

**Inside:** Tower trailhead plans... See /3 Enter our Easter giveaway... See /12 Winter sports ending... See /1B Grosbeaks on the move...See /4B

# the **LIMBERJAY** Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989 VOL. 34, ISSUE 10 March 17, 2023

#### **INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT**

# **Investigation raps EPA's wood burner testing**

#### Federal watchdog confirms many complaints aired by Lamppa Manufacturing

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

REGIONAL- The **Environmental Protection** Agency's testing program for wood stoves and other wood-burning devices is ineffective and is putting the public's health at risk. That's according to the EPA's Office of Inspector General, which issued a scathing indictment of the EPA's missteps as it attempted to implement

beginning back in 2017.

The public health wasn't the only thing to suffer from flaws in the program. Tower-based Lamppa Manufacturing had flirted with bankruptcy late last year after the EPA rescinded its certification to sellits Kuuma wood furnaces, despite test results that repeatedly demonstrated it was the cleanest-burning wood furnace on the market

strict new emission controls Right: Three generations of the Lamppa family pose with the recertification letter the company received March 1. Pictured are Garrett Lamppa, Daryl Lamppa, and Garrett's three-year-old son Leif Herbert Lamppa. photo by J. Summit

> The company, which was the first to meet the strict new emissions standards that took effect in 2020, had seen its sales grow steadily in the wake of their certification. By the summer of 2022, with the upcoming heating season and a new federal grant See...REPORT pg. 10

program for the purchase of certified wood furnaces, the company was poised for sales like they'd never experienced before. In anticipation, the company ramped up its workforce and spent hundreds of





# Iron Mosquitos create a buzz

#### ANNUAL MEETINGS

**\$1**50

# Harmony reigns at Greenwood?

Township to maintain tax levy at \$150,000

by JODI SUMMIT Tower-Soudan Editor

as moderator.

at the end of 2024.

GREENWOOD TWP- About two dozen Greenwood residents attended a rather quiet and business-like annual meeting on Tuesday. In a move back to a less contentious time, all the votes on motions were by a simple hand-raise, and almost all the motions were unanimous, with a few individual no votes

sprinkled in. No paper ballots on votes were requested. Jeff Maus was elected

levy at \$150,000 was unanimous. While

township spending is anticipated to be a

little over \$332,000, the township still

has ample reserves, and the township's

budget calculations showed an anticipat-

ed fund balance of a little over \$503,000

See...GREENWOOD pg. 9

Morse meeting

Few attend

"I love the fact our taxes are where

The vote to set the 2024 township

Local robotics team raising funds after invitation to world championship

by JODI SUMMIT Tower-Soudan Editor

BABBITT- "I am not sure who signed me up for this," said Iron Mosquitos head coach Ryan Lindsay. The Northeast Range High School (NER) science teacher whose background was in genetics. Lindsay started the robotics team at Northeast Range back in 2015.

#### See...MOSQUITOS pg. 11



Above: The Iron Mosquitos celebrate after winning the First Impact Award at the Lake Superior regional competition.

Left: The team reacts with excitement as they learn the results of the recent competition held in Duluth. The team will compete in Illinois this weekend and are invited to the world championship in Texas set for later this year.

submitted photos

by CATIE CLARK Ely Editor

MORSE TOWNSHIP- In a repeat from last year, the Morse Township meeting on March 14 was thinly attended, with just the clerk, treasurer, two supervisors, one reporter and three township residents. Last year's meeting had a total attendance of seven, including township officers.

Supervisors Len Cersine and Bob Berrini were present, and Terry Soderberg was absent.

The annual meeting was preceded

See...MORSE pg. 9



# Teachers back early release proposal

ELY SCHOOLS

#### by CATIE CLARK Ely Editor

ELY- The proposal for the Wednesday early release program for professional development and training was once again the main topic of discussion before the Ely School Board at its March 13 meeting. Since the last meeting, the district reached out to parents for their input, and so far, reaction hasn't been either firmly in favor or against the proposal, according to Washington Elementary School Principal Anne Oelke. However,"Why Wednesday?" was the question from at least one parent, Oelke said.

The early release proposal would use 50 minutes at the end of the school day on most

Wednesdays during the school year for professional development. The students would be released from school early in order to facilitate the program, giving rise to the program's name. Several neighboring school districts have already adopted early release on Wednesdays for professional development.

the high school and elementary school attended the board meeting and several commented in favor of the program. "We never get the one thing we want and that one thing is always time," commented second-grade teacher Megan Wognum. She argued that adopting an early

See...RELEASE pg. 9

Eight teachers from both



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#### **Community notices**

#### Volunteers in Education returns; new volunteers needed in area schools

**REGIONAL** - Volunteers in Education is a nonprofit educational organization that provides volunteer tutors to K-8 students. Teachers refer students to VinE, and we provide an appropriate tutor to match their needs. VinE has been an important presence in schools since 2008. Pandemic restrictions caused the program to suspend services for an extended time, but we are back and ready to help students succeed!

If interested in making a positive difference for students, please consider volunteering with VinE. Volunteer community tutors are the heart of this program. Sharing your time and talents with students needing extra support is a wonderful way to contribute to the community! If you are interested in volunteering as a tutor with Volunteers in Education contact Teresa de Venecia at teresad@winemn.org or call 218-404-5742.

#### The North St. Louis County SWCD tree and native plant sale on through May

REGIONAL - The North St. Louis SWCD tree and native plant sale will continue in 2023. If you would like to order trees, shrubs, native plants, or seed mixes from the North St. Louis SWCD, be sure to check out the website at www.nslswcd.org. It's recommended to order promptly as there is limited availability.

Each year from January through early May, the SWCD sells native trees, shrubs, plant kits and seed packs to local landowners. These plants are sourced from greenhouses and nurseries including Schumacher's Nursery, DNR Badoura Nursery, and PRT (Pacific Regeneration Technologies Inc.). Trees are to be picked up right before fishing opener at the Eveleth DNR office. Orders can be placed on the website at www.nslswcd.org.

The 2022 Sale was record-setting with more than 15,000 trees and shrubs sold, and 93 native plant kits and seed packs sold. The top sellers in 2022 were red pine and red oak. The proceeds support the conservation efforts in forestry management, aquatic invasive species control, community education/outreach, watershed protection, and many more projects.

Trees are generally sold in bundles of 20-25 seedlings or transplants. Both conifers and deciduous are available. Native plant kits contain 36 plants designed to grow well together. Seed mixes for septic mounds or buckthorn replacement are also offered.

The North St. Louis SWCD is thankful for each customer, the Eveleth DNR staff and their cooler, and for the trees that will keep Minnesota beautiful for future generations. If you have questions on what kind of trees, shrubs, plants or seed would best suit your property, visit the website to read descriptions or contact District Forester Natalya Walker at 218-288-6146.

#### Dr. Arne Vainio presents "Stories and Wisdom" at Mesabi Unitarian Univeralist Church Mar. 19

VIRGINIA - Dr. Arne Vainio, an enrolled member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and Family Practice physician on the Fond du Lac Reservation in Cloquet will speak on the topic "Stories and Wisdom" at Mesabi Unitarian Universalist Church March 19.

Dr. Vainio is a regular contributor to "Native Report," featured on the local PBS TV station. The service is at 10:30 a.m., and the church is located at 230 7th Street S., Virginia. The building is handicap accessible. For questions or more infomration visit http://www.mesabiuu.info/

# THE ARTS Lyric Arts Center presents Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple" with performances March 16-19

VIRGINIA - The Lyric Center for the Arts, a subsidiary of the Laurentian Arts and Culture Alliance, is presenting Neil Simon's The Odd Couple, live on the Lyric Annex stage from Thursday, March 16 to Sunday, March 19. This is the first theatrical show produced by the Lyric since their well-received adaptation of A Christmas Story the Musical last December.

The production is directed by Susan Nelson and features stage talent from across the Iron Range.

We are excited to keep the buzz around our revamped community theatre programming going," said Lyric Executive Director Paul M. Gregersen. "The Odd Couple is the perfect show to do so with.'

Based in 1960s New York City, the classic comedy centers around uptight, neat Felix Ungar and easygoing, disheveled Oscar Madison as new roommates. Unger is portrayed by Tucker Nelson and Nick Nelson (no relation) stars as Madison. The on-stage chemistry between the two leads is quite a treat to witness.

