was curious enough to leave the court and join the activity, he said. Wagner is planning to return to Nett Lake for a session on Tuesday, July 26, and he has another session booked for Bennett Park on Sunday, July 31 at noon. Wagner is still working on the rest of the schedule, which could include stops in Chisholm, Tower, and Grand Rapids, with the intent to finish up before school is back in session. And folks are welcome even if they choose not to participate in the drumming and singing, Wagner said. “If somebody just wants to come and listen to the songs and hang around the drum, they can do that, too. Either way, it’s a good thing,” he said. Watch for more information about upcoming locations and dates by following Chaz Wagner’s page on Facebook. Maada’ookiing grants of up to \$2,500 are awarded three times a year by the Northland Foundation. The next application deadline is Sept. 15. For more information on how to apply, go to www.northlandfnd.org

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Obituaries and Death Notices



Lon E. Lamppa
Lon Ernest Lamppa, 73, of Virginia, and formerly of Tower, Lake Vermilion and Embarrass, left this life after ‘the long goodbye’ on Saturday, July 16, 2022. A celebration of Lon’s legendary life was held on Thursday, July 21 at the Herbert Lamppa Tower Civic Center. Family services were provided by Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.
Lon was the second born to Ernest and Lyna (Niemi) Lamppa, on April 19, 1949. He was a graduate of Embarrass High School, Bemidji State University and the University of Minnesota. Shortly after he graduated,

he began a lifelong career as a physical therapist at the Ely Bloomenson Hospital. Lon married the love of his life, Ann Bee, on June 19, 1971, at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.
Lon not only helped countless patients but mentored hundreds of kids throughout his lifetime. When Lon was not working to provide for his family, he tirelessly gave everything he had to mentoring and coaching kids. “Leave something better than you found it” are words he often spoke. He had a way of creating such a safe atmosphere for his mentees that they often came to him when they needed help the most. Whether it was fixing a baseball swing or seeking life advice, countless people have sought out the care and genuine advice that just seemed to exude out of Lon.
Lon also had a crazy passion for hunting and fishing. He definitely passed on his love of the outdoors to his three sons. There are many stories and tall tales about Lon at the shack with his family and close friends.
Already we miss you, Lon. You have left behind

wife, Ann Lamppa; three sons, Justin (Amanda), Josh (Stacie) and Davis (Laura); and 10 grandkids, Ella, Emma, Ero, Ari, Lexi, Maija, Jaxson, Joey, Jace and Elliot. Lon’s brother and sister-in-law, Jim (Janice) Lamppa, also now have a void in their hearts. We know the late Ernie and Lyna will keep you in great company until we meet again.
We are so grateful for the personalized and fabulous care Lon received at New Journey Residence. Memorials are preferred in honor of Lon. Please send donations in his name to one of three different areas that we want to honor in Lon’s memory. They are: New Journey Residence, 303 Hat Trick Ave., Eveleth, MN 55734; Rock Ridge Youth Baseball, PO Box 282, Virginia, MN 55792; Tower/Soudan Little League, 5424 Hwy. 169, Tower, MN 55790.
Russell M. Michalek
Russell M. Michalek, 87, of Lake Vermilion-Tower, died on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at Essentia Health Virginia

Care Center. There will be no formal services. Family services are provided by Bauman-Vermilion, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower.
He is survived by his sons, Carl Michalek of Lake Vermilion-Tower and Ken Michalek of Gilbert.
Leona Perushek
Leona “Lee” Perushek, 96, of Ely, passed away on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at Ely Bloomenson Hospital. Funeral services were held on Thursday, July 21 at Kerntz Funeral Home in Ely.
Janice L. Nylander
Janice L. Nylander, 83, of Cook, passed away on Saturday, July 2, 2022. She is survived by her daughters, Connie (Brian) Kaufman and Debbie Nylander; sons, Dale (Debra) Ableman and Evert (Sue) Ableman; sister, Jane (Jack) Nelson; grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.


