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the TIMBERJAY



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\$1⁵⁰

WINTER RECREATION



Mining the “white gold”

Plentiful snow, excellent trail conditions have restaurants and hotels hopping

Left: Snowmobilers have been out in force in recent weeks and that’s been a boon to the local economy. Abundant snow this winter has made for good riding.

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL—When it comes to the winter economy in the North Country, those who cater to outdoor enthusiasts have a common refrain: “Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow.”

It’s been called the region’s “white gold” and the abundance of snow this winter has

left plenty of extra nuggets in the pockets of everyone from restaurant owners to hotel and resort operators.

“I think it’s been a really, really good season,” said Eva Sebesta, executive director of the Ely Chamber of Commerce. “That early snow really set us up for a good winter of riding overall.”

Snowmobiling, in particu-

lar, has attracted large numbers of visitors to the region, so many, in fact, said Sebesta, that it was nearly impossible to book a room in Ely this weekend, although the Wolftrack Classic sled dog race is another event that’s filling rooms in town right now.

The impact of snowmobiling,

See...SNOW pg. 10



Left: With tongues hanging out, sled dogs make their way toward the finish line during last year’s running of the WolfTrack Classic.

Below: A competitor in last year’s competition.

file photos

MINING

Northshore to recall workers but questions still remain

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- As area and state politicians joyfully shared the news Monday that laid off Northshore Mining workers were being recalled for an April re-start of operations in Babbitt and Silver Bay, parent company Cleveland-Cliffs remained strangely silent about the details of the recall and their plans for the operation.

Third District Sen. Grant Hauschild, who sponsored the bill to authorize retroactive unemployment benefits for the more than 400 workers affected by the layoffs in May 2022, was among the first to break the news of the recalls in a noon press release.

“I’m encouraged that Cleveland-Cliffs is beginning the process to reopen their facilities in Babbitt and Silver Bay,” Hauschild said. “In recent months, I’ve held several meetings with Cleveland-Cliffs to discuss the importance of reopening these plants as soon as possible. These mines and jobs are critical to our regional economy. I heard from numerous miners who were impacted by this closure who said they wanted to get back to work. My primary goal has always been to reopen these

See..NORTHSHORE pg. 9

WOLFTRACK CLASSIC

Ely goes to the dogs

The annual WolfTrack Classic all happens this weekend

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- It is impossible to think of this city at the end of the road without noting its history of sled dog racing— and the WolfTrack Classic has become the latest iteration of that longstanding tradition.

The WolfTrack Classic, which caps a busy February in Ely, has become one of the most popular mid-distance dog sled races in North America. And the action all happens this weekend.

The race is now organized by the Ely Chamber of Commerce, one of the

several events the chamber holds every year, including the Blueberry/Arts and Harvest Moon festivals.

“The WolfTrack Classic will bring a total of 50 dog sled teams to the area this year,” race director Ellen Cushman told the *Timberjay*. “Twenty-nine will be six-dog teams and 21 will be eight-dog teams.”

The race will be on the Taconite Trail, starting at the trailhead next to the Ely Softball Complex. The teams of six dogs will run a 30-mile race with a

See...WOLFTRACK pg. 10



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Area ambulances recognized

Tower, Cook, and Orr services honored for exceptional quality of care

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— While some area ambulance services may be small, they’re getting the job done and then some, according to a recent certification from the

state’s Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board, or EMSRB.

Three area ambulance services, including Tower, Cook, and Orr were among 95 ambulance services statewide to receive rec-

ognition for exceeding state and regional norms on at least five-of-nine clinical measures. That’s from among the more than 250 ambulance services located across the state. In St. Louis County, the only

other ambulance services to receive the recognition were the Mayo Clinic Ambulance in Duluth and the tiny Meadowlands ambulance service.

See...CARE pg. 9



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Community notices

Girl Scout cookies for sale at all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast Saturday, March 4
EMBARRASS - The Embarrass Region Fair Association will host another of its all-you-can-eat pancake breakfasts at the Timber Hall from 8-11 a.m. Saturday, March 4. In addition to the usual pancakes, choice of ham or sausage links, fruit cup and juice or coffee, attendees will also be able to purchase Girl Scout cookies.

Also taking place March 4 will be a sale of new and used horse tack and related equipment from 8 - 11 a.m. Sellers may rent a table for \$10 with all proceeds from table rent to be used for the fair horse show. To find out more on the day's events or to rent a table, call or text Beth at 218-780-3848 or Pam at 218-780-8882.

Essentia Health-Virginia offering free prenatal classes on several dates
VIRGINIA -Essentia will be offering free four-hour prenatal classes to assist with pregnancy and delivery questions as well as feeding options, baby safety and other topics. The classes are taught by registered nurses from Essentia Health-Virginia's labor and delivery unit, with certified breastfeeding experts and a car seat technician also on hand.

The class is intended for women in their third trimester — but ideally before 36 to 37 weeks. Classes will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m on the following dates: April 22, June 17, Aug. 12, Oct. 7. and Dec. 2.

The schedule of events for each day includes two hours of learning in the morning, a break for complimentary lunch, then more information in the afternoon along with a tour of the OB unit. Classes will be held in the Medical Arts building, located at 901 Ninth St. N, suite 219. Registration is required and can be done by calling 218-749-9454.

Valerie Myntti to speak at Sisu Heritage annual meeting on Sunday, Feb. 26
EMBARRASS- Sisu Heritage, Inc. will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, Feb. 26 at 2 p.m. at Embarrass Town Hall. The guest speaker, Valerie Myntti, of Eagles Nest Lake Three, will be presenting, "The Philosophy and Development of the Finnish Co-ops" including her family's memories of Co-op Point on Eagles Nest Lake One. This will be an interesting and personal piece of Finnish history on the Iron Range.

The public is cordially invited to join Sisu members for the afternoon. A short business meeting will include committee reports, election of board members, and presentation of the 2023 budget. Coffee an' will be served and door prizes awarded.

Sisu Heritage, Inc. is a nonprofit organization affiliated with the St. Louis County Historical Society. Its mission is "to enhance the Embarrass region by preserving and sharing its unique culture, climate and history." Memberships are \$10 per year and can be renewed or purchased at the meeting, or by mail to Sisu Heritage, PO Box 71, Embarrass, MN 55732. Embarrass Town Hall is located at 7503 Levander Rd. Please call 218-984-3402 with any questions.

Sons of Norway Haarfager Lodge #40 to meet March 2 for Peace Prize presentation
VIRGINIA - Sons of Norway Haarfager Lodge #40 will meet at 5:30 on Thursday, March 2, in the Virginia City Hall Club Room. Cultural directors, Duane and Sue Gustafson will present a program on the Nobel Peace Prize. The evening's serving committee is Ron and Phyllis Dall and Donna Perrault. Anyone interested in Norwegian culture and heritage is invited to attend.

March 7 meeting features Justin Juntunen
HIBBING - Justin Juntunen of Duluth will be the presenter at the March 7 meeting of Finnish Americans and Friends at Grace Lutheran Church at 2 p.m. Justin is the proprietor of a sauna building business and is on a mission to promote wellness through sauna. He has reverence for old log saunas and, using modern methods and materials, strives to replicate that experience. Everyone is welcome; coffee an' will follow the program.

online at www.timberjay.com

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Domestic violence prevention advocate to speak in Cook March 1



COOK- Melissa Petrangelo Scaia, long-time women's rights and domestic violence prevention advocate, will be the featured speaker at the Northern Progressives meeting Wednesday, March 1, 6:30 p.m. at the Crescent Bar & Grill near Cook.

Scaia, the director of International Training for Global Rights for Women (GRW), will speak about the status of women's rights locally and globally. The event is being held to commemorate the beginning of Women's History Month.

Global Rights for Women has worked with more than 60 international partners to identify obstacles to justice and safety for survivors

of violence, with the goal of improving law, policy, and practice so that women have improved safety and equality within their own community.

Scaia, who lives in Hibbing, is the former executive director of the groundbreaking Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP), also known as "the Duluth Model." Prior to that, she was the executive director of Advocates for Family Peace, an Iron Range domestic violence advocacy program, for 17 years. She has been a consulting trainer for a number of national training organizations on domestic violence and child abuse, including the Center for Court Innovation, the Battered Women's Justice Project (BWJP) and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Recently at GRW, she has participated in a number of United Nations Expert Meetings related to domestic violence and worked with numerous United Nations regional offices and local women's organizations globally. This past year she was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for Women in Public Service from Hamline University.

The Crescent is located just north of Cook at 9257 East Olson Road. Attendees may choose to come early and order from the menu.

Northern Progressives has a progressive social and political agenda and works to educate its members and the public about current civic affairs. For more information, contact Leah Rogne, 218-787-2212 or leah.rogne@gmail.com.

SUMMER FUN

MDC/Reif partnership brings concerts back to Chisholm for Summer of 2023

CHISHOLM - The Minnesota Discovery Center (MDC) and The Reif Arts Council are pleased to announce a summer partnership for 2023. The Reif, with 40-plus years of experience presenting touring arts events, is joining forces with the Minnesota Discovery Center, which now enters its 46th year of operations, to feature amazing artists in the Discovery Center's iconic open-air concert venue, the amphitheater.


"This partnership creates a unique chance to present amazing talent right here in northern Minnesota at a truly stunning venue," says Shantel Dow, Reif Executive Director. "We do have two beautiful indoor theaters in Grand Rapids, but we are missing a dedicated space for large outdoor concerts, so the Discovery Center is a perfect fit. MDC Executive Director Donna Johnson stated, "We couldn't have a better partner to work with to bring a consistent line up of musical performances back to the amphitheater stage. The Minnesota Discovery Center's 660-acre campus is well suited to accommodate large crowds and the amphitheater has a long history of wowing concert goers and musicians alike with its unique setting and architecture. As a nonprofit, this partnership will help us maximize our ability to bring back large concerts to the amphitheater by utilizing the industry experience of the

Reif and combining the promotional resources of both organizations to amp up the entertainment opportunities we offer, starting in June of 2023."

This summer's events will include Mason Dixon Line/Born On The Bayou: A tribute to the music of Creedence Clearwater Revival on Saturday, June 3, platinum selling country supergroup Blackhawk on Thursday, June 15, and rockers and fan favorites Hairball will close out the summer on Friday, Sept. 8. Tickets for all concerts are on sale now at www.reifcenter.org.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Fundraiser will benefit local Habitat for Humanity



MT. IRON— Building the Future with Habitat, the annual dinner fundraiser for North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity (NSLCHF), will be held Thursday, March 23 at the Mt. Iron Community Center. The theme of this year's dinner is "Impacting Today, Inspiring Tomorrow."

A social hour begins

Guests will also enjoy live music by Karl and Brenna Kohlhasse.

Tickets are \$50, and seating is limited. Pre-paid registrations are required, so be sure to register at www.nslchfh.org or call 218-749-8910 to RSVP by March 9.

Proceeds from this event will help provide affordable homeowner-ship opportunities to lo-

cal households. North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity, an equal opportunity housing lender, builds with people in need of safe, energy efficient homes who can repay an affordable mortgage and are willing to partner in the process of building their and others' homes. To learn more, volunteer, apply, or donate, visit www.nslchfh.org.

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ELY CITY COUNCIL

Ely City Council extends cannabinoid moratorium one year

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- In a pleasant excursion from the usual rounds of routine business, the Mayor of Ely, Heidi Omerza awarded Ely senior and Nordic skiing champion Zoe Devine, the key to the city. The award was in recognition of Devine’s individual girls title at last week’s state Nordic ski championship in Biwabik. Her individual win, combined with the eighth-place team finish for the Ely girls team, continued Ely’s reputation as a Nordic skiing powerhouse. Preceding the award of the key, Omerza read a resume of all of Devine’s athletic achievements at both the junior and senior high school levels of sport.

More edible cannabinoids

In other business, the council voted to extend its moratorium on granting any new licenses to businesses wishing to sell cannabinoid edibles, kicking the can down the road on a city ordinance yet again. Kelly Klun, Ely’s city attorney, pointed out that extending the moratorium did not lock the city into waiting a whole year until it expired, remarking to the council that, “You can revoke it at any time.”

In the discussion of the moratorium, council member Forsman stated that he would vote in favor of it, but only because the original moratorium was about to expire. Forsman missed the previous

meeting on Feb. 7, where the council voted not to approve either of the two proposed cannabinoid ordinances for a first reading.

“I would like to see a non-exclusive ordinance move forward,” said Forsman. “I don’t think waiting for (the Legislature) is the right thing to do.” The Legislature is widely expected to further loosen cannabis laws in the state this session, and could also limit the ability of local jurisdictions to restrict sale of cannabis products.

Forsman’s mention of a non-exclusive ordinance referred to the draft city law proposed at the Feb. 7 meeting which would allow the sale of legal edibles at retail establishments, while also permitting the sale of other

non-cannabinoid products at the same location. The other ordinance proposed on Feb. 7 would have restricted the sale to stores that sold cannabinoid products exclusively, like other single-product retail establishments, like liquor stores and adult content stores. Neither proposed ordinance would have permitted the sale of cannabinoid edibles for consumption at the retail location where they were sold. Both proposed ordinances were voted down for a first reading on Feb. 7.

The next agenda item was the creation of an ad hoc committee to discuss the city’s options for licensing the sale of cannabinoid edibles within city limits and to develop an ordinance. Council member Angela Campbell re-

marked that she had been watching the Minnesota Senate committees’ hearings on cannabis legalization, stating there was “a lot of confusion” over all the issues raised regarding cannabinoids and cannabis. She was in favor of the ad hoc committee while Forsman felt the council should move on to consider the “non-exclusive” ordinance that was not approved at the Feb. 7 meeting.

The council voted to form the ad hoc committee, 5-1, with Paul Kess absent and Al Forsman voting in opposition.

to appear at the council meeting this week but was unable to attend. The city council voted to revoke the rental license for the property at its Feb. 7 meeting. The property has four apartment spaces, of which three are rented.

In an unexpected turn of events, Klun reported that a detailed review of the property’s inspection history revealed that the owner did not have a current license. After the meeting, Doug Whitney, the city’s building official told the *Timberjay* that the rental license had lapsed a year ago. Klun also remarked that the owner was working with the city’s building inspector to fix the problems found

See ELY...pg. 5

COUNTY SCHOOLS

School district looks at lobbyist to boost revenue

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Ort Editor

REGIONAL— The St. Louis County Schools, ISD 2142, may enlist the services of a well-known lobbying firm to try to woo concessions from the Minnesota Legislature to address funding concerns unique to the district, per discussion at the school board’s Feb. 14 working session.

The challenge of funding was made clear by district finance director Kim Johnson toward the end of the board’s review of the 2021-22 annual audit report presented by Greg Knutson of Walker, Giroux & Hahne, LLC, the district’s long-time auditor.

Bob Larson asked a question sparked by Knutson’s comment that the district had \$1.6 million of expenses over revenues for the year.

“I should know the answer, but our general fund, are we OK?” Larson asked.

“No,” Johnson replied. “That’s why we’re working on it. It can’t be dropping that much.”

Johnson said that the district is still trying to cope with the loss of students and associated funding from the COVID pandemic.

“We lost 130 to 160 students and we haven’t recuperated from that,” Johnson said. “We’re still down 80 students, and 80 times \$10,000 is \$800,000, so guess what, we’ve got a problem. You know what’s happening with costs, fuel costs have gone up, food costs have gone up, everything has gone up. Health care costs have gone up. Everything is increasing and our revenue in the general fund is not.”

That’s where lobbying the Legislature at a time when they have a massive \$17.6 billion budget surplus becomes important. Board members reviewed a proposed contract with The Costin Group for them to ad-

vocate for three specific changes that would improve the district’s bottom line.

One would be for an increase in the amount of reimbursement aid the district receives for unfunded transportation costs.

“Transportation is paid largely on the number of students in your district,” Johnson explained. “That doesn’t work for us. We have to travel a long way to bring our kids into the schools because we have such a large area. They are only paying 18.2 percent of the unfunded portion of our transportation costs.”

The Costin Group would lobby on the district’s behalf for passage of a bill currently in the House that would raise that rate to 70 percent.

“That would help the district significantly because right now we have to fund a lot of our transportation with general fund dollars that should be going for education. That’s a huge, huge piece.”

Another unique concern is getting funding for wastewater treatment and water systems repairs and modifications at North Woods and South Ridge.

“We aren’t hooked up to city sewer and water like a lot of the other school districts, so actually we’re a rarity,” Johnson said. “We get long-term facilities maintenance money for projects greater than \$100,000 that fall in the categories of asbestos, indoor air quality, and fire safety. We’re allowed to levy for those projects on a pay-as-you-go basis and pay for those out of our long-term facilities maintenance money. I would like to have them add sewer and water upgrades, and that would help the district to be able to pay for those upgrade projects.”