The show opens as a group assembles for cards in the apartment of divorced Madison. And if the mess is any indication, it's no wonder that his wife left him. Late to arrive is Unger, who has just been separated from his wife. Fastidious, depressed, and none too tense, Unger seems suicidal, but as the action



Nick Nelson (left) and Julie Roepke rehearse for the Lyric Center's upcoming presentation of Neil Simon's The Odd Couple.

unfolds, Unger becomes the one with murder on his mind when the clean freak and the slob ultimately decide to room together with hilarious results.

Joining Nelson and Nelson on stage are Jase Matszak, Julie Roepke, Emma Thornbloom, Katie Feldt, and Amy Peterson.

"It's great to see Lyric theatre programming continuing to grow between The Odd Couple and our youth theatre education of Disney's Moana Jr. coming in May," Gregersen said. "There is so much acting talent found across the Range. It's our privilege to provide opportunities for these folks to perform on stage and for audiences to enjoy the final product after months of hard work.

Tickets for The Odd Couple are available at lyriccenteronline.org and at the door of each performance depending on availability.

The Odd Couple is generous ly sponsored by REVIVE Virginia.

# Irish Dance at Ely Senior Center March 18

ELY - After a smashing success last year, the Ely Irish Dance returns Saturday, March 18 to the Senior Center in Ely. Music and dancing will begin at 7 p.m. No experience is necessary. All dances are taught, and singles are welcome. Children accompanied by an adult will be admitted free of charge.

Jim, Carol, Susan, and Joey aka FriendsOnTheRange will play the music and call the dances. The Ely Irish Dance is sponsored by the Ely Folk School with support from the Gardner Humanities Trust. Two favorite dances, The Waves of Tory and The Siege of Ennis, will be returning this year, so all are invited to spread the news and bring friends and family.



#### CAN YOU DIG IT?

# MDC to hold Family Discovery Day March 25

CHISHOLM - The more about the Science Minnesota Discovery Center will host a Family Discovery Day entitled "FOSSILS! FOSSILS!

Museum's campaign efforts to declare a Minnewill also be time for some a year of paleontology Cretaceous Event Menu Q&A. Regular admissions apply.

wondering, visitors may also enter for a chance to um of Minnesota). sota State Fossil. There win fun paleo prizes and

While wandering and ery Center) and Dr. Alex Hastings (Science Muse-

Guests can enjoy a

#### The Ladies of Kaleva Soinnuttaren Tupa 32 & the Knights meet March 23 at 6 p.m.

VIRGINIA - The Ladies of Kaleva and Knights will meet at Kaleva Hall on March 23 at 6 p.m. Bring Aarikka items to show. Coffee will follow the meeting. Everyone is welcome.

FOSSILS!" on Saturday, March 25 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

From 5-6 p.m. in the MDC theater, the Science Museum of Minnesota's Fitzpatrick Chair of Paleontology, Dr. Alex Hastings, will lecture about Minnesota during the Ice Age. Attendees will hear

25 event will discover fossil displays, demonstrations, hands-on activities, themed games, and a meet and greet/photo opportunity with the Paleo Pals, HAPP the T-Rex and Cera the Triceratops.

membership.

Attendees will also Visitors to the March learn about MDC paleontology programming, the Hill Annex Paleontology Project, volunteer opportunities at the fossil excavation site, and meet and mingle with two paleontologists, John Westgaard (Minnesota Discov-

available for purchase from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.: Dino Dogs (hot dogs) & Raptor Nuggets (chicken nuggets) served with Fossil Tots (tater tots). Coke products available. There will also be free dinosaur sugar cookies while supplies last.

MDC is now using the winter museum entrance located in the back parking lot (follow digital navigation signs in parking lot upon arrival). Visitors attending the 'Family Discovery Day: "FOSSILS! FOSSILS! FOSSILS!"' event can arrive anytime between 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Paleo Pals will be in and out throughout the course of the event.

Visitors attending the special guest lecture presented by the Science Museum of Minnesota are encouraged to arrive early and enjoy the pre-lecture displays and activities at no extra cost. The event will take place on the 2nd level of the museum in the MDC Theater.





#### VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTOR Vermilion Campus – Ely, MN Unlimited, Full-Time – MSCF Faculty Anticipated Start Date: August 15, 2023

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Application review will begin March 27, 2023 Posting will remain open until filled.

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#### TOWER

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# City approves concept plan for improvements at mini-park

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

TOWER— The city council here, at their regular monthly meeting on Monday, approved a concept plan that would substantially remake the city's mini-park. The plan, developed by Benchmark Engineering, is being dubbed a "multi-modal trailhead development" designed to further cement Tower's reputation as a major hub for outdoor recreation.

"There really is a big convergence of trails right there," said clerk-treasurer Michael Schultz, noting that the Taconite snowmobile trail, the Mesabi bike trail, and the Prospector ATV trail all connect near the mini-park and civic center.

At the same time, the city plans to ultimately connect the mini-park with a paved walking trail connection to the city's harbor. Another trail connection already in progress will connect the harbor to Hoodoo Point.

The concept plan calls for the construction of new amenities, including a covered outdoor stage, a second pavilion, an expansion of the existing playground, and a new paved trail connecting the mini-park to the harbor area. It also includes a new bathroom facility that would be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to serve trail users and other visitors to the mini-park area.

Whether a bathroom is needed has generated some debate, given its considerable cost of approximately \$220,000 and the proximity of bathrooms at the civic center. The city had previously invested in new locks at the civic center to allow for public access to civic center bathrooms while keeping the rest of the civic center and adjacent fire and ambulance hall secure. Yet the council seemed to have warmed to the idea, noting its benefits to trail users. While original plans suggested a vault-type restroom, the council is now considering a facility that would be connected to city water and sewer and that would be heated year-round.

Council members also questioned whether the city would need to repay a portion of the grant funds they have received if they didn't complete the bathroom project.

"Is it a requirement to have the restroom?" asked council member Kevin Norby. "It's not a requirement but it was part of the grant," said Schultz. The restroom was included as part of a \$461,900 regional trails grant from Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation.

But Schultz made clear that other parts of the project, including the completion of an extension of Main Street and the completion of a new small craft launch at the East Two River were the priorities for the currently approved funding. And part of that grant was already tapped to pay for cost overruns on the construction of the new launch at the river.

The concept plan approved by the council Monday will require additional funding, so approval of the plan doesn't mean the project is a go. Instead, it forms the basis for seeking additional grant dollars in the future, noted Schultz. An accompanying council memo on the project indicated the city will likely seek a DNR grant of up to \$350,000 and a matching grant to the IRRR.

In other action, the council named the *Tower News* its official news-paper for 2023, but only after considerable discussion over whether the *Tower News'* bid qualified as "responsible."

The city is required under its charter to solicit quotes annually for its official publication and to accept the lowest responsible bid. The annual exercise has proven to be a regular source of consternation and confusion for the city council despite the fact that the city typically spends less than \$400 a year on its legal publications.

Last year, the council had rejected the bid from the Tower News for failure to include a required publisher's statement of ownership and circulation, which is filed with the U.S. Post Office and is required as part of the city's bid procedure. This year, the Tower News bid included a two-year-old copy of its publisher's statement, along with a copy of a quote addressed to Greenwood Township and another made out to the city of Tower. The Timberjay bid provided the most current publisher's statement along with a current letter and completed bid form addressed to the city.

The *Tower News*' bid  $65\phi$  per column inch for legal publishing \$2.50 per column inch for display ads, while the *Timberjay* bid 99 $\phi$  for legals and \$3.65 per column inch for display ads.

Council member Norby argued that based on the cost per reader reached, the Timberjay's quote was far cheaper, given its circulation advantage of better than six-to-one in St. Louis County. And council members appeared to question the accuracy of the Tower News' circulation numbers, noting that they appeared to be exactly the same year-to-year, defying the normal fluctuation in circulation numbers experienced by other newspapers.

"I think circulation is an important thing to consider," said council member Joe Morin.

But council members Bob Anderson and Josh Zika questioned whether the council could consider circulation and questioned whether the *Tower News*' bid could be dismissed as not responsible. Schultz said that while the *Tower News*' quote might be irregular, and lacked current circulation numbers, those probably weren't enough to justify throwing it out.

"I guess it's how you define 'responsible," said Mayor Dave Setterberg.

In the end, the council appeared to reluctantly conclude that they had to go on lowest price. Anderson made the motion and the rest of the council concurred.

