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# the TIMBERJAY



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989 VOL. 34, ISSUE 4 February 3, 2023 \$1<sup>50</sup>

## ELY WINTER FESTIVAL

# No longer a youngster

Ely's biggest winter event celebrates its 30th year

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- The Ely Winter Festival is now on its amazing 30th year, but there's no sign it's slowing with approaching middle age.

The event officially kicked off on Thursday, but signs of the imminent event were breaking out all over town days earlier. Wooden forms for making the snow sculpting blocks were sprouting in the park

and other key locations. Local art began appearing in store windows for the Art Walk, which continues through February. All day Monday, the snow sculpting team of Jaymie Stocks, Sarah Moldenhauer, and Mason Wiekert were busy carving the traditional festival pin in the space in front of Piragis Northwoods Company at the corner of Sheridan and Central. That's across the street from the headquarters of this year's

event at Northern Grounds.  
**Humble beginnings**  
The event began life as an annual cross-country ski race in 1984 from Tower to Ely. The activities at the finish line expanded starting in 1988 until it grew into a three-day weekend full of outdoor winter activities. In 1993, the headline event of the Snow Sculpting Symposium arrived as well

See...FESTIVAL pg. 10



## RECOGNITION

# Timberjay takes first for General Excellence

REGIONAL — The Timberjay took home some of the top awards in the Minnesota Newspaper Association's Better Newspaper Contest. Winners were announced Jan. 26 during the MNA's annual convention. The Timberjay took first place in General Excellence among weekly newspapers, circulation 1,501-3,000. That's considered the top award in the contest, and it's one that the Timberjay has won several times previously.

"We liked the editorial focus on important local and regional issues," wrote the judges in their comments. "Good layout. Good coverage of local news, school, and sports. The best in a very good field." The Timberjay also took first place for Best Editorial Portfolio among weeklies circulation 1,501-7,000. It's considered a special award that highlights the consistent strength of the newspaper's staff written editorials and it's another award category in which the Timberjay has been a regular winner.

Timberjay Cook-Orr Editor David Colburn took home a first-place award for Best Arts and Entertainment Story for his feature on North Woods senior artists and their astonishingly talented efforts at self-expression.

Colburn took second place for his in-depth look at criminal sentencing in the wake of the sentencing of two burglary suspects involved in the same crime and the radically different sentences the two men received. "More reporting like this is needed in journalism," wrote the

See...AWARDS pg. 9



## ARROWHEAD 135

# Cold arrives just in time

For one of the world's toughest races, brutal temps are part of the fun

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A mild January in the North Country turned to seasonably brutal cold this past weekend, just in time for the 19th edition of one of the world's toughest endurance challenges, the Arrowhead 135 ultramarathon, the 135-mile bike/ski/foot race from International Falls to Tower along the Arrowhead Trail.

"I got my wish – the worse, the better," said co-race director

Jackie Krueger.  
Krueger wasn't being dramatic. In fact, the annual race is timed to coincide with what is traditionally the coldest week of winter in Minnesota's Arrowhead. It's a test of mettle and endurance against some of the worst conditions that Mother Nature can dish out and it's been called one of the toughest races anywhere in the world.  
"Nobody wants an easy race. They want a hard race. That's what

See...MARATHON pg. 10

**Above:**  
**Burnsville bike rider Aaron Olson's beard is completely frozen white as he rolls into the checkpoint at Melgeorges on Monday.**

photo by D. Colburn

## AMBULANCE

# Jankila: Greenwood should get back to the table

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- Hibbing Fire Chief Erik Jankila had a consistent and perhaps unwelcome message for the Greenwood Town Board, Monday, as he presented his take on the township's recently completed ambulance study. The ambulance services that currently cover the township will need to be part of any discussion of the future, he advised.

"None of this study will happen just if the town board asks to do it," said Jankila, who is a Greenwood property owner himself. "You would need significant input from the providers...If the Tower and Cook ambulance services aren't at the table...it can't come to fruition."

Jankila was there by invitation to provide his insights on the so-called McGrath study on ways to bring prompter advanced life support service to the township. "Everything in this study is doable," he told the board. "But how do you get there and make it doable?"

He noted that the study failed to offer a road map to any of the four options it laid out. "That is the most important part," he said.

Jankila has spent his career in emergency services, as a trained paramedic and firefighter, and now overseeing the Hibbing Fire Department, which employs firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs.

Jankila voiced some support for a joint powers approach to the

See...JANKILA pg. 9



Eric Jankila



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## Community notices

**Celebrate National “Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast” Day Saturday, Feb. 4**  
EMBARRASS - I scream. You scream. We all scream for ice cream! Join us at the Embarrass Timber Hall for all-you-can-eat pancakes, choice of ham or sausage links, fruit cup, juice, a bottomless cup of coffee, and a scoop of ice cream Feb. 4 from 8 to 11 a.m.  
Attendees can also take home donated books and puzzles for those long winter nights. Adults \$6, children 6-10 years \$3, and under 5 years FREE. Sponsored by the Embarrass Region Fair Association.

**Dan Reed to speak at Finnish Americans and Friends meeting Tuesday, Feb. 7**  
HIBBING - Dan Reed will present “We Spoke of Many Things” at the meeting of Finnish Americans and Friends on Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 2 p.m. The group will meet at Grace Lutheran Church, 4010 9th Avenue W, Hibbing. Reed’s multi-talents have him dubbed “The Renaissance Man of Automba” by the Cloquet *Pine Knot* newspaper! In a new book, Reed has related numerous funny, clever, sad, heroic, and ironic stories of Finnish Americans living in Automba township in Carlton County. As Reed notes, “History records people in the midst of their struggles and their triumphs.” These reminisces may resonate with your personal memories. Coffee and refreshments will follow the presentation; please join us for an enjoyable afternoon of delving into Finnish lore, stimulating conversation, meeting old friends, and making new friends! The public is welcome.

**Minnesota North College’s Spring Thaw magazine seeks submissions through Feb. 15**  
GRAND RAPIDS - Minnesota North College’s annual literary and arts magazine, *Spring Thaw* seeks submissions of stories, poems, creative nonfiction, photography, and photographed art from both established and aspiring writers and artists for the 2023 edition of the magazine. Printed annually since the 1970s, this year’s edition will award a \$100 prize for one accepted entry in prose, poetry, and art as selected by the editorial board.  
Drew Olson, faculty advisor and managing editor at *Spring Thaw* said the 2022 edition, published both in print and online at [www.springthawmagazine.com](http://www.springthawmagazine.com), featured both new and established writers not just from the region, but also from various states across the upper Midwest and Great Plains region.  
The \$100 prize award, new to the publication for 2023, is made possible by a donation and sponsorship from the Minnesota North College–Itasca Campus Foundation. Olson hopes it will help to further expand the publication’s interest and reach in the greater northern region of the state. Submissions of work from writers and artists will be accepted until February 15, 2023. Submission information can be found at [www.springthawmagazine.com](http://www.springthawmagazine.com).



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**LEADERSHIP CHANGE**

# Habitat elects new board members

Volunteer leaders are dedicated to affordable homeownership in our area

VIRGINIA — At their Jan. 12 meeting, The North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity (NSLCH-FH) Board of Directors elected five new members: Steve Burgess, Jenna Conda, Tim Officer, Judy Peliska, and Debra Warner. Board members Larry Cuffe, Jr., Doug Gettle, and Caroline Owens completed their terms.

“North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity’s success in helping our neighbors in need of affordable homeownership is due, in a large part, to great leadership,” said Executive Director Nathan Thompson. “We have been blessed with a talented, self-sustaining, and diligent group of leaders that works tirelessly to provide strategic direction, oversight, and day-to-day support of our mission.”

The 2023 NSLCHFH officers and additional directors are: Linda Scott, president; Greg Krog, vice president; Don Rauch, treasurer; Rosalyn Barker, secretary; Kris Clover; Amy Crep; Carolyn Dineen; John Filander; Don Knight; Paul Knuti; Nancy Moyer; Jacqueline Prescott; Don Rauch; Joy Sundquist; Rolf Swanson; and Mark Weir.

**Incoming board members**

Steve Burgess of Tower, a volunteer firefighter, is an adjunct instructor in fire training and safety classes for Minnesota North College. He is retired from full-time employment and was the NSLCHFH construction manager (2015–2017).

“I was able to build a new home for my family using energy-saving methods I learned while working for Habitat,” Burgess said. “I have had the enjoyment of providing afford-



able housing and seeing its impact.” Jenna Conda of Hibbing is a relationship banker at the Hibbing branch of Wells Fargo. Jenna has been an active volunteer with North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity through the Wells Fargo Builds program.

Conda, who bought her first home at age 21, said, “Being proud is an understatement when 15 years go by and you realize, ‘This is mine, I did this.’”

Tim Officer of Biwabik is retired after 31 years in law enforcement, including 15 years as a K-9 handler. He is a frequent volunteer at Habitat build sites.

## NORTH ST. LOUIS COUNTY 4-H Upcoming ways to explore the world of 4-H!

REGIONAL - Many people may not know that 4-H is more than just animals and agriculture. There are more than 100 project areas that youth can explore in 4-H.

All youth and their families are encouraged to come and explore the world of 4-H. This is a great opportunity to learn what 4-H is all about, discover everything that 4-H has to offer and get questions answered.

We’ll cover what 4-H is, how you can get the most out of your membership, and what to expect, as well as what other things you can do in 4-H. There will be fun activities and prizes!

Join us on Monday Feb. 13 at the Cherry School in Iron. This free event will run from 4:30-6 p.m, so come when you can!

To RSVP, contact Nicole Kudrle by call or text at 218-404-6596 or email [vande422@umn.edu](mailto:vande422@umn.edu) by Friday, Feb. 10.



**NE 4-H Cloverbud Project Days**

All Kindergarteners through second graders are invited to participate in 4-H Cloverbud Project Days.

Participants will have a chance to explore and have fun with a variety of 4-H project areas and have the opportunity to complete a hands-on project during each session. This is a great opportunity to see what 4-H all is about and learn new skills!

NE 4-H Cloverbud Project Day will be Saturday, Feb. 11 from 10-11:30 a.m. at the Government Service Center in Virginia. This is a free program, and parents/guardians do not need to stay for the program.

To enroll, register at <https://mn.4honline.com>. Select "Undecided" for the club, and select "Cloverbuds" for the project area. For questions or help with enrollment in Cloverbud Project day, contact Nicole Kudrle, 4-H Extension Educator by phone/text at 218-404-6596 or email [vande422@umn.edu](mailto:vande422@umn.edu).

**North St. Louis County 4-H Dog Project**

Youth members of the Minnesota 4-H Dog Project learn to train and build a trusting relationship with their pet. Topics of study include canine behavior, breed characteristics, diseases, ethics, grooming, health, nutrition, responsible breeding, service dogs, therapy dogs, dog-related careers, and the wide array of dog sports.

Students in third grade to a year past high school may participate in the 4-H Dog Project. The 4-H Dog Project meets at Golden Paws Dog Training in Aurora 3722 Highway 99 Thursdays from 6-7 p.m. There are two six-week sessions, the first session starting Jan. 26 running through March 20 and the second session starting April 6 and running through May 18.

The cost to participate in either the first or second six-week session of the 4-H dog project is \$15, and scholarships are available upon request. To enroll, register at <https://mn.4honline.com>. Select "4-H Dog Project" as your

club. Select all project areas that your child is interested in. For questions or help with enrollment, contact Nicole Kudrle, 4-H Extension Educator by phone or text at 218-404-6596 or email [vande422@umn.edu](mailto:vande422@umn.edu).

**Basic Animal Nutrition Series**

Youth are invited to join us for a four session series on basic animal nutrition. Each workshop will be hosted by local experts in the field on animal nutrition. Youth may attend as many workshops as they choose. All workshops are free and will be held at the Cherry School.

➤Dairy - Thursday, Feb. 23 at 6 p.m.

➤Swine - Thursday, March 2 at 6 p.m.

➤Sheep & Goat - Thursday, April 13 at 6 p.m.

For more information contact Troy Salzar at [salze003@umn.edu](mailto:salze003@umn.edu) or 218-591-0478.

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ELY

# Ely City Council studies cannabinoid options

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY— How to regulate the sale of cannabinoid products here was the focus of a sometimes-rambling city council study session here on Tuesday. Minnesota legalized edible cannabinoid products with up to 5 mg of THC per serving during last year’s legislative session, with a limit of 50 mg per package.

But the new law, which caught many communities and even lawmakers by surprise, came with little thought about how to regulate the sale of the products. Minnesota cities can adopt their own regulations through ordinance, and many are doing so to provide more structure than was offered in the 2022 law. Many Minnesotan municipalities already regulate permits, fees, and sale hours for products like tobacco and alcohol.

Like many other Minnesota cities, Ely passed a moratorium on all new permits to sell cannabi-



The Ely City Council. From left-to-right: Al Forsman, Paul Kess, Jerome Debeltz, Mayor Heidi Omerza, Ryan Callen, Angela Campbell, and Adam Bisbee. Photos by C. Clark

noids at its Dec. 6 meeting due to concerns over the introduction of edible cannabinoids.

As the *Timberjay* reported in its Dec. 9 issue, the moratorium expires on March 7 if city takes no further action or until the city passes its own ordinance regulating the sale of these products. The city can opt to extend its moratorium, which it can do for up to a year.

The city council shot down its first attempt at a cannabinoid ordinance on Jan. 17. At this same meeting, businessman

John Chaulklin, who runs a smoke shop and edible cannabinoid store with his wife in Cook, approached the council for a permit to open a lounge in Ely. The proposed lounge would sell edible cannabinoid products for consumption on the premises.

According to Ely city attorney Kelly Klun, Chaulklin has since contacted the city to change the business model from a lounge with onsite consumption to a shop that sells the product for consumption offsite by customers.

Though Chaulklin changed his business proposal, since then, an existing Ely restaurant inquired with the city over the possibility of getting a permit to sell cannabinoid beverages, which are included as legal edibles in Minnesota.

### The study session

At the Jan. 17 council meeting, the councilors decided to hold a study session before reintroducing a cannabinoid ordinance as an agenda item. The agenda for the session, which is available on

the city’s website, included two different proposed ordinances for regulating the sale of edibles. One more permissive ordinance allowed “on-sale” edible cannabinoid products and to be sold in Ely well as “off-sale” products. The other ordinance allowed only “off-sale” products.

The difference between the two is that “on-sale” products can be consumed where they are sold whereas “off-sale” products are sold to be consumed elsewhere.

“On-sale is literally

the chewing of the gummy bears, for example, on site where you purchased it, or it could also be a THC beverage (to drink) on site where you purchased it,” explained Klun to the councilors.

### Councilor concerns

The subsequent discussion by the council and its questions to Klun, Police Chief Chad Houde, and Police Officer Brad Roy, suggested that several councilors take a dim view of permitting “on-

See ELY.pg. 5

MINING

# Federal ban put in place for Minnesota mineral leases

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The U.S. Department of the Interior announced Thursday that they are withdrawing approximately 225,504 acres of the Superior National Forest from potential mineral leasing for the next 20 years.

The decision, announced Jan. 26 by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, covers a sizable portion of the upper Rainy River watershed, portions of which are known to hold large, low-grade deposits of copper, nickel, palladium, and cobalt. The decision is clearly a blow to copper mining giant Antofagasta and its proposed Twin Metals mine, near Ely, although the fate

of two mineral leases under which the company had advanced that project remain subject to court review.

The Biden administration took steps in January 2022 to cancel those mineral leases, however, Twin Metals is suing to overturn that decision.

The mineral withdrawal would prevent new leasing in the affected area, but the former leases could still be reinstated by a court. This week’s decision, however, will block a third mineral lease sought by Twin Metals for at least the next 20 years.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act gives the Interior Secretary authority to withdraw areas from mineral leasing

for a variety of reasons, including protection of exceptional areas against environmental degradation.

The affected area is located just upstream of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, so waters impacted by mining pollution would impact an area known for some of the highest quality waters in the United States. Interior officials argued that the decision is consistent with the intent of federal lawmakers. “Congress expanded protections for the wilderness area in 1978, when it directed the Forest Service to maintain high water quality and to minimize ‘to the maximum extent possible’ the environmental impacts associated with mineral de-

velopment,” noted a press statement issued by the department.

“The Department of the Interior takes seriously our obligations to steward public lands and waters on behalf of all Americans,” said Secretary Haaland. “Protecting a place like the Boundary Waters is key to supporting the health of the watershed and its surrounding wildlife, upholding our tribal trust and treaty responsibilities, and boosting the local recreation economy.”

Federal officials note that the decision “is the culmination of more than a year of evaluation by federal partners and robust public involvement regarding the potential impacts of mining on the

important natural and cultural resources of the Rainy River Watershed.” The agency undertook and completed an environmental review of the proposed withdrawal that concluded the benefits of a withdrawal outweighed any drawbacks.

The U.S. Forest Service had requested the withdrawal in an application filed with the Bureau of Land Management in October 2021. The Forest Service manages the surface lands in question, while the BLM manages federal mineral rights. Federal law, however, does give the Forest Service the right to approve or deny mining on lands within the Superior National Forest and the agen-

cy has indicated its opposition to copper-nickel mining within the Rainy River watershed for several years. That opposition continued through the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations.

Forest Service officials have indicated that the sulfide-based ore found in the watershed poses a unique threat to downstream waters, one that agency officials fear would be difficult to prevent or mitigate.

Supporters of the mine plan have argued that the mine can be operated without impacting downstream waters and that it would create several hundred high-paying

See MINING.pg. 5

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Editorial

A stolen birthright

How do Minnesotans gain the confidence to eat the fish they catch

Our story last week on the latest research on the prevalence of chemicals known collectively as PFAS in freshwater fish should have brought a tear to the eye of every Minnesotan. Catching and eating our own locally-caught fish has been a tradition and a way of life for countless Minnesotans over the years, and it always brought with it a sense of well-being. The belief that we were eating a food that was not just good tasting but was healthful in every sense of the word.

So, where do Minnesotans go to get that sense of well-being back? Where do we go to regain a once important source of healthy food?

Sadly, there is no place to go, at least not here in Minnesota. The study, which was based on Environmental Protection Agency testing of fish fillets in Minnesota and across the country, showed dangerous levels of PFAS and related chemicals in almost every sample. Some were higher and some were lower, but the numbers were troubling across the board.

The fish tested included Minnesota staples, like walleye and both large- and small-mouth bass. The results showed that just one meal of freshwater fish per year was enough to cause a spike in PFAS levels in human blood. Anglers who regularly eat freshwater fish had PFAS levels in their blood anywhere from 10-27 times the levels found in the general public.

PFAS, which have been increasingly in the news in recent years, has been shown to impact our immune system and is linked to cancer, high cholesterol, thyroid disease, and reproductive and developmental impacts.

The dangers of these chemicals have been known for years and yet the government failed to take steps to end the manufacturing of these synthetics, which were used in everything from fire-fighting foam to fabric protecting spray. And companies, like Minnesota-based 3M, continued to manufacture these products for years even as their dangers became increasingly apparent.