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Thank You!
This activity was made possible, in part, by the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust and by the people of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund. Additional funding is provided by the Ely Rotary Club, and Ely Kiwanis Club, Lake Country Power, and Northwoods Partners.
Special Thanks: Northern Lakes Arts Association, Paul Kess, Peter Kess, Curt Laine and Cyko Arts, Gail deMarcken, Ely First Presbyterian Church, Mesabi Symphony Orchestra, Peter Schamber and Ely’s Historic State Theater, Jean Gendreau and Kim McCluskey, the Ely Chamber of Commerce, ECR and ECR Grand Pals, Ely Public Library, Boundary Waters Care Center, Carefree Living Ely, Front Porch Coffee & Tea Co., John Ratzloff, Julie Hignell, Northwoods Partners, Piragis Book Store, Heart of the Woods Quilters, Craig Haberman, Scott King, Ward Nelson
Volunteers and others: Heide Buettner, Jodi Chaffin, Kathy Champa, Denise Dreschler, Marge Forsberg, Judy Fredrickson, Kathy Golbuff, Beth Haakensen, Barb Cary Hall, Vicki Krouse, Cheryl Martinetto, Alice Moren, Ben Pawlak, Sandy Pawlak, Ann Spitler, Bill Spitler, Peggy Stolley, Sue Syverson, Joan Thoron, Barbara Wilson, Kathy Vanderboom, Judy Viken, Pat Zupancich
Quilts: The quilts donated by Dorothy Sand were won by Nan Bong, Heather Schaller and David Wigdahl.

Grand Rapids Riverfest, Saturday, Sept. 10

GRAND RAPIDS - Northern Minnesota will be seeing some of music’s top acts coming through for the second annual Grand Rapids Riverfest, on Saturday, Sept. 10 at the Grand Rapids Library Amphitheater. Grand Rapids Riverfest, a collaboration of KAXE (Northern Community Radio) and the City of Grand Rapids, just announced the lineup for this year’s event.
Wilco, an indie rock band that formed in 1994 based in Chicago, is a seven-time nominee and two-time Grammy winner. The band is headlining festivals across the nation and beyond this year alongside acts like Beck, The Avett Brothers, Billy Strings, Dawes, Jason Isbell and The 400 Unit, Emmylou Harris, and many others.
Shovels and Rope is an Americana duo based in Charleston, S.C., who bring a mix of traditional folk, country and down-right rock and roll. A festival favorite across the country, the band is best known for their energetic live performances. Out with a brand new album this spring, “Manticore,”

year’s festival, an up-and-coming Americana band from Grand Rapids featuring several local musicians: Jed and Ariana LaPlant, McKeon Hugh Roberts and JJ Snell. Wild Horses has quickly garnered a fervent and loyal fan base, filling the Wilcox Theater at the Reif Center this winter, and packing houses wherever they play. They made their debut as a band on the West Stage of Grand Rapids Riverfest last year, and will be making their main stage debut in 2022. Keep your eyes on this band.
The festival will continue to be located in downtown Grand Rapids, and will be shifting to a new community amphitheater on the grounds of the Grand Rapids Area Library, allowing for ample green space and closer proximity to the Mississippi River. Tickets for the Grand Rapids Riverfest are on sale now at www.grandrapidsriverfest.com. Tickets are \$99 for adults, \$29 for kids 11-17, and free for children 10 and under. The first 500 ticket buyers have the option of Early Entrance to the festival to claim a spot. Follow Grand Rapids Riverfest on social media for all of the latest updates.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the City of Tower and former Mayor Josh Carlson, along with his council, for renaming the Civic Center after our father, Herbert R. Lamppa. Special thanks and praise to Nancy Larson for her design work on the signs and the beautiful pedestal display at the civic center garden and most importantly, for all her work to secure the funds necessary to make it happen. We also mustn’t forget the excellent job the two maintenance workers did installing everything.

Our dad loved Tower and dedicated a good portion of his life making Tower and our surrounding area a better place to live, work, play and prosper. He was a first responder, fireman, councilman, mayor, county commissioner, inventor, businessman, math teacher, coach, house builder, forward planner and wonderful father and grandfather.

We sincerely thank you from the bottom of our hearts for what you have done.