In other action, the council:

➤ Heard from Morin that the Minnesota Housing Partnership had moved Tower's request to take part in a months-long process working toward a housing project had been advanced to the next level. He said representatives of the organization would be scheduling a visit to Tower in the near future to assess the community's readiness to expand its housing base.

➤ Heard from Schultz that the Army Corps will not increase its funding allocation for the Tower-Breitung drinking water plant project. Two years ago, the Corps had approved funding 75 percent of the estimated cost of the project, or \$3.375 million. But the process for final allocation of the funds has taken considerable time and the estimated cost of the project has increased sharply since then, leaving a funding gap of more than \$2 million. City officials had recently met with the Corps' Michelle Prosser in hopes that they would boost Corps funding to 75 percent of the latest cost estimates, but Prosser declined that request.

➤ Noted that the Project Love Lock proposal honoring the late Tower-Soudan teacher Carol Alstrom is moving forward and will have a dedication and unveiling on March 25. Schultz said councilors were encouraged to attend.

➤ Opted for more research on the possibility of renaming the street between the Tower-Soudan Elementary and the former football field in honor of Alstrom.

→ Heard that the city is still waiting on the Community Development Block Grant program to complete an environmental assessment on an infrastructure project on S. Second and S. Third Streets. The CBDG had approved \$96,250 toward the project earlier this year, but it's unclear if that will be sufficient to move the project forward.

➤ Approved the low bid of \$69,940 from Struck & Irwin Paving for crack sealing at the Tower Airport runway. SEH is set to receive \$19,900 for engineering and construction administration, or about 22 percent of the total project cost.

➤ Agreed to conduct another Tidy Up Tower this spring, with \$500 in city funds allotted for the effort. While the anti-blight effort has typically been undertaken on a weekday in the spring, after the snow melts, Anderson suggested doing it over two days, including a Saturday to allow for participation from volunteers who have to work during the week. "I think it's a great idea," he said.

➤ Gave kudos to the city's ambulance service for its recent recognition by the EMSRB for achieving better than 80-percent compliance with nine different clinical quality measures.

> Appointed Morin, Schultz and city maintenance manager Ben Velcheff to examine the city's GEM car to see if it can be made operable again. The electric vehicle's batteries are no longer holding a charge and may need to be replaced. The car was acquired as part of a grant that included the installation of solar panels on the roof covering the historic train and was supposed to be used to ferry shoppers from the city's harbor to shops on Main Street, but that idea never came to fruition.



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# Editorial -

## **Town hall lies** Rep. Skraba should reconsider his alignment with extremists

We think Rep. Roger Skraba should be reconsidering the company he keeps.

We actually had some hope that Rep. Skraba could make a decent lawmaker in St. Paul. Over the years, he has run for any number of offices, variably as a DFLer, an Independent, or a Republican. He's made it clear he's not overtly partisan, at least in the past, and his priorities often seem at odds with the latest political label he's chosen for himself. We've generally thought of him as a moderate, a label that we believe still describes most residents of the Iron Range.

Skraba is also a hard worker, as his surprise victory over Rep. Rob Ecklund attests.

Yet, the Ely lawmaker seems to have a penchant for bringing people to Ely who represent extremist views that are often at odds with reality. His March 4 town hall, which featured the bombastic blowhard Sen. Nathan Wesenberg was just the most recent example.

Wesenberg came to Ely from his home in Little Falls with the clear intention of stoking conspiracy theories and paranoia over what is, for the most part, relatively mundane gun safety legislation currently percolating through various committees in St. Paul. He spun one whopper after another. At one point, he claimed that legislation that would close the background check loophole for private firearms sales would prevent an individual from loaning a gun to a hunting partner without a background check, even though the laws in question expressly allow for lending of guns in such circumstances without a background check. The background checks apply only to actual gun sales, they are clearly constitutional, and have been required of gun stores for years. The vast majority of Americans support closing this loophole in the law.

Contrary to Sen. wesenberg's claim, background checks don't create a data base of gun owners. Federal law requires that the checks be deleted from the federal data base within 24 hours, unless the background check reveals the purchaser is prohibited for some reason from owning a firearm. Sen. Wesenberg also made it clear he lacks an understanding of the difference between a red flag law and a 72-hour psychiatric hold and told attendees at the recent Ely event that the law allows anyone to call police and have them confiscate your guns without due process. We suggest Sen. Wesenberg actually read the legislation

before his next rabble rouse in Ely, since the law clearly requires due process, including factual evidence, presented at a hearing in a court of law. We, of course, recognize that factual evidence and Sen. Wesenberg may not be well acquainted, as is often the case with individuals who self-righteously claim to have all the answers.

Rep. Skraba clearly made a mistake by inviting Wesenberg, who was not only ill-informed but also belligerent and rude, at times, in contrast to Skraba's efforts to be a tad more solicitous to his assembled constituents.

Unfortunately, this wasn't Skraba's first such error. As we reported last summer, he helped arrange a showing of "2000 Mules" last summer as a kind of campaign kickoff in Ely. While popular with many in the radicalized GOP base, the movie is an embarrassing piece of propaganda that alleges a massive, multi-state effort to stuff ballot boxes in key battleground races in support of then-candidate Joe Biden. It's a slickly-produced and astonishing tale and the producers provided exactly zero evidence other than scary music and invented props to support it. By the time the movie was mercifully over, anyone capable of critical thought would have little trouble identifying the movie's fatal flaws.

It's unfortunate that Rep. Skraba feels the need to align himself with the conspiracy peddlers and other extremists in the GOP, as if doing so is somehow necessary to convince them that he's really one of them.

Perhaps Rep. Skraba should reconsider if he really wants to be aligned with some of the most extreme elements of a political party that has veered far from the mainstream in recent years. While most residents of the area would never agree to actual gun confiscation, in our experience most recognize that some basic and perfectly constitutional regulation of gun use in this country may have at least a role to play in helping to stem this country's alarming rate of gun violence. To suggest that a universal background check law or a red flag law takes us down the road to confiscation is utter nonsense and politicians, like Sen. Wesenberg demonstrate nothing but contempt for the voters when they spout such falsehoods at events advertised as listening sessions. For a rookie lawmaker, like Rep. Skraba, we'd like to suggest it's not a good look.



# Letters from Readers

# First impressions are important

OPINION

They say first impressions are important, because they define how you are viewed forever in many instances. Roger Skraba made quite a first impression fresh off his 12-vote victory in the last election, and it wasn't a good one to put it mildly. He chose to appear with an extremist, Mr. Wesenberg, at an event organized by other extremists, the Dorr brothers (who make millions promoting farright fear and chaos under the guise of liberty and freedom from tyranny according to a recent National Public Radio broadcast). He watched as his constituents were berated and abused by a zealot lecturing them; taking the side of wife beaters and psychotic people when it comes to gun safety, rather than the well-being of his constituents. These folks were told that they could come and share their views. They were not there to be on the receiving end of a tirade by public servants who work for them.

Mr. Skraba is no moderate and voting for a bonding bill that he knows his Republican colleagues will block in the Minnesota Senate and will never pass is not "reaching across the aisle." Rather, as they say birds of a feather flock together, and Mr. Skraba decided to align himself with the most extreme elements of his party right out of the blocks. That is the lasting first impression of Roger Skraba. I will say in all fairness, however, Mr. Wesenberg did give an excellent presentation of the kind of paranoid and angry conduct that demonstrates the need for a red flag law to assess whether to keep guns out of the hands of people who may be a danger to society. A specific example is always helpful to be able understand the need for legislation. Kelly Dahl Linden Grove

#### Town hall gave a look at National Christian fascism

I've attended plenty of "town hall meetings" in my day, but Roger Skraba's first one since being elected was nothing but a propaganda spew by his Republican partner Nathan Wesenberg. What the "meeting" really was about, was Nathan to do his "Don the con Trump lesson" upon those attending. If anyone spoke opposite of his right-wing view, he'd interrupt endlessly, and never allow the other speaker to truly get to their point.

What a joke it was. National Christian fascism hard at work. Roger, you blew your first town hall meeting.