Johnson said another option being considered is to get the projects included in the bonding bill the Legislature will consider later in the session.

The third item The

Costin Group would help with involves two certificates of participation, a funding mechanism similar to bonds, totaling \$7 million, used to fund additions at Cherry and South Ridge.

“In order for the district to pay for new additions and new space we have to use this kind of funding,” Johnson said. “It’s paid for just like bonds and we pay principal and interest on them.”

ISD 2142 has permission from the Department of Education to levy for those costs for five years, but it’s only a five-year extension.

“We want to extend

that,” Johnson said. “We need this. We need all of them.”

Board member Chris Koivisto questioned whether the district’s concerns would get the attention they need given the number of clients The Costin Group has to represent.

“Right now if they’re going during the prime time of legislative action, they’re probably contracting for lots of other things,” he said. “I get nervous about them being overextended and actually doing the work. I can’t go without sharing that con-

See ISD 2142...pg. 5



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Editorial

Applause for area ambulances

Three local services recognized for meeting medical performance targets

“Small Is Beautiful.” That was the title of the influential 1973 economics and philosophy primer by E.F. Schumacher, but it also appears to be a good description of what it takes to be a successful ambulance service, at least based on the findings of a new analysis by the state’s Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board, or EMSRB.

The EMSRB, in coordination with the state’s Medical Director Standing Advisory Committee, developed nine clinical performance measures in early 2022 as a way to assess the quality of care provided by the more than 250 ambulance services across the state. Last week, the EMSRB released a list of 95 such services that achieved an 80-percent rating or higher on at least five of the nine measures.

The list included the Tower, Cook, and Orr ambulance services, which were among just five in St. Louis County to achieve that high standard.

What was interesting was that the list was stacked with dozens and dozens of small, mostly volunteer ambulance services from tiny communities across rural Minnesota. Places like Meadowlands, Blackduck, Hayfield, and Hector, or Carlton, Kerhoven, and Caledonia.

It’s conventional wisdom to assume that bigger is always better, but time and again we see that such thinking is a bit too conventional. Small organizations can be more flexible because they typically aren’t bogged down by the sometimes sluggish bureaucracy inherent in so many larger organizations. In small towns, emergency medical responders have greater incentive to follow their training because they know that those they serve will very likely be people they know.

We’ve had much local debate in recent months about the future of ambulance services in our area. Every department is facing financial and staffing challenges and we know that a new funding model needs to be found. But lost in that debate about the numbers is the human component of EMS. The purpose of an ambulance service is to provide care when we face medical emergencies, and the quality of that care is, and should always be, the primary consideration. That’s the “number” that truly counts and on that score, these three local ambulance services are top performers.

All three of these services significantly outperformed both

the statewide average and the St. Louis County average performance, in most cases by significant margins. That’s a credit to the dedicated staff at all three of these small departments and shows that, despite the challenges that all ambulance services face, these departments remain focused on the right things.

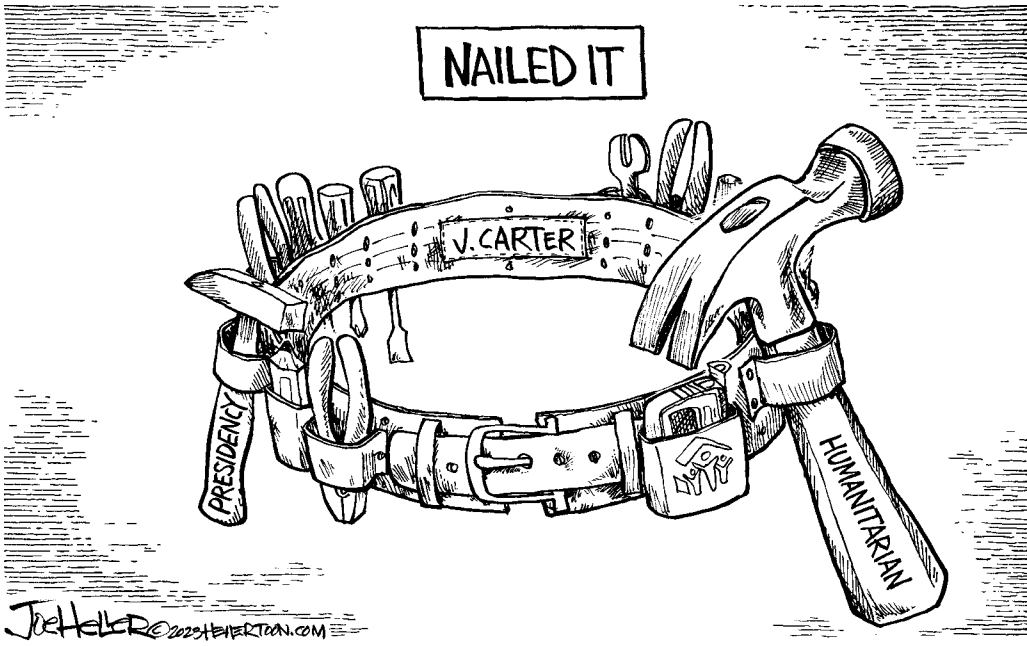
Let’s keep in mind what these measures indicate. They were developed by the medical directors who oversee ambulance services and were designed to gauge the consistency with which ambulance services meet very specific targets and goals in patient care. Things like time on scene and proper assessment for medical emergencies, such as strokes, in which time is critical. It includes proper documentation in chest pain encounters through the use of electro-cardiograms. It includes proper administration of medication to children and things like properly-documented respiratory assessments.

While there has been much discussion in recent months in our region about whether area ambulance services should be upgrading to Advanced Life Support, or ALS, levels of care, the level of care available makes little difference if the basics aren’t being covered. The EMSRB’s performance measures were applied to all ambulance services, including those that offer ALS levels of care in our region, yet many of those failed to qualify for the EMSRB recognition received by three of our local services.

We point that out not to suggest that those services aren’t capable of quality care, but to note that the care being provided by some of our own local services is really top-notch. And that’s not just fluff. It’s actually documented in these performance measures.

There have been suggestions that our area would be better off shifting to a privatized regional system for EMS. It’s that typical “bigger-is-better” mentality. Yet the numbers rarely support that idea. Bigger is more impersonal, less flexible, and more bureaucratic, and that is no advantage when it comes to EMS.

It’s a challenge maintaining small ambulance services, but it’s not an impossible one, as our area services prove every day. It turns out they’re not only getting the job done, they’re performing at the top of the industry. We think E. F. Schumacher had it right.



Letters from Readers

Save our safety net from cuts

The GOP has long backed cuts to Social Security and Medicare

I am intrigued by Republican consistency on Social Security and Medicare. First, I do praise former President Trump for refusing GOP requests to cut these programs. However, here is additional history.

In 1961 the actor and future U.S. president Ronald Reagan made a ten-minute recording. Reagan “criticized Social Security for supplanting private savings and warned that subsidized medicine would curtail Americans’ freedom.”

Former House Speaker and VP candidate Paul Ryan has long championed the privatization of social insurance programs. His two budget blueprints put forth in fiscal 2012 and 2013 would turn Medicare into a system of vouchers that individuals could use to buy private insurance. These vouchers would not keep pace with rising health care costs, forcing seniors to bear an increasingly greater burden of their health care costs in years to come.

On Oct. 16, 2018, after instituting a \$1.5 trillion tax cut and signing off on a \$675 billion budget for the Department of Defense, then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said the only way to lower the record-high federal deficit would be to cut entitlement programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

Republican Rick Scott of Florida is the architect of the plan that would sunset Social Security and Medicare in five years and raise taxes on more than 40 percent of Americans.

The Republicans have over a sixty-year history of opposition to Social Security and Medicare.

Don’t let the Republicans take your “gold” and ruin your earned “Golden Years.”

It reminds me of the Maya Angelou quote, “When people show you who they are, believe them the first time.”

C.T. Marhula
Bemidji

Where are our elected officials?

The U.S. Border Patrol has authority to operate within 100 miles of any U.S. “external boundary.” In Minnesota, this includes all of the Arrowhead and 100 miles inland to the south of Duluth. They have extraordinary powers that they’ve been using intensively on our southern borders.

We haven’t noticed them so much up here, but they do claim the right to stop and search anyone for evidence of illegal activity within that 100-mile range. The recent reassignment of problematic Border Patrol staff to Voyageurs National Park has brought the need for accountability into a more urgent focus. Sometimes, people with power feel the need to use it, whether or not they have any actual reason to do so.

You’d think the elected representatives in Congress would be competing with each other to get the facts about Mr. Ebel’s arrest and double tasing out in the open. When a bureaucracy refuses to cooperate with requests for information, it means they’re hunkering down and hoping the whole thing will go away and get forgotten. I suggest motivating those representatives — so recently re-elected — (by mentioning) that they’ll be looking at another election soon.

The more calls, emails, and letters they get, the more likely they are to make this something they’d better take care of. Squeaky wheels get the grease.

I also suggest asking the local citizens in the areas where these two Border Patrol people worked before. Did these guys get moved to Crane Lake to cover up similar behavior during their previous assignments? There’s nothing confidential about the locations of their previous assignments.

Rep. Pete Stauber’s office phone number is 202-225-6211. His post office address is 145 Cannon Office House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515. His email contact is <https://stauber.house.gov/contact/email-me>.

Senator Amy Klobuchar’s office phone number is 202-224-3244. Her post office address is 425 Dirksen Senate Building, Washington, DC 20510. Her email contact is <https://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-amy>.

Senator Tina Smith’s office phone number is 202-224-5641. Her post office address is 720 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510. Her email contact is <https://www.smith.senate.gov/services/help-with-a-federal-agency>.

To get a better understanding of your rights when dealing with the Border Patrol right here in Minnesota, visit <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/border-zone>.

David Porter
Minneapolis

It pays to be informed

Thanks to the *Timberjay* for the in-depth, informative article, “Awareness: the first step needed to reduce sex trafficking,” in the Feb. 12 edition. We need to learn and be alert.

Janaine Emmons
Angora

Why Black history is my history

I’ll never forget the day in eighth grade when I was digging around through a box of my Dad’s college papers in the basement and came across a family tree he’d done. There was a moment of excitement when I discovered that Edward Winslow Colburn was a direct descendant of Edward Winslow, a passenger on the Mayflower and three-time governor of Plymouth Colony.

“Wow, I’m descended from someone on the Mayflower!” I

thought.

And then a moment later, my excitement evaporated. Dad was descended from someone on the Mayflower, but biologically I was not. For I was adopted.

Decades later, thanks to Ancestry DNA testing, I now know that I have an ancestor who came to the Americas on a very different kind of ship — a slave ship.

I started a search for my biological roots quite serendipitously. I was a 40-year-old college professor helping a student with a re-

search project on adoption when I stumbled across the adoption forums on America Online. After discovering hundreds of posts for searchers from California, where I was born, I decided to try to confirm some information my mother had told me and put up a post of my own. Within hours I had multiple responses confirming my birth mother’s married and maiden names, and I was off and walking down the path. I say walking because if I’d have been running, I’d have unlocked the majority of information I was looking for in a matter of weeks. But each new revelation was followed by weeks and months of wondering about what I was doing and whether I should take the next

step or not.

When I finally wrote to my birth mother and received a response, I got two surprises. The first was that her handwriting was almost identical to mine. The second was that my biological father was not the man she’d named in the records, it was someone else, a young hairdresser with a Portuguese surname with whom she’d had a fling. I was lucky enough to find a family tree online with his name, a tree that traced back to the founding of Santa Barbara, Calif., my birthplace. My ancestor Ildefonso Dominguez was a member of the Spanish company that built the Santa Barbara Presidio. It wasn’t the Mayflower, but it still felt pretty cool

to be connected to a landmark historical event.

In 2018, I decided to see if I could unequivocally establish a link to this side of my heritage through DNA testing, and the results gave me that confirmation, matches with numerous relatives directly linked to my birthfather.

But the results held many surprises. I’d expected to see stronger Portuguese and German ties. They were there, but much smaller than my ties to England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and northwestern Europe. I have tiny bits of DNA from Sweden and Norway. Six percent of my DNA is Indigenous American,

See **HISTORY**...pg. 5



DAVID
COLBURN

Letters from Readers

The patient always comes first

In regards to the article in last week’s *Timberjay* titled, “Letter roils ongoing ambulance dispute,” I would like to shed some light on the situation for the Tower City Council. Mayor Setterberg claims that Tower has been very supportive of Greenwood’s ambulance study, yet last fall the Tower Ambulance Director (at a meeting with a study representative that several of us attended) found it difficult to agree that ALS (Advanced Life Support) is a higher level

of service than BLS (Basic Life Support) and that she would not be participating in bringing ALS to our communities. Councilman Norby also made the statement that, “A lot of the info they (McGrath) want isn’t easily retrievable...we don’t have the time or resources to do it all.” These statements don’t sound like they are supportive, do they?

The city has created a closed meeting ad hoc committee to discuss the ambulance service’s future. These closed secret meetings may be “legal” but are antithetical to the Open Meeting Law and serve to usurp its very purpose. A few years ago,

Reed Anfinson, publisher of the *Swift County Monitor* and Past President of the National Newspaper Association Foundation, described such closed meetings by saying, “Through our years of reporting we’ve seen public bodies try to meet in private to discuss sensitive topics. Often, these topics involve something that is going to cost taxpayers money. Public officials want to have the discussion outside the public light to avoid the expected not-so-pleasant feedback they are going to get from some constituents.” The state Dept. of Administration has also weighed in by recommending that all

state agencies hold open meetings to promote transparency and community engagement. I am gratified to know the Greenwood Town Board has decided not to participate in these closed meetings for the sake of transparency and open government.

Mayor Setterberg also claims Greenwood has not come to the city about ambulance issues and that is flatly false. Both Supervisor Stoehr and myself have brought forth these problems: material breaches of the contract, no business plan, late contract, removal of an essential unilateral hold harmless clause and others. When we made these claims at

an ambulance commission meeting both Councilman Norby and the ambulance director were in attendance. The hold harmless clause is common in many ambulance service contracts, and I am sure if a joint powers board is created, we will see that very clause used to protect Tower and the townships from the actions of the JPB. I have failed to effectively relay the importance of this clause, but am hopeful that Mr. Lotz’s letter in last week’s paper can accomplish that end.

In conclusion, the city of Tower has failed to meet its contractual obligations on several occasions. Usually, a business

that can’t meet its obligations seeks to limit those obligations to maintain its credibility and viability. Maybe, just maybe, Tower should look at one option as having a private service operate its service or sell their license outright. Greenwood has stated its goals clearly. Shorten response times, bring a higher level of service, and we are not interested in operating an ambulance service. We understand we probably cannot achieve these goals all at once and we know it will cost more, but at the heart of it all we believe “The Patient Always Comes First.”

**John Bassing
Greenwood**

ELY...Continued from page 4

in the December 2022 through January 2023 inspections, and that a new license would not be issued until all the problems were remedied.

In a related agenda item, Forsman reported that the budget committee recommended the increase of the short-term rental license fee from \$100 to \$400. Forsman remarked that quadrupling the fee was “really a lot.” He made a motion to send the matter back to the budget committee for more discussion, which the council approved.

In other business, the city council:

- Authorized council

and staff to attend the League of Minnesota Cities annual conference on June 21-23 in Duluth. The council also approved attendance at the League of Minnesota Cities Safety and Loss Control workshops, which address how to reduce liability risks for municipalities.

- Approved increases for civil enforcement fees, labor charges and equipment with operator fees. The increases are designed to reflect the costs to the city for enforcement and services.
- Approved the purchase of an upgrade from Caselle Clarity to Caselle Connect with the optional

module of miBudget for a total of up to \$17,850. These products will replace the city’s current accounting software which is no longer supported.

- Approved the purchase of a Dell brand computer from Voltz for \$1,599.97 for the police department.
- Authorized a professional services contract with TKDA for \$81,700 for the Ely Trailhead Building. The building project is already funded through state bonding and federal dollars.
- Approved Cody Perkins maple tree tapping request, contingent on his meeting all the require-

ments in the city’s written tree-tapping policy.

- Granted an exemption to the sewer inspection requirement for the transfer of ownership of the property at 312 E. Chapman St., contingent on verification “that there are no obvious problems.” The buyers have lived at the property since 2015. “This is really a gray area,” in the enforcement of the sewer inspection ordinance, said clerk-treasurer Harold Langowski, “requiring council approval.” The agenda item triggered an extended discussion on what were and were not legitimate reasons for exemptions to

sewer inspection.

- Approved airport taxi lane reconstruction design and construction phase services from TKDA for 2023. Langowski stated that the services were to aid the city in meeting the grant deadlines for funding to fix “the last piece of real-ly bad blacktop at the airport.”
- Approved city and Ely Utilities Commission claims for \$135,585.68.
- Approved the invoice to AE2S for the wastewater treatment facility improvements project for \$19,896.19.
- Approved an invoice from SEH for work

on the Prospector ATV Trails for \$654.50.