What is lacking today is both guidance and a discussion about how we avoid such tragedies in the future.

First, we need to hear from agencies like the Minnesota Department of Health, to better understand the risks associated with the levels of PFAS found in our state's waters. As with mercury, we need more testing,

lake-by-lake, and recommendations about how much locally-caught fish Minnesotans can safely consume. As it is, Minnesotans are flying blind. Fishing and eating fish is too important to Minnesota's cultural traditions and economy to continue to stick our heads in the sand.

And what about accountability? It's true that the companies that made millions of dollars off the manufacture of these products may face a form of accountability. 3M has been targeted by literally hundreds of lawsuits over its involvement and a recent analysis from Bloomberg Law suggests that the company could face eventual bankruptcy as a result of its potential liability.

While that's a form of accountability, it doesn't make up for the contamination of an important source of what was once high-quality food. The recent study notes that the loss of locally-caught fish as a healthy food source will fall hardest on those of lower means, including recent immigrants or tribal communities, that often depend heavily on the eating of fish for sustenance. As always, the poor suffer the worst consequences when we abuse the commons.

This is, of course, an age-old story about corporations using our common environment, be it our air, water, or land, as a free dumping ground for their toxic products, emissions, and discharges. PFAS is only one of a thousand examples, but it's one that will be with us for a long, long time. PFAS are what are known as "forever chemicals," because they don't readily break down in the environment. They will be polluting our waters today and for generations in the future. These chemicals have robbed Minnesotans of a birthright.

We know there are those who advocate for less regulation of business. We also know that many of us, with good reason, don't trust the government to be the check on business activities that they should be. In part because of that mistrust, Minnesotans and Americans in general have been too willing to starve our regulatory agencies through understaffing, weak laws, or lax enforcement. The story of PFAS and the impact to Minnesota fish is a classic example of what happens when that anti-regulatory attitude holds sway. It's time we once again acknowledge the risks of letting unchecked corporations salt our very Earth.



Letters from Readers

Health providers case to save lives through safety legislation

Preventing firearm death and injury is a critical issue that needs to be addressed if we are to reduce suicide rates in Minnesota. According to data from the Minnesota Department of Health, firearms were the leading method of suicide in the state, accounting for more than half of all suicide deaths. This is a concerning trend that must be addressed if we want to save lives in Minnesota.

One of the keys to reducing suicide rates in Minnesota is through stricter firearm safety measures. Studies have shown that states with stricter gun laws have lower suicide rates. Specifically, a study published in the American Journal of Public Health found that states with stricter gun laws had a 17 percent lower suicide rate compared to states with looser laws. This suggests that tighter firearm regulations can save lives.

One specific policy that has been shown to be effective in reducing firearm violence, including suicide rates, is universal background checks. These checks would reduce rates of violence in Minnesota by ensuring that people with felony convictions, a history of domestic abuse, restraining orders, and people who have been deemed mentally incompetent by a court are not able to purchase firearms.

Another policy that could help reduce suicide rates in Minnesota is the implementation of "red flag" laws. These laws allow family members or law enforcement to petition a court to temporarily remove firearms from someone who is at risk of harming themselves or others. Another study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that red flag laws were associated with a 13 per-

cent reduction in suicide rates.

Preventing firearm death and injury is a critical issue that needs to be addressed in order to reduce suicide rates in Minnesota. Stricter gun laws, universal background checks, and red flag laws have been shown to be effective in reducing suicide rates. It is time for the Legislature to take action and pass these policies to save lives in Minnesota.

**Dr. Mary Bianco**  
**Dr. Joe Bianco**  
**Dr. Jim Montana**  
**Molly Edwards DNP**  
**Peggy York-Jesme FNP**  
**Ely**

What if long-term care wasn't here when you needed it?

When three of my grandparents were no longer able to stay at home because of medical issues and aging, my family was fortunate to be able to visit them daily at the Boundary Waters Care Center (then the Ely Nursing Home). During junior high and high school, volunteer opportunities as a candystriper at the nursing home steered me into a long career in nursing. Recently, a family member had a three month stay at the BWCC for recovery and rehabilitation from an injury. Again, it was convenient to visit on a daily basis, stop in with important news or mail, and bring a dog to visit. As a health care professional, I was impressed with the care given, the camaraderie, caring nature, and medical expertise of the staff, including the rehabilitation and dietary departments.

About four months ago I surprised myself by coming out of retirement to accept a position at the Boundary Waters Care Center. While I hadn't ever really considered a job in long term care, I discovered what a rewarding position it is. I love my job. I love going to work. I love the

residents and the staff with whom I get to interact.

Through no fault of their own, the Boundary Waters Care Center has found itself in a rather precarious financial position, the result of a "perfect storm" of factors which they have no control over (slow and lacking reimbursement, staff shortages, etc.). Their goal as a nonprofit is to break even while providing high quality and accessible care to residents of Ely and the surrounding area. That is threatened. Closure of the BWCC is a possibility. The next closest skilled nursing facility is roughly 50 miles away, quite the drive for family and friends.

Please take a moment to reach out to our local legislators and encourage them to support House File 733 and Senate File #7 which would provide increased staff wages (HF 733) and cost reports and gap funding (SF #7). While this isn't a permanent fix to the problem, it is a solution that would increase the viability of the BWCC and allow it to continue operations. Rep. Roger Skraba can be reached at: 1-651-296-2190 (or toll free at 800-339-0466) or email ([rep.roger.skraba@house.mn.gov](mailto:rep.roger.skraba@house.mn.gov)). Sen. Grant Hauschild can be reached at: 1-651-296-1789.

While I will be just fine without my job, 49 of my colleagues likely will not. Even worse, the residents and their families will be greatly impacted by the closure of this long-standing community facility. Donations in any amount can be sent to Adam Masloski, Executive Director, BWCC, 200 W. Conan St., Ely, MN 55731. Many of us don't think about our future need for services (including long term care) until we need them. Wouldn't it be a travesty if this service isn't there when we need it most?

**Sally Koski, PhD, RN**  
**Nurse Educator**  
**Boundary Waters Care Center**

COMMENTARY

House of Representatives dysfunction is cause for alarm

Like many Americans, I watched with dismay this month as the House of Representatives struggled through 15 votes over four days to select a new speaker. The sense of dysfunction was remarkable. Anyone watching might well have wondered about our ability to govern ourselves.

For a week, there was no speaker to call the House to order. Elected members couldn't take the oath of office and start conducting business. One

house of the Congress was effectively AWOL. Finally, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-California, secured enough votes to win. But the chaos and divisions do not bode well for his leadership.

I served in the House for 34 years, and I never witnessed anything like this. In fact, it had been 100 years since the House majority took more than one vote to select a speaker. The last time it took more than 15 votes was in 1859, when Congress and America

were bitterly divided on the eve of the Civil War.

It's fitting that the contest took place on the two-year anniversary of the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the Capital, when supporters of Donald Trump tried to prevent the Senate from confirming Joe Biden's election as president. Both events are reminders that democracy is fragile.

Reportedly, McCarthy won only after granting concessions to hard-right conservatives who demanded rules changes and committee assignments to amplify their power. That's a dangerous posture for our system of government, when an extreme minority can effectively dictate

terms to the majority.

It also makes it less likely the House will compromise with the Democratic-controlled Senate to pass legislation. Government shutdowns may be looming when must-pass spending bills come due. It may be difficult, later this year, for Congress to raise the federal debt limit and prevent a default on U.S. financial obligations.

It would be bad enough if the deadlock over House leadership were the only sign that our democracy is fragile, but it's not. There's also the fact that Trump refused to recognize the results of the 2020 election, and that many Americans still be-

lieve that it was rigged.

These blows to our system accumulate. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit annual democracy index, the United States has been a "flawed democracy," not a full democracy, for several years. It cites Trump's election denial, the nation's "extremely low levels of trust in institutions and political parties," and "deep dysfunction in the functioning of government" as reasons for the mediocre rating.

Some of this reflects the politics of the day. We Americans have become increasingly



LEE HAMILTON



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ely teen convicted of attempted murder

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

VIRGINIA- An Ely youth was convicted on Jan. 24 of the second-degree attempted murder of his younger brother. Minnesota Sixth District Judge Robert Friday passed down the guilty verdict at his bench in Virginia for Michael William Haapala, age 18. Haapala waived his right to a jury trial, opting for a judge’s decision based on an agreed-upon submission of 124 items of evidence.

Haapala was 16 when he attacked and stabbed his then 13-year-old brother 13 times early on Oct.8, 2020. Originally charged as a juvenile, the state prosecutor’s office successfully moved to have Haapala charged as an adult late in 2021. Haapala was twice evaluated for mental competency, once as a juvenile and once as an adult, and found fit to stand trial. Judge Friday’s verdict was a general finding. Minnesota requires him to issue a detailed memorandum within seven days explaining his verdict. Friday scheduled a hearing for this purpose on Feb 2, which is after the time that the Feb. 3 issue of the *Timberjay* goes to press.

The original incident.

Haapala took his brother for a walk

between 2-3 a.m. in the woods near Trezona Trail on the morning of Thursday, Oct. 8, 2020. Haapala stabbed his brother multiple times. He left his brother in a ravine by Miner’s Lake, assiming that he would die from blood loss. One of the stab wounds rendered the victim incapable of speech, making it impossible to call for help.

A hiker spotted the victim around 3 p.m. and called 911. He later led Officer Deinhammer of the Ely Police Department to the scene. When Deinhammer first examined the victim, he “was cold to the touch,” and when the officer checked for a pulse, he “heard a groaning sound,” according to the charging documents on file with the court.

The victim was first transported to Ely Bloomenson Hospital and later to Essentia Health in Duluth via Life Link air ambulance.

Haapala admitted to police in the presence of his father that he had stabbed his brother. Police found the knife used in the attack in Haapala’s closet and his wet sneakers with what appeared to be blood on them in his bedroom.

Juvenile charge

Haapala was sent to the Arrowhead Juvenile Center in Duluth. As originally reported in the *Timberjay*, Haapala was

arraigned during the last week of October 2022 for attempted murder in the second degree, which means that the attacker intended to kill but that the act was not premeditated.

At that time, Sixth District Judge Michelle Anderson in Virginia ordered “Rule 20” psychiatric, psychological and competency studies, along with a chemical dependency study and a family assessment by St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services.

In April 2021, Haapala was deemed mentally unfit for trial but was later deemed restored to mental competency according to the Duluth News Tribune. Due to restored competency, Judge Anderson granted a motion by the St. Louis Co. Prosecutor’s office in Dec. 2021 to allow Haapala to be tried as an adult.

The public defender representing Haapala, Lara Whiteside of Cook, filed documents with the court intending to defend Haapala on the grounds of “mental illness of deficiency.” The adult case was assigned to Judge Friday, who ordered a new mental assessment of Haapala on Jan.19, 2022.

Again found mentally competent, Haapala waived his right to a jury trial, opting for a stipulated evidence trial initialed by Judge Friday at the St. Louis Co. Courthouse in Virginia on Jan. 17.

TEDA loans now available

TOWER— Looking to make improvements to your business or commercial property in Tower? Then you’ll want to contact the Tower Economic Development Authority, which has restocked its commercial rehabilitation loan program thanks to matching dollars from Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation.

The TEDA board has adopted new guidelines and the program is now ready to start lending low-interest money for improvements to commercial buildings or business expansions in Tower. The money is available at just two percent interest, well below the current rates offered by many other lenders.

The loan program is revolving, which means money repaid to the program by borrowers becomes available again for new lending.

“We’re thankful to the IRRR for their partnership on this effort,” said TEDA executive director Marshall Helmberger. “Restocking these funds was made possible, as well, by the recent sale of lands on Mud Creek Rd. Those dollars are now being invested here in town.”

Interested? Then call TEDA executive director Marshall Helmberger at 218-750-2510 to get started.

MINING...Continued from page 3

jobs in the area.

Supporters of protection have argued that the mine would inevitably pollute and that the development would threaten a robust recreational economy that already exists in the area, catering to visitors to the wilderness.

Reaction swift

While the Biden administration’s decision was expected, the response was swift and, at times, hyperbolic, from elected officials from northeastern Minnesota, who have backed the Twin Metals proposal.

“Today is an attack on our way of life,” said Eighth District Congressman Pete Stauber. “Joe Biden banned mining in 225,000 acres of Minnesota’s Iron Range, and

locked up development of taconite, copper, nickel, cobalt, platinum group elements, and more,” said Stauber, who promised a political response to the action. “They will answer for the pain they elected to cause my constituents today,” Stauber noted.

Contrary to Stauber’s comments, the withdrawal decision will not impact iron ore or taconite mining in northeastern Minnesota, even on lands within the Superior National Forest. Neither will the decision impact the proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine, near Hoyt Lakes, which is located within the Superior National Forest but outside the Rainy River watershed. That project has been in development for the past two decades and

is currently mired in legal challenges to several of its permits.

Other northeastern Minnesota lawmakers also weighed in, with an accusation-filled letter they sent to President Biden. “Today’s order will cause Minnesota and our communities to lose thousands of potential jobs that would have resulted in future mining projects, billions of dollars in future investment in the people of northeast Minnesota, and billions of dollars in revenues that would support students through Minnesota’s School Trust Lands,” notes the letter, which is signed by the entire northeastern Minnesota legislative delegation.

In fact, the withdrawal will have no direct impact on state school trust lands, since the withdrawal only affects federal land within the borders of the withdrawal zone. Meanwhile, state officials had concerns about potential liability from a Twin Metals proposal to store mine tailings on school trust land. In a Feb. 15 letter to Twin Metals CEO Kelly Osborne, DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen noted that the DNR officials believed that request posed an “unacceptable financial risk to the state and potentially to the

School Trust Fund.”

Area lawmakers let other questionably sourced charges fly as well. “It is unacceptable that your administration is once again choosing to invest taxpayer dollars in the development of Chinese owned mines in nations that employ child-slave labor while blocking... critical minerals here in America,” wrote the delegation. The *Timberjay* inquired with the delegation’s spokesperson, David Anderson, about the source for the claim, but he did not respond prior to presstime. While the Biden administration has recently announced a U.S. commitment to invest in mines in Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, those investments were announced last year primarily as a geopolitical strategy to begin to reverse growing Chinese influence over the metals mining sector in Africa.

Meanwhile, supporters of the withdrawal were elated by the administration’s decision. “In my view, this decision is the most significant land protection effort in the past 40 years in Minnesota,” said Becky Rom, of Ely, who serves as national chair of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, an



Charlie Hutchins provided the music at the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters party on Jan. 27 in Ely. Photo by C. Clark

organization established to fight the proposed Twin Metals project.

The group held a celebration rally last Friday in Ely to mark the political victory.

Despite the win, Rom said her organization can’t rest until the wilderness enjoys permanent protection from the potential impacts of sulfide-based mining. The organization has been working at both the state and federal level

for years to pass legislation that would permanently withdraw mineral leasing from that portion of the upper Rainy River watershed where the sulfide-based deposits are found.

The BWCAW is among the largest wilderness areas in the lower 48 states and is the most heavily visited wilderness in the country.



The Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters held a party on Jan. 27 at their Ely storefront to celebrate the revocation of the mining leases in Superior National Forest. Photo by C. Clark

ELY...Continued from page 4

sale” products.

“I’m against on-sale,” council member Al Forsman bluntly. “I’m going to support the ordinance for ‘off-sale’ alone. I think it’s inevitable that it’s going to pass in the state (Legislature) anyways, so we might as well get to get control of it (how we sell it in Ely).” Councilor Adam Bisbee agreed with Forsman.

The conversation and the questions careened from topic to topic, covering a lot of ground, including discussion about how to determine if someone is impaired driving a vehicle

after consuming legal edible cannabinoids, the regulation of these products in parks, public spaces or near schools, and how to enforce violations of the ordinance.

Each councilor had his or her own areas of concern and each had questions or comments to make during the almost-hour long session. The session resembled a graduate school seminar more than a meeting of locally elected officials.

How edible cannabinoids are packaged for off-sale purchase was another topic of concern. For

example, the councilors worried that the edible cannabinoid gummies and their packaging might appeal to toddlers.

“We’re going to have more poison control incidences with children,” remarked Officer Roy. “We’re seeing it already in places like California.”

Another exchange over packaging brought up a concern about people outside of Ely bringing it into the community with no regard for local laws or concerns. Mayor Heidi Omerza suggested there are limits to what the city can do about that, “We

do happen to be a tourist community. We can say yes or no to whatever we want, however, believe it or not, people may bring whatever they want up here, so we will be dealing with this one way or the other.”

Councilor Bisbee offered a humorous take. “I can already envision thousands of slimy gummy bear wrappers strewn across the parks and into the Boundary Waters and everywhere in between – and I don’t know if they are offered in [sustainable] packaging.”

Another draft ordi-

HOUSE...Continued from page 4

partisan and suspicious of each other. Republicans and Democrats seem to inhabit different universes. Gerrymandered election districts and partisan media outlets have pushed elected officials to the extremes. McCarthy, for example, is no centrist. He aligned himself with Trump, who endorsed him for speaker. Yet his ambition was almost thwarted

by the party’s right flank.

Today, an occasional display of bipartisanship can seem almost poignant, as when Biden and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell traveled to Kentucky this month to celebrate infrastructure funding.

Partisanship isn’t always bad, of course. In our two-party system, it’s part of how government

works. But it can be overdone to the point where it brings the whole enterprise to a halt. Political parties should compete for power but compromise when needed for the good of the nation.

We Americans are deeply fortunate. Our nation’s founders devised a system of government that has served us well for over 200 years. But it isn’t

written in the stars that the United States will always prosper, or even exist as a democratic republic. Maintaining a functioning democracy is a big challenge, and it’s up to all of us to ensure our representatives perform their job seriously and make the system work.



**the**  
**TIMBERJAY**

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Week of Feb. 6

**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 Feb. 21.

Greenwood Fire Dept.- Meetings on the first and third 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.

**Skating parties underway in Soudan**  
SOUDAN- Skating parties are held at the Soudan Skating Rink every Tuesday and Saturday, weather permitting. There is free food, games, and lots of fun for all ages. Loaner skates in almost every size are available in the warming shack.  
Hours are Tuesdays from 4 – 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 12 – 2 p.m.  
Sponsors this week are Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Recreation Board, Leonard Stefanich, St. James Presbyterian Church, Dick Johnson, and Coke Products. If you are interested in helping sponsor this event, please contact Jim “Chimpy” Tuominen at Zup’s in Tower, 218-753-2725.

**“A New Journey” for St. James**  
TOWER- With the retirement of Pastor Doug Workman at St. James Presbyterian Church in Tower, the Session has supplied the pulpit with the following speakers for February. Services are Sunday at 10 a.m., with coffee an’ following.  
Feb. 5: Pastor Ellen Taube  
Feb. 12: Linda Kroholm  
Feb. 19: JoAnne Connell  
Feb. 26: Rev. Richard Blood  
Every Sunday, during the service, there is special music with Greg Kuchan on guitar and his wife, Denise Kuchan on electric drums.