> Barry W. Tungseth Ely

#### Embracing spring... when it finally arrives

It was taking six to eight seconds for the large cinematic snowflakes to float down some 10-15 feet, as slow a motion as nature can allow in March. Breathlessly mystical in its moments of free-fall, as captivating as anything visually in memory. So calm, like we wished our lives were. Quiet as our inner-voice pleads for. Peaceful as the world actually could be. Early spring's quietly hushed voices are so emotionally therapeutic, allowing a spiritual insight into ourselves, though one's attitude is responsible for what you see and hear, then feel. One couldn't help but attempt to hear the flakes landing and stacking on each other. Crystallized water formed so unique simply falling on one another does makes a sound, auditory candy for the senses. Hearing so delicate a presumably joyful noise, you had to listen breathless, exhaling in slow motion so as not to disturb any crystalloid musical notes.

flock as first light emerges and movements begin flowing as a spring creek in March, gently gaining width and depth, finches and chickadees with redpolls arriving for the sunflower chips just offered, almost ceremoniously for the love of these miniature winged dinosaurs. The definitive daybreak was so assuring that all was well in this world, this location, this moment's place in time. Silence in nature. And where there is silence, peace is closer by.

Spring in its first month is the emotional season. For many it's the best time of the year. A stronger sun exposed lends softer walking to ice fishing above crappies, The tapping of maple trees in a nearby sugarbush as gravity flows the sweet water into its barrel, and eventual boiling pan. And with its Illuminating Worm Full Moon, spring is the hope for gardening. Plant life. Doing outdoor life. Life itself offering hope. When one favors that. And when you swallow it all.

#### Mark Haarman Ely



And then, a scout pine siskin reports to its nearby

## Your letters

The *Timberjay* encourages letters to the editor. You can submit letters by mail at PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790, or email letters to marshall@timberjay.com.

We ask that letters be limited to 300 words.

Letters are subject to editing, primarily for length and clarity.

Letters are a great way to offer your input to the *Timberjay's* editorial page. We want to know what you think!

# Making the U.S. work takes all of us

The northern Minnesota political drama in recent

weeks has been compelling. The Ely City Council presented yet another resolution (their 8th or 9th?) in favor of copper sulfide mining. A town hall meeting hosted by our District 3A Rep. Roger Skraba and cohosted by Sen. Nathan Wesenberg, of Little Falls was held at the senior center. And on Saturday, March 11,

a Zoom call was held with District 3 Sen. Grant Hauschild and



Minnesota over 20 interested citizens. All

are fine examples of democracy in action, giving citizens an opportunity to interact with elected officials. Close to 200 people turned out to do just that.

Every single one of us probably had ten other things we

could have chosen to do, but for varied reasons, we chose to show

up with our questions, concerns, appreciations, requests, and ideas. The city council meeting offered small town theater with locked-in attitudes standing up to each other. A councilor with 29 years of service under his belt lost his cool in an emotional tirade against "all you people who keep showing up every time we have a resolution on mining," also implying that we had imported outsiders from the Twin Cities, which was just a figment of his indignant imagination. My mental reaction was, "I can guarantee you that if you quit proposing resolutions

about copper sulfide mining, over which you have no authority nor jurisdiction, we'll quit showing up to protest them." I also have felt that the none of the city councilors in the last 15 years have bothered to learn the real facts about copper sulfide mining, so we continue to provide them with that education. We have invited them repeatedly over the years to visit the well-researched exhibits of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Water, and I think it's safe to say that most of them never set foot in the building.

Concerned people from

the townships around Ely were once again castigated for daring to show up and speak up. On some issues, it feels like we all know our lines and we show up to deliver them. Those of us who have worked for years on the copper mining issue are not surprised with the unanimous votes by the council. This time we were in for a pleasant surprise when the newest and youngest councilor, Adam Bisbee, voted "no" to represent those of us in Ely who were opposed. He did not feel that a prearranged una-

See **ISSUES...**pg. 5

#### My chance meeting with an icon-to-be

With the sad passing of coaching legend Bud Grant, I'm reminded of the one-and-only time our paths crossed, which could've ended very badly, as I came close to ending his Vikings career before it even started.

It was in Mankato, the summer of '67, as the Vikings were about to open their training camp with Grant as their brand new head coach. I was a 20-year-old student, had just finished my first year at Mankato State (now Minnesota State - Mankato) and had stayed in town that summer to work. I had the morning off and drove up to the upper campus- there were still two campuses then, upper and lower- to watch the Vikings' first practice. As I turned the corner by Gage Center to drive by the practice field, which you could still do in those days (they didn't get the huge crowds at training camp as they did in later years), most of the players were already out on the field. So, I was slowly driving past, watching the players, looking for certain numbers, and generally not paying attention to what was in front of me, which just happened to be Grant (and one of his players, I think Mick Tingelhoff) on his way out to the field from the clubhouse.

After slamming on the brakes, I can still remember sliding down in my seat, mortified, as Grant, his hand on the hood of my car, gave me a long look and shook his finger at me before continuing on (Tingelhoff was laughing his butt off). So, the long and the short of it was my carelessness almost ended Bud Grant's Hall-of-Fame career with the Vikings before it even began, which would've made for a rather dubious claim-to-fame.

#### Lynn Scott Soudan

#### VNP officials need to be demoted or fired

While catching up on some *Timberjays* delivered while I was away for a winter break, my eyes were immediately drawn to the article about Justin Ebel and his tasing.

My jaw dropped as I read on about the egregious behavior of the park rangers. "Protect and Serve" usually seen all over police cars in Minneapolis or "committed to trusted service" on others. My ass.

These two "wanne be" cops seemed to have an agenda for the day, which included finding someone to hassle. An older retired couple and a local houseboat operator seemed to fit the bill. By all accounts this was to be their full day. Accomplishing exactly nothing of value, unless you count setting back relations with the local community several decades. What ensued after Ebel arrived is inexplicable and absolutely unforgivable. Let's just look at a few highlights.

There was absolutely no need to board the houseboat. The older couple was scared and posed absolutely no threat. The vessel had been inspected for safety already, and the story makes it clear these two officers knew absolutely nothing about boats or boat handling and seamanship. Any bully knows, always pick on people who can't fight Letters from Readers

back.

If they absolutely had to see the boat they had already had an opportunity to do so while the boat was on the rocks. Issuing an order the houseboat captain couldn't comply with verifies their lack of seamanship skills, along with common sense. It's clearly evident that Mr. Ebel knew what he was doing and had a sensible plan.

A lifetime of small craft operation, several thousand miles of deep water ocean sailing and a year or two working on commercial vessels gives me the confidence to say this. One vessel in particular gives me this perspective. I worked a 40' passenger vessel had a large cabin on it for passengers and drew very little water. Just like a houseboat. The captain had 50 years of experience and had spent the last part of it as a pilot on the Panama Canal. In high winds our boat was difficult to handle. I doubt if he could have done any better than the poor fellow running the houseboat. Why these two rangers were so determined to provoke and escalate things is a question that must be answered.

Most important, had they taken Mr. Ebel back to their gulag, cleaned him up and checked him out for the uncalled for taser attacks, and then released him with an apology and a promise to look into the conduct of their rangers, that would be one thing. But no, they bully him some more, threated him with his livelihood, and haul him off to a Bemidji jail. That was off-thecharts egregious. Are park officials trying to start an all-out war with the local populace? A populace, I'd like to add that is none too happy with the NPS to start with. It's the start of a good handbook on how to foment real unrest. Ask the British who finally pushed their colonists to rebel and overthrow them thus founding our country.

The outcome of this will not be to anybody's liking. Marshall Helmberger's editorial is a good start. I'd like to add briefly, the two rangers need to be fired, ideally the Park Superintendent as well. Hopefully he can just be retired out, or at worst re-assigned to a National Park nobody ever goes to. If the rangers can't be fired, they should be demoted to digging latrines. Not that it needs to stop there, hopefully that's just the start.

The *Timberjay* is to be commended for its dedication to staying on this. It most certainly will take public pressure to get it all out in the daylight, maybe even a lawsuit. If there were to be a fund for a lawsuit established, I am in. It's going to take more than the *Timberjay* to keep the pressure on, and get these people gone.

Mark Wendt Stillwater

The letter below is being reprinted because the second half was inadvertently left out last week.

# Resurrecting the Ely City Band

Upon my retirement, on the day we moved to our vacation home north of Ely, after R & R Transfer had lugged all our stuff inside and we had assembled a bed, we went into town to celebrate. It was Tuesday, June 30, 2009. It was raining lightly, so Farmers Market vendors had moved into the pavilion, and the City Band concert was moved to Washington Auditorium. There, as the musicians were arriving, I introduced myself to Wayne Marshall, who was conducting. Wayne pointed to his tuba and invited me to play. I became a member of the Ely City Band the very first day Emily and I became full-time Elyites!