- Approved Pay Estimate #5 (Final) for the Prospector ATV Phase 6 Beaver River Crossing-Project to Northland Constructors for \$223,062.88 and the issuance of the Certificate of Substantial Completion.
- Approved the Ely Community Resource first quarter payment of \$5,125.
- Approved a residential rehabilitation loan for John and Susan Leonard for up to \$10,000, for the property at 127 W Chapman St. to fix the sewer line, pending proper paperwork and fees.

ISD 2142...Continued from page 4

cern.”

The board discussed the possibility of asking for reports from The Costin Group to demonstrate accountability for their activities and time under the contract. The board will act on the contract proposal at its business meeting on Feb. 28.

Audit results

Knutson’s audit of the district resulted in an unmodified opinion, and Koivisto asked him to explain the significance of that.

“Is that rare or common?” he asked. “How do we compare? Do we have bragging rights or no?”

“You’ve got bragging

rights,” Knutson responded. “Not everybody has that. As far as the number of findings, you’re second to none as far as the government entities we audit.”

The district did have a familiar and longstanding finding related to its cash handling procedures at its schools. The district doesn’t have enough staff

in each office to provide for the recommended separation of duties when it comes to handling such transactions. As in the past, the district acknowledged the finding and will continue with the corrective action plan of having the district’s accountant monitor those transactions.

Knutson also discov-

ered four minor items that he recommended the district address. One was to reconcile old outstanding wire transfers, some dating to 2016, still listed as outstanding that had been manually entered into the records. Two items dealt with following petty cash procedures at Cherry and Northeast Range. The fourth was a recommen-

dation to close six checking accounts at Ely Area Credit Union that were opened with the district’s tax ID number for use by booster groups. Those accounts were not approved by the board or the administration, Knutson said.

HISTORY...Continued from page 4

from the southern California area, unexpected but not odd given where and when my ancestors lived.

But the biggest surprise was finding out that I was two-percent Black, from Mali and the Congo region of Africa. There was nothing in what I’d discovered about my biological lineage to that point that could explain it.

Keenly curious about this revelation, I started doing more digging, which led me to Mexico and its three centuries of African slavery.

While Spaniards in the New World were not permitted to engage in the slave trade directly, in the 1500s the Spanish Crown contracted with other European nations to supply slaves to their colonies, including New Spain, which we know now as Mexico. Mali, in West Africa, and the surrounding Atlantic coastal region was the major source of slaves taken to New Spain, primarily for agricultural labor and to work in mines. Natives from the Congo had previously migrated to the Mali region, likely accounting for that genetic thread. Africans, it was said, were harder workers than the Indigenous people of Mexico, although the need for African labor was created because the Indigenous population was decimated by 19 epidemics of diseases brought by the Spaniards. About 200,000 African slaves were taken to Mexico, 80,000 of them women, beginning as early as

the 1520s. Under Spanish law, slaves were allowed to marry whom they wished, and there was extensive intermarriage with the Indigenous population. The children of such marriages were considered free. Spanish masters also raped African female slaves, and a rigid caste system was formed based on racial mixture. But the Mexican economy was not quite as dependent on slave labor as the American South, and by 1829 slavery was abolished in Mexico. The later Mexican Revolution placed higher emphasis on the country’s European and Indigenous roots, pushing the story of the slave trade and Afromexicans (who include some descendants of slaves who escaped to Mexico from America) deep into the shadows, and it was only eight years ago, in 2015, that the national census finally included a category to indicate one’s African heritage. Today, while the government has officially recognized Afromexicans as significant contributors to the nation’s history, the community still encounters racism, inequity, and relative invisibility in Mexican culture. And indeed, the community more closely identifies with “Black” and related terms than they do with the term Afromexican.

Through Ildefonso Dominguez’s wife, Maria, I had an established ancestral foothold in the Sinaloa region of Mexico, a region in colonial days that was estimated to be two-thirds

African descent, perhaps since mining was a significant part of the economy there that would have needed slave labor. Born in 1743, I could document Maria’s Indigenous heritage in the region back two generations, leaving many generations in the past where one of her ancestors could have married an African slave. I think that’s the most likely explanation of the source of my African DNA.

It appears impossible to know anything specific about my Black ancestor outside of race, but it is a sobering and sad thing to think that somewhere in time one of my ancestors was enslaved, suffering the horror of capture and hideous slave boat conditions beyond my imagination. But my ancestor obviously endured, surviving that ordeal only to face another as a slave on a plantation, a ranch, or perhaps in a mine. Was my Black ancestor a woman or a man? What was marriage and family life like, if there was any? Is it possible my DNA comes not from Maria’s side, but from a biological ancestor of Ildefonso? The questions go on and on, with the only answers generic and entirely speculative, though extrapolated from historical facts.

But my DNA test took Black history from conceptual to personal. A piece of my history is akin to that of African Americans whose ancestors were brought here as slaves. It’s history, but it makes my heart ache

in the present over man’s inhumanity to man, and over the tendrils of that inhumanity that decades and centuries later continue to diminish our society in insidious ways.

Contrary to what many conservatives would have you believe, there’s nothing “woke” about that. It’s documented historical fact with repercussions in modern day America that some conservatives are trying to sweep under the rug with a broom of revisionist denialism. Nearly half of Republicans in a 2021 Monmouth University poll said they don’t approve of teaching the history of racism in schools. That’s a direct denial of the actual history experienced by millions of their fellow Americans. Racism and its effects are as much American history as the Founding Fathers, who embedded slavery in the Constitution, and it takes little more than a glance at social media to discover it infects elite and common folk alike in the here and now. My history is tied to that history, both as a descendant of a slave and as a member of the privileged White class that propagated it in this country, and it should be taught and understood in its entirety and not dismissed as a historical aberration. We will never realize our ideals as “one nation” until we reconcile with our past. That’s this slave descendant’s contribution to Black History Month.



**the
TIMBERJAY**

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Week of Feb. 27

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 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is March 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.

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

St. Martin’s Lenten schedule

TOWER– St. Martin’s Catholic Church is happy to announce their schedule of Lenten activities.

Stations of the Cross will be prayed Friday evenings (beginning Feb. 24) during Lent at 5 p.m. A fish dinner will be served after the stations.

Bible Study continues through Lent; meeting on Friday mornings at 9:45 a.m. in the Upper Room.

The regular Mass schedule follows through Lent:

Sunday Mass – 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday and Friday Masses – 9 a.m.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is available on Mondays from 2 to 8 p.m., and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. until the start of Mass.

St. James upcoming service schedule

TOWER- St. James Presbyterian Church in Tower will have services led by the following speakers for February. Services are Sunday at 10 a.m., with coffee an’ following.

➤ 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.

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.

If you are interested in helping sponsor this event, please contact Jim “Chimpy” Tuominen at Zup’s in Tower, 218-753-2725.

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Hockey Day in Soudan this Saturday, Feb. 25 to focus on youth skating

SOUDAN– Hockey Day this year is geared towards young skaters. Rink opens at 11 a.m.

There will be a game for hockey players ages 12 and under at 1 p.m. Game may use pond hockey nets if there aren’t two goalies playing. This is the 8th annual event. There will be free pizza and hot dogs, ice cream, and pop for all attendees. All youth skaters are invited to attend. Adults are encouraged to come and watch and cheer on the young local hockey players.

Plans for next year do include the resumption of the adult Tower vs. Soudan game, but with new rules in place for selecting team members for this fun event.

All area youth are invited to Hockey Day on Saturday. Skating fun and treats for all ages. Loaner skates are available.



OUT ON THE ICE

TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS

Choices on the ballot in Breitung

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

BREITUNG TWP- Long-time Soudan resident and ISD 2142 teacher Erin Peitso is running for the two-year supervisor seat in Breitung Township. Breitung Chair Tim Tomsich, who was appointed to fill the vacancy last year, is also running for the seat.

Peitso grew up in Tower and has lived in Soudan for 23 years. She and her husband Terry, who works as a surgical technician at the Virginia Hospital, have two grown children. Peitso has been a teacher for the last 12 years, starting at Tower-Soudan, and is now at Northeast Range, where she teaches first grade. Before teaching, she ran a daycare in her home for 11 years, and also was an EMT for the Tower Ambulance Service.

“I think it’s important to be active in your community,” she said. “Now that my kids are grown, I have a chance to be active in a new way, that I couldn’t do when they were younger.”

“A lot of people look at others to do it,” she said. “I’ve been feeling you have to take the initiative and do it. We need people to start stepping up. I can do that now.”

Peitso said things are working well in the township.

“I just want to continue the things we are doing,” she said, “and to continue to make sure we have things for our children.”

“I want to do my best to be part of making this the best community it can be,” she said.

Peitso realizes she is running against someone with much more experience, but felt this year was the time to start, and wouldn’t be discouraged if the votes aren’t in her favor.



Matt Tuchel



Erin Peitso



Tim Tomsich

“If I don’t win,” she said. “I plan to run again next year.”

Incumbent Tomsich had retired from the board last year, but then was appointed to fill the vacancy when Matt Tuchel, who had filed for and run unopposed for the opening in 2022, withdrew after an opinion from the township attorney cast doubt on whether or not Tuchel’s position as the Water and Wastewater Supervisor for the Tower-Breitung Wastewater Board created a conflict of interest.

Tomsich said he hopes to oversee the completion of many infrastructure projects that are in the works, including the reconstruction of the paved trail to McKinley Park, blacktopping projects in Soudan on Poplar St. and Spring Rd., and the Stuntz Bay Rd. project. He is also working on finding grant funding for upgrades to the campground, including improvements at McKinley Park such as new playground equipment, new dock decking, purchase of a sound system, and a new canopy to replace the ones damaged in a storm last summer. The township has received \$30,000 from the IRRR which will fund half the project, and the township has a funding request to Lake Country Power’s Operation Roundup® to help with the playground equipment.

The township also has a project to rebuild the crib dock at the

Stuntz Bay Landing (a project in cooperation with the Stuntz Bay Association) that was destroyed during ice out last spring.

“There are a lot of major projects I would like to see completed, or at least funded,” he said.

Tomsich said he was happy to see someone else on the ballot.

“We do need new ideas, fresh ideas,” he said, and noted that supervisors didn’t need township government experience to do well on job.

“When I first started,” he said, “I didn’t know anything about township business either.”

Matt Tuchel is running for the open three-year supervisor seat, which is currently held by Greg “Dusty” Dostert, who decided to retire from the board.

“I recognized the need for someone willing to do the job,” he said. “The board only has three members, and the township has a lot going on. We need someone able and willing to do the job.”

Tuchel has been attending township meetings for several years.

“I know the ins-and-outs of public service,” he said. He also has contacts with grant funders from his work for the wastewater board.

“Breitung is so different from most townships,” he said. “We have a lot more going on.”

Tuchel is also a longtime member of the fire department, where he has been the assistant chief since 2005. He is an EMT with the Tower Ambulance Service, and currently serves as their training officer. He formerly served as the ambulance supervisor.

Tuchel said his goal is to maintain the level of quality government in place currently.

“I have no agenda, per se,” he said. “I just want to keep what we have going well.”

Tuchel and his wife Mindy have two children. His 16-year-old daughter Julia is doing PSEO at Minnesota North-Mesabi, and his son Isaac, in seventh-grade, is homeschooled.

The township has since worked with the Minnesota Attorney General’s Office to resolve the previous conflict-of-interest question. It was determined it was not a conflict since the township does not oversee the water and wastewater supervisor position, which is overseen by the joint powers board. Tuchel would not be qualified to sit on that board. Tuchel is also the assistant chief for the Breitung Fire Department, and that potential conflict was resolved through a contract with the fire department which states that Tuchel could be paid for the leadership role. The township also held public hearings on this issue.

Incumbent treasurer Jorgine Gornick is also running unopposed.

Township elections are being held from 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14, with the annual meeting to follow at 8:30 p.m., when the 2024 town levy may be set.

FOOD SHELF FUNDRAISER



St. Martin’s raises over \$1,200 for the Tower Area Food Shelf

TOWER- What started as a youth group project at St. Martin’s Catholic Church has turned into an annual fundraiser for the Tower Area Food Shelf. This year’s event, held as always on the same day as the Super Bowl, raised \$1,215 in freewill donations.

A dedicated group of volunteers spent a couple of days making desserts and did all the vegetable cutting needed to serve up steamy bowls of meaty booyah to the many community members who stopped by for an in-person or take-out meal.

Left: Harlan and Adeline Broten attended the fundraiser, along with their great-granddaughter Leona and daughter-in-law Brenda (not pictured).
photo by J. Summit

COLLEGE NEWS

Morgan Hensley graduates at UW-Eau Claire

EAU CLAIRE, WIS.– Morgan Hensley, of Embarrass, graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire from the College of Education and Human Sciences, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in social studies.

Local students named to Minnesota North College Dean’s list

HIBBING– The Minnesota North College Dean’s list for Fall Semester 2022 has been announced. This list includes students from all the colleges in the new Minnesota North system. Congratulations to the following

list of students who completed 12 or more credits while earning a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher:

Jacob Gibson, Embarrass
Morgan Gibson, Embarrass
Jaida Lemieux, Embarrass
Isaiah Littler, Embarrass
Calvin Winger, Embarrass
Alana Carmondy, Tower

Brielle Hujanen, Tower
Marco Pazzelli, Tower
Raven Sainio, Tower

CANINE AFFAIRS

Barb Kollar’s 101st birthday gets a round of a-paws

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Barb Kollar of Ely didn’t go to the dogs for her 101st birthday – rather, the dogs came to her, she harnessed them up, and then she took them for a dog sled ride. At the same time, she unleashed the full potential of her mushing experience and made the occasion a fundraiser to benefit the Boundary Waters Care Center, where she is currently a resident.

For the last four years, Barb has gone mushing for her birthday at Wintergreen Lodge, which has awarded her three of its famous dogsledding diplomas. For her 98th birthday, she earned her Bachelor’s in mushing. On her 99th birthday, she earned her mushing Master’s degree. Last year, for her 100th birthday, Barb was awarded her Ph.D. (Doctorate of Pulling Hounds).

On Wednesday, last week, Barb once again celebrated her birthday by completing her post-graduate work in mushing at Wintergreen Lodge. As part of earning her post-doc credentials, Kollar took a student, BWCC’s executive director Adam Masloski, to teach him Dogsledding 101 on her 101st birthday. While dogsledding for the first time would make anyone paws, according to the staff at Wintergreen Lodge, Kollar wasn’t too ruff on him.

When asked howl Masloski was doing, Kollar remarked, “He’s a com-

plete beginner to mushing but it looks like he’s got some potential.”

“Barb takes the cake as our oldest musher ever,” said Wintergreen director Paul Schurke. “Adam greatly enjoyed dogsledding and learning from Barbara as part of her “post-doc” achievements.”

The post-doc mushing session and teaching event was also a fundraiser for BWCC, which is need of donations to tide the nursing home over until funding relief becomes available from the Legislature for skilled nursing salaries and other inflation-impacted expenses.

As reported in the *Timberjay* in its Jan. 20 edition, Minnesota skilled nursing facilities did not receive the usual annual funding relief from the state last year because the bill to do so was left on the Legislature floor without passing. The current Medicaid/Medicare funding formula also has not been updated to account for inflation and other economic factors affecting post-pandemic healthcare.

To celebrate Kollar’s first birthday past 100, an anonymous donor will match all donations up to \$2,000. The fundraiser, which is named “Barb’s Mushing Match Campaign,” is still ongoing, Schurke confirmed. Tax-deductible gifts for the fundraiser can be sent to: BWCC, 200 W. Conan St., Ely, MN 55731.



Barb Kollar of Ely went dog sledding at Wintergreen Lodge for the fourth year in a row for her birthday. She turned 101 last week. From left-to-right: Barb Kollar, Adam Masloski, Kollar’s daughter, Cindy Miller, and lead sled dog Alice. photo by Wintergreen Lodge

BWCAW rally has snow day

ELY- Those who follow such things already know that the Boundary Waters rally trip to the state capitol on Feb. 23 was cancelled. The trip to the Twin Cities was to advocate on state capitol steps in favor of climate change mitigation and permanent protection for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The rally program included Ely’s Will Steger as a guest speaker.

The *Timberjay* asked the rally organizer, Save the Boundary Waters, why the event was cancelled. Maddie Fahline, a spokesperson from that group responded, “We were concerned about safety due to the weather.” She went on to say that “a lot of snow” was on the forecast for the Twin Cities, and that holding the rally on a different date would be in the best interest of Boundary Waters supporters from around the state who wanted to attend. The southern half of Minnesota was under a National Weather Service blizzard warning on Wednesday and Thursday.

The rescheduled rally will be on March 15 at 4 p.m. in the Minnesota Capitol Rotunda.