FOOD SHELF FUNDRAISER

# St. Martin’s Souper Bowl meal set for Feb. 12

TOWER- St. Martin Catholic Church’s annual fundraiser for the Tower Area Food shelf, Souper Bowl Sunday, will be held on Sunday, Feb. 12. The church will be serving a booyah dinner from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. (or when the booyah runs out) in the church social hall. Those attending will have the option to eat in or take out. The cost is a free-will offering, and all proceeds go to the food shelf.  
This is the 19th year that St. Martin’s has hosted this event. The event began as a youth project but has now evolved into a parish project; youth still participate but the adults of the parish have joined in to assist. The work begins on Friday with the cutting of the vegetables, then on Saturday we make the booyah and the desserts; and finally on Sunday we serve the delicious meal.  
We hope that you will join us to lend support to the Tower Area Food Shelf.



WINTER SPORTS

# Bocce ball on ice: Was this game invented in Tower?

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- The official temperature in Tower on the morning of Jan. 28 was -34.5, but that didn’t deter over 60 people from spending the day outside on the ice on the East Two River by the Your Boat Club Marina.  
The Finlander Bocce Ball tournament was sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board. Entry fees were all returned as prize money to the top four teams, though the top team donated most of their prize money back to the events board, which also organizes and fundraises for the Fourth of July festivities.

Finlander bocce is a conglomeration of bocce ball and curling. It may have been invented in Tower around 40 years ago, when tournaments were organized by both Kathy Yernatich and Rod Politano, according to Brenda Broten. Brenda and her late husband Dan restarted the event in Tower around 15 years ago, as part of a chamber-sponsored Long John Days winter festival. Brenda said when the event was held at Moccasin Point, there were as many as 60 teams competing.  
“We had about 40 teams for Long John Days,” Brenda said, “and eight to ten rinks out on the ice.”  
If anyone has more information on how this game originated, please contact the *Timberjay*.  
The game is played with round wooden disks with simple handles on ice lanes, similar to curling but without the finesse. Players mostly end up on their bellies as they try to get their teams’ wooden pucks closest to the “jack” as it is known in bocce, the first ball rolled out in the game.

Volunteers (and their plows) had cleared four lanes down to the ice, which then was flooded just prior to the competition to give the ice a nice clean coating, though the lanes were still rough enough to lend an air of chance into the day’s competition.  
The new location at Your Boat Club had ample room for participants to set up portable



Above: Tyler Vogh.  
Left: Ginger Main.

Find more photos on the Timberjay’s facebook page.

photos by J. Summit

ice fishing shelters to provide warmth between time out on the ice. Most players came stocked with provisions, jokingly referred to as antifreeze. There were bonfires lit near each of the lanes.  
The event was supported with donations from IBI Construction, Vermilion Storage, and Bruce Carlson. Volunteers included Brent Peterson, Kenny Folstad, John C. Mroszak Jr., Jennifer Manick, and the former

president of the events board Julie Johnson.  
**1st Place**  
Eddie Udovich  
Dave Bialke  
Joyce Bialke  
Julie Bialke  
**2nd Place**  
Detton Koski  
Clayton Pratt  
Kassandra Bjorgo  
Shara Dostert

**3rd Place**  
Bailey Lindell  
Shannon Kelly  
Frederick McDougall  
Travis Weatherton  
**4th Place**  
Jordan Peitso  
Sarah Peitso  
Tyler Vogh  
Nicole Jagunich

## Mardi Gras at St. Martin’s on Friday, Feb. 17

TOWER- St. Martin’s Catholic Church is hosting a Mardi Gras celebration on Friday, Feb. 17. There will be fun for the whole family beginning at 5 p.m. and through 8:30 p.m. It’s an open house style event – come when you want and stay as long as you want.  
Drawings will be held throughout the evening at 6:15, 6:45, 7:15, and 7:45 p.m. You must be present to win one of the door prizes. A prize will be given for the best costume. Kids each receive one free drawing ticket, for adults the cost is \$1 for each ticket.  
There will be a kid’s activity area with games to play, a decorate your own cupcake station, and an art project. The pinata will be broken at 7:45 p.m.  
Bingo begins at 6 p.m. Cost

for bingo is \$5 for 10 games; prizes include gift certificates/ gift cards to local businesses. A cribbage tournament will begin at 5:45 p.m. Cribbage will be played in teams of two, each player pays \$10 to enter, winning team takes home half of the pot. For this event we ask that you sign up with Maryann (218-753-4310) by Monday, Feb. 13.  
There will be a cash bar for adult beverages and lots of food. Some of the items you will find on the menu in include jambalaya, chili, a variety of meatballs and wings, Mardi Gras meringues, meat and cheese tray with crackers, and much more.  
This year we have added bucket raffles, a silent auction and the 50/50 cash drawing. Winners will be announced at 8:15 p.m.  
The cost is a free-will offering. We hope that you will join

us for this feast before Lent.

## Lunch Bunch to meet on Thursday, Feb. 9

ANGORA- The Lunch Bunch will meet at the at the South Switch in Angora for lunch on Thursday Feb. 9 at 12 noon. RSVP to Sue at 218-235-0208 or Barb at 218-780-7275 by Feb. 6. Anyone who would like to join us is welcome.

## Gavin Olson named to University of Mary in Bismarck Dean’s List for Fall Semester 2022

BISMARCK, ND- Gavin Olson of Tower is among the 973 students named to the 2022 Fall Semester Dean’s List at the University of Mary, in Bismarck. This number includes students in Mary’s undergraduate program

and in adult education (University of Mary Online).  
To qualify for the honor, traditional undergraduate students must earn a 3.50 or better grade point average while carrying at least 12 credit hours. Students enrolled in the UMaryOnline program must earn a 3.50 or better grade point average while at a full-time adult learner status.  
About the University of Mary: True to its motto “lumen vitae” — The Light of Life — the University of Mary offers education for the whole of life through cutting-edge professional programs and graduate programs animated by moral courage and leadership in chosen professions and service to the community. A private, co-educational Catholic institution, the University of Mary welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds.

Get Informed!

Get the Timberjay!



HEALTH CARE

Ely Community Health Center takes a bite out of dental care

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- The Ely Community Health Center (EHC), the area’s no-cost health clinic for minor health needs, chronic illness monitoring, and preventative care, has now added routine dental cleaning and fluoride-treatments to its repertoire of services.

“Oral health has been identified as one of the ten Leading Health Indicators by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion,” said Helen Tome, the director of the EHC. She spoke to the Jan. 17 Tuesday Group meeting at the Grand Ely Lodge. “Poor dental health can have serious consequences,” she said.

Tome went on to explain that poor oral care and lack of access to routine preventative dental services increases the risk of chronic health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

Like many other rural areas in Minnesota, Ely has struggled with dental care access. “There’s a 1,000-person waiting list for Ely’s sole dentist,” Tome remarked. “Based

on the data that we collected for 2022 and the patients that we’ve seen, 57 percent reported not being able to establish care ... due to either the insurance that they carry, or the dental provider’s ability to take on new patients. Thirty-two percent reported cost or insurance as a barrier to care and 11 percent reported transportation as a barrier.”

EHC gets toothy

One of the unique ways EHC has been able to respond to the dental care access issue is through the services of volunteer dental hygienist Peggy Stelley, who gives up many of her evenings to clean teeth at no cost.

EHC also recently received a dental innovator grant to seek ways to improve access to dental care in Ely. The funding gives Tome the ability to find dental care for the center’s dental clients who need care beyond a simple cleaning. “The dental innovator part of my job is to assist our patients with establishing care with a dentist if they need more advanced care. That usually means calling around until I can find a dentist

that will accept them as a patient including their insurance or referring them to children’s dental services and sometimes working with local dentists for emergency care.”

With the help of a Minn. Dept. of Health loan, EHC was able to purchase Dr. Anderson’s former offices last year, which helped with the expansion of the center’s health and dental services.

“So far we’ve raised \$77,300 through grants and community support,” Tome remarked. “All of the funds raised through the campaign will go towards paying down the loan for the facility.”

To help pay for the move to the new location, EHC has established a goal for 2023 of raising \$200,000.

The center plans to hold an open house sometime this spring, so the residents of the Ely area will have the opportunity to see what the recent expansion looks like.

Tome isn’t shy about where she wants to go with the dental program. “We want to become the area’s critical access dental provider... We would like to recruit dentists to

visit on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Eventually, we would like to have a program similar to the AppleTree (in Fergus Falls) or the Childrens Dental Services (of eastern Minn.) and be able to bill through state-funded programs.”

About EHC

The EHC is perhaps best known for their Wellness Wednesdays program that provides free blood pressure monitoring at the Ely Senior Center on selected Wednesdays throughout the year. The center has many more services than that, all at no cost, provided by a dedicated core of local volunteers.

“There is no income limit in order to be seen at our clinic,” Tome said. “Our services are available to anyone who is experiencing barriers to receiving care. We don’t turn anybody away. If we’re unable to treat the patient, we will work with that individual to find a solution.”

The EHC was founded in 2015 after the nonprofit Project Care decided to close the Ely Free Clinic for uninsured

residents in the Ely area. A group of volunteers created the new organization to try to fill the gap left behind by the free clinic closure.

The nonprofit 501(c)(3) health center provides basic non-emergency medical care and health-care referrals at no cost. Lab work and x-rays are available through the center through an agreement with the Ely Bloomenson Community Hospital.

The center can also help with obtaining, filling or refilling prescriptions. It can help applicant navigate Medicaid and MNsure and other public health programs.

The EHC is located at 33 E. Chapman St. It is open every Thursday evening from 5:30-7 p.m. for the medical clinic and for fluoride varnish treatments for teeth which take less than 10 minutes. Routine dental cleaning is available by appointment, with a current waiting time of approximately one month according to EHC dental hygienist Peggy Stelley.

EHC can be reached through their website, ely-communityhealth.org or through their office num-

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.

2023 Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

- Feb. 7: Understanding and updates on the War in Ukraine with Elyite Tatiana Riaboki
- Feb. 14: Clean Energy Resource Teams with Melissa Birch
- Feb. 21: Tales from the Arctic with Ron Haakenson

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2023



the temp drops, snow falls town fills with people and fun  
fest 30 kicks off

EDUCATION

Washington Elementary awards students

ELY- Washington Elementary School in Ely honored 48 of its students on Jan. 26 with awards for honesty, teamwork, and acceptance for the more recent quarter. Several awards are given for each grade, K-5, and the recipients are picked with the input of their classmates.

The theme for November was acceptance. For December is was teamwork and for January, it was honesty. Additional awards were given out for playground behavior.

The monthly theme award recipients received a free ice cream from Dairy Queen. The playground behavior awards came with a

free Subway meal.

Principal Anne Oelke gave the awards personally to each recipient in an all-school assembly Thursday morning which took an hour.

The names of the award recipients are listed on the school’s Facebook page.



Washington Elementary School Principal Anne Oelke gave out awards for playground behavior, honesty, teamwork and acceptance last Thursday to students at her school. Photos by C. Clark



St. Scholastica grads Little Shop of Horrors cast

DULUTH- The College of St. Scholastica publicly announced its list of conferred graduates for Fall 2022 last Friday. Included among the graduates were Erin Forsman and Patrick Vanderbeek of Ely.

The college remarked in a statement: “Congratulations to each and every one of these Saints on their transformational growth, hard work and perseverance and most of all, accomplishments both personal and academic in nature.”

St. Scholastica is a private Catholic college in the Benedictine tradition. The U.S. News & World Report lists the small Duluth school on its Best National Universities and Top Performers on Social Mobility lists and was ranked as one of the “Best Colleges for your Money” by Money Magazine.

ELY- The cast for the Northern Lakes Arts Association spring musical, Little Shop of Horrors, appeared online on Monday. Here’s the line-up:

Wendy Lindays is Audrey. Karin Schmidt is the voice of Audrey II. Ian Lah will play both Seymour, the hero, and Orin, everyone’s evil dentist. Peter Kess is Mr. Mushnik. Jennifer Merhar, Grace Klein, Ruth Lah, and Emily Weise are the ever-musical street urchins. Matthew Janeksela is cast as Wino #1/Chorus. Grey Kurnava is the Interviewer/Chorus. Bailey McLinn-Bellhar is the Customer/Chorus. Olin Weise will be the puppeteer behind Audrey II on stage.

The musical will be staged March 23-April 1 at the Vermillion Fine Arts Theater on the Vermillion Campus.

Upcoming Events

Ely Public Library

ELY- A new kahoot event will begin at 3 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 8 and run until Monday, Feb. 13 at 8 a.m. The kahoot will be an online trivia game on the first five Gallagher Girls series by Ally Carter. Participants must sign-up in advance to provide the library with an email address in order to play.

The Friends of the Library Bookclub will meet on Monday, Feb.13 at 3 p.m. The title for discussion will be “The Maid” by Nita Prose

Preschool Storytime is held every Friday from 10:30-11 a.m.

Ely Folk School

ELY- The Ely Folk School will hold a free Artist Meet & Greet event on Saturday, Feb. 4 from 2-4 p.m. at 209 E. Sheridan St., where the public can meet the local artists displaying works in the Ely ArtWalk.

The Ely Folk School will offer a one-time class in snow sculpture on Saturday, Feb. 11, from 2-5 p.m. in the pocket park next to the school’s 209 E. Sheridan location.

Makers Mornings at the Ely Folk School are held every Thursday morning from 9:30 a.m.-12:30

p.m. for makers to meet, talk, craft, and have coffee. Makers’ mornings are free community events.

End of the Road Film Festival

ELY- Tickets for individual films and for the omnibus festival pass for the End of the Road Film Festival are now on sale online at elyfilmfest.com. The film festival is Feb. 9-12, which will overlap with Ely Winter Festival. The \$75 pass for the entire festival is good for admission to all the films though purchasers of the whole-festival pass must still make seat reservations online for the films they wish to attend. Tick-

ets for individual films are \$10. The festival pass and tickets to individual films can also be purchased at Ely’s Historical State Theater.

Dorothy Molter Museum

ELY- The museum will hold a silent auction beginning at 12:15 p.m. on Feb. 1. Bidding will end online at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 9, which is during the museum’s annual fundraising dinner at the Grand Ely Lodge. Bidders do not need to attend the dinner to win items in the silent auction. Those attending the dinner can pay for and take any items won in the auction at that event. Most

items include shipping options for bidders outside the Ely area. Winner bidders can also pick up their items at the museum when it’s open. The link to the auction site is on the museum’s Facebook page, under the events tab.

NLAA/Reflections Dance Company

ELY- Dance classes begin on Feb. 13 at the Ely Rec Center and on Feb. 14 at the Winton Community Center. NLAA members get a \$5 discount. Sign-ups and schedule are linked on the NLAA website at northernlakesarts.org.

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 CITY COUNCIL

# Council hears from new CHRA director Jugovich

## Culture change in the works as residents adjust to having more input

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Cook resident Robert Jorgenson likely didn't expect to get such a speedy response when he attended last week's Cook City Council meeting to register a complaint about trash on some nearby properties owned by the Cook Housing and Redevelopment Authority. His complaint was addressed almost before he completed it by the man seated behind him, Mike Jugovich, the new CHRA executive director.

"We'll be over there to take care of that tomorrow," Jugovich said.

Jugovich replaces former executive director Reed Erickson, who resigned about two months ago. Erickson's tenure was marked by accusations of heavy-handed management from a small number of residents who appeared frequently at

council meetings to voice their complaints.

This time, comments from Jugovich were decidedly more upbeat.

"I'm Mike Jugovich and I'm your HRA director, and I have had a really good experience with it," he began after being welcomed by City Administrator Theresa Martinson. "The board has been outstanding, and the residents have been great to work with. We are moving through some obstacles, but we're going to win, failure is not going to be an option for us. We're just about back on the right track."

Jugovich noted that the apartments will be completely filled by mid-February.

"We want to make sure that these apartments are up to speed and people have a good experience," he said. "They deserve to be in a clean, healthy environment. I think we're

trying to change the culture a bit and do things a little bit differently, bring people back into meetings and let them understand that they have a voice."

Jugovich voiced a commitment to use local sources whenever possible for maintenance activities.

"We're trying to buy as much local as we can," he said. "There are some items that are difficult. But we've got great places right here in Cook to purchase things."

Jugovich also talked about getting acquainted with some of the administrative ins and outs.

"When I walked in there's a lot of things I



Liza Root

didn't have, and the board has been outstanding," he said.. "Anytime I call somebody I get help. I've really leaned on the board, and it's been such a wonderful experience because everybody has stepped up and said 'What do you need?' We want this operation to be good, strong and move into the future."

Jugovich said he's reworking the application waiting list according to Housing and Urban Development guidelines. He also talked about other ideas for improving CHRA, and extended an invitation to not only the council but the community.

"Please stop in and

see us," he said. "We're proud of the work we've done, we're very proud of the things that we're doing, and very proud that we feel that the residents have gotten a sense of ownership back. It's their building. We work for them."

In a related matter, Mayor Harold Johnston recommended that former city counselor Dave Danz be appointed to the CHRA board. That recommendation was approved.

In other business, the council:

►Extended a warm welcome to newly-elected council member Liza Root.

►Approved annual budgets for the ambulance service and fire department.

►Approved payment of an invoice from SHE for \$6,200 for work on the snow removal equipment building at the airport, and approved another invoice

from KGM Contractors for the same project.

►Received a final report on the Artists on Main Street project.

►Heard from Mayor Johnston that an increase in per capita assessments to townships for fire protection will be needed to help provide for much-needed equipment upgrades. A preliminary assessment suggested the increase could possibly be from \$20 to \$40 per capita.

►Approved a bid from Shannon's Mechanical Contractors for \$7,300 to replace the furnace in the liquor store.

►Discussed housing development options.

►Heard a State of the City report from councilor Liz Storm, who highlighted a long list of positive aspects of the community that would make Cook attractive to new residents.

### Programs for winter available at library

COOK- Cook Public Library Director Crystal Whitney has numerous reading events beginning or taking place in February for all ages.

**ADULTS**

►Alphabet Reading Challenge: Pick up an Alphabet Reading Challenge card at the library. Scratch off a circle to reveal a letter then read a book that starts with that letter. Complete all nine circles and turn in by Mar. 30 for a prize.

►Beaded Star Take & Make: Stop by the library and pick up a Beaded Star kit that contains beads, thread, beading needle and directions. Extra beads and thread can

be used for more stars or other projects. Bring your finished Beaded Star to the library and receive a prize!

►One Book One Community Read—The Pull of the Stars by Emma Donoghue. Stop by or call the library to request the book. Join us for a book discussion on Thursday, March 9 at 4 p.m..

►Movie Night at The Library, Feb. 9 at 5 p.m.

**PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY**

►Yeti To Read Activity Booklet & Bingo Card: Pick up a Yeti to Read activity booklet at the Cook Public Library. Complete the BINGO card on the inside cover and turn in your card between March 1 - 30 at the Cook Public Library to receive a prize.

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

►I Love to Read Month" Coloring Page: Stop by the library to pick up a Yeti to Read snowflake coloring page. Color in one snowflake every time you read for 20 minutes during the month of February. Fill in all the snowflakes and return to the Cook Public Library for a prize.

►Winter Story Time: Let it Snow!, Feb. 16 at 10 a.m.

**TEENS**

►Teen Advisory Board Program (7th – 12th Grade): Earn 100 points between Jan.3 – May 31 and receive an invitation to a Harry Potter/Star Wars Overnight Party in the library in June. Stop by the library to sign up.

►Harry Potter Escape Room, Feb. 27 at 5 p.m.

**NWFA mounts February show**

COOK- "Friendships and Collaborations: Three Exhibits in One!" is the February show at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook, opening Feb. 2.

The featured exhibit is The Iron Range Friendship Quilt Mini-paintings. Ten artists created mini-paintings of "Our Favorite Images of the Place We Live" that are used to form a three foot by five foot quilt curated by Mary McReynolds.

"Friends Art", coordinated by Mary Jo Hyland, showcases the talents of members of the Vermilion Watercolor Group. Members each painted subjects which were then assembled creating four original

"FRIENDS' ART" paintings.

"Round Robin Quilts" is the third facet of the February exhibit, featuring four round-robin quilts created by Vickie Lange, JoAnn Anderson, Cheryl Harelstad and Alberta Whitenack. The public is invited to attend a reception at the gallery on Friday, Feb. 3 from 5-7 p.m., and while there enjoy the hundreds of crafts and original works of art on display.

The NWFA Gallery is located at 210 River Street. Patrons can view the February exhibit on Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Annual NWFA photo contest is underway**

COOK- It's time to get your camera out of hibernation and start snapping photos for the Northwoods Friends of the Arts annual photo contest.

The cost to enter is \$10 per photo, which includes identical mats and sleeves for each photo, with the sizes again being 5x7 or 8x10. Students 18 and younger may enter up to three photos without cost.

The deadline for entry, getting your photo to the gallery, is Saturday, Feb 25, 1 p.m.

There will be one contest winner receiving \$100 and a runner-up is awarded \$50.

Voting will take place March 2 - 31.



North Woods School senior participants in Knowledge Bowl this season include, from left, Kohen Briggs, Steven Sopoci, Cooper Antikainen, and Emily Trip, pictured with Coach Amanda Pascuzzi. submitted photo

### NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

## Seniors aim for berth in state Knowledge Bowl competition

FIELD TWP- The North Woods Senior High Knowledge Bowl season is off to a strong start this year in a return to "buzzing in" in person after two years of competing at a distance due to COVID-19 the past two years.

The Grizzlies have a new coach this year, Amanda Pascuzzi, and have three teams that are competing at the Northeast Service Coop in Mt. Iron. The season consists of three meets, followed

by a power-ranked tournament in March.

This year's all-senior team has its sights set on the state tournament at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd in April. Kohen Briggs, Emily Trip, Steven Sopoci, and Cooper Antikainen started out their quest on the right foot by placing first in their section at the first meet of the season, and followed that up with a second-place finish at their second meet on Tuesday. They also were

honored with a special "shout-out" on Tuesday for having the best-written round score of the day.

Currently, this group stands tied for third place in the overall power-rankings for the Class A division in the Northeast. A final meet on Feb. 22 will determine if they can compete in the tournament to advance to the state level. The Northeast area will send the top six teams to state.

### NORTH WOODS SECOND QUARTER HONOR ROLL 2022-23

#### A Honor Roll

**Seniors**  
Cooper Antikainen  
Kohen Briggs  
Brielle Hujanen  
Kiana LaRoque  
Olin Nelson  
Kaden Ratai  
Karah Scofield  
Steven Sopoci  
Madison Spears  
Emily Trip

#### Juniors

Evelyn Brodeen  
Jonah Burnett  
Brandon Cook  
Addy Hartway  
Helen Koch  
Riley Las  
Victoria Olson  
Autumn Swanson  
Trinity Vidal  
Jacob Whiteman

#### Sophomores

Rory Bundy  
Addison Burckhardt  
Alex Burckhardt  
John Carlson  
Ella Cornelius  
Nevada Gauthier  
Ryder Gibson  
Aidan Hartway  
Brielle Lindgren  
Louie Panichi  
Sierra Schuster  
Amber Sopoci  
Lydia Trip

#### Freshmen

Lincoln Antikainen  
Isaiah Briggs  
Lauren Burnett  
Brynn Chosa  
John Danielson  
Isabelle Koch  
Victoria Mathys  
Isabel Pascuzzi  
Sadie Spears

#### Eighth Grade

Alethea Bangs  
Corralyn Brodeen  
Presley Chiabotti  
Abigail Dargontina  
Emarie Gibson  
Andrew Hartway  
Carson Johnson  
Sophia Mathys  
Kaycee Zupancich

#### Seventh Grade

Gage Aune  
Sophia Bangs  
Zoey Burckhardt  
Carsyn Burnett  
Colt Chosa  
Sawyer Glass  
Cyrus Johnson  
Rebecca Koch  
Joshua Long  
Evangelina Mathys  
Kalle Nelson  
Aubrey Olson-Stoltenberg  
Vincent Pascuzzi  
Alice Sopoci  
Evalyn Thiel

#### B Honor Roll

**Seniors**  
Brenden Chiabotti  
Jared Chiabotti  
Hannah Kinsey  
Lane Kneen  
Loren LaFave  
Garrett Lappi  
Anya Pearson  
Elias Smith  
Avery Thiel  
Alexandria Whiteman

#### Juniors

Annabelle Calavera  
Hannah Cheney  
Madison Dantes  
Sean Drift  
Emily Grahm  
Evan Kajala  
Cynthia Kirkman  
Zefrym Mankowski  
Cadense Nelson  
Cole Rabas  
Luke Will

#### Sophomores

Nicholas Abramson  
Trajen Barto  
Kalvyn Benner  
Olivia Boone  
Nia Gaskell  
Talen Jarshaw  
Mya Kinsey  
Jay Mattson  
Ethan Ploof  
Sheyenne Schuster  
Dakota Schwarzenberger  
Richard Swinson

#### Freshmen

Sophie Arvila  
Josephine Carlson  
Levi Chaulklin  
Mariah Glowaski-Kingbird  
Mya Goggleye  
Brittin Lappi  
Blaze Markwardt  
Megan Taylor  
John Warren

#### Eighth Grade

Makayla Benner  
Grace Bundy  
Kate Cheney  
Kaelyn Ehrbright  
Sydney Krecklau  
Ella Kruse  
Michael Nuthak  
Victoria Phillips  
Caleb Rutchasky  
Hunter Schwarzenberger  
Merilee Scofield

#### Seventh Grade

Kayson Gaskell  
Johnathon Hampson  
Felicity Hoagland  
Cedar Holman  
Rainer Jacobson  
Brittan Koskela  
Nevaeh Wipf



THE PRICE OF POWER

# MPUC approves modified rate hike for Minnesota Power

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — Area residents served by Minnesota Power will see their rates increase slightly by later this year, based on a decision last week by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, or MPUC.

The MPUC approved a rate increase of approximately \$59 million for the investor-owned utility, which equals about nine percent overall. That percentage increase applies to all of

Minnesota Power’s rate classes. Residential customers have already been experiencing most of that increase since the MPUC approved an interim rate hike just over a year ago, which increased residential rates by 7.11 percent. The new final rate will add about a 2.5 percent increase on top of that.

Commercial and industrial customers will see a modest reduction from the 14-percent interim rate hike imposed by Minnesota Power last year. Those customers will also be eligible for a rebate for the overpayments

over the past year. Final rates for all classes are expected to go into effect this summer.

The commission also authorized a return on equity of 9.65 percent for the company. The decision is subject to a final written order and reconsideration.

As a regulated utility, Minnesota Power must receive approval from the MPUC whenever changes in revenue or expenses require adjusting its rates.

The company filed its rate request in November 2021,

seeking to increase its annual operating revenue by \$108 million or approximately 18 percent. The MPUC decision effectively cuts that request in half.

And Minnesota Power officials say that’s not enough to meet the needs of customers and finance their transition to renewable sources of energy. “As utilities are asked to do more and even faster, we expect rate review requests to become more frequent going forward,” said Bethany Owen, CEO and president of ALLETE, the company that owns

Minnesota Power.

“We plan to file another rate request later this year that will reflect the revenue requirements that Minnesota Power needs in order to advance its state-leading Energy Forward strategy.”

Minnesota Power provides electrical service to Tower and Soudan as well as a small portion of Lake Vermilion. Minnesota Power also provides electricity to Ely’s public utilities commission through a contract, but those rates won’t be affected by the latest MPUC decision.

## JANKILA...Continued from page 1

operations of the Tower Area Ambulance Service, which is currently being explored by townships that participate in the Tower Ambulance Commission. He said Tower probably already qualifies as a regional service given the size of the region it covers. And he urged the town board to sit back down with TAAS.

“You can fix the prior problems and go back to the drawing board,” he said. “I know this is very difficult with Iron Range politics,” he told the board. “But this is not unique to Greenwood Township.”

### Joint powers model

The idea of forming a joint powers district has merit, according to Jankila. “Now is the time to do it. You need to start bringing the players to the table, and not putting the blame on any one entity,” he said.

Jankila made it clear that the Greenwood town board isn’t the venue for the kind of discussion that needs to occur. “It needs to be done correctly and will take some time. The entities have to sit down together, bring together the clinics, and create a better funding system and revenue stream,” he said.

Jankila said the process of forming the Cloquet Fire District was “incredibly painful” when they did it, but the parties all understood that “the patient always comes first.” He said while that system has had a rocky start, it is moving forward in a positive way.

The political system is favoring the regional and joint powers approach, with more funding options including at the state and federal level, he said.

A joint powers agree-

ment would be developed in an “open manner,” said Jankila.

Suihkonen agreed. “If you come to the table, we can accomplish a lot.”

Greenwood residents have expressed concerns about such a joint powers board, where Greenwood would only have one vote out of six, but where Greenwood property owners might end up paying a larger share because of its high property values.

Jankila said fire and ambulance districts are going to be adopted all over the state, because the economics no longer work for small entities.

“The little communities just can’t do it anymore,” he said. Issues facing these services include staffing, training, and finding enough volunteers and employees.

Jankila noted that the creation of a district won’t necessarily save money. “But it will put more value on the dollars that you do spend,” he said.

Without the ability to levy taxes, Jankila said ambulance services like Tower can no longer survive. “Tower is covering a ginormous area that doesn’t have a critical care hospital,” he said, which means no matter how hard they try, the current model of responses to 911 calls is not enough for the service to break even.

Jankila said Hibbing receives about 4,000 911 calls, but that the vast majority of their revenue came from its 800 transfers.

“Ambulance services without a hospital in their area are struggling for the most part,” he said, because they do not get the number of transfers, and transfers they do get require them to

put in more unloaded (and uncompensated) miles,” he said.

### ALS options

While some in the township have focused on establishing more regular ALS service, which is a step above the Basic Life Support, or BLS, care currently provided by the TAAS, Jankila urged the town board to take a more realistic look at the cost-benefits of that level of care.

Tower Ambulance Director Dena Suihkonen, who attended the meeting, said that ALS calls account for about 11 percent of their annual runs.

“So, for Greenwood,” Jankila said, “statistically maybe 13 calls needed ALS.”

ALS options suggested by the McGrath study included the hiring of a community paramedic either based at Bois Forte’s Vermilion Clinic, or by contracting with the Virginia Fire Department or another ALS provider, or having Greenwood hire its own paramedics.

But all of these options, Jankila noted, would require cooperation from the current holders of the ambulance service territory, Tower and Cook.

Jankila said the community paramedic model is currently being used in the metro area because the large medical providers (who are also providing EMS services) find it more cost effective to use a paramedic to provide certain types of care compared to having a patient come in for an office visit. But whether or not that model could work in a rural area is a question, he said. And in any case, the paramedic would need to be a member

of the TAAS to be able to treat a patient during a 911 call.

The idea of contracting with another ALS service to have a paramedic and ambulance housed in Greenwood has major issues with how it could be funded, he said. “The primary jurisdiction [TAAS] has the authority to make the decision to transport,” he said. “There would need to be an intercept agreement.”

The only way this could be sustainable, Jankila said, would be with a rather large subsidy, of approximately \$120,000-\$140,000 per paramedic, plus the cost of a rig. The current reimbursement model has a “ridiculously low payment model,” he said, “especially with the high percentage of Medicare and Medicaid patients.”

Reimbursement paid for these patients is well below the cost of providing the service.

“The costs need to be seriously looked at,” he told the board.

Greenwood Interim Clerk JoAnn Bassing asked what would happen if Bois Forte got their own license to run an ambulance service on the Vermilion Reservation that would encompass Greenwood Township.

Jankila said there were several issues to consider, including how intercepts would be handled and some other liability issues. Greenwood, as well as Bois Forte, would also need to show a valid reason for pulling away from the Tower PSA.

“Bois Forte couldn’t respond to Greenwood Township without pulling out of Tower’s PSA,” said Suihkonen.

Others in the town-

ship have cited the Buhl ambulance service, which is currently being run by Essentia, as a potential model, but Jankila disagreed. He said Essentia was willing to take on the Buhl area because of its central location and relatively low number of calls, which are mainly coming from a nursing home and assisted living facilities.

“They are 15 miles away from hospitals in Hibbing and Virginia,” he said. “So, it can work.” In addition, there are financial incentives for ambulance services that are owned by the same hospital/medical networks. In Buhl’s case, he said, Essentia can subsidize the ambulance service costs and operates clinics in both locations.

And in any case, bringing in such a provider would require TAAS to give up their PSA license.

### Fixing the model

Solutions to the EMS payment system are on the agenda at the Legislature this year, Jankila said, but with many competing bills, he predicts it could take a few years before lawmakers come to a workable agreement.

“We have done a terrible job of adapting to the changes in primary health care,” he said. “We are just reacting unless you are a conglomerate-owned hospital ambulance service.”

“There are eight hospital-run ambulance services that account for 80-percent of the ambulance calls in the state,” he said. “They drive the legislation.”

Twenty years ago, the funding for ambulance services matched the costs and the labor force, but they haven’t kept up with the changes in both the ambulance and medical industry.

“They want everybody to go to the mother ship in Duluth,” he said, noting the smaller rural hospitals no longer can provide care for many common medical issues.

Adding to the problem, he said, is the fact that ambulance services can’t bill for the cost of providing medical care in response to calls. Some common medications used during an ambulance call can cost hundreds of dollars.

“We carry medications that cost \$500 per vial,” said Jankila, “and we are getting \$400 a call.”

Jankila said there is legislation moving through this year that would allow ambulance services to create taxing districts. Other legislation would allow individual PSAs to change their boundaries, and bills to create funding for recruiting, training, and retention of EMS workers. Many of the bills are an outcome of the recent Office of Legislative Auditor’s report on the EMSRB board, the organization that the Legislature created to oversee local ambulance services.

“There are a lot of things going on,” Jankila said.

The Greenwood Ambulance Committee is holding another meeting on Monday, Feb. 6 at 6 p.m. to discuss recommendations on the McGrath study to present to the town board, as well as possibly make recommendations as to how to move forward at this time. The next regular town board meeting is set for Feb. 14.

## AWARDS...Continued from page 1

judges on Colburn’s report. “Kudos for doing the extra dive into exploring the justice system.”

The *Timberjay* also took home a third-place award for its headline writing.

“Obviously, we’re very pleased for the recognition from our peers,” said *Timberjay* Publisher

Marshall Helmberger. “The first place for General Excellence, in particular, reflects the quality work

that our entire staff puts out week after week, from the front page to the classifieds.”

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

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

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DEMOGRAPHICS

COVID reshaped population movements in state

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have helped reverse a decades-long trend of declining population in rural parts of Minnesota. That change is noted in the Center for Rural Policy and Development’s annual “State of Rural Minnesota Report 2022,” which outlines demographic and economic trends.

The biggest loser, according to the report, was the seven-county Twin Cities metro area, with a net loss of 19,764 people from 2020 to 2021. That ended more than a decade of year-to-year growth averaging around 10,000 new residents per year.

Counties like St. Louis County, classified in the urban/town/rural category for statistical analysis for this report reaped the largest benefit from this outmi-

gration, adding 5,574 people. St. Louis County itself experienced a net gain of 811 residents from 2020 to 2021. The Arrowhead region as a whole saw a net gain of 1,252 people.

“This sudden shift in migration can be due to a lot of things—the pandemic, housing prices, perceptions about crime, as well as college students choosing to take courses online instead of migrating to urban colleges,” said CRPD researcher Kelly Asche. “Time will tell if these trends hold or if they will go back to pre-pandemic patterns. Such a shift would be a significant deviation from the norm.”

Counties classified as wholly rural also picked up population, gaining 518 people due to migration. Town/rural counties lost an average of 967 people per year due to migration between 2010 and 2019 but gained 2,622 people from 2020 to 2021. Any trends

noted for Greater Minnesota’s rural areas can be inferred to reflect the experience in St. Louis County, outside of Duluth, but are not broken out in the data.

The report notes that these shifts are sudden and modest, and that population across much of Greater Minnesota is still expected to decline over the next 20-30 years.

**Economic data**

Average earnings in St. Louis County were the best in the Arrowhead region at \$61,332, approximately \$6,000 higher than in Koochiching and Carlton counties and \$8,000 higher than Itasca and Lake counties. Household incomes in rural parts of Minnesota continued to run below the statewide average of \$70,886.

That wage differential is offset by the difference in the cost of living. For a two-parent family with one wage earner and two

children, the cost of living in St. Louis County was calculated to be \$53,003, about \$15,000 lower than for the same family living in the Twin Cities metro.

Nearly 35 percent of the jobs in St. Louis County are in education and health services, a trend reflected throughout greater Minnesota, and those jobs, on average, pay about 10 percent above what is needed to cover the cost of living for a two-parent family with one wage earner and two children. Government jobs represent 13.6 percent of the total, about 16,000 jobs. Almost 12,000 people are considered to be self-employed, 9.6 percent of the county’s total employment.

Leisure and hospitality jobs show the greatest discrepancy between average pay and cost of living. The report indicates that the average leisure and hospitality job in St. Louis County pays \$383 per week, only 37.6 percent of

what is needed to cover the cost of living, estimated to be \$1,019 for the above-described household.

Reflective of the challenge employers in the northeast have faced in filling job vacancies, the report notes that job vacancies in Greater Minnesota are at their highest levels at any point since 2005. This increase is largely due to retirements in the workforce as well as continued economic growth. Calculated by comparing the average quarterly job vacancies as a percentage of total jobs, the pressure on the economy in the northeast is 9.4 percent for 2021, significantly higher than the 5.8 percent mark in 2018, previously the highest mark since 2005. Not surprisingly, employers have been offering increased wages for vacant positions, according to the data.