The Lamppa family

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice to the Voters of Kugler Township

The following offices are open for election at the November 8, 2022 General Election. Affidavits of Candidacy may be filed with the Town Clerk by calling 218-248-0606. Filings are open beginning Tuesday, August 2 and ending on Tuesday, August 16, 2022. Hours on Tuesday, August 16 are between 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm, for the offices of:

One Supervisor C – (4) Four-year term
One Treasurer – (4) Four-year term

Filing fee: \$2.00

Chris Suihkonen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, July 15 & 22, 2022

EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP Notice of Candidate Filing

Notice is hereby given Eagles Nest Township will be accepting affidavits of candidacy at Eagles Nest Town Hall 1552 Bear Head State Park Road from August 2, 2022 to August 16, 2022. The Eagles Nest Town Hall will be open on Tuesday, August 2, 2022 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, Friday, August 12, 2022 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and on Tuesday, August 16, 2022 from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Appointments to file may also be made by contacting the Clerk at eaglesnesttpw@citlink.net. Filing fee is \$2.00.

The following seats are open for candidacy this election:

Town Supervisor A- (4) four-year term
Town Supervisor D- (4) four-year term
Town Supervisor E- (4) four-year term
Treasurer- (4) four-year term
Special Election Town Supervisor B- (2) two-year term.

Published in the Timberjay, July 22 & 29, 2022

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PUBLIC NOTICES

FIELD TOWNSHIP MEETING NOTICE

The Field Township regular August board meeting will be held August 16, 2022, at 7 pm at the Field Town Hall.

Pat Chapman/Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, July 22, 2022

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME

Certificate of Assumed Name
Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.
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Dated: June 28, 2022
SIGNED BY: Jemma Baker

*Published in the Timberjay,
July 22 & 29, 2022*

NOTICE OF PRIMARY ELECTION GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

State of Minnesota, County of St. Louis

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a
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Published in the Timberjay, July 22, 2022



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- 4 Glacial
- 7 Mrs. Flintstone
- 12 Baton Rouge sch.
- 13 Extinct New Zealand bird
- 14 Figure of speech
- 15 "— show-time!"
- 16 Parthenon locale
- 18 "The A-Team" actor
- 19 Le — (French news-paper)
- 20 Pear type
- 22 Sugary suffix
- 23 Actress Tyne
- 27 Director Howard
- 29 Cut up, as a pizza
- 31 Metric measure
- 34 Desert haven
- 35 Tam topper
- 37 "Ray Donovan" actor Voight
- 38 Money maven Orman
- 39 Vichy water
- 41 Latin love
- 45 Shadow
- 47 Mimic
- 48 Maryland's

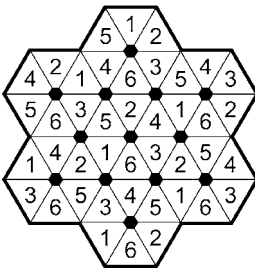
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by Linda Thistle

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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PRIMARY ELECTION

District 3A Republicans share views as primary approaches

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A pair of Republicans are squaring off in the Aug. 9 state primary for the chance to unseat Minnesota House District 3A incumbent Representative Rob Ecklund in November, and while the two share many views in common, each has his own unique perspective on issues of concern to North Country voters.

Blain Johnson, of Balsam Township, is a native North Dakotan who relocated his public safety and government consulting business, Paramount Planning, to Grand Rapids in 2016. Among his consulting contracts is one to provide emergency management services for Lac qui Parle County and he also serves as vice president of the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers.

Johnson's interest in politics was sparked while he was working on a master's degree in biodefense and homeland security at George Mason University in Fairfax County, Va., near Washington, D.C.

"When I was out there, I had the opportunity to work with (North Dakota) Senator John Hoeven, and working in the Capitol building really got my juices flowing politically in terms of what constituents came into the office for and trying to manipulate that into bill language."

Running against him is Ely Mayor Roger Skraba, who ran against Ecklund and lost in a 2015 special election to fill the District 3A seat left vacant by the death of David Dill. That setback aside, Skraba has been in public service for about 15 years. He's currently on his third term as Ely mayor, has served on the Ely City Council, and also serves as chair of the St. Louis County Planning Commission. He also works as a fishing guide and carpenter.