Students named to Minnesota College North Dean’s List for Fall 2022

HIBBING- The Minnesota North College announced its Dean’s list for Fall Semester 2022 on Feb. 21. Dean’s List students at the college are those who have completed 12 or more credits while earning a grade point average of 3.25 or higher.

Babbitt students on the Fall Dean’s List are: Erin Backe, Jacob Bjork, Christopher Ferjusion, Chris-

tine Jarvis, and Oskar Koivisto.

Ely students on the Fall Dean’s List are: Lane Anderson, Jake Anderson, Esther Anderson, Kale Beno, Claire Blanch, Amanda Block, Zoe Devine, Mary Erickson, Monica Gross, Drayke Hanninen, Phoebe Helms, Matthew Janekselä, Ryan Kosinski, Jaicee Krings, Anna Krueger, Gavin Marshall, Brett Moschel, Jordan Muhvich, Hannah

Penke, Eddie Prijatel, Madelyne Roderick, Hailey Schaller, Katrina Seliskar, Lindsay Sikora, Deborah Spengler, Audrey Thomas, Kelly Thompson, Deanna Tupy, and Emilie Wojcik.

Tasha Fulkrod of Winton was also on the Dean’s List.

ARS POETICA

Love Sonnets at Northern Grounds

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association held its February Call of the Wild poetry reading on the evening of Thursday, Feb. 16, at Northern Grounds. The theme for the February gathering of poets was

love sonnets. One local poet even brought and read one. The rest of the offerings by six different individuals covered mainly love poetry and poems inspired by northern Minnesota’s wilderness. The poetry

reading lasted an hour and included original poems by the *Timberjay*’s haiku poet Cecilia Rolando. All those who read a poem at the mike received a half-off coupon for a beverage at Northern Grounds.



Northern Lakes Arts Association executive director Ian Lah starts off the monthly Call of the Wild poetry reading last Thursday at local gathering spot Northern Grounds. photo by C. Clark

Upcoming Events

Ely Folk School

ELY- The Ely Folk School will offer an eight-session class, “Introduction to Clay Work,” starting Thursday, March, which meets for every Tuesday and Thursday during March from 6 to 8 p.m., at 209 E. Sheridan St. Tuition is \$330. Sign up through the link on the “learn” tab at elyfolk-

school.org.

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.

Ely Public Library

ELY- The Ely Public Library will celebrate International Polar Bear Day on Monday, Feb. 27, from 3-4 p.m. Learn about polar bears, play a polar

bear game and do polar bear crafts. Please register in advance so the library knows how many supplies to order.

The Library Board will meet on March 1 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

The library will hold a “Get Crafty” session on Friday, March 3, from 1-2 p.m.. Participants will start a mini-greenhouse in a used milk jug using milkweed seeds. The milkweed starts can be transplanted into yards later to help the monarch butterfly popula-

tion. This technique can be used with other plants as well. Please register for this program in advance, so the library can order supplies.

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

Ely Memorial High School Dance Team

ELY- The Ely high school dance team will hold a dance show on Sunday, Feb. 26, at 2 p.m. at the high school gym-

nasium. There is no entry fee, but donations are appreciated.

Ely Area Ambulance Service Joint Powers Board meeting

WINTON- The Ely Area Ambulance Service Joint Powers Board meeting will be on Tuesday, Feb. 28, starting at 4 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Winton Community Center.

In Brief

Tuesday Group schedule

ELY – The Tuesday Group community educational lunch gathering meets every Tuesday at noon 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. 28: The Death Positive Movement and Normalizing Death with Cheryl Boyes

➤ March 7: Northern Lakes Arts Association Updates with Ian Lah

➤ March 14: Meet new Elyites

➤ March 21: Ely Community Resource Mentor Program with Ryan Stewart

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2023



time is moving fast
winter soon rolling over

which seeds to start first

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.

NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

Bear Bots bring robotics back to North Woods

New team still works with Iron Mosquitoes but competes independently

FIELD TWP- The Iron Mosquitoes of Northeast Range School in Babbitt have established a strong reputation for their past performances at FIRST Robotics competitions and use of their robot for community activities, and now the group can tuck another feather in their cap. They’ve spawned an offspring, a new ally and potential foe all in one, the North Woods Bear Bots.

North Woods School once had a robotics team, but it went defunct, and last year interested Grizzlies made the long trek to Babbitt to compete as members of the Iron Mosquitoes.

That was the plan headed into this year, too, right up until early January when Iron Mosquitoes Coach Ryan Lindsay got word of a new development on the FIRST Robotics circuit.

“Three days before the season began on Jan. 7, we got a text from Mr. Lindsey saying that there was another team that had dropped out and there was a grant available if North Woods wanted to start their own team,” said Bear Bots Coach Tiffany Briggs.

Briggs said the Bear Bots received a \$5,000 grant from the Medtronic Foundation, a leading supporter of the FIRST Robotics Competition in Minnesota, and there was still money left over from the former North Woods team to cover the additional \$1,000 needed to field a team for the big regional competition in Duluth.

But as the season got underway, the Bear Bots were a team without a robot kit.

“We had to wait to get our kit that they send you for the season shipped to us,” Briggs said. “So we were two weeks behind before we got anything to start with this season.”

The kits provide the basic parts, and rules delineate the parameters, but the plans and programming for the robots are up to the seven-member Bear Bots team to create. Teams can also add components to the kit, and buying robot parts takes more money.

“We started doing some fundraising on our own,” Briggs said. “All the kids brainstormed a list of local businesses that they either had con-

nections to or thought that they would give, and then they did an ad and sent out letters. That’s the only fundraising we’ve done to this point because we’re in the build season. Most teams do fundraising events out of the build season. We’re already coming up with ideas of what we can do when we have more time to focus on that.”

But the team has found it challenging to spend some of that hard-earned cash.

“Everything’s out of stock at every vendor you try to buy robot parts from,” Briggs said.

Bear Bots team leadership is a family affair, with Tiffany’s husband, Nate, also serving as a coach and their son, North Woods senior Kohen Briggs, serving as team captain. They shepherd a crew of diverse ages and experience that includes senior Stephen Sopoci, juniors Alex Niles and Haley Leinonen, sophomores Alex Burckhardt and Amber Sopoci, and freshman Isaiah Briggs.

“Four of them had previously worked with the Iron Mosquitoes and the other three are pretty much brand new to it and jumping in because we need them,” Briggs said.

The team also has a couple of adult technical mentors. Cam Nichlast brings his expertise as an industrial electrician to the project, and Walter Harrier is a computer programmer by trade who first fell in love with robotics competition in St. Paul, where he started and mentored four junior-varsity level teams. It wasn’t something he was about to leave behind.

“I’ve coached robotics for about eight or nine years,” Harrier said. “I moved up here two years ago, and close to the high school. I went up there and met the principal and said, ‘I’m your new robotics coach.’ Well, I was just asking about the program. Their coach had left, and he connected me with the Babbitt team.”

Harrier is a true believer when it comes to robotics competition as a gateway into numerous career pathways.

“I would encourage every one of these kids to be a programmer, because it’s a great job,” he said. “It’s problem solving, and in the post-COVID



Top: The new Bear Bots robot takes a trial run in a scrimmage last weekend. submitted
Lower left: Stephen Sopoci, left, and Alex Burckhardt, center, help Coach Nate Briggs with making bumpers for the robot.
Lower right: Captain Kohen Briggs tries his hand at using a rotary tool to shape a gripper on the robot’s claw. photos by D. Colburn

world you can work anywhere. It’s a great alternative for kids who grow up here and don’t necessarily want to have to move away from their roots. And then there’s mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, they’re all just great careers.”

Robotics competition also exposes participants to skills vital in any workplace, Harrier said.

“It doesn’t matter what you’re going to go into, you’re going to use these skills,” he said. “It teaches you a lot about problem solving, teamwork, and communication. The tournaments are designed so you have to work with other teams. Every match, you’re in it with two other teams that you’re collaborating with. And then in the champi-

onship you have to try to sell yourself to other robots, you have to listen to other teams and figure out which ones are the best fit for your alliance. These are going to benefit you as a person in everything that you do.”

And the Bear Bots continue to collaborate with the Iron Mosquitoes as they move forward, going to Northeast Range on weekends to take advantage of their large, well-equipped workspace and their experience. They were there last Saturday when Captain Kohen took a few minutes to explain what their robot has to be able to do in this year’s competition.

“There are two different items they call cargo that you use to score,” he said. “This year it’s

little traffic cones and little inflatable cubes, and you have to pick them up somehow with your robot. The cones you have to put on posts, and the cubes you have to put on this table-like thing, you just set them on there.”

The final way to score points is for a three-team alliance to drive their robots onto a 4’ x 8’ pivoting platform and try to balance it. The more robots on the platform and the better the balance, the more points are scored.

The Bear Bots were working at a brisk pace on Saturday, as they needed to have their robot ready for a scrimmage the next day at Minnesota North College Itasca Campus. The Iron Mosquitos were working on their robot, too, and Briggs said the

teams came up with very different approaches in designing and building their robots.

Kohen said the team has run into a few hurdles, including having to improvise because of sold-out parts they wanted. The main axle that came with their kit was bent and had to be replaced, and they only had wheels for their robot for a week.

But the design process went fairly well, with team members scouring old competition videos for ideas and tweaking things to facilitate their scoring strategy. The robot incorporates a long arm with a claw at the end to pick up and place the cones and cubes.

“That’s been a challenge making the claw because everything has to be just right,” Kohen said. “It’s coming along and hopefully we can use it at our scrimmage.”

Kohen is also the brains behind the bot, the programmer who designs the code that tells the robot every move it has to make to accomplish its tasks.

“Java is the language we use,” he said. “It’s like a library and there’s a lot of stuff already made out there to help teams. A lot of teams put their code on there and that works really nice. There’s just a good community in robotics that works together even though they’re against each other.”

Team member Amber Sopoci provided the *Timberjay* with a brief recap of the team’s experience at the scrimmage.

“This was the first chance for the Bear Bots to see our robot in action,” she wrote. “We did a lot of work on our robot, and got some experience with judging and talking about our design. All of the teams were excited to be there, and helped when we needed some extra parts! This scrimmage is leading up to our competition in Duluth, which will put our new team to the test. We are all ready and excited to compete! Go Bear Bots!”

The team won’t have to wait long for that test, as the regional competition in Duluth, held at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center, is coming up March 1-4.

Bus drivers get nod from director for their service

REGIONAL- Minnesotans across the state celebrated the seventh annual School Bus Driver Appreciation Day on Wednesday, and ISD 2142 Transportation Director Kay Cornelius was extra appreciative of her drivers this year as she reflected on how they stepped to the fore throughout the COVID pandemic.

“Our drivers were amazing during the pandemic,” she said. “They buckled down and did what they needed to. We constantly had to do extra cleaning, and they were delivering daycare kids when we had care for essential workers. They delivered homework, they delivered food, it was crazy. But they did it with grace. It was very much a team.”

Cornelius has been with the district for 28

years, and she has some drivers who’ve been there even longer, she said.

“We have some people that have been in the district for 30 years,” she said. “It’s good to have some of the old school guys who’ve been around forever and get how the district works, and it’s nice to have them as mentors.”

School Bus Driver Appreciation Day seeks to spark public appreciation for school bus drivers and bring awareness to the shortage of drivers facing most districts in the state.

Cornelius is happy that she has enough regular bus and van drivers, around 75 of them, to cover the district’s extensive network of routes. Driving a morning and afternoon route doesn’t constitute a full-time job, but Cornelius works to find

additional opportunities in district for someone who wants more hours.

“It’s all about retention,” she said. “The goal is to keep our good employees.”

Another goal is to find good employees, and Cornelius is looking for more substitute drivers to fill in or help with activity transportation. Bus driving is a great way to have a positive impact on kids, she said.

“We give training for free, plus we pay for the training for them to pass the road test,” she said.

The district also pays for the required DOT physical.

To learn more about substitute driver opportunities and options, call the 2142 Transportation office at 218-749-8130, ext. 1113.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NWFA photo contest deadline is Saturday

COOK- Entries for the Northwoods Friends of the Arts annual photo contest must be submitted at the gallery in Cook by 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25. The gallery is located at 210 S River St.

See the NWFA Facebook page for complete details about entry fees and photo specifications. The contest exhibit and people’s choice voting will run through March, with the winners to be announced at a gallery reception on March 31.

Theatre tickets go on sale Friday

COOK- Tickets for the Bleak Mid-Winter Players presentation of “Awaiting the Morning Light”, an original, historical fiction play writ-

ten by Jesse Bangs, will go on sale Friday. Seating for any of three dinner performances, March 24-25 at the First Baptist Church in Cook and April 1 at North Star Church in Virginia, and a March 26 matinee in Cook and April 1 matinee in Virginia will be available. Tickets cost \$15 per person for dinner theaters and \$7 per person for matinees.

Check the Bleak Mid-Winter Players Facebook page for the link to the ticket sales site and more information about specific locations.

MN North releases dean's list names

REGIONAL - The following students have been named to the fall semester 2022 dean’s list at Minnesota North College for completing 12 or more credits while earn-

ing a grade point average of 3.25 or higher. They are: Nicholas Curtis, Hannah Kinsey, and Stephen Sopoci, all of Angora; Christopher Chaulklin, Addy Hartway, Nathan Palm, Kaden Ratai, Karah Scofield, and Skyler Yernatch, all of Cook; Abigail Shuster and Elijah Squires, of Gheen; Simona Benner, Monique Benner, Evelyn Brodeen, Jack Cook, Grace Koch, Helen Koch, and Chloe Maroste, all of Orr; and Micah Chlebeczek, of Ray.

Read It
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ENERGY TRANSITION

New state law advances date for carbon-free power

Area power co-op manager on board with the change, while recognizing significant challenges

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- DFL legislators and Gov. Tim Walz put the state’s electric utilities on a fast track to carbon-free power generation last week when Walz signed a bill advancing the date for the total phaseout of carbon-generating electricity by ten years, from 2050 to 2040.

“Minnesota is not going to wait any longer, Minnesotans are not going to wait longer,” Walz said at a signing ceremony at the St. Paul Labor Center. “They made it clear with their voices, they made it clear through advocacy, they made it clear with their votes, that they expect movement around climate change to happen, and it is happening today.”

Only Rhode Island and the District of Columbia have more aggressive dates for conversion to carbon-free generation than Minnesota.

The law establishes two standards for electric utilities to meet, one for use of renewable sources of electricity and one for carbon-free generation.

The renewables standard requires power companies to achieve the already established target of 25 percent by 2025, and includes a target of 55-percent renewable generation by 2035.

Anything that doesn’t emit carbon is considered to be carbon-free. That includes nuclear and hydro-electric, along with wind and solar. Nuclear power and some hydroelectric power sources aren’t considered to be renewable, but are carbon-free, hence the separate standards. The new carbon-free standard has targets of 80 percent by 2030, 90 percent by 2035, and finally to 100 percent by 2040.

The law provides some flexibility for utilities in

meeting the standards by establishing renewable energy credits, or RECs. Power companies can buy these credits in lieu of hitting carbon-free or renewable goals as a way to offset their carbon emissions. A utility would also be able to ask the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for an exception to the standards if implementing them would threaten affordability for customers or the reliability of the power grid.

Authors of the bill made some concessions on several issues of concern expressed by utilities, who have been transitioning generating capacity toward carbon-free sources for years. “We’re trying to make sure that we’re being responsive to legitimate questions and concerns while still keeping the overall framework and goals intact,” said the bill’s prime sponsor Rep. Jamie Long, DFL-Minneapolis.

One of those concessions was a nod to the challenges faced by rural electric cooperatives that are smaller and have fewer financial resources than the state’s major power companies. Cooperatives and municipal power agencies will only have to hit 60 percent carbon-free by 2030, rather than 80 percent. Targets for 2035 and 2040 remain the same.

Lake Country Power General Manager Mark Bakk was supportive of the change, noting that his company is fully on board with the shift to carbon-free.

“It’s the right thing to do, and we’ve been going that way for quite a while,” Bakk said. “We’re not opposed to carbon-free technology, none of Minnesota’s utilities are. This buys us some more time, which was helpful. We’ll take that first little bit on the initial milestone for sure.”

But that doesn’t mean

the path to getting to the 100-percent goal will be easy, in part because some of the technology needed to get there still needs to be invented.

Challenges ahead

Annie Levenson-Falk, executive director of the Citizens Utility Board, a consumer advocacy group that supports the new targets, told a legislative committee that she “can’t sit here today and say, though, that Minnesota can for sure get to 100-percent carbon-free electricity on this timeline without issues. I think that advances in technology and grid management solutions will make it possible, but that last ten percent requires a bit of faith.”

Bakk agreed.

“Some of the technologies we will be depending on don’t exist,” he said. An effective means of energy storage remains a big piece of the puzzle, according to Bakk. “That technology isn’t developed yet on a scale that would be necessary to make this work.”