FESTIVAL...Continued from page 1



**Left: Jaymie Stocks (left), Sarah Moldenhauer (center), and Mason Wiekert (standing) carved the traditional snow sculpture on Monday depicting this year’s pin for the Ely Winter Festival.**

photo by C. Clark

as the first festival pin. Along the way, the event became the Voyageur Winter Festival.

The Ely Art Walk arrived in 1998. In 2004, the Art Walk became its own nonprofit entity. In 2007, the event formally adopted the Ely Winter Festival name, which it has kept ever since.

**So many events**

This year’s 10-day festival is home once again to the yearly favorites of the Snow Sculpting

Symposium, the Ely Art Walk, skating and kick sledding in Whiteside Park, candlelight skiing out at Hidden Valley and as many snowshoeing events as there are days in the festival. Spots for hikers for the snowshoe hikes out to Sigurd Olson’s historic Listening Point are limited. Sign-ups are at [listeningpointfoundation.org](http://listeningpointfoundation.org) using the link halfway down on the homepage.

One notable special event this year are two shows by singer-songwriter Courtney Yasmineh at Northern Grounds Coffee House this Saturday and Sunday.

Several events that are independent from the festival run concurrently with the official festival activities. The Dorothy Molter Museum annual fundraising dinner and the Ely Art Walk are two of the better-known ones, run

by their own nonprofit organizations. This year, a new independent event has arrived to run alongside winter festival activities: the End of the Road Film Festival, which the *Timberjay* profiled in depth in the Jan. 27 edition.

The calendar of everything that’s happening is on the festival website at [elywinterfestival.com](http://elywinterfestival.com). The 2023 Ely Winter Festival pin is available at Northern Grounds, Zup’s, Grand Ely Lodge, Potluck Kitchenware, Piragis Northwoods Company, and online at the festival website for \$6. One dollar of that amount will help fund the school musical production of “Frozen.”

The Ely Winter Festival is a nonprofit organization, supported through grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council.

MARATHON...Continued from page 1

they signed up for,” Ken Kruger, co-race director said.

The temperature when the 149 racers toed the starting line in International Falls on Monday was a frigid -27 degrees, with trail conditions favorable for those on foot and bikers but not so much for skiers as the supercooled snow grips the bottom of skis like sandpaper. Only one of the four skiers made it as far as the Elephant Lake checkpoint at Melgeorge’s Resort before dropping out. Both kick sled entries had dropped out by Melgeorge’s as well.

Hydration was a

common challenge for racers in this year’s cold, with sip tubes on hydration packs and water bottles freezing up.

As of Tuesday night, 29 bikers and 37 foot racers had joined the ranks of the dropouts.

“At this point, we’re seeing a lot of bike mechanical issues with flat tires, mostly tubeless tires, and probably four or five frozen hubs,” Ken Krueger said Tuesday afternoon. “Water bladders, probably four or five were leaking very badly. I’m not aware of any frostbite. I’m not aware of any serious injuries. People are making pretty good decisions. We have awesome snowmobile guys to get them to safety, and the GPS trackers help us keep track of them wherever they are.”

This is the first year that the Arrowhead 135 has required all racers to be equipped with the trackers, which feed data to an online map that provides individual location and speed data.

It was a breakthrough

year for 2011 Arrowhead Rookie of the Year cyclist Ben Doom, of St. Cloud, who’s been a consistent top-four finisher since 2016 and has completed all but one of the Arrowheads he’s raced in. This year Doom crossed the finish line at Fortune Bay Resort Casino in first place, with a time of 15 hours, 20 minutes.

“This was my last year, I’m taking a break, so it’s nice to come out on top,” Doom said.

As a veteran who’s experienced the worst the Arrowhead 135 can throw at a racer, the cold wasn’t a problem for Doom, who said that the hard snow was nice, although it got to be “a little bit like Styrofoam, so your tires stick to it.”

“It’s hard to go hard when it’s cold,” he said. “I’d rather have it cold than warm, because when it’s warm the trail is just mushy,” he said.

Doom’s hydration pack froze about five miles

into the race, but he was able to defrost it without having to stop and go inside at the Gateway Store checkpoint and wait for it to melt.

On the women’s side, race veteran Kate Coward took the bike crown with a time of 19 hours, 10 minutes, placing seventh overall.

Leah Gruhn, of Duluth, who also competed in the bike race, was the fifth woman to cross the finish line, and she rode unsupported. It’s the tenth time she’s finished the race, making her the woman with the most Arrowhead finishes overall.

“Unsupported means you can’t go into any of the checkpoints, so you’re not getting the drinks and food and warmth and drop bags and water you would get otherwise,” she said. “You need to carry all your stuff from the start or be prepared to melt snow to make water and be prepared to not let certain things freeze and

thaw them out if they do freeze.”

Gruhn said she chose to ride unsupported for the additional challenge, and to prepare for an upcoming 1,000-mile race in Alaska that follows the track of the famed Iditarod sled race.

Gruhn also experienced a frozen tube on her hydration pack, and didn’t have the option of going into a checkpoint to let it thaw. The first time it happened she was able to get it cleared, but the second time she couldn’t until she stopped to sleep for a few hours and thawed it with her body heat inside her sleeping bag.

Her bike also got a bit sluggish in the cold.

“My bottom bracket, which is what the crank arms touch, the pedals got to be really stiff and so it was hard to move the pedal or the crank,” she said. “Basically, it just added

extra resistance. I think there was grease maybe in there that got to be too thick, which just made it exhausting to pedal, so that slowed me down a little bit.”

Brian Corgard, of Coon Rapids, took first place in the men’s foot race with a time of 34 hours, six minutes. Ellen Humberston, of Wausau, Wis. was the winner in the women’s division with a time of 42 hours, 41 minutes, placing in a tie for seventh overall.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

# Report: Carbon emissions are falling in Minnesota

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota declined by 23 percent between 2005 and 2020, according to a new analysis released this week by the state’s Department of Commerce and Pollution Control Agency.

In their biennial report, the two state agencies informed the Legislature that the state is currently on track to meet its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2025.

State regulators say the largest decline in greenhouse emissions is in electrical generation, where greenhouse gas emissions have fallen by 54 percent over that same 15-year period. That reduc-

tion has been made possible by the rapid transition of the state’s electricity generation sector away from coal and toward renewable energy, a trend that is continuing with investments in clean energy sources such as wind and solar.

The transportation sector remains Minnesota’s largest source of climate-warming emissions, accounting for about 25 percent. Light- and heavy-duty trucks are the largest sources of greenhouse emissions in the transportation sector. Emissions from the agriculture and forestry sector remained flat, with carbon capture from forest growth offsetting a rise in emissions from crop and animal agriculture.

“Industry policy shifts, better

agricultural practices, and personal behavior changes during the pandemic provided Minnesota with a course correction, but it is essential that we double-down on climate actions that can keep us on track,” said MPCA Commissioner Katrina Kessler.

“This report shows we have successes to celebrate, and we have a clear path forward with the Climate Action Framework on what we need to do,” added Commerce Commissioner Grace Arnold. We now have a historic opportunity for investments in clean energy, from the billions in federal funds and actions being taken by the state Legislature, to the collective efforts happening across this state by individuals and businesses, schools and other

local governments, communities of all types and sizes, and our tribal nations in Minnesota.”

Emissions from the residential sector, including homes and apartment buildings, have risen 14 percent during the period. For the commercial sector, which includes businesses, hospitals, and schools, greenhouse emissions have dropped 22 percent, driven by the declining use of oil and natural gas in these facilities, which peaked in 2014.

The COVID pandemic resulted in changes within many sectors, which caused Minnesota’s greenhouse gas emissions to drop significantly in 2020. Future years’ data will show whether these trends continue, since emissions in many sectors were

already declining in 2018 and 2019.

The state’s bipartisan 2007 Next Generation Energy Act set statutory benchmarks to reduce greenhouse emissions 15 percent from 2005 levels by 2015, 30 percent by 2025, and 80 percent by 2050. In 2022, Minnesota’s Climate Action Framework updated goals for the state to reduce emissions 50 percent by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

The Climate Action Framework also identifies a series of actions Minnesota must take to reduce our greenhouse emissions and to prepare our communities for the impacts of climate change.

BWCAW

# McCollum reintroduces mining protection for Rainy River headwaters

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Even as the Biden administration approved a 20-year mineral withdrawal on a portion of the Superior National Forest last week, supporters of expanded protections for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness say they’re keeping the pressure on for a permanent fix.

They are targeting roughly the same 225,000-acre piece of the upper Rainy River watershed in the latest legislation introduced by Minnesota Fourth District Congresswoman Betty McCollum. The St. Paul

Congresswoman has been among the most ardent backers of protection for the 1.1 million-acre BWCAW for years and she has been working for nearly a decade to pass a measure that would, in effect, expand a mining buffer zone that was established around portions of the area under the 1978 Boundary Waters Wilderness Act. That buffer zone did not encompass portions of the national forest around the Kawishiwi River watershed in part due to existing mineral leases there that had been issued a dozen years earlier. Those leases have since been canceled, although the companies involved, Twin Metals and parent Antofagasta,

are challenging that decision in court.

While McCollum lauded the Biden administration’s recent decision to implement the temporary mineral withdrawal, she noted that a future administration could opt to reverse the decision, potentially reopening the area to copper-nickel mining.

“That is why I am committed to reintroducing the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act in the 118th Congress to continue working to protect this national treasure in perpetuity,” said McCollum in a press statement.

The measure would encompass 234,328 acres in the Superior

National Forest, about 9,000 more acres than included in the withdrawal. It specifically exempts taconite mining from the ban, although there are no known plans for taconite mining in the affected area and the geological formation known to hold taconite does not extend into the affected area.

“The freshwater in this area is pristine, and contamination from heavy metals and sulfuric acid from mine tailings would cause irreparable harm that would quickly spread through the Boundary Waters’ 1.1 million acres of interconnected lakes and streams,” said McCollum in a press statement. “This would damage the unique wildlife, hurt

the region’s recreation-based economy, and preclude hundreds of thousands of visitors from Minnesota and across the country from enjoying this wilderness. Once damaged, it cannot be restored.”

While the prospects for passage of the bill in the current GOP-led House aren’t favorable, Becky Rom, national chair of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, said persistence pays off when it comes to legislation.

“Every time the bill is introduced, we build support,” she said. “It’s eventually going to happen.”

STATE GOVERNMENT

# Walz proposes \$65.2 billion biennial state budget

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Gov. Tim Walz laid out his One Minnesota budget proposal for the new biennium last week, a record-high of \$65.2 billion that would spend most of the state’s estimated \$17.6 billion surplus and provide about \$8 billion in tax cuts.

Portions of the budget were released across the week prior to Walz’s announcement on Jan. 24, but this was the first time Walz presented the entire package.

“Over the last week, we laid out our plan to make Minnesota the best state in the nation for children, invest in our economic future, combat climate change, and improve public safety across the state,”

Walz said. “Today, we lay out the full picture of how this budget will lower costs, cut taxes, and improve lives for Minnesotans,” Walz said. “For a middle-class family of four, the One Minnesota Budget could put \$10,000 back in their pocket. We are delivering a transformational budget for Minnesotans, and I look forward to getting this done.”

The proposed budget is about 25 percent larger than the state’s current budget, with much of it reflecting one-time spending linked to the budget surplus.

**Refunds and taxes**

The budget revives the “Walz checks” proposed last year by the governor, with some revisions.

Families with incomes below \$150,000 would

receive a \$2,000 check, plus an extra \$200 for up to three dependents, while single adults making less than \$75,000 would qualify for \$1,000 rebate checks. The income limits are stricter than those proposed last year and would cover about 2.5 million people. The plan would cost about \$4 billion.

Walz targeted over \$1 billion over four years for child care tax credits for families making less than \$200,000. Additional tax credits provided for low-income families would result in tax cuts of \$2.3 billion over two years.

Taxation of Social Security benefits has been a hot-button issue, with Republicans the loudest advocates for a complete repeal, but the Walz budget doesn’t go that far, reducing taxes on benefits for about 350,000 household while leaving in place the tax on wealthier recipients.

In holding with his longstanding support of a progressive tax system, Walz is proposing an increase in the capital gains tax, which is estimated to generate \$660 million from Minnesotans who have enough money to make investments.

**Priority areas**

Numerous priorities focus on Walz’s stated intent to “to make Minnesota the best state in the nation for children” with this budget proposal.

Education would get

a high-quality workforce.

**DNR funding**

Walz has designated \$287 million to the Department of Natural Resources to connect people to the outdoors, mitigate and adapt to climate change, manage natural resources proactively, and address operational need, including \$3.1 million to modernize the online permit and reservation system.

The \$118 million Get Out MORE initiative, to be funded equally through the general fund and capital investments, will revitalize camping and related infrastructure, modernize boat access, and improve visitor services at state parks and recreation areas. Climate change initiatives will include grasslands enhancement and protection and restoration of peatlands. Proactive management of resources includes \$1.4 million for chronic wasting disease, \$2.4 million for investments in fishing, and \$1.7 million for protecting water resources.

Included in the capital budget proposal is a \$14.4 million allocation for Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park to construct a visitor center and design campground and trail additions.

**Reactions**

As expected, Walz’s proposal attracted support

from DFL legislators and fostered dissent among Republicans.

“The Governor’s budget reflects the values of Minnesotans: we value great public schools, affordable health care, and an economy that works better for everyone. House DFLers share these goals and values,” House Speaker Melissa Hortman, DFL-Brooklyn Park, said. “I commend the Governor for proposing a bold budget with an inspirational vision for our future. I look forward to our continued partnership as we craft our budget.”

House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth, R-Cold Spring, criticized Walz’s use of the surplus.

“In a time there is a record surplus, \$17.6 billion, Minnesotans are expecting to have that back,” she said. “Unfortunately, what we heard today is Minnesota is spending and it’s going to cost Minnesotans a little bit more to be here. That was a little bit surprising. If we can’t cut taxes now, when can we?”

Walz’s proposal is only the first step in the state’s budget-making process. After Minnesota Management and Budget releases its latest budget forecast next month, lawmakers will use those projections and Walz’s budget as starting points to create the state’s 2024-25 biennium budget.

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## Tax-forfeit properties for sale by county

REGIONAL- Online bidding has opened for St. Louis County’s first auction of the year featuring tax-forfeited properties that are being offered for the first time. More than 55 properties are available for bidding at [publicsurplus.com](http://publicsurplus.com) through Feb. 9 at 11 a.m.

The auction list includes land in communities throughout the county, including Ely, Cook, and Winton, homes in Duluth and Canosia Township, and a cabin on Elephant Lake in Camp 5 Township, plus additional waterfront properties including on Bassett Lake,

Gansey Lake, Elliot Lake and the Sturgeon River.

A sale catalog has photos, maps and details about each property, including the starting bid price, and is available online at [stlouiscountymn.gov/landsales](http://stlouiscountymn.gov/landsales), or by calling the Land and Minerals Department at 218-726-2606.

## Clarification

In our report last week on fraud, we mentioned a “local credit union” that had confirmed the legitimacy of an account that later received a wired payment from a customer. The credit union involved WAS NOT the Embarrass Vermillion Federal Credit Union. The *Timberjay* appreciates the opportunity to clarify its reporting.



# Nationwide COVID emergency to terminate in May

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

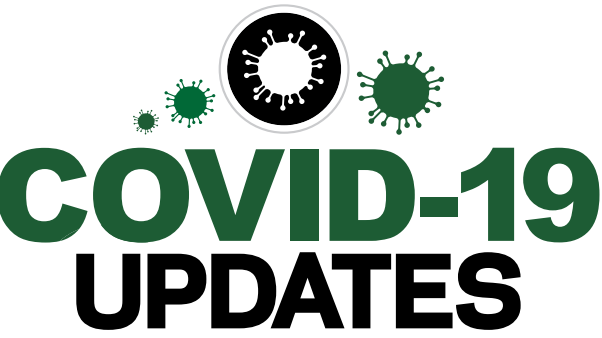
Change will have numerous ramifications for individuals and health care

REGIONAL- The biggest sign yet of the nation’s shifting battle against the COVID-19 pandemic came on Monday when the Biden administration issued a statement saying that two national emergency declarations initiated by former President Donald Trump will be terminated on May 11.

Trump’s declaration in March 2020 paved the way for a massive federal response to the pandemic, and Biden has regularly renewed the emergency declaration to continue to provide resources and flexibility in dealing with the ever-changing state of COVID waves. There are actually two separate declarations, one for a general national emergency and the other for a public health emergency.

The White House issued its most recent statement in response to two bills introduced by House Republicans that would allow the declarations to expire on March 1 and April 11 respectively. The Biden administration said it needs more time to implement an orderly transition for the many aspects of the federal response that will be affected by the end of the emergency.

“An abrupt end to the emergency declarations would create wide-ranging chaos and uncertainty throughout the health care system — for states, for hospitals and doctors’ offices, and, most importantly, for tens of millions of Americans,” the statement said. “Tens of mil-



lions of Americans could be at risk of abruptly losing their health insurance, and states could be at risk of losing billions of dollars in funding. Additionally, hospitals and nursing homes that have relied on flexibilities enabled by the emergency declarations will be plunged into chaos without adequate time to retrain staff and establish new billing processes, likely leading to disruptions in care and payment delays, and many facilities around the country will experience revenue losses. Millions of patients, including many of our nation’s veterans, who rely on telehealth would suddenly be unable to access critical clinical services and medications. The most acutely impacted would be individuals with behavioral health needs and rural patients.”

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, the end of the emergency will impact federal government waivers or modifications of certain requirements in a range of areas, including in the Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP programs, as well as in private health insurance. In addition, it will impact the authorization

of medical countermeasures and liability immunity that was extended to providers who administer services.

The government has provided millions of free COVID vaccinations, tests, and treatments during the pandemic, and transitioning out of a national emergency would bring most of that to an end, transferring future costs to individuals and their insurance plans. Some Medicaid enrollees who were kept on the rolls due to the national emergency could lose their coverage once the emergency expires. Private insurance, Medicare and Medicaid will continue to cover vaccinations, but COVID treatments such as Paxlovid could be subject to out-of-pocket payment.

The statement from the White House comes at a time when about 500 Americans per day are still dying from COVID-19 and the highly-contagious XBB.1.5 variant now accounts for over 61 percent of cases nationwide, according to the Centers for Disease Control. In the six-state region including Minnesota, XBB.1.5 represents 36.5 percent of

COVID cases.

Another sign that the nation is shifting away from a pandemic-oriented response to one that recognizes COVID-19 as an endemic disease appeared last week when a U.S. Food and Drug Administration advisory panel recommended simplifying vaccinations by making the bivalent COVID boosters introduced last September the standard vaccine for initial vaccinations and boosters. The vaccine would be updated annually, likely going into the fall, to target the most prevalent variants of concern. The move could set up a system of annual COVID vaccinations similar to that used for influenza.