"What motivated me to run (for the House) was when Rob (Ecklund) was voting Democratic straight across the board," Skraba said. "Those aren't our values and I felt like we weren't getting representation, so I said, You know what, I think I'm going to run."

Both men have been on the campaign trail since March, and the feedback they've been getting is the same. People are concerned about the economy, jobs, and inflation, undue government influence in issues like mining, and are ready for a



Roger Skraba

change in representation in St. Paul. From his consulting work, Johnson has also picked up on anxiety over what he called an "anti-law enforcement agenda" on the capital and concerns that increased training requirements could make it more difficult to come up with volunteers to staff local fire departments and ambulance services.

The *Timberjay* talked with the candidates this week and asked them to respond to questions about issues that affect District 3A and, in some cases, the state as a whole.

Budget surplus

In June, state officials estimated that \$7.2 billion of a projected \$9.25 billion state budget surplus remains to be spent, and as the likelihood of a special legislative session fades, it will fall to the next Legislature to decide what to do with it.

Johnson wants to see the bulk of that surplus go back to the taxpayers.

"I truly believe we need to keep our taxes lower," he said. "We need to make income tax and all the other sorts of taxes more reasonable. I would put a lot of that money back into investing in the people of the state and allow them to dictate what they want to use that money for."

Skraba has a similar position, but that wasn't uppermost in his mind when he began answering the question.

"Can we take a billion dollars of that and put it into mental health?" he said. "It's a lot of money, and yes, the taxpayers all paid for it. But I want to see a billion dollars go towards mental health so we can responsibly start to solve this mental health issue we're having in America."

For the balance, Skraba wants to give money back to the taxpayers proportional to what



Blain Johnson

they paid in. The tax on Social Security needs to be eliminated, he said. Passing a bonding bill is a priority. And Skraba said he believes people are paying too much in taxes and he wants to figure out why.

Mining

The candidates were asked how they would try to balance the interests of mining against those of the environment, and both were in accord that the issue isn't an either/or proposition.

"Rules and regulations that are in place were put in place for a reason," Skraba said. "If you can meet or exceed the standards, then you should be allowed to do this. We have groups of people saying no, we don't even want it, the risk isn't worth it. In this world, risk is part of what we do every day. The minerals in the ground can be mined safely, they will be mined safely, and we will have people working to make sure it's done that way."

"The mining question comes up probably more than any other one that I've talked to constituents about," Johnson said. "It just boggles my mind because we've got one of the most intensely scrutinized processes to get a mine approved in the whole United States. We do have to protect nature; that's a huge industry up here, so I think we have to be very careful. But I think there's a balance to strike in allowing some of these existing taconite companies that are mining now and the potential ones for copper and nickel."

Timber

The candidates were less certain about how the Legislature could support the ailing logging and timber products industry in the region, although both agreed it's a pressing prob-

lem that should be addressed.

Johnson said that a dialogue should be initiated with companies to pinpoint their future plans.

"Some of the constituents I've talked to are afraid their jobs are going to go away and they're going to have to move," he said. "We need to sit everybody down and say what are your future plans? How do we in the Legislature make sure the environment is right for you to exploit timber itself and how do we make it as easy as possible on you to get your products developed and shipped?"

Skraba said he believes there's a role for government in supporting the timber industry, but that solutions that may appear feasible might not be.

"It's not like you can say 'Let's give the loggers free stumpage, that'll help them,'" he said. "If there's no one buying the wood, that doesn't help them. If the price of fuel is \$6 a gallon and it costs \$1,200 to move the wood from Ely to Duluth and \$1,200 is what you're getting paid for that load, it doesn't take long before people start asking why they're doing it."

Skraba advocated for better forest management, suggesting that there's more timber to cut than is being allowed at present.

"We need to do something, we're obligated to do something," he said. "It's part of our economy, natural resource extraction. Somehow there's got to be a solution, but how much we incentivize it, is up for debate."