Bakk said market factors have been driving Minnesota utilities to move toward carbon-free technologies, and that the law mandating conversion by 2040 could have unintended consequences.

“Once there’s a mandate and you have to go a certain route, costs end up getting driven up by that,” he said. There’s a push to electrify different sectors of the economy. Transportation is a big one, but also there’s a push related to home heating technologies. We’re pushing to electrify more sectors of our economy, but at the same time a bill like this puts some pretty major hurdles on the supply side. On the supply side it’s a little harder to achieve as the demand side starts to exponentially grow. Simple economics will tell

you that’s going to drive up the prices.”

Bakk noted that consumers are still paying on some traditional power plants that will have to be retired before they’re fully paid off.

“We’ll still need to recover the cost of what it took to build and modernize some of them,” he said.

Another challenge to meeting the targets, Bakk said, is the massive buildout of alternative carbon-free generating capacity that will be needed. He believes wind farms will be a major component of that, and described challenges associated with them.

“When you build wind generators you also have to build transmission to get that wind power to where the actual load is,” he said. “None of those things are all that easy. You’ve got to be able to site the wind farm, and for that you’re dealing with property rights with property owners. You’ve got to be able to plan and route and permit transmission lines, which has become more difficult as well, with a lot of the same issues as property owners. They’re not necessarily excited to see more transmission lines.”

Providing his 50,000 customers with a reliable source of affordable electricity is of utmost concern to Bakk, and the reliability issue is a shared concern of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the regional power grid operator serving members across 15 U.S. states and Manitoba. MISO manages power distribution and can shunt more power to areas during times of peak demand, but that task is growing more challenging.

“The rapid fleet change occurring in the MISO region is giving rise to a host of urgent and complex reliability challenges,” John Bear, MISO CEO, said in



Wind turbines, like these at Taconite Ridge, are likely to play a major role in the ongoing energy transition.

a report addressing reliability. “And fleet change is not the only challenge we face. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe. Electric vehicles and electric heating in homes and businesses are also poised to grow, which could exert new pressures on the grid in hours of the day and seasons of the year that rarely posed risks in the past.”

Bakk said he looked at the MISO load generating profile at about 6 a.m. on one of the coldest days in the last two weeks. “It was about 80 percent coal and natural gas serving the load at the time, but those are things that would need to get replaced. That’s really significant,” he said. “How are we going to ensure reliability in periods of high demand and low wind and zero solar? Those are major concerns for us up here in northern Minnesota. If something happens in the winter related to reliability, that’s dangerous.”

Bakk said that cooperatives tried to get the Legislature to put a specific exemption in the law for natural gas peaking plants that can be run when reliability is an issue, but the proposal was rejected.

Republican lawmakers opposed to the bill

questioned the validity of established science about human-caused climate change and argued the state’s moratorium on nuclear power should be lifted. Xcel Energy owns the only two nuclear power plants in the state and can count that energy toward the carbon-free target, an advantage no other Minnesota utility has. A subsequent bill introduced by Republicans calling for research into emerging modular nuclear technology could wind up in omnibus legislation later in the session. Bakk said he would favor such a move.

Despite the possible challenges, Bakk said Lake Country Power is committed to meeting the new targets. To do so, they will be working with their power supplier, Great River Energy, of which they are part-owner along with 27 other cooperatives. GRE has past success in hitting emissions targets. They hit a 2025 goal of a 30-percent reduction in CO2 emissions seven years ahead of schedule. Bakk said the current plan is to focus on obtaining more wind power contracts.

“It’d be a lot of additional wind, and then the additional transmission necessary to get that to where the load is.”

CARE...Continued from page 1

“In early 2022, working with EMS physicians from across the state, the EMSRB established multiple clinical advisory performance measures that could be used to benchmark and highlight the wonderful prehospital care that Minnesotans receive every day from our dedicated EMTs and paramedics,” said Dylan Ferguson, executive director of the EMSRB, in a press statement issued Feb. 16. “The measures looked specifically at the quality of patient care in cases of strokes, chest pain, trauma, and pediatrics,” added Ferguson.

The measures were

adopted by the EMSRB in consultation with the state’s Medical Director Standing Advisory Committee.

“The implementation of these measures was a step towards improving the already phenomenal care that is provided across the state of Minnesota every day,” stated Ferguson.

The EMSRB recognized those services that performed at a rate of 80 percent or higher on at least five of the nine clinical measures. But some area services did much better than that. The Tower Area Ambulance Service, for example, exceeded 80 percent on seven of the

measures, while one of the measures had no examples in recent years with which to compare and so received no rating. The TAAS achieved a 100-percent rating on stroke encounters with documented stroke assessment and pediatric encounters resulting in medication administration. And it received ratings of 92 percent or above in chest pain encounters with documented 12-lead ECG, trauma patients with documented pain assessment, and respiratory encounters with documented respiratory assessment. In addition, the service received an 87.5-percent rating for

stroke encounters with a scene time of 20 minutes or less and an 81.25-percent rating for stroke encounters with documented blood glucose. Those were all above the overall statewide average rating of 71.6 percent and well above the St. Louis County average of 65.81 percent.

The only area where the TAAS rated lower than average was for possible heart attack encounters with a scene time of less than 20 minutes. The service had just two such encounters last year and one of those calls, which was on Lake Vermilion’s Ely island, not surprisingly exceeded

the 20-minute scene time, resulting in a 50-percent rating.

Tower Ambulance Director Dena Suihkonen said the recognition shows quality isn’t a matter of size. “I feel this shows small services are able to focus on doing what’s best for their patients,” she said. “I am very proud of our providers. This shows that not only are we treating patients appropriately we are documenting appropriately as well.”

Orr Ambulance director Donna Hoffer described the recognition as “awesome,” and is encouraged by the con-

tinuing interest in joining the volunteer service in the town of 250. While Orr may be among the smallest towns in the state with an ambulance service, it currently has 21 members on the roster. “And we just recruited a couple more,” said Hoffer.

Orr’s ambulance staff has been busier than usual this past year. In addition to covering emergency calls within its coverage area, it also responded to 58 mutual aid calls for neighboring departments that lacked available staff, a testament to the commitment of the Orr ambulance crew.

NORTHSHORE...Continued from page 1

two plants. I’m glad to say that we’re one step closer to making that happen.”

District 3A Rep. Roger Skraba added his accolades later in the afternoon. “I am extremely happy to hear that Cleveland-Cliffs has started the process of contacting workers to begin reopening their facilities in Babbitt and Silver Bay,” said Skraba. “This has been an issue that we have been working hard on during the first month and a half of the legislative session.”

Gov. Tim Walz and U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar also issued statements expressing their support for restarting Northshore operations.

“I’m relieved to learn that the collaboration

between state and local leaders has paid off and that the Iron Range families who depend on these jobs can rest easy knowing that they’re heading back to work,” Walz said. “This is a win for Silver Bay, Northeastern Minnesota, and the state as a whole.”

Cliffs silent

Goncalves made no mention of the Northshore situation during a recent investors’ call to discuss the company’s 2022 performance, and as of Tuesday afternoon the only new news release on the company’s website was to announce a price increase in steel products.

The *Timberjay* contacted Cleveland-Cliffs via email asking for more infor-

mation about the recall, but had not received a response as of press time. *The Duluth News Tribune* did manage to get through to Cliffs spokesperson Pat Perisco, but she declined to shed any more light on the situation.

“At this time, Cleveland-Cliffs is calling back some workers to Northshore Mining,” Persico said in an email to the *News Tribune*. “We will provide more details when we decide when and at what capacity this operation will be brought back online.”

Persico declined to say how many workers would be called back, and her answer leaves open the possibility that Northshore could resume operation at less than full capacity.

Goncalves idled Northshore operation and shifted pellet production to Virginia’s Minorca facility amid a royalties dispute with the Mesabi Trust, which owns the rights to the ore in the Peter Mitchell Mine in Babbitt. As prices spiked and shipments soared in 2021, the royalties owed to the Mesabi Trust soared dramatically to \$71 million, including \$27.1 million in bonus royalties. In February 2022, Goncalves called the Mesabi Trust royalty structure “ridiculous” and announced the shuttering of Northshore. At the time, Goncalves also said that he now considers the mine and pellet processing facility in Silver Bay to be a “swing”

facility that will operate only as Cliffs needs new base ore.

In October, the Mesabi Trust initiated arbitration against Northshore and Cliffs related to alleged underpayments of royalties by the company in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The trustees elected not to make quarterly distributions to its investors in October 2022 or in January due primarily to the uncertainty caused by the Northshore shutdown. In a Jan. 12 release, the Mesabi Trust outlined multiple factors that have caused concern about the future revenue they might generate from Northshore.

“The Trustees’ determination of no distribution this quarter also takes into

account numerous other factors,” the release said, “including uncertainties resulting from Cliffs’ prior announcements to make Northshore a swing operation as Cliffs’ Minorca operation becomes increasingly utilized, Cliffs’ increased use of scrap iron in its vertical supply chain planning, potential volatility in the iron ore and steel industries generally, national and global economic uncertainties, the cost and expense related to the Trust’s initiation of arbitration against Northshore and its parent, Cliffs, possible further disturbances from global unrest, and the potential impacts from further outbreaks of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.”

in particular, is felt by any number of businesses. "Gas sales have been strong at the Y Store, and our resort has been very busy with both smaller and larger snowmobile groups," said Brian K. Anderson, public relations director for Fortune Bay Resort Casino. "When we've been sold out, we steer business to our fellow Lake Vermilion Resort Association members, and they do the same for us."

Sebesta echoed that sentiment. "When you think about what the DNR



Above right: Dozens of sleds were parked outside Benchwarmer's Bar and Grill in Tower over the weekend.

While the land-based trails have been generally outstanding since mid-January, getting there took a considerable amount of effort, much of it volunteer. The big mid-December snowfall left a



Lossing said demand for snowmobile rentals has been strong in recent weeks, with all 13 of his sleds booked for all three days of the recent holiday weekend and the same for this upcoming weekend. And it's been bringing in people from far and wide, notes Lossing. "We've now had people from three countries and 17 U.S. states who have rented snowmobiles this year," he said. "It's kind of fun to see all the different people who are

The region's average high for Feb. 24 is 28 degrees, with an average low of minus one.

Cushman said that the fastest teams could finish in three to four hours, "depending on the snow ... All the teams should finish by 4:30 p.m."

"Spectators should plan to arrive between 8 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.," Cushman advised. She did not know how many parking spaces would be available next to the start-

The staff requests that spectators park well away from any road crossing and stay back from the

The official welcome party is on Friday, Feb. 24 from 4-7 p.m. at the Timber Trail Lodge, located at 629 Kawishiwi Trail in Ely. The party is an occasion where spectators can meet race

The traditional annual Musher Dinner will be on Saturday, Feb. 25, from 4-7:30 p.m. The all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner is a fundraiser for the Minnesota North College Vermilion Campus Wilderness Club. Admittance is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under

First place for the eight-dog teams will be \$2,000, with \$1,700 for the six-dog teams. Second place will be \$1,350 and \$1,250, and third place will be \$1,100 and \$1,000, for the eight-dog and six-dog teams, respectively. The amounts drop for each subsequent finisher, with the eighth-place finishers receiving \$250 and \$225 for the eight-dog and six-dog teams. In addition, all of the other dog teams that finish the race will receive \$50.

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BROADBAND

Paul Bunyan wins \$10 million federal broadband grant

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL - Exercising perseverance, Paul Bunyan Communications (PBC) has secured federal funding for multiple proposed high-speed broadband projects, including one for an area north of Virginia that had previously been slated for future development with state Border-to-Border funds.

The \$10 million award

from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s ReConnect program will help connect 3,529 people, 35 farms, and two public schools through projects in Hubbard, Itasca, and St. Louis counties, according to a joint press release from U.S. Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith.

“This federal funding will make a real difference, allowing thousands of families to access critical opportunities online while

enabling farms to connect to new technologies such as precision agriculture,” Klobuchar said.

The award will cover about 75 percent of the costs, with PBC picking up the remainder, and the regions to be covered will get the company’s top of the line GigaZone broadband service.

“These areas will now not only get broadband access, they will go from slow satellite or dial up Internet to speeds of up to 10 gigabits per second and become part of one of the largest rural gigabit networks in the country,” said Gary Johnson, PBC CEO/General Manager.

“This will be a game changer for the residents in these areas,” added Steve Howard, PBC Information Technology and Development Manager.

The development north of Virginia will serve customers in Wuori, Sandy, and Pike Townships, stretching west from Hwy 169 almost to Hwy 53, east past Lax Rd., and north from the Hwy 53/169 junction to Door Rd.

PBC had to put in some extra work to get the USDA ReConnect grant after its initial application was rejected, said PBC Marketing Supervisor Brian Bissonette. The company applied for a state Border-to-Border grant for the projects instead, then later discovered the ReConnect rejection wasn’t due to the proposal, but to a minor paperwork issue with the grant application, so they resubmitted the corrected application, Bissonette said. Meanwhile, the state Border-to-Border grant came through in December,

two months before the announcement of the ReConnect awards.

“And now the ReConnect3 grant has been awarded to us,” Bissonette said. “We won’t be adding many more additional locations other than what was already planned with Border-to-Border grant but the ReConnect3 grant will allow the state to reissue the funds meant for those areas to other projects so it keeps more money in Minnesota.”

And looking ahead to when the new system will be deployed, future customers shouldn’t get rid of their current internet provider any time soon.

“The one thing we aren’t sure of at this point is when we might start construction on these additional projects,” Bissonette said. “Per the grant, we have up to five years to get them

done. We have several other projects already in progress or scheduled, so while it will be exciting for those who live in these areas to know access to high quality, reliable fiber optic Internet service is coming, it won’t be right away. For sure within five years but when specifically, we won’t know for a while yet. That is still to be determined. We hope sooner but that will depend upon completion of other projects we already have committed to.”

One of the company’s current projects is the deployment of high-speed broadband in Cook. PBC had hoped to complete that work before winter, but supply chain issues with equipment interfered with that plan, and work to complete the system will begin this spring.

DISASTER

Lake home a total loss

BEATTY TWP – A two-story, three-bedroom Lake Vermilion home in the 8700 block of Raps Road in Beatty Township was destroyed by fire on Friday, Feb. 17.

County dispatchers received the report of a fire at approximately 4:50 p.m., and when firefighters and law enforcement arrived they discovered the 30-year-old structure was fully engulfed in flames.

According to the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office, the home was not occupied at the time and is considered a total loss.

County property tax records indicate the owner as Linda Young, of Britt. The estimated market value of the home was \$221,200.

The incident remains under investigation by the State Fire Marshal’s Office and St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office

THE LEGISLATURE

Bakk, Ecklund new lobbyists in St. Paul

REGIONAL—Two of northeastern Minnesota’s former lawmakers have joined the stable of lobbyists that represent a wide range of interests at the Minnesota Legislature. Both former Sen. Tom Bakk and former Rep. Rob Ecklund have signed up to lobby on behalf of various entities.

As first reported in the *Timberjay* two weeks ago, the parent company of tobacco giant Phillip-Morris, known as Altria, has hired former Sen. Tom Bakk to lobby on behalf of the company on tobacco-related legislation.

More recently, the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board has confirmed that two other major corporations, Essar Capital Americas and Twin Metals Minnesota, have hired Bakk to work on their behalf in St. Paul.

Bakk will serve as one of eight lobbyists working on behalf of Twin Metals and is one of three lobbyists registered as working to support Essar Capital. Essar has been fighting to regain state mineral leases they say are critical to its hopes

of completing a taconite pellet plant near Nashauk. But the company, a subsidiary of Essar Steel, has a checkered record on the Iron Range, one that includes a bankruptcy that sought to discharge millions of dollars owed to suppliers and contractors, many of which are located in north-eastern Minnesota.

Meanwhile, Twin Metals is a joint venture controlled by Chilean mining giant Antofagasta, that has proposed to build a sulfide-based copper-nickel mine near Ely.

Former Rep. Ecklund, who lives in International Falls, has registered as a lobbyist for a total of seven distinct entities, mostly tribal or governmental. Ecklund is registered to lobby on behalf of both the Bois Forte and Grand Portage tribal governments, both located in his former district. He is also registered to be working on behalf of the city of Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission, Forest Lake Area Schools, ISD 31, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association and a single corporate client, Verizon Wireless.



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EOE

PUBLIC HEALTH

Uncovered workers would get paid sick leave under new proposal

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Mandated paid sick leave could be coming in 2024 for 900,000 workers employed by Minnesota businesses that currently don't provide that benefit, if a bill passed by the state House of Representatives last week becomes law.

House File 19, which passed 69-54, would mandate that nearly all employers provide paid "sick and safety time" to their workers after logging 80 hours on the job. Workers would earn one hour of leave for every 30 hours worked, and could accrue up to 48 hours per year. Unused hours could be rolled over into the next year, with a maximum of 80 hours to be banked at any given time.