It was such fun, those next eleven years of June rehearsals (Monday & Tuesday evenings) and July rehearsals (Mondays) and concerts in the park (Tuesdays, plus July 4 after the parade). To be part of a band playing a program of marches, patriotic tunes, familiar musical medleys, etc, in Whiteside on a beautiful summer evening feels like pure Americana: an appreciative audience in lawn chairs, the hum of the Farmers Market, the smells of the food trucks, families picnicking, kids riding by on bikes or boards and climbing on the playground structures, a coach-pitch ballgame happening across

street. One year, a concert program included a medley from "Show Boat," and I was asked to sing "Old Man River." Afterwards, an older guy in the audience came up to acknowledge my effort; "Well," he said, "you're no Paul Robeson." Exactly! We never pretend to be professional or even very good. We are amateurs who play the best we can with limited practice time. We laugh a lot, at our mistakes, at the director's jokes, at the incongruity of performing "Seventy-Six Trombones" with only one or two. No auditions-make one rehearsal and you are playing in the concert. Your sight-reading skills will necessarily improve, as will your eye/hand coordination and your mental health!

Every town across America used to have a band. Sadly, most have disappeared. A community band is a wonderful institution: an inter-generational group of volunteers from all walks of life, all sides of political divides, coming together to make music.

But the 133-year tradition of the Ely City Band came to a halt three years ago, due to the COVID pandemic as well as the school demolition and renovation project. For three years there was no access to a practice room, to school percussion equipment, or even to sheet music. Many of us regulars have really missed it. And now there is a groundswell of interest to see if the band can be resurrected. NLAA (the umbrella organization) and Karl Kubiak (our school band's director) are ready to lead this effort. The thing is, though, that our numbers were dwindling before the pandemic, and we have lost some players during these past years, so we really need an influx of new blood. My hope is that there are instrumentalists among the many new Elyites who have come into our community during these same years, enough to give the Ely City Band a critical mass and new life. If you are interested in joining the band or are willing to help with logistics, or would like to donate toward band expenses, including the hope of giving the director an honorarium, email Contact@ northernlakesarts.org.

Elton Brown Ely

#### **ISSUES...**Continued from page 4

nimity serves the good of the community.

I imagine the councilors were also surprised by the numbers of young citizens who showed up with a willingness to not

Sen. Wesenberg caused offense when he dominated the meeting initially with his pro-gun agenda, employing blatant lies and name-calling, rudely talking over Rep. Skraba and others attempting to speak, until he was convinced to leave the "stage." I personally also find offensive the use of the term "sanctuary" in reference to law-breaking for guns. Everyone else was generally passionate but civil, and people listened respectfully, with lots of head-nodding, to a retired civics teacher who explained aspects of the constitution along with the need for more education about civics and the constitution in the schools and the legislature. What mystifies me is why gun proponents can believe the lie that "they're gonna' get your guns" when no one has ever threatened the use of appropriate guns for hunting or protection. It is, of course, fear-mongering to get people riled up. Can anyone really argue that they think it's reasonable for individuals to have weapons of war that can kill 40 people in a less than a minute? I think everyone in that room has a heart that breaks when they hear more children have been killed in a mass shooting. In the first 60 days of 2023, there were 100 mass shootings, defined as leaving four or more people dead. I had once read that in countries with strict gun laws and much lower crime rates, when a child is killed, the whole country knows that child's

name, mourns them, and does not quickly forget. I asked the crowd if anyone could name one child killed in the last school shooting. No one could, including me. We have to Hwy. 169, nursing homes, support for small farmers, and the gun safety laws. One participant mentioned that the United States has 26 times the mass shootings as other countries, urging the Senator to support the gun regulations. The word sanctu-



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just appear, but also to speak their truth about the unwelcome attitude they were encountering and the lack of transparency in council meetings and committee agendas. All of us like to snuggle down into our positions where we are comfortable, sometimes longing for at least some things to stay the same, but Ely continues to change, as it always has. Currently, there is an influx of younger people who are paying attention, who want to make a difference in the world, who have fresh energy and good ideas, who are willing to get involved, and who will outlive us all. So, get used to it and rejoice, for they are the ones who will keep Ely vibrant.

The town hall meeting was another bit of dramatic democracy. The meeting was advertised with a focus on gun sanctuaries, aka Second Amendment sanctuaries, which refers to localities, counties, or states that have adopted resolutions or laws to prohibit enforcement of certain gun control measures perceived as violating the Second Amendment. These include universal background checks and bans on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. The attacks on state gun safety laws across the country are being coordinated by the gun lobby and gun rights extremists. stop normalizing violence. In his Zoom call, Sen.

Hauschild said his experience in his first Senate session has been mind-blowing. It has been described as unlike any other session in the history of the legislature. He sees senators who were prepared and ready to get things done, who probably had been frustrated when Republicans were obstinately blocking any progress for so long. Now with a Democratic trifecta, House, Senate, and Governor, they are accomplishing a lot. Reproductive rights have been codified into statute, drivers' licenses for all, including immigrants, was passed, opposed by Republicans even though it always had bipartisan support in the past. Also passed were voting rights (with some restrictions) for felons, which reduces recidivism, and the 100 percent energy bill with the goal of carbon neutrality by 2040. Keep your ears open for much more coming up. The Zoom call gave us an opportunity to celebrate the Democrats' creation and passing of the Inflation Reduction Act, the American Rescue Plan, and the Infrastructure Plan, which bring many benefits to our country and local communities.

Participants brought information and concerns about mental health for kids, continued work on ary means a place of refuge or safety for those that need it, often provided by churches and in private homes for those being persecuted, such as immigrants fleeing dictatorships and war-torn countries. Communities have named their towns sanctuaries for those needing a welcoming haven. We may provide sanctuary for friends or relatives who need a safe place to rest and recover from collisions with the world. Nature sanctuaries provide safety for birds, plants, and animals that otherwise would be endangered. This is not a word that should be used for guns and people who want to ignore and break the gun safety laws.

An excerpt from Carrie Newcomer's song "Sanctuary" expresses the essence: "Will you be my refuge, my haven in the storm? Will you keep the embers warm when my fire's all but gone? Be my sanctuary till I can carry on?"



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Moving? Questions about your subscription? Call the Tower office at (218) 753-2950.

## Week of March 20

#### 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.

#### **Tower Winter Farmers Market on** Friday, March 17

TOWER- The Tower Winter Market will be held on Friday, March 17 from 4 - 6 p.m. at the Pike River Products building on Main Street. Winter market days are on the third Friday of the month.

#### **Tower-Soudan-**Embarrass **Bookmobile** Schedule

**REGIONAL-** The Arrowhead Bookmobiles will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesday, April 5 & 26.

Stops include: Britt (Sand Lake Storage): 9 - 9:30 a.m.; Bois Forte (Boys & Girls Club): 11 - 11:30 a.m.; Greenwood (Town Hall): 12 – 1 p.m.; Soudan (Post Office area): 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.; Tower (Civic Center): 3:45 - 4:30 p.m.; and Embarrass (Hwy 135 & Hwy 21): 5 – 6 p.m.

More info online at alslib.info/services/bookmobile. For more information on the Bookmobile or Mail-A-Book services contact the Arrowhead Library System, 218-741-3840, email at als@alslib. info, or website at alslib. info.



#### **Roxanne Tea**

was lower than the 37 calls in 2021. Calls included one wildland fire, eight motor vehicle crashes, three power lines down, two mutual aid structure fires, and 12 medical calls. Volunteers put in a total of 649 recorded hours in 2022, but Lotz reported that many hours outside of calls and regular meetings were not recorded. Members spent 81 hours doing truck and equipment maintenance. Vermilion Lake Fire Department members are not paid for their volunteer time.

The department ended the year with 15 members, and currently 11 members have wildland fire training. Six of these members have EMR, EMT, or First Responder training also. The department had one long-time member of 39 years retire last fall, and added one new member who already had Firefighter

## **TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS Township annual meeting reports**

#### Vermilion Lake Township

There were 19 votes cast. Roxanne Tea was elected to the three-year supervisor seat

and incumbent treasurer Steve Lotz was reelected to the two-year treasurer seat. Both received 19 votes

The township passed their 2024 levy at \$38,300, similar to previous years.