Both candidates said they would support an incentive package similar to the one the Legislature used to lure an oriented strand board (OSB) manufacturing plant to Cohasset to encourage redevelopment of the long-shuttered OSB plant at Cook to produce siding products.

Tourism

Among the issues confronting resort owners and the seasonal tourism industry is the problem of finding employees in an increasingly scarce labor market.

Skraba said that he's encountered multiple instances where existing zoning regulations, whether city or county, have stood in the way of property owners building living spaces to house seasonal employees who come from afar. "You used to count on local people to come to work for you," he said. "They're not coming anymore because they're not there. They don't want to work in this type of tourism. They want to work toward the degree they want when they graduate. We need to figure out this labor shortage. If it means creating our own (foreign worker) program for the state, I'm all for it."

"I think there's a broader discussion to have on why that's occurring, whether it's from people just living on unemployment or people aren't even in the community to begin with," Johnson said.

Johnson suggested establishing some sort of incentive plan for younger workers who may still have their education to pay for.

"When summers are prime for them to come back, we could maybe come up with a package to help offset tuition costs or something like that because those jobs don't pay a ton anyway," he said.

Health care workers

The shortage of health care workers in Minnesota is serious and likely to grow worse, particularly in rural areas where an increasing number of health care professionals indicate they plan to leave their professions within the next five years. Long-term care staffing is already critical, with more than 23,000 job vacancies reported statewide in April.

Johnson noted that the issue isn't isolated to Minnesota, that the shortage is nationwide.

"If it was just a Minnesota issue, I would be more primed to offer some legislative services like packages for nursing, relocation assistance, things like that," Johnson said. "It's really a national issue. I don't know how much we can do locally on that, to be completely honest."

He did support incentives for health care students to remain in-state, but said he would take more of a hands-off approach on the issue.

Skraba took the opportunity to voice his concerns about the overall health care system.

"My frustration lies with how much money we have in our lives that we dedicate toward health care and yet health care says it still doesn't have enough money," he said. "We're paying people to take care of our elderly in assisted living \$15 an hour and yet we're paying someone to work in the food industry \$15 an hour. Where's the parity here? That bothers me."

See...3A RACE pg. 9B

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TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

Greenwood debates merits of state firefighter training

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- The Greenwood Town Board has yet to approve a monthly treasurer’s report since the resignations of both the elected treasurer and clerk.

“We’ve been working on the report for days,” said Greenwood Chair Sue Drobac at the board’s July 12 meeting. She has been using her bookkeeping experience, along with her experience from being the township clerk, to assist interim treasurer Jeff Maus.

“We’ve gone back to April, but according to our bank statements and CTAS [the township’s accounting system], we are finding differences,” Drobac said they are also finding inconsistencies with other monthly reports that were given to the board.

“This has been a lot of work,” said Drobac, who asked the board if they would agree to pay her for the time she is spending on these problems, or if they would like to look into the cost of hiring a local accounting firm to help with the problem.

The board decided to have Drobac look into the cost of hiring an accounting firm, and she will report back at the August meeting. The board then voted to table the treasurer’s report.

Township resident John Bassing, during public input, addressed concerns that were brought to the board by fire department member Jim “Jet” Galonski at the June meeting. He began by thanking Galonski for his years of service to the township, but then noted that many of the issues raised by Galonski were not accurate. He noted that ISO ratings are based on training levels of the department in addition to water pumping capability, and that in fact many of the largest insurance agencies no longer use ISO ratings to determine insurance rates. He noted that department members currently have the highest annual PERA pension of any nearby departments.

“Jim wants more pension,”

he said, “but they are getting more than any other department in the area. That money comes from the homeowners insurance we pay. The fund is invested 95 percent in stocks, and if the stock market drops the township is responsible.”

Bassing also said the town board has a vested interest in keeping the fire department meetings open and transparent.

“A case was brought to the state on the basis of a recording of a fire department meeting,” Bassing said. “At the next meeting they ruled that no recording was allowed. This alone is why transparency is needed.”

Interim Treasurer Jeff Maus, who is a fire department member, told the board he had been threatened with violence at a meeting during the time no recording was allowed.