Local mandates al-

ready exist in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Bloomington, and DFL efforts to expand paid sick leave statewide have been going on since 2019. With the party in control of both chambers of the legislature and the governorship, the measure stands a greater likelihood of becoming law than ever before.

"(This bill) ensures that the 900,000 Minnesotans who currently don't have access to a single paid day off in our state ... would be able to have that human dignity of being able to stay home," said Rep. Liz Olson, DFL-Duluth, the bill's sponsor.

Federal government employees and independent contractors would be exempt from the mandate, while all other employers would have to start offering the benefit beginning

Jan. 1, 2024. Businesses that do not comply would be subject to fines as high as \$10,000 per violation.

Earned sick and safe time could be utilized by workers for multiple reasons. These would include: needing treatment or care regarding physical or mental illness; absence owing to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking; and quarantine due to exposure to an infectious disease. An employee could claim paid time off if these situations applied to either themselves or to a family member.

Noting that Duluth's 2018 measure excluded seasonal workers and businesses with fewer than five employees, Rep. Dave Baker, R-Willmar, offered multiple amendments to the bill. He wanted the bill to apply only to businesses with over 25 employees, want-

ed the benefit withheld from seasonal workers, and wanted to extend to 90 days the time needed on the job to qualify. None of his proposals were adopted.

An amendment offered by Olson to allow building and construction trade labor unions to waive their members' rights to earned sick and safe time while negotiating collective bargaining agreements was agreed to, as was an amendment from Rep. Andrew Myers, R-Tonka Bay, to instruct the Department of Labor and Industry to draft a form for employers to inform their employees of their rights under the bill.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Human Services committee for consideration. A hearing has yet to be scheduled.

Tax-forfeit auction nets over \$1 million

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Thirty-four of the 54 properties in the recently concluded St. Louis County Online Tax-Forfeited Property Sale sold for a total value of nearly \$1.1 million, with several North Country properties figuring into the mix.

A 40-acre tract in Betty Township, primarily north of 9036 Raps Road crossed by two private driveway easements in the southeast corner and zoned for multiple use, attracted top dollar in the auction. Listed at a minimum bid of \$32,800, Kyle

Colbert was the successful bidder at \$92,600.

On the opposite end of the scale, a 30 foot by 119 foot parcel on the northeast corner of Fall Lake Drive N and 2nd Avenue E in Winton that was predominantly wetland, listed at \$250, was purchased by Christian J. Proetz for \$311.

A non-conforming .11-acre parcel located on undeveloped platted roads northwest of Highway 115 and Hunters Pass in Greenwood Township, listed for \$225, was purchased by Colin D. Ulmer for \$4,000.

Karl A. Anderson was the successful bidder on a

2-acre triangular plot with about 220 feet of frontage on a branch of the Willow River at the southeast corner of Willow River Road and Kasun Road in Unorganized Twp 63-21, Orr. Listed at \$1,500, Anderson bid \$14,600 for the property.

No bids were received on four other area tracts in Ely, Cook, Owens Township, and Morse Township. The Morse Township tract on Shagawa Lake was described as "predominantly wetland and not suitable for development," which likely contributed to the lack of interest in the small parcel with 360 feet of lake frontage.



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GIRLS BASKETBALL

Timberwolves KO Grizzlies

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

ELY- In boxing terms, the early January bout between North Woods and Ely girls hoops teams was the equivalent of a 12-round slugfest ending in a split decision in favor of the Ely girls, 64-61. But the highly anticipated rematch in Ely last week, Grizzlies vs. Timberwolves II, turned out to be a knockout for

the Wolves, who walked away from the ring with a 66-41 win. This Melee in Ely had all the makings of another barnburner at the outset, as North Woods jumped out to a quick 6-2 lead on hoops by Helen Koch, River Cheney, and Hannah Kinsey. The Wolves pulled even at 10-10 on a free throw by Madeline Kallberg, then pulled ahead on a bucket by Claire Thomas. As the Wolves heated up, the Grizzlies

Right: Ely's Zoe Mackenzie goes in for a layup under pressure from North Woods' Kiana LaRoque.
photo by D. Colburn
cooled down, missing shots, forcing bad passes for turnovers, and scoring only four points over the next nine minutes. The Wolves were far more

See GIRLS...pg. 2B



BOYS BASKETBALL

Wolves pound Giants

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

AURORA- The North Woods boys amped up the defensive heat on Friday, turning a close game at Mesabi East into a rout, as the Grizzlies improved to 13-9 on the season with a 90-49 win. It's been a rough year for the Giants, who have only two wins under their belt and are no strangers to blowout losses, but they gave the Grizzlies a good test throughout much of the first half. After North Woods streaked to a 21-11 lead, fueled by an early 10-point outburst by Brenden Chiabotti, the Grizzlies suddenly went cold, and the Giants took advantage. A solid 12-0 run had the Grizzlies on their heels, suddenly trailing 23-21. A trey by Jared Chiabotti put the Grizzlies back up one, and after Mesabi East regained the lead on a bucket, Brendan Chiabotti responded with a triple to put North Woods ahead for good. That's when the Grizzlies cranked up the defensive pressure and converted turnovers into points in an 11-0 run to close out the half, taking a 43-31 lead to the locker

See NW BOYS...pg. 2B

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Griz tally most wins since 2014

Rout L-BF, 57-16

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP – The North Woods girls hoops team sent their seniors out in proper style Tuesday night with a thorough beatdown of Littlefalls-Big Fork, 57-16. The win gave the Grizzlies the most season victories they've had in nearly a decade. The Grizzlies didn't allow the visitors a single point in the second half as they controlled the tempo from beginning to end. The final score could have been worse if not for stretches of lackluster shooting by North Woods, but a strong night of offensive rebounding gave them the chances they needed to keep pouring on the points. And on possessions when the Grizzlies' full court press wasn't creating scoring opportunities, it still created havoc for L-BF to get into and run its offensive sets. Hannah Kinsey controlled the paint and scored a game-high 25 points to lead North Woods. While no other Grizzlies scored in double figures, seven other players picked

See NW GIRLS ...pg. 2B



STATE NORDIC SKI CHAMPIONSHIP

Absolutely Devine

Ely's Zoe Devine takes state girls Nordic title

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

GIANTS RIDGE— For a tiny school, Ely regularly wields a big footprint when it comes to Nordic ski competition in Minnesota and they proved it once again when they delivered the second state girls individual champion in six years here on Thursday. Senior Zoe Devine, a standout Nordic skier for Ely since the eighth grade, edged Duluth East's Lydia Kraker by a tenth of a second to claim the state individual title in the pursuit competition. That it was a photo finish was no surprise, as Devine held a narrow two-second advantage coming off the morning's classic race, the first of two parts in the pursuit competi-

“It was just a thrill to watch it all play out for her.

Former Ely Nordic Coach Paula Anderson

tion, which combines skills in both classic and freestyle skiing. Devine acknowledged that she prefers the classic portion of the event, in which she had dominated at Section 7 meets all season long. While she was edged in the freestyle portion by Kraker and Greta Hansen of Math and Science Academy, her two-second advantage from the day's earlier race

Above: Senior Zoe Devine, of Ely, makes her final sprint to the finish in the state freestyle event.
Right: Devine lunges her right leg forward, likely shaving the winning tenth of a second off her time.
Lower right: Devine and second-place finisher Lydia Kraker, of Duluth East, embrace after the final event of the pursuit competition.

photos by M. HelMBERGER
made the difference. Devine said she was never content to sit on her narrow edge from the morning's race. "I treated it like no cushion at all," she said. "In this race and with all these

See DEVINE...pg. 2B



Ely girls team places eighth; Durkin makes solid showing for the boys

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

GIANTS RIDGE— While Zoe Devine's girls title clearly received top billing locally from last week's Nordic ski state tournament, several other Ely skiers posted strong performances as well, and it helped the Ely girls team finish in eighth place while competing against some of the largest schools in the state. "It was a great day for the Ely Nordic Wolves and the culminating event for our four senior

Right: Members of the Ely girls Nordic ski team pose after the conclusion of competition last Thursday. Pictured are (l-r): Phoebe Helms, Ava Skustad, Zoe Devine, Claire Blauch, and Anna Dunn.
photo by M. HelMBERGER
state skiers," said Ely Head Coach Todd Hohenstein. Success comes in many forms, noted Hohenstein, and is different for each athlete. "All of the skiers participating in the state meet came in with

See ELY SKIERS...pg. 2B



GIRLS BASKETBALL

Wolves hold off Cherry to improve to 20-4

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY— The Timberwolves used solid shooting and a punishing second-half defense to contain the Tigers as Ely improved to 20-4 with a 71-42 win here on Tuesday, leaving them a contender for the third seed heading into next week’s Section 7 girls basketball playoffs. “We dominated defensively after starting a little slow on that end,” said Ely Head Coach Max Gantt. “Cherry is a well-coached team that does not give up, but we really made life hard for them in the second half.”

The Tigers kept it close in the early going but Ely slowly built a 39-26 lead by the half. But the Wolves amped up the pressure in the second half to put it away. “We gave great on ball pressure and handled their cutters and posts very well,” said Gantt. “We won the second half 32-16.” Four Ely players reached double figures on the night, with Hannah Penke leading the way with 16 points. Grace LaTourell was right behind with 15, while Madeline Kallberg and Zoe Mackenzie notched ten points apiece. Sarah Visser notched six points along with “a ton” of steals

and generally solid defensive play. Heading into their regular season finale on Friday, Gantt called their contest with 18-7 South Ridge “a must win” that could decide the third seed for the playoffs. “Heading into it, we are emphasizing trusting our teammates on offense and giving everything we have on defense down the stretch,” said Gantt. “The better we take care of the ball and move it, the better we are on offense. The more effort we give on defense, the more we show we can lock up anybody.”

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ely goes 1-1 on the week

MT. IRON— The Ely boys hoops squad kept it close throughout the first half here on Tuesday, but the Rangers used a smothering defense to keep the Wolves under wraps in the second half. The Rangers went on to win 62-51. “We couldn’t get into any flow offensively in that second half as they were really aggressive on defense,” said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. Senior Joey Bianco managed 23 points in the face of the Rangers’ defensive assault, while freshman Jack Davies added 17. The Wolves had better success last Friday against Chisholm as they held off the Bluestreaks, 62-51.

“We played well on both ends of the floor and really limited what they were able to do offensively,” said McDonald. Bianco poured in 22 points and added six assists. Davies had 16 points and Erron Anderson tallied seven rebounds. The Wolves have a major test at home on Friday against South Ridge. “That’s a big one and the one next Friday at Fond du Lac is also a big game for us,” said McDonald. “We will need to keep playing defense down the stretch here and take better care of the basketball to have a chance in those games and in the playoffs.”

ELY SKIERS..Continued from page 1B



Left: Ely sophomore Dylan Durkin competes in the freestyle at the state Nordic ski championship.
photo by M. Helmberger
different goals and benchmarks that would define success for them personally. We try to frame the competition as a chance to publicly show what your best effort is on any given day. The place that the skier earns is only a product of the effort.”

It turns out that all of Ely’s pursuit racers moved up in the rankings over their appearances at the state tournament last year, and all improved their

combined times considerably, thanks in part to the fast snow conditions. Senior Phoebe Helms finished 45th this year, with a combined [classic/freestyle] time of 33:38.0. That was nearly five full minutes faster than her time at the 2022 state tournament, when she finished 53rd. Junior Claire Blauch shaved more than eight minutes off her combined time from last year, improving her ranking from last year’s 91st to 51st this year. Junior Ava Skustad finished 61st, up from 67th last year, with a combined time of 34:49.6, more than five minutes

faster than her 2022 mark. Sophomore Anna Dunn took more than seven minutes off her time, finishing 79th with a combined time of 35:46.9, up from 93rd last year. The improved performances, combined with the team sprint efforts of Kelly Thompson and Sydney Durkin, who finished 18th with a time of 18:21.43, earned Ely an eighth-place overall team finish in the 16-team field, all of which hail from much larger schools. While the young Ely boys team didn’t qualify for state competition, Ely sophomore Dylan Durkin qualified as an individual and finished 65th in

his first state competition, with a combined time of 29:48.6. Ely’s continuing success in Nordic skiing has become a tradition that helps build for the future, notes Hohenstein. “One great outcome of having a successful state meet performance is that it makes talking about next year’s season so easy,” he said. “We know how special an athlete Zoe is and that state championships are rare occurrences for small town programs. However, the process of setting goals and then working hard to reach that potential, we can do that each year and find success.”

DEVINE..Continued from page 1B

fast skiers, I just took out of the gate knowing they’d be right with me. So, I just went for it.” She said she was a bit nervous while waiting in the pen to start the race, but she was pleased with the fresh snow and cold conditions, which she felt worked to her advantage. Experience also helped. It was Devine’s fifth trip to the state Nordic ski meet and it showed at the very end as she lunged her right foot forward at the finish line, likely shaving that critical tenth of a second off her time. It was a veteran move and it likely handed her the state title. The immediate aftermath of the afternoon race was emotional for the top racers, many from Section 7, who had competed against each other all season long and got to know each other well. Devine and Kraker embraced just past the finish line, in relief and mutual admiration. As the rest of the Ely girls team crossed the finish line they

surrounded Devine as well, basking in the excitement of the performance of a lifetime. Devine said Duluth East, in particular, had provided the kind of stiff competition that helped others in the section hone their skills. “They’re the best in the state and have been all season,” she said. Indeed, Duluth East swept the girls team competition, topping second-place Stillwater by a whopping 24 points. Unlike most high school competition, Nordic skiing is a single class, which leaves tiny schools like Ely competing against some of the largest schools in the Twin Cities and surrounding suburbs. But Devine, who said her senior class has about 50 students, enjoys that extra level of competition. “It’s honestly just fun, because they don’t always know about us, but we’ve put our name on the radar,” she said. “I think by now most of them know us.” While Devine had

finished sixth overall last year in the state tournament and was clearly one of the state’s premier girls Nordic racers as the season got underway, she said she never imagined she’d be sitting at the top of the sport when the final race had been run. “I was not expecting this at all,” she said. But her former longtime coach, Paula Anderson, who had been watching Devine all season, had a feeling. “Her success during the last two weeks of the season put her on a trajectory which reminded me of Erin Bianco,” said Anderson, noting Ely’s previous girls individual state champion back in 2017. “Of course, anything can happen at state and many, many things have to go right, but it was just a thrill to watch it play out the way it did for her.” Anderson, who coached Devine through her junior year, said the young prodigy had her breakout year as a freshman, when she finished

12th at the state tournament, a mark she topped two years later when she finished sixth. Anderson was there to cheer Devine on for the classic and freestyle races. “I saw her on the second to last hill [in the freestyle] and wondered how it would play out at the end, knowing that they would try to get around her at some point and out-sprint her at the finish,” said Anderson. “As expected, Lydia [Kraker] and Greta [Hansen] got around her on the flats on the top of the last hill before the plunge into the stadium. She entered the finishing stretch in third place, and out-sprinted them to the line, winning by a toe touch. Good thing she knows how to lunge. She said she wasn’t thinking at all at that point, just racing, and the lunge was an instinct. It worked and was very exciting.” Devine’s current coach, Todd Hohenstein, said they had practiced that last sprint to the finish

over the past couple weeks as Devine prepared for the tournament. While she was focused on honing her skills, and was clearly going to be a contender for the title, Hohenstein said he doesn’t think that was her primary focus. “I don’t think Zoe was thinking much about finishing in the top spot. She and most of our skiers are just out there pushing to be the best they can be.” While Devine was first across the finish line, she finished third in the freestyle based on time, completing the 5K course in 14:45.3. Yet her classic time, of 15:23.3 was more than seven seconds faster than Kraker, who had finished fourth in the morning’s race, giving Devine the title. Anderson called Devine a very calm and smart racer. “She does get nervous, but she doesn’t show it much and it doesn’t affect her racing. She is patient when she is racing and when in a tight spot

she can find lines and make moves that are really beyond her experience.” While Devine was in a class of her own this season, Anderson said the support of her teammates is important. “She has stated that it is much better when she is there with the entire team, rather than as an individual.” Devine will have a new team when she next takes up competitive skiing. Thursday’s state title marked the end of Devine’s remarkable high school Nordic career, but she won’t be hanging up the skis any time soon. She has committed to ski for St. Michael’s College near Burlington, Vermont. While Devine also qualified for state three times in cross country running, she said she plans to focus solely on her skiing for at least her first year of college, where she is likely to continue her tradition as a standout athlete and student.

NW BOYS...Continued from page 1B

room. “I don’t know what it’s been about the past few games with us giving up a good amount of points in the first half,” Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich said. “But it really came down to the boys working hard and making adjustments when our press wasn’t working.