Fire Chief Steve Lotz reported that the department had responded to 30 calls during 2022; this

ordered in December. The township road report discussed the condition of Koski, Hill, Swieringa, Old Cemetery, and Jarvi roads. All were reported in fair to good condition, and all will need

the time required.

new gravel applied in the "near future." The township has contracted with St. Louis County to have 900 cubic yards of class five gravel, and will work with Rasmusson Forest Fuels on the project.

I and II training, along with EMR training.

Lotz noted that the department is seeking new

members who are willing and able to devote

ing grant for new turnout gear, which were

The department received a DNR match-

#### **Breitung Township**

Incumbent and longtime chair Tim Tomsich was re-elected to the two-year supervisor seat, outpolling Erin Peitso 76-26. Matt Tuchel, running unopposed, garnered 94 votes. Incumbent treasurer Jorgine Gornick received 102

votes. There were 103 voters. Watch for a full report on the annual meeting in next week's paper.



Interim treasurer Jeff Maus and interim clerk JoAnn Bassing were both elected to the positions they had been appointed to last year.

#### **Greenwood Township**

Four candidates, all running unopposed, were elected. Incumbent Paul Skubic received 59 votes for a three-year supervisor seat. John Bassing received 72 votes for the second open three-year supervisor seat. Interim clerk JoAnn Bassing was elected to a one-year clerk term with 71 votes. Interim treasurer Jeff Maus was elected to the twoyear treasurer seat with 71 votes. See story on front page.

More township updates in next week's paper.

#### PERSONAL FINANCE

# LSS Financial Counseling offers free credit improvement services

DULUTH - March is National Credit Education Month, a month dedicated to teaching people about credit and how it can affect them. It is a great time to learn some of the ramifications of having a low credit score and what steps can be taken to boost credit scores.

An estimated 11-percent of Americans have poor credit, according to FICO, the largest and best-known company that provides credit scores.

According to Experian, one of the major credit reporting bureaus, FICO credit scores can range anywhere from 300-850. Credit scores from 670-739 are considered "good," credit scores from 740-799 are considered "very good" and 800-850 are considered "exceptional." On the other side of good credit are credit scores from 669-580

which are considered "fair" and finally, credit scores from 579-300 are considered "poor".

**Tim Tomsich** 

Matt Tuchel

While barriers may exist with higher credit score ranges, these barriers become considerably more apparent with lower credit scores.

'Many people may know what makes a good credit score but aren't aware of the issues that can arise from having low credit scores," states Dan Park, financial counseling supervisor for LSS Financial Counseling, a service of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

Park points out some of the barriers that can arise from having a low credit score:

►Utility companies may charge more for a deposit or even deny access.

►Both automobile and home insurance premiums can

►Individuals can pay higher interest on loans.

► Accessing a loan may be difficult.

Employers may take credit score into consideration, affecting employment prospects.

While these issues can exist, action can be taken to improve credit scores. One of the most important things someone can do is thoroughly review their credit report to look for any errors and dispute them if any are found.

"Now is a great time for people to pull their free credit reports," Park said. "Mistakes on credit reports are very common and there are simple steps that can be taken to fix them.'

LSS Financial Counseling offers free Credit Improvement Services. Certified financial counselors are available to review credit reports and assist with steps that can increase credit scores.

LSS Financial Counseling can also help individuals and families develop a budget, prioritize which debts should be addressed first, and explore beginning a debt management plan.

LSS Financial Counseling offer confidential, nonjudgmental support through financial counseling and education equipping people to reach their goals and achieve financial wellness. Services include budget and debt counseling, debt management plans, free credit report reviews, student loan counseling, homebuyer services, foreclosure prevention and more.

To make an appointment call 888.577.2227 or visit lssfinancialcounseling.org.

# **Come celebrate the life of Carol Alstrom on March 25**

Donations still needed to pay the cost for the memorial TOWER- A memorial cel- nent memorial, and they settled gym from 2-4 p.m.

ebration is planned for the late on the idea of a love lock post,

To support the Love Lock

increase.



Carol Alstrom on Saturday, March 25 at the Tower-Soudan School. Alstrom spent her entire teaching career at Tower-Soudan, and was a mentor, coach, teacher and friend to the community even after she retired from teaching and coaching.

"The idea for a celebration came to fruition because Susan Alstrom knew it was important to honor her sister's wish to have a party, not a funeral," said former Tower-Soudan student Sarah Christmas.

A group of former students discussed the idea of a perma-

which they had seen in other areas. The 10-foot tall love lock post with a granite "under foot" memorial marker will be placed on the grounds of the former Tower-Soudan High School. Friends and family of Carol Alstrom, along with community members, will be invited to place a padlock on the post.

The project has gotten the go-ahead from the city and school district.

The memorial will be unveiled at 1 p.m. on March 25 at the Tower-Soudan School, with a celebration of life in the school

Memorial Project, a GoFundMe has been set up for contributions at https://gofund.me/7c475725.

Check donations can also be made to:

CB&S Bank

c/o the Celebrate Carol Alstrom Memorial Fund P.O. Box 910, Russellville,

Ala. 35653

For more information visit: https://www.facebook.com/ groups/celebratingcoacha/

FOURTH OF JULY



## FIREWORK DONATIONS NEEDED

WE NEED YOUR HELP BY APRIL 1! Donations Needed for the 2023 **Tower-Soudan Fourth of July Fireworks!** 

The Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board is currently raising funds for this year's fireworks display. Funds need to be in place by April 1 to get the fireworks ordered. The estimated cost is \$18,000.

#### Please mail your contribution to:

**TSLVEB PO Box 461** Tower, MN 55790



TSLVEB is a 501c3, and your contributions are tax-deductible. The events board needs to get the fireworks order in by April 1.

#### **Donations needed by April 1 for fireworks** TOWER- Fourth of works ordered. Towchased on a multi-year July in Tower and Soudan er-Soudan Lake Vermilion contract by the Tower

always ends with a big bang, that is, the fireworks display, but the costs for those big bangs have been rising.

Fundraising for this year's fireworks display is now underway, and funds need to be in place by April 1 to get the fireEvents Board estimates the cost of fireworks to be \$18,000.

The group also raisthe approximately es \$15,000 for the parade, games, and associated event costs.

In previous years, the fireworks had been pur-

#### **THANK YOU!**

For your continued support!

**JORGINE GORNICK** 

**Breitung Township Treasurer** 

Fire Department Relief Association with proceeds from the pull tab gambling income, but as of 2022, that funding has been used up. This is the first year the events board needs to raise the money for fireworks and to hire a professional crew to light them off.

Please email the events board as soon as possible at tseventsboard@gmail.com or mail TSLVEB, P.O. Box 461, Tower, MN 55790 if you would like the fireworks to continue. Provide information on the contribution amount you would be willing to donate. TSLVEB is a 501(c)3, and your contributions are tax-deductible. This \$18,000 needs to be in place by April 1 in order to have the fireworks display this year.

The TSLVEB would also like to encourage each of you to consider becoming a member, and volunteer. The next meeting of the events board is scheduled for Thursday, March 16, at 4:30 p.m. in the Breitung Community Room, Soudan.

This is a time for everyone to come together and help, both personally and financially, to continue this wonderful celebration of our independence.

#### ELY MIDDLE SCHOOL

# Ely school musical about problems of scale

by CATIE CLARK Ely Editor

ELY- Something fishy happened at the Washington Elementary School auditorium when the Ely middle school students staged their musical, "The Rainbow Fish." The student thespians performed the hour-long musical on March 10 in the afternoon for the elementary school and in the evening for the general public.

On the scale of school musicals that goes from horrid to exceptional, the Rainbow Fish netted a very good, especially for the quality of musical perfor-

mance from its young cast. A lack of coordination in some of the dance numbers was the one thing that kept the production from hooking a better evaluation.

T h e musical is

based on the 1992 children's book of the same title. The book was popular enough to become a series as well as an HBO television production in 1999-2000.

The plot is about selfishness and the redeeming value of generosity. The rainbow fish was the most beautiful fish in the ocean because of her amazing and colorful scales. One day, a little fish asked if it might have one of the rainbow fish's scales but was turned down. The rainbow fish's selfishness caused the other fish to shun her. On the advice of her only friend, the starfish, the rainbow fish sought out the octopus for advice. The octopus advised giving the scales away because the friendships and the happiness gained would more than make up for the rainbow fish's beautiful scales. The rainbow fish followed that advice, giving up her selfishness, vanity, and scales, but gaining social acceptance and happiness.