The bivalent booster targeting BA.4 and BA.5 has drawn only scant interest from the public at large, with only 15 percent of the eligible population in the U.S. having received it, according to the CDC.

### In Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Health announced last week that it was closing its last four testing locations, including the one in Duluth, another signal of the shift toward an endemic-oriented response. This comes on the heels of MDH discontinuing its free at-home test ordering program, although a limited supply is still available for order.

A telehealth program will continue to operate that virtually connects those who test positive for

COVID with a clinician who will evaluate their case and prescribe antiviral medications that can be picked up locally if the case warrants such treatment.

St. Louis County Public Health Division Director Amy Westbrook told the *Timberjay* last week that the overall response to COVID-19 is indeed shifting. “Most people in our communities now have some sort of immunity, whether it’s been from exposure, or an infection, or vaccine. That sets us up for better protection through herd immunity. I would say we’re still in a pandemic, but we’re shifting toward more of an endemic. As long as we’re seeing spikes anywhere in the world and high community transmission, I wouldn’t say we’re out of a pandemic. But in public health, we’re treating it more as an endemic disease. We’re not quite doing the same surveillance, we’re not putting out the same public health recommendations as we were. So there has been a significant shift, both in mindset and in how we’re approaching public health recommendations.”

The county and the state appear to have avoided a post-holiday bounce in case numbers this year, which had been characteristic of the previous two winters, Westbrook noted.

“Our morbidity and mortality has stayed lower than normal, which is good,” she said. “And our respiratory illness activity

in general has decreased. I think the school break helped a lot. Prior to the holiday break, we had been seeing a lot of influenza-like illness activity in schools, and we were seeing a lot of school outbreaks, but since then, it has been decreasing for all of our respiratory illnesses, which is good. We have seen long-term care outbreaks go down as well. I think long-term care facilities are still being really careful.”

However, Westbrook remains mindful of the potential of another possible COVID outbreak that could be coming with XBB.1.5.

“I think people should be aware that we are seeing a new variant and that it looks like it’s more highly transmissible and evades the immune system more than other variants,” Westbrook said. “We’re always encouraging people to get vaccinated and get their boosters and to seek out antivirals if they’re getting sick, or if they’re tested positive for COVID. We still have a virus that could be new to some people and could be more severe in some people. We as a community want to make sure that we’re paying attention to this still because we do have vulnerable populations.”

## Minnesota North College hosting spring open house events

REGIONAL- Minnesota North College is excited to announce its upcoming Spring Open House events, offering prospective students and families the opportunity to explore the college’s programs, facilities, resources, and our six campuses throughout “The North”. The events will take place on:

Vermilion Campus – Saturday, Feb. 4, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Mesabi Eveleth & Virginia Campuses – Thursday, March 16, 3 – 6 p.m.

Rainy River Campus – Thursday, April 6, 3:30 – 6 p.m.

Itasca Campus – Thursday, April 13, 3:30 – 6 p.m.

Hibbing Campus – Thursday, April 20, 3:30 – 6 p.m.

Attendees will have the chance to meet with faculty and staff, attend informative presentations, and take tours of the college’s state-of-the-art facilities. The events will also include workshops and demonstrations,

showcasing the college’s hands-on approach to learning.

“We are thrilled to welcome prospective students and their families to our Spring Open House events,” said Molly Franz, Dean of Enrollment Management. “These events provide a unique opportunity for individuals to learn about the programs and services we offer.”

For more information about Minnesota North College’s Spring Open House events, please contact the following corresponding campus contacts:

Vermilion Campus: Contact Jessica Anderson for more information at 218-235-2191 or jessica.

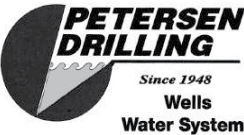
anderson@minnesota.north.edu.

Mesabi Range Eveleth & Virginia Campuses: Contact Carrie Hejda for more information at 218-550-2515 or carrie.hejda@minnesotanorth.edu.

Rainy River Campus: Contact Molly Franz for more information at 218-598-9336 or molly.nelson@minnesotanorth.edu.

Itasca Campus: Contact Bill Marshall for more information at 218-322-2340 or william.marshall@minnesotanorth.edu.

Hibbing Campus: Contact Sarah Merhar for more information at 218-969-4520 or sarah.merhar@minnesotanorth.edu.



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# SPORTS

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## BOYS BASKETBALL

### Back-to-back wins lift Ely to 14-3

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

ELY— The Timberwolves improved to 14-3 here on Tuesday after routing Greenway on the hardwood, 79-45. The Wolves jumped out early on the scoring prowess of senior Joey Bianco and freshman Jack Davies, who combined for 55 of Ely’s points. “We led 45-21 at halftime

and never looked back,” said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. Bianco led the way offensively with 30 points and ten assists for a double-double, while Davies poured in 25 points. Senior Erron Anderson notched his own double-double with ten points and ten rebounds. Tuesday’s win came on the heels of last Friday’s 82-51 victory at Littlefork. The game was surprisingly tight in the

early going. But Ely ticked off a run just ahead of the break that sent them into halftime up by 16. “We kept building our lead in the second half,” said McDonald. “We played very well defensively again.” Bianco again led Ely scorers, pouring in 25 points while notching eight assists and seven boards. Davies added 19 points while sophomore Caid Chittum tallied 18. Anderson

**Ely freshman guard Jack Davies takes a fade away jump shot.**  
photo by J. Greeney  
notched another double-double, with ten points and 14 boards. The Wolves will head down the road to Babbitt on Friday to take on the struggling Nighthawks. They’ll host Deer River on Tuesday, with a 7:15 p.m. start.



## GIRLS BASKETBALL

### Grizzlies outpace Red Lake

Slip 63-50 to Barnum

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The North Woods Grizzlies girls took two long road trips this past week, coming home with a solid 77-50 win over Red Lake and a 63-50 loss against Barnum. The Jan. 26 tilt against Red Lake saw Helen Koch quietly come to the fore in leading the Grizzlies to victory in a game where North Woods got rolling toward the end of the first half and continued to build momentum in the second. “When I added up the score, Helen had 24 points. She couldn’t believe it and neither could I,” North Woods Head Coach Liz Cheney said. “It seemed like such

See NW GIRLS...pg. 2B

### Wolves just keep winning

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

NASHWAUK- A long bus ride didn’t slow the Timberwolves here on Monday as they speared the Spartans 74-41 to improve to 15-2 on the season. “We scored 50 points in the first half,” said Head Coach Max Gantt. “We played good defense, knocked down good shots, and took care of the ball.” Senior Madeline Perry led the team with 22 points, followed by juniors Grace LaTourell with 24 points and Hannah Penke with 18. Playing at home last Friday, the Timberwolves’ defense kept Duluth Denfeld contained enroute to a 54-19 shellacking. “Our press and defense were awesome all game,” said Gantt. Ely’s player-on-player defense was especially tight and shut down the Hunters ability to score, especially in the first half. The teams went to the break with Ely up a remarkable 33-3. Denfeld’s only first half basket was a trey at 7:18 into the game. Denfeld clawed back on scoring in the second half, but couldn’t overcome Ely’s control of the ball. Penke had 20 points and 3 blocks and Latourell had 18 points and 6 rebounds. Junior Sarah Visser added 5 points to go along with her solid 10 rebounds and 6 steals. Sophomore Clare Thomas added 13 rebounds off the bench as well.

## NORDIC SKIING



### Strong home meet for Ely

Devine tops the field, boys and girls teams both finish second

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

ELY— With a north-west wind heralding an Arctic blast, hundreds of the region’s high school Nordic skiers gathered at Hidden Valley a day early to beat the cold that was forecast to hit the following day. It’s prep time for the sectional competition set for next Wednesday, Feb. 8, so racers were competing in the pursuit competition (combined freestyle and classic), as well as sprints. In the pursuit, Ely senior Zoe Devine continued her recent dominance, sweeping the field on her home course, finishing first

in both the freestyle and classic races for a combined time of 33:49.9, a full 49 seconds ahead of second-place finisher Rowan Bixler of Duluth East. Devine, at 17:19.2, beat Bixler by 23 seconds in the classic competition, and by 26 seconds in the freestyle event, with a time 16:30. “Zoe skied very well,” said Ely Head Coach Todd Hohenstein. “She, like many of our athletes, understands when to relax and ski efficiently, conserving for key areas of the race course to make a move and open up gaps or close them down

See NORDIC...pg. 2B

Above: Ely senior Zoe Devine is all by herself in the lead of classic race Friday morning. Devine took first overall.

Below: Ely senior Phoebe Helms coasts into the finish line.  
photos by M. Helmberger



## BOYS BASKETBALL

### Grizzlies notch wins on the week

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The North Woods Grizzlies boys ran at will Tuesday against the fledgling Northeast Range Nighthawks, blowing the visitors out of the gym 123-28. The Nighthawks’ slashing guard and senior floor leader Wyatt Martin was unavailable for the game, and the taller, faster, more athletic Grizzlies defenders clamped down hard on NER. The Nighthawks’ Logan Meskill banked home the first shot of the game to put NER up 2-0, the only lead they would enjoy. The Grizzlies’ Jared and Brenden Chiabotti converted consecutive steals into layups and the track meet was on. NER’s Makana Bodas scored a bucket and LeoMcKrahl canned a couple of jumpers from the free throw line, but

**Right: The Grizzlies’ Jonah Burnett eyes the bucket on a jumper against Duluth-Marshall.**  
photo by D. Colburn

by that time North Woods was already up 24-8. North Woods then reeled off a 25-1 run before NER found some success against the Grizzlies reserves. McKrahl connected on a jumper, and Cameron Posey drove the baseline and scored on a nifty backward flip off the glass. Then Meskill hit a long range bank shot for the Nighthawks’ only trey of the contest, and Bodas scored to complete a nine-point streak that made the score 58-18. Aidan Hartway and Kalvyn Benner notched scores for the Grizzlies before the half, giving the Grizzlies a 62-18 lead at the break.

See NW BOYS...pg. 2B









CRIME

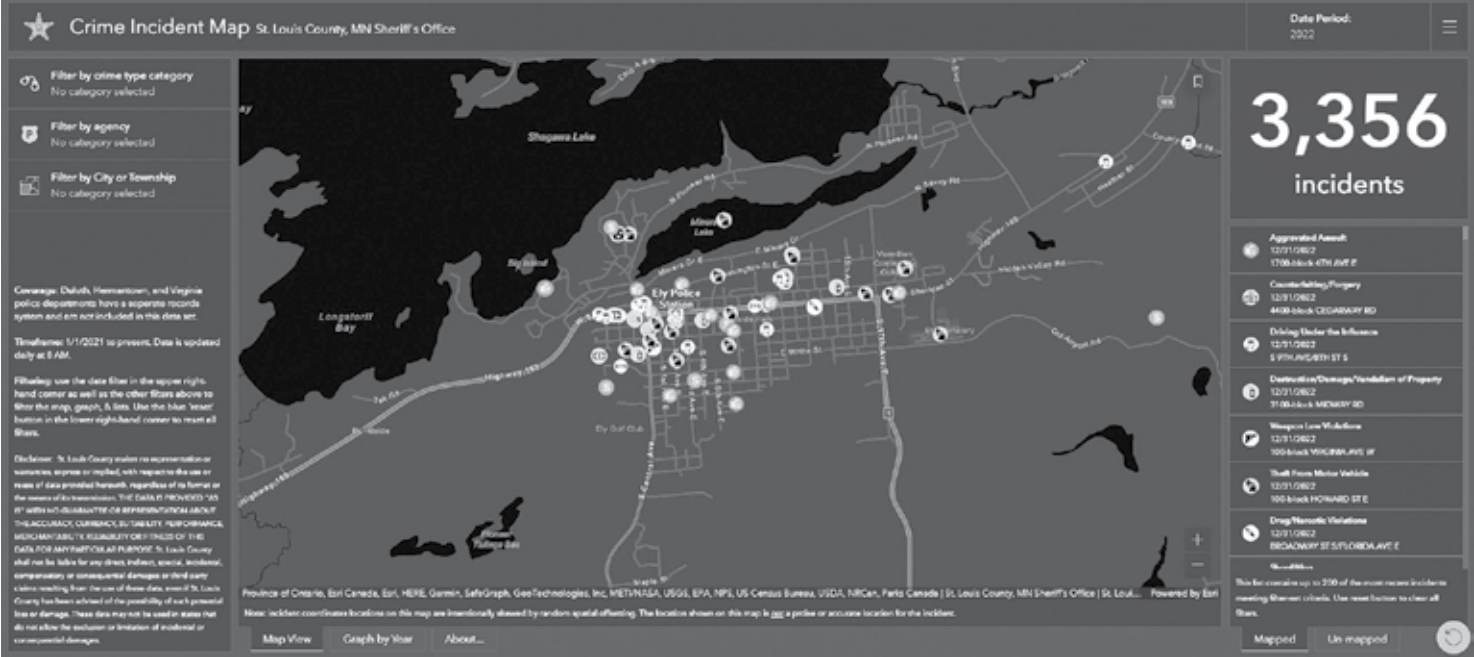
# Sheriff’s Office debuts online crime map

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Wondering about crime in your neighborhood or in another region of the county? The St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office has launched an interactive online dashboard that details where crime incidents have occurred. The online crime map shows various types of incidents, including crimes against people, property crimes, and others that are reportable as part of the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

The dashboard shows incidents in areas of the county that fall under the jurisdiction of the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office, as well as in other jurisdictions that use the same records management system. The cities of Duluth, Hermantown and Virginia use separate records systems and crimes reported in those locales are not shown on the map unless a St. Louis County Deputy was involved in the response.

Information on the dashboard is updated daily. The crime incident data, which dates back to Jan. 1, 2021, can be sorted and viewed based on lo-



The map can be found at [www.stlouiscountymn.gov/crimemap](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/crimemap) and allows users to search by location, and then refine the search to type of crime.

cation, range of dates, responding law enforcement agency, or other criteria.

The map opens in a default mode showing all crimes committed since 2021, which makes the sort criteria exceptionally useful for eliminating some of the overlapping pins that get congested and obscured in areas with more reported crimes, such as cities.

For example, opening the map and zooming in on Ely, one initially sees a large cluster of crimes with their identifying icons overlapping. Using the “crime type” filter to show only burglaries, the map adjusts to show that only three burglaries have been reported for Ely, the most recent of which is a burglary in the zero-block of Klondike Drive N reported on Oct.

20, 2022. Resetting the map and using the dates filter to show crimes committed in the past 14 days, only one shows up for Ely, a sex offense reported on Jan. 16.

“We wanted to make this information available because it’s important from a transparency perspective, but also to ensure people have accurate information when there are concerns

about crime in a community,” said Supervising Deputy Brandon Silgird.

The online dashboard was created and maintained through a coordinated effort of the Sheriff’s Office and County GIS staff. The dashboard is available online at [stlouiscountymn.gov/crimemap](http://stlouiscountymn.gov/crimemap).

PUBLIC SAFETY

# Breitung board hears ambulance issue, DWI arrests updates

by RACHEL BROPHY  
Staff Writer

SOUDAN – At the Jan. 26 Breitung Township regular meeting, Supervisor Chuck Tekautz gave an update on Tower Ambulance Commission issues.

“As far as the ambulance, Greenwood still isn’t paying,” he said. “I guess they got their summary from their draft study for the ambulance and it didn’t come out the way they wanted it, so I don’t know what’s happening there.”

Tekautz went on to say, “Now I see they said they want nothing to do with supporting the ambulance. Right now, Tower is running the ambulance, and some months there’s a fairly good loss depending on maintenance and if they need some equipment.”

Tekautz reported on the progress of the ad-

hoc ambulance committee formed to look into future options for the service.

“Would it just be better to have the TAAS with everyone contributing?” Tekautz asked. “The state says you have to do this, and you have to do that, but they don’t tell you where you’re going to get the funding.”

“We’re trying to figure how to keep the ambulance going while keeping up with what the new laws that the state wants,” he continued. “As far as our BLS [Basic Life Support] service I think we’ve got a good service here, but it’s not ALS [Advanced Life Support]. I know when I was on the ambulance for 25 years, we used Virginia even back then. We’d meet them by the Y Store or the Lutheran church and get the paramedics in there. It worked out good. But I guess Greenwood wants ALS and wants it for nothing - I think.”

Tekautz reported that TAAS has ordered the new ambulance for a cost of \$250,000 which is “standard price these days – unfortunately.” Tekautz also noted changes in leadership of the Tower Ambulance commission.

“Kevin Norby is resigning from ambulance commission and Bob Anderson is taking over,” he said.

## DWIs top police report

Police Chief Dan Reing reported the department is seeing quite a bit of snowmobile and OHV traffic running through town. Reing reported four DWIs for the month of December, three of which were on the Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) enhanced enforcement shift. There were two fourth-degree DWI arrests, one third-degree and one second-degree that included a forfeited vehicle and test refusal.

Supervisor Chuck Tekautz asked for clarification on what each degree meant. Reing explained that fourth degree is a first offense DWI, and third degree is a gross misdemeanor with one prior DWI in 10 years or a BAC of 0.16 or above. Second degree is two priors in 10 years. All who were arrested lived outside of Tower-Soudan. In the second-degree violation, the driver actually hit the ditch. Reing explained that TZD enhanced shift covers areas outside of Breitung-Soudan, but are still within about 30 miles. Reing also reported that the school bus driver who has been having trouble speeding through Soudan has had a governor put on his bus.

## Other business

In other business the board:

➤ Discussed a bench purchase and placement along the trail. Clerk Di-

anna Sundahl will look at costs and options.

➤ Approved changes to fire chief and asst. chief education and experience in the job descriptions and deleted one of the formerly required classes. According to Assistant Chief Tuchel, “It’s a difficult and expensive class to get. You’d probably have to leave the state to find one.”

➤ Approved making formal application to the county for a formal 911 address for the skating rink/shack.

➤ Approved the CTC internet contract.

➤ Approved having the clerk research broadband information and funding.

➤ Approved authorizing making an application and accepting funds from IRRR FY23 Culture and Tourism program for

McKinley Park and Stuntz Bay projects.

➤ Designated township election hours as 10 a.m. -8 p.m., appointed election judges, and the absentee ballot board.

➤ Approved ordering a Ring doorbell system with the basic package for enhanced entrance security at Breitung Community Center.

➤ Approved making application for a noise ordinance sign as well as the ayment of \$1,508 for sign.

➤ Discussed township equipment replacement costs.

➤ Approved transferring \$100,000 to a 9-month CD at 3.5 percent.

The Breitung Town Board next regular meeting will be Thursday, Feb. 23 at 12 noon.

## Thank You

Thank you for all your thoughts, prayers and support in the loss of our beloved Ron.