Galonski said he didn’t have time to research everything, but he still had the opinion that the board wanted to override the will of the fire department members.

“I’ve gotten the impression that I am the enemy,” he told the board. “I’ve been hearing that people are quitting or want to quit the department.”

“The info I gave is still good,” Galonski said.

Galonski then gave the board a copy of a public data request form for information on any lawsuits, litigation, or legal action against the fire department, board of supervisors, or personnel in the last 10 years. He said he had submitted it to the former town clerk on May 12, but had yet to hear any response.

Fire department training

The board discussed the issue of required training for fire department members. The fire department was not in agreement with the town board’s decision to require that members complete the state firefighter I and II training classes within two years of joining the department. This is a policy that was in place for about 30 years, until recently when it was loosened to

completion time to within five years. The current department was asking to have it removed altogether.

Ralston appeared to be in agreement, saying that since the training was not mandated by OSHA, he felt it was a “detriment to the department.”

But others on the board did not agree.

“We need training,” said Drobac. “We want everyone trained and everyone healthy. There is a lot of liability when the fire department is called out.”

Drobac asked Fire Department Safety Officer Rick Worringer why the department had decided to get rid of the long-standing requirement to complete this training.

“We train internally all the time,” said Worringer. “Firefighter I and II is great training, but it’s mainly for interior firefighting. Only nine of our 17 members are trained for interior firefighting.”

Maus said the two classes require 151 hours of training, and that in the past, department members have completed the classes in less than a year.

“If you join, you want to be fully trained and be able to fully participate,” Maus said.

“The state puts these classes together and pays for it,” Maus said. “The state thinks it is important. It covers hazardous materials, extrication, wild-land fires, and a whole litany of things that are important.”

Maus said there is an issue of liability if the department responds on a mutual aid call and the other fire chiefs don’t realize the members are not fully trained and can’t do certain things.

“It’s great that people want to help,” Maus said, “but you have to have both....you need the right people in place.”

Supervisor Rick Stoehr said “it is in the best interest to have as many trained firefighters as possible. You never know who can show up at a scene. You want people there trained in the fundamentals, so when push comes to shove, at least they have an idea of what is going on.

We should shoot for Firefighter I and II.”

“We don’t want people out there who have no knowledge,” Stoehr said.

Worringer said he “agreed with that 100 percent. It is what we want to shoot for.” But he added it was possibly turning away someone that can’t comply in that time frame.

“But if we ask them to comply as soon as they can, maybe we can keep them on board until they can get this done at their pace. We are adding a body, not losing anybody,” Worringer said.

John Bassing asked if perhaps the department could incentivize completion within two years.

Ralston wondered if they kept the mandate to have it within two years, if the township could allow a firefighter to remain if they had a legitimate reason for not completing the classes on time.

“I don’t believe that’s for us to mandate something that none of us really know anything about,” Ralston said, “We are stepping outside the boundaries of being the employer of the fire department.”

“Volunteers are so hard to come by,” said Worringer. “I am not poo-pooing Firefighter I and II. I just don’t think we should mandate a time frame.”

Ralston said the issue needed more discussion.

Worringer said the department would be happy if it went back to five years for completion.

The board made no decision to change the requirement from the two-year timeframe.

Other business

In other business the board:

- Approved \$469 in back pay for former deputy treasurer Tammy Mortaloni. The board had delayed payment because Mortaloni had not detailed her hours as requested by the board. Mortaloni also requested \$150 in penalty from the township for the delay.
- “We couldn’t read what she had handed in,” said Supervisor Barb Lofquist, “and she was

asked months ago to submit it in typewritten form.” The board voted 4-1, with Paul Skubic voting against, to deny payment of the requested penalty payment.

The board also heard that the required paperwork (detailing which classes had been completed) for her fire department training reimbursement had not been submitted, and voted 3-2, with Skubic and Ralston voting against, to delay that payment until the paperwork was completed.

- The board decided not to relocate the current interior surveillance cameras because the quote received was over \$3,400. The board will look into the cost of acquiring “nest” type cameras to install by the doors in the town hall.
- Approved hiring of election judges.
- Repealed Ordinance 2020-02, the township ordinance which set up an onerous 12-step process for public requests for township data.