The production was directed by K-5 music teacher Mike Rouse. The cast of 13 included: Isabel Ebert as the angel fish, Mattie Lindsey as the rainbow



Music teacher Mike Rouse was prepared to go underwater. photo by C. Clark

fish, Brandy Strange as the barnacle, Aubrielle Poppler as Ms. Minnow, Riley Nielsen as the hermit crab, Amelia Strom as the octopus, Coco Gillson as the baby clown fish and Paysin Kundinger as the shark.

Rouse got laughs from the elementary school audience when he introduced the production wearing a diving mask and snorkel. The performances of Lindsay and Johnson were notable for their talent at hamming things up on stage. The musical content was very good with no bad notes anywhere.



The starfish in her bright costume was one of the two biggest hams in the show. From left-to-right: Amelia Strom as the octopus, Ashlynn Gerlovich in the background as the little fish, Maddie Johnson as the starfish, Molly Vetos-Keen, and Lucy Oelke as the puffer fish. photo by C. Clark



Vetos-Keen as the clown fish, Brandy Ashlynn Gerlovich as the little fish (left) asked Mattie Lindsay as the rainbow fish for one of her fancy scales. photo by C. Clark



hamming things up on stage. The musical content was very good with no bad notes anywhere. The rainbow fish finally fit in with the rest of the fish after getting over her own selfishness. From left-to-right: Aubrielle Poppler as Ms. Minnow, Mattie Lindsay as the rainbow fish, Isabel Ebert as the angel fish, and Coco Gillson as the baby clown fish. Photo by C. Clark

# **Midco Invasion of Ely**



# Missing child found

ELY- On Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 5:09 a.m., the Ely Police Department responded to a missing child situation from a home on the 400 block of Washington Street in Ely. The child's father called 911 and reported he could not find his three-year-old daughter. He did find an exterior door open and her boots gone. The temperature at the time of the 911 call was around -10 degrees F. The Ely PD arrived a short time later, met with the father and began a search for the child. Other area emergency responders also arrived to assist in the search, including the Virginia PD and their K9 officer, Teddy. K9 Teddy was able to lead officers to a vacant house next door to the residence. The vacant house had an unlocked front door to an unheated porch area. At 6:07 a.m., officers entered this

front porch and found the child. The child was very cold, had slow response to officers, but was breathing. Officers immediately attempted to warm the child up and brought her back home until the ambulance arrived. The child was then transported to the Ely Bloomenson Commu-

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

➤March 28: Treaty Promises & Indigenous Health Care with Linda Olson Bergum, M.D.



## 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: 218-82	27-3345

#### Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous

#### One of the Midco trucks currently working in Ely. photo by C. Clark

ELY- If you've noticed that Ely appears to be overflowing with Midco trucks this week, you would be right. According to Paige Pearson Meyer, Midco's Vice President of Corporate Communications, the firm has dispatched an additional 15 field technicians to Ely to help with connecting its customers to its fiber network. The extra techs are scheduled to work in Ely through next week.

The *Timberjay* reached out to Midco to

see if there was a specific reason for the ramp up in personnel, Meyer replied: "We're working to complete as many conversions as possible. Because we have a smaller team in Ely, we brought in reinforcements to help." nity Hospital (EBCH).

EBCH stabilized the child, who was then transported to a facility providing a higher level of care. She was listed in stable condition by Tuesday afternoon.

The following assisted the Ely PD in responding to this situation: the St. Louis Co. Sheriff's Department, Lake County Sheriff's Department, Babbitt PD, Virginia PD, St. Louis Co. Rescue Squad, Ely Fire Department/First Responders, Ely Area Ambulance Service and the EBCH. **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 pretest 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.

#### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Upcoming Events

#### Ely Public Library

ELY- The library will celebrate Spring Fairy Fun Day, March 21, 1-2 p.m.

The library will hold a free four-session painting class starting on Wednesday, March 22. The class will meet every Wednesday through April 12, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The announcement for the class states: "Try your hand at painting and learn skills to improve your works of art." The class will use acrylic paint. All materials will be provided. Advance registration is required since seats are limited.

A new Kahoot will start on March 23 at 3 p.m. and end on March 27 at 8 a.m. The subject of Kahoot online trivia game will be the books in the Betsy Tacy series by Maud Hart Lovelace. Please register in advance since the library will need an email address for each person who wishes to play to send the link to the game.

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

#### Ely Folk School

ELY- The folk school

will hold an Irish Dance on Saturday, March 18, from 7-10 p.m. at the Ely Senior Center, 27 S. 1st Ave. No experience necessary. All dances will be taught. \$10 per person, kids free with parent.

A complete class schedule, registration and tuition/fee information are linked off the "learn" tab at elyfolkschool.com

#### **NLAA Art Show**

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association will host the art show "Melting Away Winter" by Lauren Rehbein. The show will run from March 13-26 at Ely's Historic State Theater. NLAA will have a reception for the artist and her work on Saturday, March 18, at 5 p.m. Viewing hours are limited to the hours that the State Theater is open.

#### Gardner Humanities Trust

ELY- The Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust will accept applications for its 2023 spring grant round with a deadline of midnight, Wednesday, March 29. Apply through the internet grant portal at gardnertrust.org.

#### National Forest Service

ELY- The Forest Service will hold a free twohour class on Saturday, March 18, starting at 10

a.m., on how to safely burn hazardous woody debris. The event will be at the Kawishiwi Ranger Station, 1393 Highway 169 in Ely. This is an outdoor class so dress for winter.

#### Ely Area Food Shelf March food drive

ELY- The Ely Area Food Shelf is holding a food drive for non-perishable items every Saturday this month. The food shelf asks that the public help with contributing non-perishable food items every Saturday in March from 10 a.m. to noon at 15 W. Conan St.

#### **COOK/ORR LOCAL**

# **Interactive outdoor "Tree Society" now through March 26**

SIDE LAKE – An innovative outdoor activity starts this week at McCarthy Beach State Park that allows you to talk with trees.

Side Lake resident Margo Gray is an Artist Fellow with Upstream, a nonprofit whose mission is to connect Minnesotans with natural places. For her fellowship, she's creating a new work of art that's free to access and gives Iron Range residents a whole new way to explore this state park.

The Tree Society invites visitors to join a secret club that takes care of all its members. But before you do, you must pass the challenges the society leaders set for you. These challenges take you through the park's woods, getting a new perspective on the forest's residents as you go.

"It's a bit like attending a play, except you're the main character," says Gray. "The other characters are trees. They deliver their lines via text message, and they let you know what to do next. It's also a bit like a scavenger hunt, because you need to use your observational skills, knowledge, and creativity to complete challenges."

The experience is designed for all ages, though may be best for ages six and up, as it requires some walking and reading. Adults can also enjoy the experience on their own. Families will enjoy a fun challenge that everyone can participate in, and adults will benefit from a chance to see the park in a different way.

Since The Tree Society is, after all, a secret society, you won't find signs or instructions at the park (don't worry, state park staff are in on the secret). All the information you need to get started is at www.secrettreesociety.org. Be sure to have the starting instructions ready, as they won't be posted at the park itself. Once you arrive at the park, you won't need the internet- you'll be exchanging text messages with the characters.

Tree Society will be open to the public March 16 - 26 and accessible during open hours at McCarthy Beach State Park in Side Lake. The free experience lasts 45-60 minutes, and can be done on your own schedule. Park near the picnic shelter on the west side of McCarthy Beach Road. Participants will do about half mile of walking to the end of a path and back. Snowshoes are optional, but winter boots can get the job done. The experience works best for humans age six and up, but all ages are welcome.

If you enjoy spending time outdoors, learning more about your surroundings, or if you've ever wanted to talk to a tree, join us! Learn more at www. secrettreesociety.org.

#### **Upstream Minnesota**

Upstream brings people together to celebrate and amplify the many ways Minnesotans of all backgrounds love and value our place. We help cultivate a shared value of caring for our lands, lakes, parks and streets that inspire even more people to act in ways, both large and small, to be better stewards of Minnesota's unique and beautiful natural places. For more information please visit mnupstream.org or follow us on Facebook or Instagram @minnesotaupstream.