We had to go to man, and man worked well.” Those adjustments paid even greater dividends in the second half, with the Grizzlies holding the Giants to just 18 points while piling up 47 points at a pace they found more to their liking. “Our guys are fast, athletic, and they want to

run and jump,” Jugovich said. “They wanted to slow us down, and in the first half we were pretty stagnant. But once we figured it out, everything worked our way.” It was another contest where Jugovich mixed up his lineups, and he was pleased with the contributions he got from the guys

coming off the bench. “Having Talen (Jarshaw) come back has been amazing,” Jugovich said. “He played an amazing second half. Eli (Smith), Kaden (Ratai) and Luke (Will), whoever’s playing that big man spot, they’ve been doing very well setting screens and getting rebounds. It’s not

necessarily them developing but just really stepping up and showing what they can do.” Brenden Chiabotti had another big game for the Grizzlies, leading all scorers with 33 points. Jonah Burnett continues to be an offensive stalwart, hitting for 18 on the night. Jared Chiabotti also

reached double figures with 15. The Grizzlies had back-to-back home games on Thursday and Friday this week, taking on Rock Ridge and then Chisholm. North Woods will finish the regular season on the road with games at Carlton next Tuesday and Deer River next Friday.

NW GIRLS..Continued from page 1B

up points in the win. Standing at 14-11 after Tuesday’s win, North Woods eclipsed last sea-

son’s 13-13 record with at least two games still to play. It’s the most wins for a Grizzlies team since the

2013-14 season. North Woods was slated to be on the road Friday at Floodwood to finish out the

regular season. Depending on how other results shake out for sectional opponents in the final week, a win at

Floodwood coupled with Tuesday’s victory could give North Woods a shot at hosting a first-round game

in the Section 7A tourney that begins next week.

GIRLS..Continued from page 1B

effective, getting scores from Madeline Perry, Grace LaTourell, Zoe Mackenzie, and Thomas to build a 12-point advantage, 26-14. The Grizzlies regained their footing down the stretch, with a pair of Cheney free throws cutting Ely’s lead to 28-22 at the half. A trey by LaTourell and an bucket by Hannah Penke gave the Wolves a little breathing room at

37-27, but the Grizzlies countered with a triple from Kinsey and a score by Kiana LaRoque to stay within striking distance. But a shot by the Grizzlies’ Brynn Chosa with just under nine minutes remaining would be the last basket North Woods would see for the next five minutes, and the Wolves threw their knock-out haymaker, a devastating 17-1 blitz that gave them

a commanding 58-35 lead with just over three minutes left. Five Ely players scored in the streak. The Wolves coasted the rest of the way for the 66-41 win. “It started a little slow, but once we started moving the ball around, they got tired,” Ely Head Coach Max Gantt said. “Our defense just kept working. I’m really, really proud of our defense.”

The Wolves had good success on offense by driving and dishing the ball to open players for easy shots. “That’s when we’re at our best,” Gantt said. “Even if we run a set and that breaks down, it’s just drive and kick. We have a lot of ball handlers and we have a lot of shooters. I was really impressed with how we found people off

the drive.” For North Woods Head Coach Liz Cheney, the formula leading to the Grizzlies’ loss was clear. “Bad passing, missed shots, and lack of rebounds,” Cheney said. “But we still played with them despite all of that. The last six minutes doesn’t reflect the game as a whole. I think the girls just kind of gave up a little bit there at the end.”

For Cheney, the last week of the regular season will be focused on getting back to the basics to tune up for sectionals, she said. Ely had four players score in double figures, led by Perry with 16. LaTourell pumped in 15, while Penke and Thomas each had 12. North Woods was led by Kinsey with 13, followed by Cheney with 11.

Obituaries and Death Notices



Randy J. Zupancich
Randy James Zupancich, 60, of Britt, died of natural causes on Friday, Jan. 27, 2023. A private service will take place for family, followed by a celebration of life on Sunday, Feb. 26 from 2-6 p.m. at Tom and Jerry’s in Chisholm. Arrangements are entrusted

to Rupp Funeral Home and Cremation Service in Chisholm.
Randy was born on April 22, 1962, in Chisholm, to Louis and Lorraine (Hill) Zupancich. He graduated from Chisholm High School in 1980. Twenty years ago, Randy met the love of his life, Deb Rhodes, and they were united in marriage on Nov. 1, 2006, in Hastings. In 2012, Randy moved back to the Iron Range where he worked for US Steel as a Step-Up Foreman, Production Truck Driver and Mobile Equipment Operator. Randy enjoyed spending time with his grandkids and loved them all dearly.

Randy is survived by his wife of 16 years, Deborah; children, Zach (Heidi) Zupancich, Adam Zupancich and Melanie Zupancich; grandchildren, Ariana, Natalie, Morgan, Victoria and William; mother, Lorraine Zupancich; sister, Chris (Mark) Gustafson; nephew, Tyler (Bailey) Gustafson; niece, Ande Gustafson; and brothers-in-heart, Mark Brotherton, Danny Wiirre and Chris Allen.
He was preceded in death by his father, Louis; and father- and mother-in-law, Robert and Alice Rhodes.

Robert W. Pulkinen
Robert W. Pulkinen, 84, of Washington Manor in Virginia, formerly of Embarrass, died peacefully from Alzheimer’s on Friday, Feb. 17, 2023, at New Journey Memory Care in Eveleth. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 27 at Grace and Truth Bible Church in Virginia, with visitation starting one hour prior. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.
He is survived by his spouse, Francine Brula Pulkinen; son, James Pulkinen and significant other Katie Dougherty of Duluth; son, Michael (Jamie) Pulkinen of

Wausau, Wis.; grandchildren, Brian (Erin), Eric and Rachel Pulkinen; four step-grandchildren; one step-great-grandson; sister-in-law, Delores Walsh of Badger; numerous nephews, nieces, relatives and friends.
Lois E. Johnson
Lois E. Johnson, of Aurora, passed away peacefully at Carefree Living in Babbitt, on Monday, Feb. 13, 2023, 23 days shy of her 101st birthday. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.
She is survived by her daughter, Kris (Jim) Watson of Aurora; grandchildren, Patti (Justin) Mineheine of Aurora, Dawn

(Dave) Serena of Babbitt, Christopher Hannula and Lori (Steve) Wisniewski, both of Houghton, Mich.; great-grandchildren, Kyle and Abbi Dale, D.J. Serena, Owen Hannula, Evelyn and Emilia Wisniewski.
James Lokken
James “Jim” Lokken, 84, of Cook, passed away peacefully at home on Monday, Feb. 13, 2023. To honor his wishes, there will be no funeral service. You are invited to privately celebrate his memory in your own way. He will be with us all in spirit. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

PUBLIC NOTICES

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**
MORTGAGOR(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-foreclosure notice and acceleration requirements of said mortgage, and/or applicable

statutes including the requisites of Minn. Stat. § 580.02;

PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, 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 mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption 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, single-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 section 580.30, or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23, the time to vacate the property is 11:59 p.m. on **March 15, 2024.**

MORTGAGOR(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 premises: 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 originator: 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

VERMILION LAKE TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Vermilion Lake Township, County of St. Louis and State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023.

In case of inclement weather, the election and meeting will be postponed until Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

The election poll hours will be open from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at which time the voters will elect by ballot:

One Supervisor for a term of 3 years
One Treasurer for a term of 2 years

The Annual Meeting will commence at 8:15 p.m. to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law.

The Annual Election and Meeting will be held at the following location:
VERMILION LAKE TOWN HALL, 6703 WAHLSTEN ROAD

NOTE: Board of Canvass will meet following the Annual Meeting.

Crystal Alaspa, Vermilion Lake Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24 & March 3, 2023

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP ELECTION & ANNUAL MEETING

THE GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP 2023 LOCAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD AT THE GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP HALL ON TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023 POLLS open 7:00 am to 8:00 pm

Saturday, March 11, 2023 the Greenwood Town Office will be open from 10 am to noon to accept Absentee Ballot applications and Absentee Ballots.

Monday, March 13, 2023 the Greenwood Town Office will be open from 1 pm until 5 pm to accept Absentee Ballot applications and Absentee Ballots.

In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until March 21, 2023.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Greenwood Township Annual Meeting will be directly after the voting is complete starting at 8:15 to 8:30.

Dr. JoAnn Bassing - Interim Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24 & March 3, 2023

NOTICE OF BREITUNG TOWNSHIP ELECTION of OFFICERS, BOARD OF CANVASS, and ANNUAL MEETING
**Breitung Community Center, 33 First Avenue, Soudan, MN
Breitung Township, St. Louis County, MN**

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Breitung Township, County of St. Louis, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers, Annual Meeting, and Board of Canvass will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until March 21, 2023.

The Election Poll hours will be open from 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., at which time the voters will elect:
Supervisor (1) for a term of 2 years
Supervisor (1) for a term of 3 years
Treasurer (1) for a term of 2 years

Sample Town Ballot posted.

The Board of Canvass will meet following the Township Election to certify the official election results.

The Annual Meeting will commence at 8:30 p.m. to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law.

The Annual Election, Annual Meeting, and Board of Canvass will be held at the following location:
Breitung Community Center
33 First Avenue, Soudan, Minnesota

Dianna Sundsahl, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 17 & 24, 2023

Town Election Ballot
Town of Greenwood, Minnesota
March 14, 2023

Instructions to Voters:
To vote, completely fill in the oval(s) next to your choices like this:

Town Offices	
Town Supervisor Seat A Vote for One	
<input type="radio"/>	John Bassing
<input type="radio"/>	<small>write-in, if any</small>
Town Supervisor Seat B Vote for One	
<input type="radio"/>	Paul Skubic
<input type="radio"/>	<small>write-in, if any</small>
Special Election for Town Clerk To fill vacancy in term expiring March 12, 2024 Vote for One	
<input type="radio"/>	JoAnn Bassing
<input type="radio"/>	<small>write-in, if any</small>
Town Treasurer Vote for One	
<input type="radio"/>	Jeff Maus
<input type="radio"/>	<small>write-in, if any</small>

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24 & March 3, 2023

LEIDING TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Leiding Township, County of St. Louis and State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at the Leiding Town Hall.

In case of inclement weather, the election and meeting will be postponed until Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

The election poll hours will be open from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at which time the voters will elect by ballot:

One Supervisor for a term of 3 years
One Treasurer for a term of 2 years

The Board of Canvass will follow the election.

The Annual Meeting will commence following the Board of Canvass to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law.

Regular Town Board Meeting
The regular meeting of the Leiding Town Board will be held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Marie Milan, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24 & March 3, 2023

Town Election Ballot
Town of Breitung
General Election • March 14, 2023

	Put an (X) in the square opposite the name of each candidate you wish to vote for.
Supervisor #1 (2-Year Term) Vote For One	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Erin D. Peitso
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tim Tomsich
<input type="checkbox"/>	<small>Write-in, if any</small>
Supervisor #3 (3-Year Term) Vote For One	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew Tuchel
<input type="checkbox"/>	<small>Write-in, if any</small>
Treasurer (2-Year Term) Vote For One	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jorgine Gornick
<input type="checkbox"/>	<small>Write-in, if any</small>

Published in the Tmiberjay, Feb. 17 & 24, 2023

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Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

THINKING OF SPRING

It’s February and I’m getting tired of winter

I would not want to be a weather fore-caster. Nope. They get blamed for bad weather, even when they are right about the forecast. And they never get credit when there is good weather, and they do predict it right. I’d rather watch for the signs. “The caterpillars are almost all black this year, Joe, it’s gonna be a bad one for sure.” Or “did you see Dave’s wood pile, we’re really in for it this year!” Well, I just looked at the



APRIL
WAMHOFF

weather forecast for the next 10 days. The professionals are pre-dicting mild weather and I surely do want to believe them. Let me be blunt. I am tired of snow and bitterly cold weather. February is always a tough month for me. I’m glad it’s a short one. The holidays are done and the extra pounds have returned. I need to get outside for both mental and physical health. And while it’s good exercise, I don’t want to

shovel snow anymore. I just want to take a nice walk in the woods without looking like the Michelin man because I am wearing so much cold weather clothes. Enter the weather forecast. As an islander, but not a forecast-er, I look at three aspects of the weather. In the summer, I really need to pay attention to the wind and its direction. A strong east wind is gonna make it rough for me to get off the island and out to my job. A really nasty one will keep me stranded in one place or the other. Rain is inconvenient, but usually doesn’t prevent travel on its own. The boys and I have

good raincoats, though it seems they are always on the wrong side. It’s been proven on many occasions that none of us are sweet enough to melt! In the winter, I need to make snowfall on the top of my list of weather concerns. Snowfall, with or without the wind, can obliterate the trail or road and make travel impossible. And wind from any direction will most certainly blow the road in. Don’t get me wrong, I’d love to be snowed in at home but there are obligations... And temperature, always temperature. Egads, I don’t love the days and days below zero

temperatures. Michelin man or not, it just gets cold. So back to the forecast. The Weatherman says we’re in for a stretch of sunnier weather, with highs in the 20s this weekend. I am doing the dance of joy! Add a little more warmth to that and I will be in forecasted weather euphoria! I do hope they’re right. I’ve tried to consult the other forecasters on next week’s weather. I just can’t find a cat-erpillar of any color but Dave’s wood pile is starting to look sickly. A strong indication of better weather and that spring is on the way!

WHITETAIL DEER

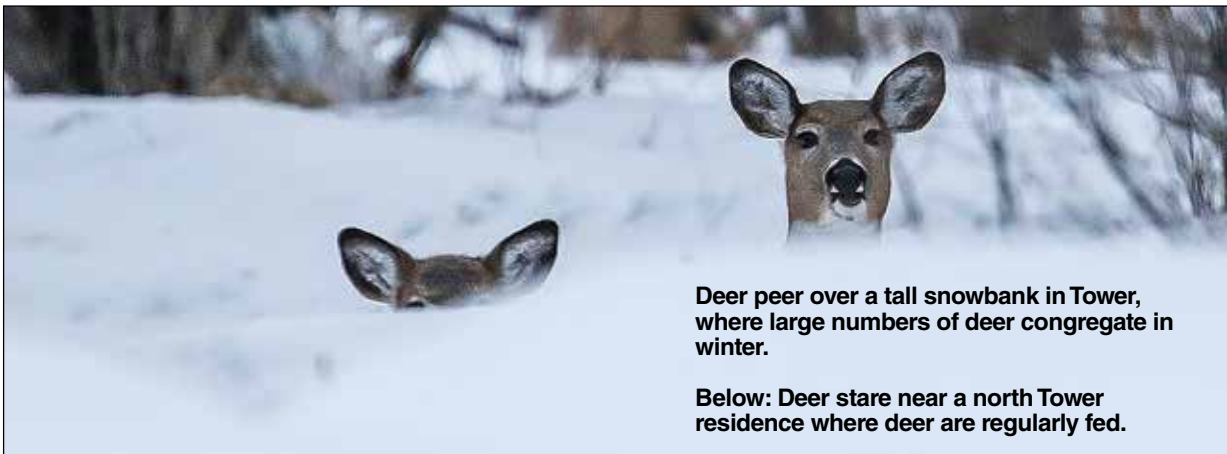
Tough weeks still ahead for whitetails

Trend toward greater snowfall poses challenges

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The longer days of late February are a reminder that spring is at least somewhere out on the horizon, yet it’s often the toughest time of year for wildlife like whitetail deer. It’s been a remarkably mild winter in terms of temperature, but a combination of factors are undoubtedly stressing deer more this winter than the usual mea-sures might indicate. For most wildlife in winter, it’s a question of generating the energy needed to survive. That means access to enough food to generate the heat warm-blooded bodies require to resist the cold of winter. For whitetail deer, deep snow is typically the biggest challenge for winter survival here in the North Country, accord-ing to Jessica Holmes, Tower Area DNR wildlife manager. “They need to expend so much more energy when trudging through deeper snow depths,” said Holmes. While snow depths tend to pile up gradually over the course of a North Country winter, that wasn’t the case this year when a major storm hit the area in mid-December, leaving 12-20 inches of heavy, dense snow across the region. That was on top of the several inches of snow that had been on the ground since the region’s first major snowfall on Nov. 11.