“Jet wouldn’t get his information with this policy in place,” Lofquist noted.

The vote to repeal was 3-2, with Ralston and Skubic voting against.

- Awarded the quote for propane to low-bidder Ferrellgas for \$1.849 for up to 5,000 gallons. The township owns its own tank, and typically uses between 3,000-4,000 gallons a year.
- Heard that the recreation committee would like to remain as a separate non-profit, and not a township committee. This gives them more flexibility for fundraising. They are still willing to act as the liaison for rentals of the town hall and pavilion. The committee is in need of new members, anyone interested should contact Greenwood Town Hall.
- Approved a \$100 donation for the Tower-Soudan Fourth of July committee.
- Discussed the issue of someone leaving an electric car plugged into an outdoor outlet at the town hall parking lot.

This article was corrected because quotes originally attributed to Mike Ralston were actually from John Bassing

3A RACE...Continued from page 8B

Skraba said that one of the primary limiting factors in attracting health care workers to small towns is a lack of childcare.

“Potential employees come here and like it and then they ask ‘Where can I put my kids when I’m working?’” he said. “The Legislature keeps kicking this can down the road. Maybe it’s not a legislative issue, maybe it’s a community issue. But it is an issue, one that bleeds into health care and leaks into other industries.”

Education funding

Many public school systems, including ISD 696 in Ely and ISD 2142

St. Louis County Schools are facing a double budget whammy this year with decreased state aid due to decreased enrollments and skyrocketing expenses due to inflation. The *Timberjay* asked if the Legislature should re-evaluate how schools are funded for the future.

“Nothing bothers me more than seeing a meme on Facebook where a school teacher says they have to buy their students stuff to do these learning activities,” Skraba said. “It’s our job to figure out how we’re going to pay for it. That needs to be fixed.”

Skraba said that in addition to looking at the

funding formula, he would also look into how almost \$500 million he claimed was put into schools last year was spent. He also spoke in favor of re-evaluating curriculum for older students to give them more alternatives and keep them engaged with school through graduation.

“We need to make sure that our K-12 system is fully funded,” Johnson said.

He pointed out that over the past decade schools have added more specialized support staff, and he questioned if they were all needed. While he’s an ardent advocate of public schooling and wants to look at the fund-

ing system, he also suggested that “a year or two of firming up the budget and cutting things isn’t necessarily a bad deal.”

Abortion

In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling voiding the Roe v. Wade constitutional guarantee of a right to abortion, over half of the states in the country have raced to impose strict restrictions or outright bans on the procedure. But in Minnesota, the right to an abortion is still protected under the state constitution.

Neither candidate supports a total ban on abortions, and both are in

agreement that abortion shouldn’t be an alternative to responsible birth control.

“We need to provide women an opportunity in cases of incest or rape or if her health is in danger or if the baby’s not medically going to make it,” Johnson said. “I’m not advocating for an elimination of all abortion clinics in the state because I think there’s still a medical need for women to have those in those circumstances I mentioned.”

“It’s up to the people that were involved,” Sk-

raba said. “As a legislator I hope that I could craft legislation to help a woman make a decision to keep the child. Instead of saying I have to do this, there’s no other solution, how can I craft language that gives you another solution that you win and the child wins. When it comes to the whole argument about a woman’s health, that’s between the doctor and the woman making that decision. That’s a decision between them. I don’t know why we’re even hung up on this.”



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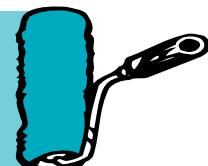
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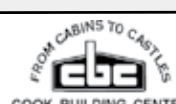
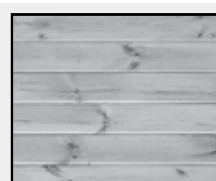
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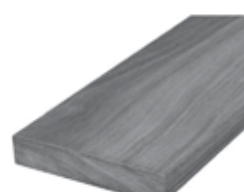
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community it serves."

Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital 328 W. Conan St. | Ely, MN 55731 | 218-365-8704

EOE

Super Crossword

Answers

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