Delores Hujanen, Les Hujanen and families

## Obituaries and Death Notices

### Mark Leustek

Mark Leustek, 53, of Ely, passed away on Monday, Jan. 30, 2023, at the Boundary Waters Care Center. Family arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

### Donnie J. Gordon

Donnie Jean Jameson Mosher Gordon, 78, of Cook, passed away on Saturday, Jan. 14, 2023, surrounded by her family. A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

She is survived by her husband, Tom; children, Lori (Deb) Gordon, Cynthia Porter, Erica (Mark) Burns, Naomi Gordon, Russell (Kelly) Mosher and Andrew Gordon; siblings, Dennis (Marlene) Jameson and Sandra Janney; grandchildren, Malory, McKenzie, Erin, Garrett and Jasmin plus those she loved like her grandchildren, Camer-

on, Steven and Matthew; great-grandchildren, Aubriella and newborn Rylee; nieces, nephews and their families.

### Charles E. Lerfald Sr.

Charles Eugene Lerfald Sr., 69, of Angora, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023. A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 3 at Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service.

He is survived by his loving wife, Tammy; daughter, Shelby (Jon); sons, Charles Jr. (Kenzie), Jeremy and Darren; sister, Sarah Maki; brothers, David (Bonnie), John and Keith (Sue), all of Embarrass; sister-in-law, Delores of Gilbert; grandchildren, Kinsley, Lacie, Nolan, Jazzy, Ariana, Lawrence, Landon, Aria and Anika; and numerous nieces and nephews.

### Darlene M. Graupman

Darlene Mary Elizabeth Stuedemann Graupman, 91, of Babbitt,

passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023, at Carefree Living in Babbitt. Funeral services were held on Saturday, Jan. 28 at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Babbitt. Burial was at the Amanda Cemetery Annex in Waasa Township. Arrangements were with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her three children, Sandra (Kevin) Gibson, Steven (Linda) Graupman and Shelly (Darrell) Zillmer; ten grandchildren, Julie (Dan) Viren, Scott (Lisa) Gibson, Travis (Andrea) Gibson, Ross (Dawn) Graupman, Neil (Christina) Graupman, Amy (Matthew) Eldridge, Tony Zillmer, Teri (Chris) Iverson, Tyler Zillmer and Tracy (Leeland) Campion; 20 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild and another on the way.

### Mary Ann Starkman

Mary Ann “Dolly” Sever Starkman, 94, a proud lifelong resident of Ely, died on Friday, Jan. 27, 2023, at Carefree Living in Babbitt.

The family would like to thank the dedicated staff of Carefree Living for their daily provision of kind and compassionate care. Funeral services will be announced at later date. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

She is survived by her daughters, Marie (Tim) Salerno and Sharon Franklin; daughter-in-law, Bonnie K. Starkman; grandchildren, Michael (Heidi) Starkman, David Starkman, Matt and Sean (Alyssa) Salerno, John Franklin and Morgan (T.J.) Maglio; great-granddaughters, Jade, Vivienne, Quincy and Annie; and great-grandsons, Logan, Vincent and Julian.

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Tue: 9:30am–3pm  
Wed: 11am–5pm

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Regional Landfill**  
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POLLUTION DEBATE

# Should Birch Lake be listed as impaired?

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

**BIRCH LAKE** — Whether or not to list Birch Lake as an impaired water due to elevated levels of sulfate is another flash-point in the ongoing battle over mining pollution in northeastern Minnesota lakes and streams. The issue raises further questions about the transparency of the state’s Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), which continues to claim the full backing of the federal Environmental Protection Agency for its decision to exclude the lake, located near Babbitt, from the impaired waters list.

In fact, the EPA expressed considerable concern about the MPCA’s determination to exclude Birch Lake, but agreed to defer a decision until next year on whether to override the MPCA on the issue, which it has the authority to do. The EPA, in 2021, rejected the MPCA’s impaired waters list for failure to include 30 water bodies, including the Pike River and Lake Vermilion, that are impaired due to excessive levels of sulfate for wild rice waters. The EPA did not include Birch Lake among the 30 impacted water bodies, but tribes and environmental organizations have been urging its addition to the list, arguing that portions of the lake are regularly exceeding the wild rice sulfate standard. In response, MPCA officials have promised to gather additional information on the issue in conjunction with environmental groups and tribes, which have led the push to include Birch Lake on the impaired waters list.

Why it matters

The list of impaired waters is issued every two years based on federal requirements in the Clean Water Act and is based on exceedances of federal water quality standards for a long list of potential parameters. In northeastern

Minnesota, sulfate levels above the state’s strict 10 mg/l wild rice standard are among the most common reasons for inclusion on the list, assuming that wild rice is known to be present, or has been present in the recent past, on lakes or streams in question.

Mercury levels in fish, which can also be linked to mining pollution, are another common reason for including a lake in the region on the impaired waters list. The list is used to set pollution reduction goals, known as total maximum daily load, or TMDLs, that are necessary to restore impaired waters to an improved status.

Should Birch Lake be on the list?

All sides agree that Birch Lake meets one of the requirements to be listed as an impaired water for wild rice. The natural grain, which is a key food source for many northern Minnesota residents, particularly tribal members, has grown in parts of Birch Lake for years. As such, the lake is classified as a wild rice water, which means it is subject to the 10 mg/l wild rice standard for sulfate.

That’s where the debate gets stickier.

The MPCA has gathered surprisingly little water quality data from Birch Lake since the 1970s, when state regulators were dealing with a relatively new pollution source, the outflow from the Dunka pit, which flowed through Unnamed Creek into Birch Lake’s Bob Bay. But environmental advocates have done their own extensive water quality testing in the lake, and those results have consistently shown sulfate levels above the wild rice standard, particularly in the vicinity of mining-related discharges at Bob Bay and Dunka Bay.

Testing undertaken over the past several years in three parts of the lake by the White Iron Chain of Lakes Association, or WICOLA, shows sulfate levels near Dunka Bay averaging 8.58 mg/l, or

just under the 10 mg/l wild rice standard. Meanwhile, sulfate levels near the Birch Narrows and Birch Rapids, were considerably lower, with averages of 4.16 mg/l and 3.09 mg/l respectively. Most lakes in northeastern Minnesota that are unimpacted by mining pollution consistently see sulfate levels of less than 2 mg/l.

While the WICOLA data would seem to support the MPCA’s position that Birch Lake is currently compliant with the 10

mg/l standard as a whole, other test data point to a bigger problem. Dr. Patrick Brezonik, a now-retired professor of civil, environmental, and geo-engineering from the University of Minnesota who chaired the MPCA’s wild rice standard advisory panel, examined test data gathered by Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness, and the Northern Lakes Scientific Advisory Panel over a period of about two years. “The grand average

sulfate concentration for all 104 samples collected over that time period is 13.6 mg/l (higher than the 10 mg/l standard),” wrote Brezonik in comments he provided to the MPCA on the issue. “Substantially higher concentrations were found in Bob Bay: average = 29.6 mg/l, and Dunka Bay: average = 15.3 mg/l, as well as north of Dunka Bay: average = 11.4 mg/l. Bob’s Bay and Dunka Bay both have tributaries that drain existing or past iron

mining lands.”

Based on that data Brezonik said he has concluded that at least portions of Birch Lake, particularly areas around Dunka and Bob Bay, “are impaired by sulfate concentrations that exceed the state of Minnesota’s water quality standard for wild rice waters.” The MPCA is well acquainted with Brezonik, since the agency tapped him to chair the committee it established to update the wild rice sulfate standard.

Some of the MPCA’s critics say it’s not being forthcoming when it claims that the EPA has signed off on its impaired waters list, when the issue of Birch Lake remains unresolved. “Protecting Minnesota waters and wild rice is MPCA’s job,” said Paula Maccabee, chief legal counsel and advocacy director for Duluth-based Water Legacy. “So is disclosing EPA’s concerns with candor and working in collaboration with public interest stakeholders and tribal rightsholders to address those concerns.”

MPCA officials say they’re taking steps to address the concerns being raised about Birch Lake, and that they are open to utilizing information gathered by the public to aid decision-making. “The MPCA is committed to gathering and including the most up-to-date and accurate information when making decisions related to all our work, including the impaired waters list,” said Michael Rafferty, communications manager for the state agency. “We fully intend to include this data and are working with the groups to get it in an electronic format so it can be loaded into the database we use for assessing data and comparing it to the water quality standard.”

Whether the agency and its critics can find consensus on the issues remains to be seen. The next update to the state’s impaired waters list is set for 2024.



Looking up through the frosted branches of a grove of giant aspen on an island far out in the middle of the Lost Lake Swamp on a rare sunny day last month.

CLIMATE

# January was mild, and among the gloomiest ever

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

**REGIONAL** — This week’s cold snap was, for the most part, a return to normal for late January in the North Country after an exceptionally mild and remarkably gloomy January.

Consistent, deep cloud cover actually contributed to the mild weather by trapping heat in the overnight hours. “Some of the overnight lows were incredible,” said state climatologist Pete

Boulay.

Citing data from International Falls, Boulay noted that the border city went ten days, from Jan. 10-Jan. 20 in which the coldest overnight temperature was a balmy ten degrees above zero. “On five of those nights, our overnight low was in the 20s,” Boulay added.

By comparison, the average overnight low in the Falls in mid-late January is seven degrees below zero, which means overnight temperatures during that

stretch ranged from 17 to as much as 35 degrees above average.

For the month, considering both highs and lows, the month ended with an average temperature of 13 degrees, putting it in the top ten mildest Januaries on record in International Falls, which has one of the longest periods of record in the region.

The cold snap that hit the area this past weekend affected this January’s ranking for mildest.

“If the month ended on Jan. 27, it would have been the second

warmest on record,” said Boulay. Even with the past several days of chilly temps, January 2023 will lodge in the history books as the eighth warmest.

It may also have been the cloudiest, at least in the past 60 years. Boulay notes that the solar instrument at the St. Paul-Minneapolis airport clocked the lowest amount of solar radiation since its installation way back in 1963 through the 27th. “It was a gloomy month, that’s for sure,” said Boulay.

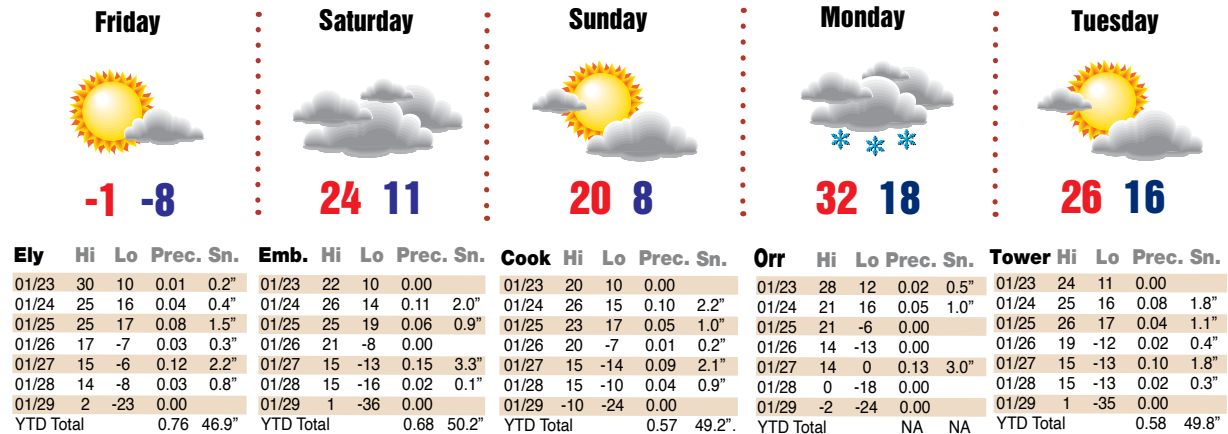
January’s mild temperatures

have helped push the overall temperature average at most northern St. Louis County reporting stations to above average for the winter, running anywhere from 2.7 degrees in Tower to 4.7 degrees at a station located 25 miles east of Ely.

While January was mild, Boulay said a recent poll of Minnesotans revealed that most said they preferred cold and sunny winter weather to mild and cloudy. “That’s as long as there isn’t wind,” added Boulay.

## LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather



## Fishing reports

### Ely area

Stream trout fishing has been good to very good this last week. Rainbow trout and brookies are both being caught in very shallow water near downed trees, weedbeds and large flats. Deadsticking fresh dead minnows or deadsticking small jigs tipped with wax worms has been very effective. Before 9 a.m. has been the most active period. Eelpout reports have

begun to trickle in as anglers start targeting them as we get closer to their spawning season. Anglers have been finding them in the evening in typical spots like shallow humps and flats with sand or weeds. Heavy, bright glowing eelpout jigs, packed with chunks of fresh minnows and pounded on the bottom has worked best.

*Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors. See more at ArrowheadOutdoorsEly MN.com*





# Visit These... SNOWMOBILE HOT SPOTS!



**Taconite Trail:**  
Snow: 16-26" • Base: 1-4"  
Groomed, good condition

**Arrowhead Trail:**  
Snow: 14-25" • Base: 1-4"  
Groomed, good condition

Conditions online at:  
[dnr.state.mn.us/snow\\_depth](http://dnr.state.mn.us/snow_depth)



**FREE**  
Market Analysis

**Barb Hegg**

Associate Broker, GRI  
[barb@vermillionland.com](mailto:barb@vermillionland.com)

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Home Office: 218-666-0144  
Mobile: 218-742-2369

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2



**Ski-doo Rentals,  
Sales & Service**

• Brand NEW Fleet of  
Ski-doo Rentals



**ski-doo**  
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Babbitt MN 55706

3

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BAY  
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fresh meat & produce
- Convenience store
- Gas with 24 hour card readers
- Diesel also available
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the road  
to Orr!*

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4

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MOTEL**



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[www.marjomoteltowermn.com](http://www.marjomoteltowermn.com)

5

**SLED RENTALS**

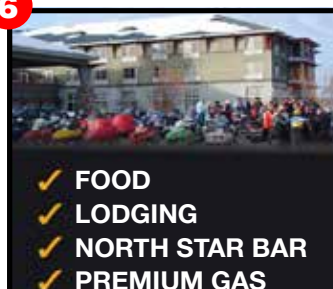
[vermillionhouseboats.com](http://vermillionhouseboats.com)  
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[info@vermillionhouseboats.com](mailto:info@vermillionhouseboats.com)

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6



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- ✓ PREMIUM GAS



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7



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Year-Round!**

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next to Soudan's Only Store!**

- Comfy, cozy rooms
- Great rates • Wifi
- Continental breakfast

**PROJECT/CLASSROOM  
PARTY ROOM**

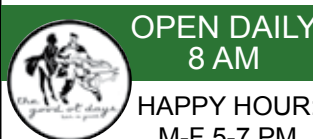
**BOOK THE ENTIRE INN!**

**218-753-2333**

30 Center Street, Soudan

8

**GOOD OL' DAYS**



**OPEN DAILY  
8 AM**

**HAPPY HOUR:  
M-F 5-7 PM**

**BEST BREAKFAST  
IN TOWN!**

**DAILY MEAL SPECIALS**

- Homemade Chili
- NEW Desserts
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9

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- Unique Daily Programs
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10

**COOK  
VFW**



**HAPPY HOUR • 4-6 PM  
SUN-SAT  
- CLOSED TUESDAYS -**

**FRIDAY  
BURGER NIGHT  
4:30-7 PM**

**Call For  
Take-Out  
666-0500**

11

**MELGEORGE'S**  
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*Centrally located on Arrowhead Trail*

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12



*Serving  
Lunch, Dinner  
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**HOURS:**  
Tuesday thru Saturday:  
11 AM to 8 PM  
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13



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14



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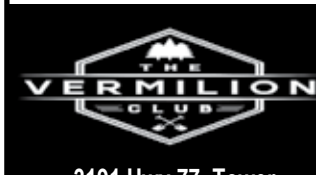
4675 Hwy. 53, Orr MN  
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16



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EMPLOYMENT



**COME JOIN OUR TEAM!**  
Waschke Family Chevrolet is currently seeking an Auto Body Technician and an Automotive Detailer. Stop in and apply in person at 126 N Hwy. 53, Cook, or inquire by phone at 218-666-5901, or send resume to Dgrecinger@waschke.com.

**WANTED!**  
Waschke Family Chevrolet is currently seeking an A/B technician. Prefer GM Certified but will train. Base pay plus incentives! Stop in and apply in person at 126 N Hwy. 53, Cook, or inquire by phone at 218-666-5901, or send resume to Dgrecinger@waschke.com. tfn

PUBLIC NOTICES

**GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP  
ALS AMBULANCE COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, Feb 8, 2023, 6:00 PM  
GREENWOOD TOWN HALL**

PURPOSE: THE COMMITTEE WILL FORMULATE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE McGRATH STUDY TO PRESENT TO THE TOWN BOARD FOR IT'S CONSIDERATION. ALSO, THE COMMITTEE WILL DISCUSS AND POSSIBLY MAKE RECCOMENDATIONS AS TO HOW TO MOVE FORWARD AT THIS TIME.

A QUORUM OF GREENWOOD TOWN SUPERVISORS MAY BE PRESENT.

Dr. JoAnn Bassing  
Interim Clerk Greenwood Township

*Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 3, 2023*

**NOTICE OF MORTGAGE  
FORECLOSURE SALE**

**THE RIGHT TO  
VERIFICATION OF THE  
DEBT AND IDENTITY  
OF THE ORIGINAL  
CREDITOR WITHIN THE  
TIME PROVIDED BY  
LAW IS NOT AFFECTED  
BY THIS ACTION.**

Date: January 12, 2023

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN  
THAT:

Default has occurred in the  
conditions of the following  
described mortgage:

DATE OF MORTGAGE: **May  
31, 2007**  
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL  
AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE:  
**\$103,500.00**

M O R T G A G O R ( S ) :  
**Christopher Lopuski, a single  
person**

MORTGAGEE: **American  
Bank of the North n/k/a Park  
State Bank**

DATE AND PLACE OF  
FILING: Recorded on June  
8, 2007, as Document No.  
01053424, in the office of the  
Recorder, St. Louis County,  
Minnesota.