That pushed snow depths across the area above 15 inches, the thresh-old for adding to the DNR’s winter severity index, or WSI. The index is a cumu-lative measure of days with temperatures of zero or below and snow depths of 15 inches or more. In a typical North Country winter, the index tops out at around 100, with the bulk of the points for temperature. Such conditions routinely lead to at least some winter mortality for whitetails, but the mortality level rises sig-nificantly in winters when the index hits 120 or above. Through mid-Feb-ruary, the index was sitting at anywhere from the low 50s to the 90s across the region, although the past week likely added at least ten more points to the index. With potentially several weeks of continued deep snow and seasonably cold temperatures, the winter is likely to finish up in the moderate-to-severe category depending on location. But this may well be a year when the WSI reading fails to fully reflect the unique challenges the weather has posed for deer this winter. DNR biologists have long recognized that WSI points added for snow depth are tougher ones for deer than below zero tempera-tures. As long as deer are able to access food they can generally weather just about any temperature a northern Minnesota winter can throw at them. So, a winter when the bulk of



Deer peer over a tall snowbank in Tower, where large numbers of deer congregate in winter.
Below: Deer stare near a north Tower residence where deer are regularly fed.



the index points accumulate due to snow depth, as has been the case this season, it’s actually tougher on deer than might otherwise be expected. A challenging situation was made worse, notes Holmes, by the heavy rain and thawing temperatures that hit the region last week, significantly altering snow conditions— and not to the benefit of deer. Biologists have long recognized that the crust that typically forms on the snow in north-ern Minnesota in late March or April is a particularly difficult time for deer. Their pointed hooves will break through most crusts, which impedes their ability to travel for food. It also leaves them exceptionally vulnerable to predators, like wolves, which are more frequently able to travel on the crust. In a typical year, deer may have to weather two or three weeks of such condi-tions, but the rare mid-Feb-

ruary thaw and rain has created crusted conditions that could linger for the next two months and will only be made worse with the several inches of fresh snow that’s fallen since. “What’s going to happen in the next several weeks, that’s the golden ticket,” said Holmes. “The wolves will start running on top, so the potential for surplus killing is there.” A signal of climate change? For years, convention-al wisdom suggested that warmer winters brought on by climate change would be beneficial for area whitetail deer, a species that has long been on the northern fringe of its range here in northern Minnesota. But, while the climate is clearly changing, not all of those changes are neces-sarily helpful to whitetails. A 2020 analysis of north-central Minnesota climate trends by a U.S. Forest

Service researcher con-firms that winters have warmed significantly in recent decades, which is helpful to whitetail deer. Yet, snowfall has been on the rise as well, at least in the past decade, as milder air is able to hold more water vapor and helps lead to deeper snowfalls than was the norm in the recent past. “The years 2013, 2016, 2018, and 2019 all fall within the top 15 years for total annual snowfall,” according to Daniel Roman, the Forest Service researcher who helped compile the weather data. “The record for total annual snowfall is 2013, with 109.5 inches.” Despite the warming tempera-tures, northern Minnesota remains sufficiently cold to maintain, rather than melt, snow for several months at

a time. As more snow falls, the duration of deep snow has been increasing and that appears to be limiting deer survival in the winter. All of which may be one reason that the whitetail deer herd has struggled to recover from losses suffered in some recent winters, despite warming temperatures. Winter protection key DNR biologists say the trend toward greater amounts of snow is coming at the same time that DNR policy changes that have shortened rotation ages for most timber— a move that tends to decrease the amount of dense conifer understory that deer fre-quent in winter. Snow depth is often considerably less under a dense stand of conifers, making it easier for deer to move around. “These snow shelter areas are so important,” said Holmes. “It’s a place where they can rest and not expend so much energy to move around.” Recent winters have definitely challenged the region’s whitetails, and it’s been seen in the drop in harvest numbers in recent years. Wildlife managers fear that without a change in the weather or an increase in the amount of winter cover, any recovery in the whitetail deer population could be painfully slow.

Fishing reports

Ely area

Stream trout were biting on more remote lakes this last week. More remote lakes still have good populations of hungry trout to catch and this is where anglers should focus their attention. Downed trees, weedbeds, and especially areas with water coming into the lake, are good places to focus. Wax worms and dead minnows remain the go-tos for tipping small jigs or jigging spoons. Lake trout fishing continues to improve slowly on area lakes. While it still seems a few lucky

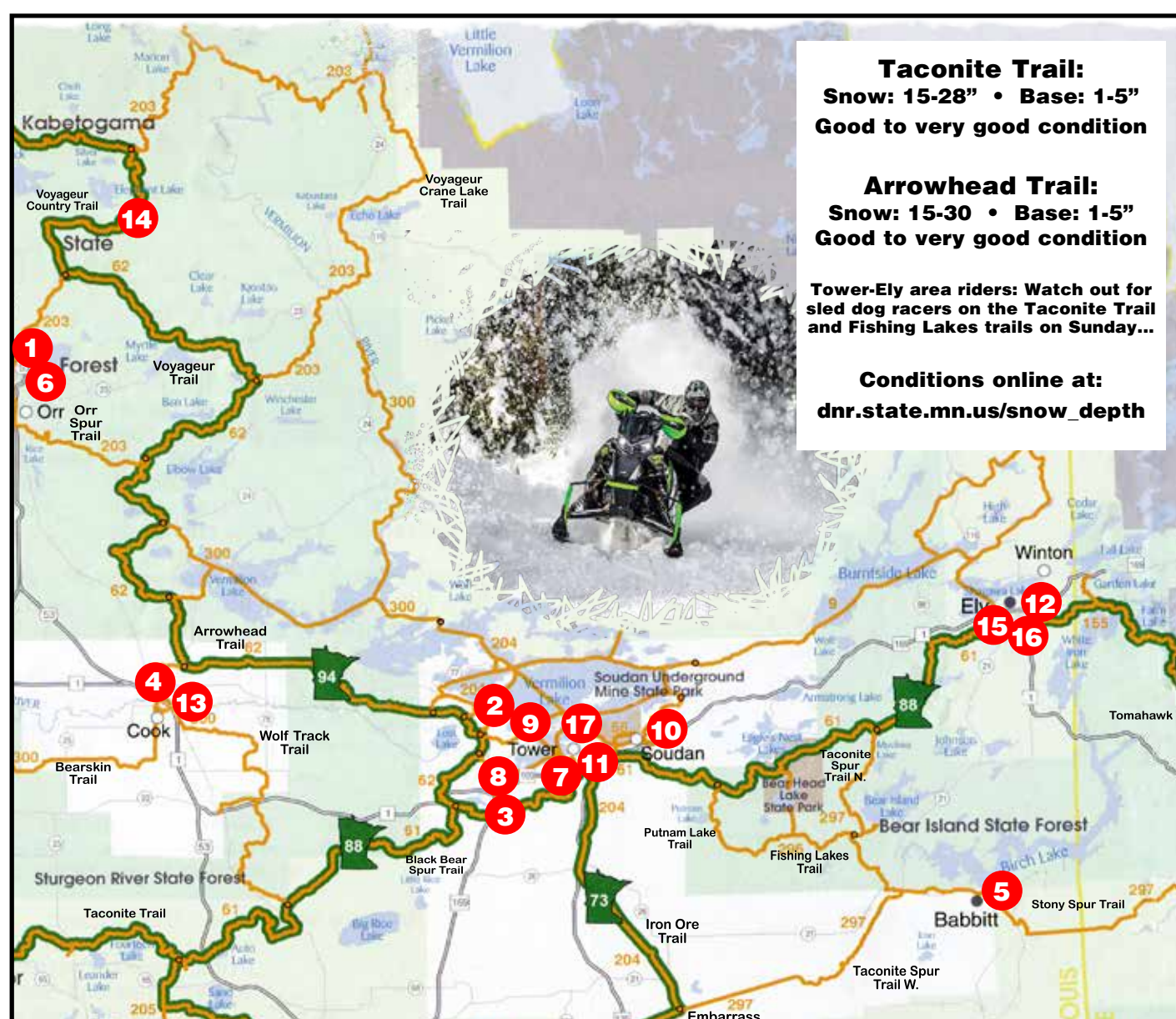
groups strike it rich and have an amazing day of trout fishing, most anglers are now reporting that they are at least seeing trout. Swedish Pimples and smaller bucktails are accounting for the major-ity of lakers being caught right now. Anglers should be lying dead baits right on the bottom and fishing live minnows just off the bottom. Key depth has remained a little deeper than usual, typically 40-60 feet of water. Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors. See more at ArrowheadOutdoorsEly MN.com

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST from NOAA weather

Friday				Saturday				Sunday				Monday				Tuesday			
8 -4				16 -5				30 17				32 10				24 6			
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.
02/13	42	21	0.00	02/13	42	21	0.00	02/13	42	20	0.00	02/13	43	19	0.00	02/13	42	20	0.00
02/14	42	21	0.00	02/14	42	21	0.00	02/14	41	18	0.00	02/14	43	28	0.00	02/14	42	20	0.00
02/15	41	16	0.83 1.9"	02/15	41	16	0.70 0.5"	02/15	40	20	0.51 2.6"	02/15	32	5	0.68 1.5"	02/15	42	18	0.85 1.0"
02/16	17	-3	0.05	02/16	25	-3	0.00	02/16	23	-6	0.02 0.4"	02/16	12	-9	0.00	02/16	18	-12	tr 0.2"
02/17	15	-11	0.00	02/17	13	-11	0.00	02/17	11	-16	0.00	02/17	27	-15	0.00	02/17	13	-20	0.00
02/18	23	-8	0.00	02/18	24	-8	0.00	02/18	19	-19	0.00	02/18	36	18	0.00	02/18	24	-16	0.00
02/19	36	16	0.00	02/19	36	16	0.00	02/19	35	17	0.02 0.2"	02/19	30	0	0.00	02/19	36	15	0.00
YTD Total			1.71 49.4"	YTD Total			1.44 51.4"	YTD Total			1.36 56.1"	YTD Total			NA NA	YTD Total			1.46 51.6"



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Closes: 03/01/2023

Position Purpose: Responsible for providing outpatient mental health therapy services within the Behavioral Health unit, to support status as a National Health Service Corp (NHSC) approved site. Perform diagnostic assessments, develop treatment plans, and conduct psychotherapy for children, adolescents and adults in a manner that is both culturally sensitive and appropriate utilizing the proper psychotherapeutic techniques.

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Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 10, 17 & 24, 2023

**Behavioral Health
Rehabilitation Specialist**

Closes: 03/01/2023

Position Purpose: The Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Specialist will provide adult mental health rehabilitative services (ARMHS) services to support clients with a serious mental illness diagnosis in the form of instruction, support, and skill coaching either in the client's home or in the community. Services provided will strongly emphasize personal goal setting and developing strategies to achieve them, skill building, client advocacy, and connecting clients with community resources. The Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Specialist will enable the client to develop and enhance psychiatric stability, social competencies, personal and emotional adjustment, independent living, and community skills when these abilities are impaired by the symptoms of mental illness.

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Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 10, 17 & 24, 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

**Notice to the Voters of
the Town of Crane Lake**

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of the Town of Crane Lake, County of St. Louis, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 5:30 PM at the Crane Lake Chapel Fellowship Hall to set the levies, and conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. In case of inclement weather, the Meeting may be postponed until Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

Jo Ann Pohlman, Clerk, Town of Crane Lake

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24 & March 3, 2023

**MORCOM TOWN BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE**

The Morcom Town Board will hold a Special Town Meeting on Wednesday, March 1, at 4:00 pm at the Bear River Community Center.

Call the clerk if you have questions, 218-471-7776

Sasha Lehto, Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24, 2023

**LEIDING TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF AUDIT**

The Leiding Town Board will hold their Annual Board of Audit on Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Leiding Town Hall.

Marie Milan, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24, 2023



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Kabetogama Lake Association is seeking an Executive Secretary to provide administrative support to the Board of Directors. This is a year-round, part-time, partially remote position with administrative, financial, and marketing related duties.

The Executive Secretary is responsible for tracking lodge taxes and association expenses, paying invoices, preparing related financial reports, and other administrative tasks. Additionally, this role serves as a main point of contact for potential visitors seeking information about Kabetogama businesses and local activities.

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For complete job description, please visit www.kabetogama.com/jobs or email your resume to jobs@kabetogama.com. Contact Sara with questions at 218-875-2001. tfn



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PUBLIC NOTICE

**Bearville Township
Annual Town Meeting
Tuesday, March 14, 2023**

The Annual Town Meeting for Bearville Township will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, beginning at 6:30 pm at the Bearville Town Hall, to set the levies, and to conduct any and all other business proper to be conducted when the Annual Meeting is convened. Residents of Bearville Township that are eligible to vote in Bearville Township may vote at the Annual Meeting. All meetings are open to the public.

In case of inclement weather, the Annual Town Meeting will be held one week later on Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at the time and place stated.

Kathy Cressy, Bearville Town Clerk
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bearvilletownship@gmail.com

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**KABETOGAMA TOWNSHIP
ELECTION & ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Kabetogama Township, County of Saint Louis, State of Minnesota that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March (March 21, 2023).

The election poll hours will be open from 4:00 to 8:00 pm, at which time the votes will elect: One Supervisor 3-year term, One Supervisor 2-year term, One Supervisor 1-year term and one Treasurer 2-year term.

The Annual meeting will commence at 8:15 pm to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law.

The Board of Canvass will commence immediately following the Annual meeting.

The Annual Election and Meeting will be held at the following location: Kabetogama Town Hall, 9707 Gamma Road, Kabetogama, MN 56669

Mary Manninen, Clerk, Town of Kabetogama

Published in the Timberjay, Feb. 24 & March 3, 2023

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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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.

TOPS- Meetings every Monday at 4:45 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.

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

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TOTALLY OUT OF IT

ACROSS

1 Four-string guitar

5 Bits of land in el agua

10 Luca Brasi in "The Godfather," e.g.

16 Soft infant food

19 Life — know it

20 New Mexico or Colorado county

21 Useless

22 Division of history

23 Start of a riddle

26 Mantra syllables

27 Old-time cleaning cake

28 Tennis' Safin

29 Not skilled in at all

31 Heavy weight

32 All — sudden

35 Spoken

37 French movie theater

38 Riddle, part 2

44 President Biden

45 Speaks

46 Singer Turner

47 Tell el — (Nile excavation site)

50 It fills la mer

51 Riddle, part 3

57 Becomes familiar with anew

59 Per-unit price

60 Mortise insertion

61 Ambulance VIPs

62 Decorative dashboard finish

66 Chain in biology

67 Riddle, part 4

73 China's Chou En- —

74 Like many soda bottles, volume-wise

75 Purposely ignore

76 Book of charts

79 IRS form IDs

80 "— is a virtue"

84 Riddle, part 5

87 In honor of

89 Small river

90 — -mutuel betting

91 Oxygen-requiring bacterium

93 Start for center or Pen

94 End of the riddle

102 Square yardage, e.g.

103 Instant replay option

104 Expressive rock genre

105 — Leppard (rock band)

106 Mythical man-goats

109 "In the red," e.g.

111 Division of history

115 Concorde, e.g., in brief

116 Riddle's answer

120 Grassland

121 Henner of "Taxi"

122 — Island (Providence's state)

123 Old TV's — May Clampett

124 Work unit

125 Workout wear

126 Planted

127 Some deli loaves

DOWN

1 Cry noisily

2 Ghostly pale

3 Real bargain

4 Electric eye, e.g.

5 "The Tall Corn State"

6 Leave for a short time

7 Spy novelist Deighton

8 Exhibit works

9 "... or — told"

10 Drag racer

11 New York home of Cornell

12 Relative of a stickpin

13 Raging crowd

14 PDQ's cousin

15 Emperor after Claudius I

16 City on the Illinois River

17 Ralph Lauren competitor

18 Pale hue

24 Actress Skye

25 Main parts of churches

30 Fuel rating

33 Galas

34 On the Red, e.g.

36 Former senator Trent

38 Open slightly

39 City in Alaska

40 Four-piece band

41 Writer Capote, to pals

42 Org. in many spy novels

43 Make a ski mask, maybe

48 Lagoon surround

49 Christen

51 Core group

52 Frisky swimmer

53 Uncool sort

54 About

55 Lower-class, to Brits

56 Growl threateningly

58 Warning initials above an internet link

59 Hair bases

62 Actress Kate of "Grey's Anatomy"

63 Of sheep

64 "Casablanca" woman

65 Prized buy for a coin collector

67 Nail on a paw

68 Pledge

69 Brand of sneakers

70 Didn't win

71 Hang it up

72 App that asks "Where to?"

77 Frolicking

78 Move back and forth

80 Open tourney, often

81 Necessarily

82 Sleeveless cloak

83 Arabian chief

85 Pooch noise

86 Mist

87 Agent's cut

88 "... there — square"

91 Something hilarious

92 Fabric with raised designs

94 Grapple with, slangily

95 Slate clearer

96 Attachment to a dog or cat collar

97 "House" actress Wilde

98 Old-time Ford

99 NASA countdown term

100 Ferber of fiction

101 — regions (Hades)

107 Crater edges

108 Novelist Irwin

110 Corp. VIPs

112 Squeezed (out)

113 Be in power

114 Jubilant cries

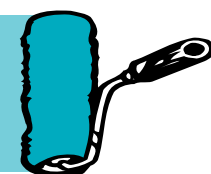
117 Exist

118 "So that's your trick!"

119 Wrecker's job



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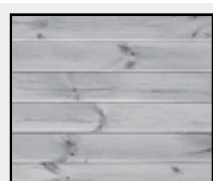
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