ASSIGNMENT(S) OF  
MORTGAGE: None

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF  
PROPERTY:

**That part of the Northwest  
Quarter of Southeast  
Quarter, Section Twenty-  
one, Township Sixty-four,  
Range Twenty, described as  
follows: Beginning at the  
center of said Section 21;  
thence East along the East-  
West Quarter line 535 feet;  
thence South parallel with  
the North-South Quarter line  
of said Section, 535 feet;  
thence West parallel with  
the East-West Quarter line  
535 feet to the North-South  
Quarter line of said Section  
21; thence North to the point  
of beginning.**

COUNTY IN WHICH  
PROPERTY IS LOCATED: **St.  
Louis County, Minnesota**

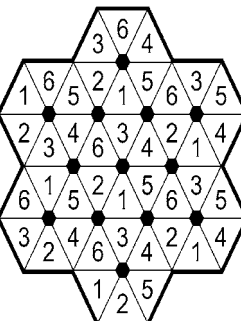
THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO  
BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE  
AS OF THE DATE OF THIS  
NOTICE: **\$62,293.11**

THAT no action or proceeding  
has been instituted at law to  
recover the debt secured by  
said mortgage, or any part  
thereof; that there has been  
compliance with all pre-fore-  
closure notice and accelera-  
tion requirements of said mort-  
gage, and/or applicable stat-  
utes including the requisites of  
Minn. Stat. § 580.02;

PURSUANT, to the power of  
sale contained in said mort-  
gage, the above described  
property in St. Louis County  
will be sold by the Sheriff of St.  
Louis County at public auction  
as follows:

DATE AND TIME OF SALE:  
**March 15, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.**  
PLACE OF SALE: **St. Louis  
County Sheriff's Office, 100  
North Fifth Avenue West,  
Room 103, Duluth, MN  
55802,**

to pay the debt then secured



by said mortgage and taxes, if  
any actually paid by the mort-  
gagee, on the premises and  
the costs and disbursements  
allowed by law. The time  
allowed by law for redemp-  
tion by said mortgagors, their  
personal representatives or  
assigns is **twelve months**  
from the date of sale, unless  
reduced to five (5) weeks  
under Minnesota Statutes,  
Section 582.032.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE  
PROPERTY: If the real estate  
is an owner-occupied, sin-  
gle-family dwelling, unless  
otherwise provided by law,  
the date on or before which  
the mortgagor(s) must vacate  
the property if the mortgage  
is not reinstated under sec-  
tion 580.30, or the property  
is not redeemed under sec-  
tion 580.23, the time to vacate  
the property is 11:59 p.m. on  
**March 15, 2024.**

M O R T G A G O R ( S )  
RELEASED FROM  
FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON  
MORTGAGE: None

THE TIME ALLOWED BY  
LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY  
THE MORTGAGORS, THE  
MORTGAGORS' PERSONAL  
REPRESENTATIVES OR  
ASSIGNS MAY BE  
REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS  
IF A JUDICIAL ORDER  
IS ENTERED UNDER  
MINNESOTA STATUTES,  
SECTION 582.032,  
DETERMINING, AMONG  
OTHER THINGS, THAT THE  
MORTGAGED PREMISES  
ARE IMPROVED WITH A  
RESIDENTIAL DWELLING  
OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS,  
ARE NOT PROPERTY  
USED IN AGRICULTURAL  
PRODUCTION, AND ARE  
ABANDONED.

**PARK STATE BANK**  
Robert R. Kanuit, #0252530  
Fryberger, Buchanan, Smith &  
Frederick, P.A.  
302 West Superior Street,  
Suite 700  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802-  
1863  
(218) 722-0861

**THIS IS A COMMUNICATION  
FROM  
A DEBT COLLECTOR.**

**NOTICE OF MORTGAGE  
FORECLOSURE SALE  
FORECLOSURE DATA**

**Street Address, city and zip  
code of mortgaged prem-  
ises:** 11368 Nett Lake Road,  
Orr, Minnesota 55771

**(2) Transaction agent (if  
applicable); residential  
mortgage servicer; and  
lender or broker:** Park State  
Bank f/k/a American Bank of the North

**(3) Tax parcel identification  
number(s):** 425-0030-02515

**(4) Transaction Agent's  
mortgage ID number (MERS  
number):** Not applicable

**(5) Name of mortgage orig-  
inator:** American Bank of the  
North n/k/a Park State Bank

*Published in the Timberjay,  
Jan. 20, 27, Feb. 3, 10, 17,  
and 24, 2023*

**Program Accountant  
(2 positions)**

**Closes: 02/08/2023**

**Position Purpose:** The Program Accountant is responsible for setting up, maintaining, and monitoring all general ledger accounts, funds, and budgets in the accounting system relative to State, Federal and Tribal contract/programs including preparing adjusting journal entries under the direction of the Program Accounting Supervisor. Also monitors contracts/programs by providing requests, reporting and documentation under the direction of the Program Accounting Supervisor (Supervisory Program Accountant).

**Excellent Benefits:**

Medical & Dental- Free • Annual leave •  
Sick leave • 401k match • 15 paid holidays •  
Flex plan • Basic Life Insurance • LTD  
Voluntary benefits available by payroll deductions

**Website Address:** <https://boisforte.com/jobs/>

*Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 27 & Feb. 3, 2023*

PUBLIC NOTICES

**VERMILION LAKE TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF AUDIT**

The Vermilion Lake Town Board will do the annual audit of books of the treasurer and clerk during its regular monthly meeting on Thursday February 9th at 6:00 pm at the Vermilion Lake Town Hall.

Crystal Alaspa, Town Clerk

*Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 3, 2023*

**Morcom Township**

**Notice of Election**

Morcom Township Election will be held Tuesday, March 14, 2023 from 4:00-8:00 pm at the Morcom Township Community Center: Bear River School located at 12512 HWY 22 COOK MN 55723.

Morcom Township Positions open for election:  
1 Supervisor for a 3 year term, 1 Treasurer for a 2 year term.

**Notice of Annual Meeting**

Morcom Township will host our annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 after close of township elections and counting of ballots at approximately 8:00 pm at the Bear River School located at 12512 HWY 22 COOK MN 55723.

**Notice for Meeting Date Change**

Morcom Town Board has changed the February Township Meeting from Wednesday, Feb. 8th and will be held at 6:00pm on Wednesday, Feb. 15th. All welcome to attend.

**Notice Board of Audit**

Morcom Town Board will be hosting their Board of Audit at 4:00pm on Wednesday, Feb. 15th. All are welcome to attend.

**Notice of Public Accuracy  
Testing**

Morcom Town Board will be having their public accuracy testing and viewing of ballot for election on Feb. 15th from 4:00-6:00pm.

**If you have any questions about  
the above meetings, please feel  
free to contact our Clerk,  
Sasha Lehto at 218-969-5812.**

*Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 3, 2023*

**CryptoQuote**

**AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW**

One letter stands for another. In this sample, **A** is used for the three L's, **X** for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.

UOXAX QD P MYQRX QSDQGX YE

ZYH, UOPU TOQDJXAD PVV GPZ

VYSW, Q EXXV UOQD QD AQWOU

EYA CX, Q BSYT UOPU UOQD QD

TAYSW. — DOXV DQVMXADUXQS

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**CryptoQuip**

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: **K** equals **P**

XTOYF KGTKUFWM WTAWFGAYAQ

VUF SFXYNF TZ JA TADYAF

XTAFM VGJANZFG NFGOYWF:

“Y NFF SFJS KJMKJD.”

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**OPEN POSITIONS**

10 Fifth Street SE Cook, MN 55723

**Care Center**

FT & PT Nursing Assistant (Wage starting at \$17.79/hr., \$1,500 sign-on bonus)  
PT Registered Nurse (Wage starting at \$36.22/hr. \$4,000 sign-on bonus)

**Hospital/ER**

PT Registered Nurse (Wage starting at \$36.22/hr. \$4,000 sign-on bonus)  
PT Unit Clerk/HUC (Wage starting at \$17.79/hr. EMT and/or NA cert. required)

**Environmental Services**

FT (Environmental Tech I) Housekeeping and Laundry Aide (Wage starting at \$15.03/hr. \$1,500 sign-on bonus)  
Casual Laundry Aide (Wage starting at \$15.03/hr)

**Laboratory**

FT Medical Lab Tech (Wage starting at

\$24.08/hr., \$4,000 sign-on bonus)

**Radiology**

FT Radiologic Technologist (Wage starting at \$27.77/hr., \$4,000 sign-on bonus)  
Casual Ultrasound Tech  
(Independent Contractor, weekend only)  
Casual Radiologic Tech  
(Independent Contractor)

**Dietary**

PT Dietary Aide/Cook  
(Wage starting at \$14.53/hr.)

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More Info? Contact Human Resources

**218-666-6220**

[humanresources@cookhospital.org](mailto:humanresources@cookhospital.org)

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The Cook Hospital & Care Center offers competitive pay and benefits including PERA retirement, Health and Dental coverage, Life and LTD.

PUBLIC NOTICES

**Notice of Vacancy  
St. Louis County Cooperative Extension  
Committee**

The St. Louis County Board of Commissioners will be making three (3) appointments to the St. Louis County Cooperative Extension Committee for terms expiring December 31, 2025. Persons interested in serving on this committee should submit an application no later than **February 24, 2023** to: Phil Chapman, Clerk of County Board, 100 North 5th Avenue West, Room 214, Duluth, MN, 55802.

To apply online, go to [www.stlouiscountymn.gov/clerk](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/clerk) click on the "Application for Citizen Advisory Committee". Paper applications are also available in the County Auditor's Office in the Duluth Courthouse and the Virginia Government Services Center or by emailing [chapmanp@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:chapmanp@stlouiscountymn.gov) or calling 218-726-2385.

**St. Louis County Cooperative Extension Committee:** Approximately eight committee meetings are held annually on the third Thursday of the month from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at various locations in St. Louis County.

**TERM:** Three (3) years, expiring December 31, 2025.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Resident of St. Louis County with an interest in recommending, supporting and advocating for Extension educational programs brought to local people through the St. Louis County Extension Offices as an outreach of University of Minnesota Extension. Knowledge of your community resource and needs.

**FUNCTIONS:** Provide leadership to strengthen and inform program and ensure that it meets community needs. Assist in marketing and promoting the Extension educational program in St. Louis County. To provide citizen input in the planning, implementing and obtaining support for the Extension programs and budget. To represent the County in staff hiring, evaluation and development of financial resources for Extension programs.

**DESIRED AREAS OF RESIDENCE:** Citizen members will be appointed by the County Board and generally geographically balanced across the county.

NANCY NILSEN, COUNTY AUDITOR - TREASURER  
By: Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board

*Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 3 and 10, 2023*

**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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

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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦**

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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

AUTOMOTIVE

**Langevin Auto & Truck Repair**  
Full Service  
Auto Repair & Garage

Hours: 8 AM-5 PM M-F  
2 Miles South of Tower  
**218-749-0751**

HAIR CARE

DREAMWEAVER SALON & DAY SPA- Open Monday-Friday 8:30 – 6:30. 218-666-5594. tfn

HOSPICE

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

PET CREMATION

VISIT VermilionPetCremation.com or call 218-780-8069 for pet cremation details and rates.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AA MEETING IN COOK- Sunday Night Big Book Group meets at Trinity Lutheran Church, 231 2nd St. NE, Cook, at 7:00 pm Sunday. For information call 218-666-2820 or 218-780-7670.

AL-ANON MEETING IN COOK - Ashawa Al-Anon Family Group meets at Trinity Lutheran Church, 231 2nd St. NE, Cook, at 7:00 pm Sunday. This meeting is for families and friends of alcoholics.

AA OPEN MEETING- Thursdays at 7 p.m. at Woodland Presbyterian Church, Acacia Blvd. and Central Drive in Babbitt.

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

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

HIV/AIDS? For confidential compassionate local support call the Rural AIDS Action Network, toll-free 1-888-647-RAAN(7226).

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

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

**CryptoQuip**  
answer

Movie prophecy concerning the demise of an online money transfer service: "I see dead PayPal."

**CryptoQuote**  
answer

There is a voice inside of you, that whispers all day long, I feel this is right for me, I know that this is wrong. — Shel Silverstein

BUILDING SERVICES

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Superior Quality

- Plank Paneling
- Trim
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- Industrial Lumber

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8825 Hwy 101, Iron, MN 55751

WANTED

SELIGA CANOES WANTED: We'll buy old Seligas in Good Shape. Turn your classic canoe into cash. Call Steve at 365-6745. tfn

GRAIN FANNING MILL WANTED. Also, empty Altoid tins. 218-780-8870. 3/p

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Line classifieds cost 30¢/word, \$6.00 minimum.  
Classified ads can be run a second time at half price (private parties only). We now accept payment by Visa, Mastercard, AmEx, and Discover. Call your ad in to 218-753-2950. Display (boxed) classifieds are billed by the "inch"- please call for prices and information on discounts.  
Call Today – 218-753-2950 or 218-365-3114

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Hwy 53, Orr • Call 218-757-3150

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Super Crossword

**ACROSS**

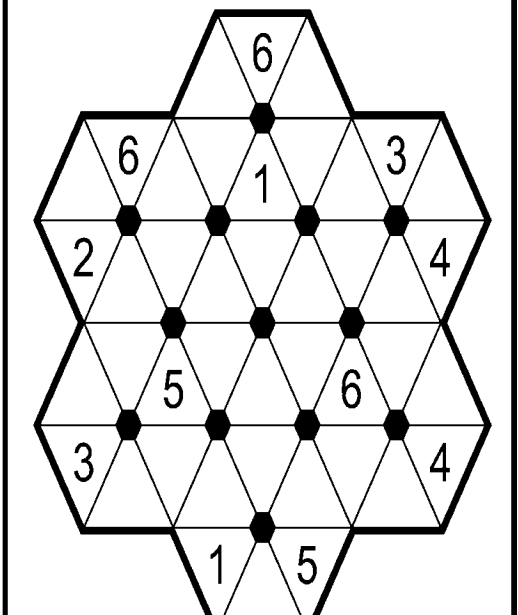
1 Elevates  
9 Faithful attendant in "Othello"  
15 Maritime  
20 Intensify  
21 Quark model particles  
22 Kagan of justice  
23 Start of a riddle  
25 Deserves  
26 Violinists' rub-ons  
27 Radio's Glass or Flatow  
28 Fished for morays  
30 Jostle (for)  
31 In — (mired)  
32 Riddle, part 2  
37 English diarist Samuel  
39 Confuses  
40 Aviary homes  
41 Apple, e.g.  
43 Next yr.'s alums  
45 Look after  
49 Riddle, part 3  
56 With  
59-Across, DVD format  
59 See  
60 Supervises  
61 —  
62 Liquid-emptying conduit  
65 Bits of land in la mer  
66 Pollute  
68 Target of Arrid or Sure  
69 Riddle, part 4  
76 Some purple flowers  
77 Drifting types  
78 Home of Club Cal Neva casino  
79 Place side by side for contrast  
82 Ayres of "State Fair"  
83 Scold  
86 — out a living  
87 ID for the IRS  
88 Riddle, part 5  
91 Part of MCAT  
93 Fair-hiring abbr.  
94 Irate, with "off"  
95 "The Office" actor Wilson  
99 Cure provider  
103 "Cómo —?" (Spanish greeting)  
108 End of the riddle  
113 E. — (bacterium)  
114 Bagel salmon  
115 1980s Pontiac  
116 JVC rival  
117 Bacterium that requires oxygen  
119 Shady recess  
121 Riddle's answer  
125 Sleep loudly  
126 Turns out  
127 Bring back in from another country  
128 Axed down  
129 Not wobbling  
130 Florida city south of Tampa Bay

**DOWN**

1 Put a fresh bandage on  
2 Onto dry land  
3 Frosts over  
4 Soundness of mind  
5 Enthusiasm  
6 Taco sauce  
7 Hagen of Broadway  
8 According to  
9 Chef Lagasse  
10 Threaten  
11 Lead-in to thermal  
12 Sophia of "Firepower"  
13 Doctors in training  
14 "Boyfriend" singer Simpson  
15 "You — have worried"  
16 According to  
17 Enthusiasm  
18 Markswoman Oakley  
19 Surgical beam source  
24 Encircle with a belt  
29 Sue Grafton's "— for Evidence"  
33 Papas' other halves  
34 Central German river  
35 Deputy: Abbr.  
36 Oct. clock setting  
38 Plan detail  
42 Choose (to)  
44 Fishing pole  
46 Asmara native  
47 Middy snooze  
48 Salon supply  
49 "Understood, dude"  
50 Farm tower  
51 Un-, non-, pro- and con-  
52 Vacation getaway  
53 Shah's land  
54 Horse noise  
55 Boat in Venice  
56 Theda of silent films  
57 Describe by drawing  
58 Potentially offensive, for short  
63 Disloyal sorts  
64 Capital of South Dakota  
66 Throw easily  
67 Lhasa's land  
70 Narrow inlets  
71 African vipers  
72 Singer Redbone  
73 Strewn, as seeds  
74 Military group  
75 "Yes" signals  
79 Boeing plane  
80 Hawaiian guitar, for short  
81 Lamb nurser  
83 In — (prior to birth)  
84 Start for eminent  
85 — one's time  
89 Chocolate snack cake  
90 Lone Star State coll.  
92 Mr. Capote, informally  
93 Contest competitor  
96 Filmdom's Hitchcock  
97 Ugandan despot Amin  
98 Girls in family trees  
100 Listening accessory for an iPod  
101 Text written for commercials  
102 Oahu shindig  
104 Tiny pieces  
105 Overly, emphatically  
106 Writer Camus  
107 Middy snooze  
108 Really mark down  
109 Singer Lena  
110 "The — Incident" (Henry Fonda film)  
111 Singer with the #1 hit "Royals"  
112 Bottom point  
118 Humorist Bombeck  
120 Metal source  
122 "That — lie!"  
123 Divs. of days  
124 "For" vote

**SNOWFLAKES**  
by Japheth Light

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



**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦**  
♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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**Even Exchange**  
answers

1. Rocket, Locket  
2. Blank, Black  
3. Dream, Dread  
4. Dipper, Diaper  
5. Bully, Burly  
6. Mouse, Moose  
7. London, Landon  
8. Smock, Shock  
9. Brunch, Branch  
10. Limbo, Limbs

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**Answer**

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

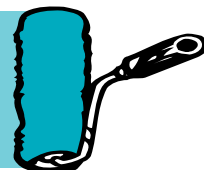
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	14		15	16	17	18	19
20									21							22				
23									24							25				
26									27				28		29			30		
31							32	33	34				35				36			
37						38		39							40					
					41	42						43	44				45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52						53	54	55				56	57	58		59	
60									61				62	63			64			
65									66				67		68					
69						70	71	72					73						74	75
			76										77					78		
79	80								81		82				83	84	85			
86						87				88	89				90					
91															94					
108	109	110								111						112		113		
114																				
119																				
125																				
128																				

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## Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

- |                       |             |                    |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Spaceship          | R _ _ _ _   | Necklace ornament  | L _ _ _ _   |
| 2. Empty space        | _ _ _ _ N   | Darkest color      | _ _ _ _ C _ |
| 3. Sleep vision       | _ _ _ _ M   | Be anxious about   | _ _ _ _ D   |
| 4. Ladle              | _ _ _ P _ _ | Baby's cloth       | _ _ _ A _ _ |
| 5. Schoolyard menace  | _ _ _ L _ _ | Broad-shouldered   | _ _ _ R _ _ |
| 6. Computer pointer   | _ _ _ U _ _ | Like Bullwinkle    | _ _ _ O _ _ |
| 7. Big Ben's location | _ _ _ O _ _ | Little House actor | _ _ _ A _ _ |
| 8. Artist's garment   | _ _ _ M _ _ | Electrical jolt    | _ _ _ H _ _ |
| 9. Late morning meal  | _ _ _ U _ _ | Large twig         | _ _ _ A _ _ |
| 10. West Indies dance | _ _ _ _ _ O | Arms and legs      | _ _ _ _ _ S |

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