#### Margo Gray

Margo Gray is an experience designer and creator of interactive events based in Side Lake, MN. She holds an MFA in Directing from Carnegie Mellon University, was a Fulbright Fellow with the Moscow Art Theatre School, and has worked on dozens of theatrical productions and interactive events from Minnesota to London. She has received grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, and Forecast Public Art, and is a current Artist Fellow with Upstream Minnesota. Learn more



at margogray.com.

#### McCarthy Beach State Park

McCarthy Beach State Park, 7622 McCarthy Beach Rd, Side Lake, MN 55781 (Use west entrance to park by picnic shelter). Experience accessible during all park open hours, from March 16-26. No charge but a state park parking pass is required.

# United for Veterans hosts first-ever Winter Family Retreat

ELY - Local veterans and their family members enjoyed a winter weekend at Grand Ely Lodge full of outdoor fun, meaningful conversation, and creating new connections at United Way of Northeastern Minnesota (UWNEMN)'s first-ever United for Veterans Winter Family Retreat. More than 75 attendees enjoyed snowshoeing, ice fishing, pallet painting, and group team building challenges.

Speaker Kurt Roettjer, a member of 23rd Veteran, hosted an impactful talk discussing the realities of military service. Struggling with PTSD, depression, and a sense of purpose are all extremely common for veterans, and many resources are available for help not only for current and retired service members but also their families, he said. He emphasized that mental health impacts everyone differently, and a variety of services and treatments are available, encouraging veterans in attendance to explore different options as not everyone responds the same way.

Cast Outdoor Adventures Inc. which facilitates leadership and skills development, led a sled dog demonstration. As a military veteran, Hicks talked about his experience, love for the outdoors, and how varying levels of skills and disabilities can still succeed in the wilderness – and in life.

The retreat was organized by UWNEMN with guidance from its United for Veterans committee, comprised of local veterans.

"It's always important in our United for Veterans work that we not only host activities that are fun for local veterans and their families but that they are particularly meaningful to veterans and encourage relationship building," said UWNEMN Community Impact Coordinator Michelle Lampton.



Left: Army National Guard Edward Stanek takes his kids skiing at the recent family retreat in Ely.

Army veteran Raymond Elj gets a warm greeting from a Cast Outdoor Adventures Inc. sled dog. submitted photos



Dave and Heather Hicks, operators of the non-profit organization Veterans in attendance said UWNEMN's United for Veterans Winter Family Retreat accomplished just that.

"I enjoyed the weekend and connecting with other vets," said one veteran in a retreat survey. "Feels like I have known some for years even though we just met." In addition to the family retreat, UWNEMN will host four quarterly United for Veterans Veterans Connection events this year to help facilitate relationships with local veterans and servicemembers. The next event takes place June 10th at the Hibbing Raceway where veterans get free admission, a meal coupon, and raffle entries. RSVP is required at www. unitedwaynemn.org/racing.

To learn more about UWNEMN's United for Veterans program, visit www.unitedwaynemn. org/united-veterans

#### COMMUNITY NOTICES

#### Pancake benefit for Cook Food Shelf coming March 19

COOK- The Cook Lions Club will host a benefit pancake breakfast from 9 a.m.-noon on Sunday, March 19 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Cook.

The pancake batter is being donated by Homestead Mills, and a free will offering will go to the Cook Food Shelf.

#### NWFA has ongoing and special events

COOK- Northwoods Friends of the Arts has plenty of activity going on to keep your creative juices flowing.

➤ Jody Feist coordinates Open Art sessions each Monday night from 6-8 p.m. Artists enjoy working together sharing ideas and solving problems with each other.

> On Thursday evenings

from 6-8 p.m. Howard Hilshorst coordinates the wood carver group where they help beginners with their craft and share ideas.

► 114 photos are on display during March for the Winter Wonderland Photo Contest exhibit, running through March 31. Visitors to the exhibit will choose the best photos and decide the winner (\$100) and runner-up (\$50) of the contest.

➤ In April the gallery will feature an exhibit of the art work of students from North Woods School, beginning April 10.

All activites are at the NWFA Gallery 210 S River St. Open hours for photo voting and viewing of original works of art, crafts and gifts are Thursdays and Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and on Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact nwfamn.org@ gmail.com for more information. Also check out Facebook and Instagram as well as online at www.nwfamn.org.

#### Community meal at Trinity Lutheran on Thursday, March 23

COOK- Trinity Lutheran Church is hosting a community meal on Thursday, March 23 from 4 - 5:30 p.m. The menu includes chili, cornbread, a side, and dessert. All are welcome to come eat-in or drive-through.

#### State park pass available at Cook Library

COOK- Patrons can now check out a 7-day Minnesota State Parks pass at the Cook Public Library with their library card. Passes are good for seven days and must be displayed in the vehicle's dashboard on entering a park or recreation area. Passes do not need to be returned; please reycycle them. Passes must be checked out at the Cook Public Library. Due to the limited number of passes, there may be a wait list.

Call 218-666-2210 or email cookpubliclibrary@alslib.info for more information.

#### Adult mystery event at the Cook Library on March 30

COOK- Adults are invited to attend a mystery event at the Cook Library on Thursday, March 30 at 5:30 p.m. Food and beverages provided by the Friends of the Cook Public Library.

#### Voting underway for this year's NWFA photo contest at gallery

COOK- It's time to head on in to the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook to be inspired by the entries in NWFA's annual photo contest and vote for your favorites.

There top vote-getter will receive \$100 and a runner-up is awarded \$50.

The voting is underway now through March 31 during regular hours. Open gallery hours are Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Those viewing the exhibit will vote for two favorite photos, making winners "the peoples' choice."

The public is invited to attend a reception at the gallery on Friday, Mar. 31 at 5 p.m. at which the winners will be announced.

NWFA Gallery is located at 210 S. River St.

#### **RELEASE**...Continued from page 1

release program would help by making professional development training more timely during the year, instead of cramming it all into five teacher in-service days.

Special Education teacher Autumn Boedeker agreed. "The benefit (of ongoing weekly professional development) to the students would make up for the time we would take away from them (through early release)." She used the recent lock-down at the elementary school as an example of how early release would provide more timely training: "We could have used Wednesday early release time to consult

with law enforcement (for debriefing)."

Superintendent John Klarich noted that the proposal to adopt an early release program was entirely staff driven. The school decided to add a vote on the early release proposal to the agenda for the next board meeting.

#### New equipment

Multiple mentions of new equipment deliveries were buried in the reports of the district's two principals and its facilities director, including a new scoreboard and shot clocks to be shipped on April 20. Also listed were two vertical mills for the metal shop and a new metal lathe. High School Principal Jeff Carey remarked during the meeting that, "One vertical mill was purchased with a donation from Cleveland Cliffs." The other mill was bought with federal Perkins funds and the lathe was bought with funds from the sale of old shop equipment.

Also mentioned was the award of the Lake Country Power Educational Excellence Grant for \$100,000 to remodel the high school chemistry lab. This money is in addition to a \$20,000 private donation for the same purpose.

Some of the new furniture for the media center has begun to arrive according to the principals' report. In addition, the new choir chairs and the new cafeteria tables have both arrived.

In other business, the school board:

➤ Approved the termination and non-renewal of contracts for two teachers, 7-12 math teacher Sarah Anderson and Kindergarten teacher Brittany Baier. No reason for the terminations were stated at the meeting or at an inquiry after the meeting.

► Approved and signed the Minnesota-required American Indian Parent Advisory Committee report coordinated by Paige Falt, the district's indigenous support interventionist,

on the district's efforts for Native American students and the involvement of their families in their education.

➤ Received the Minnesota Department of Health inspection report of the district's food service facilities, which recorded zero violations.

➤ A p p r o v e d Washington Elementary School Principal Anne Oelke as the Identified Official with Authority (IOwA) for Ely Public SchoolDistrict.Designating an IOwA is a Minnesota Department of Education requirement for access to the state's online education information systems. March 17, 2023 9

➤ Approved forming a coop for baseball with Northeast Range for the spring 2024 season at the recommendation of Tom Coombe, the district's athletic director. "I think this is a win-win for everyone," remarked school board chairperson Ray Marsnik. "I think both districts will benefit from this."

► Approved a \$1,500 donation to help fund the high school trip to Washington D.C., and a \$2,500 donation for the baseball program, both from Virginia Ivancich.

#### GREENWOOD...Continued from page 1 -

they are at," said Mike Ralston. "I love paying no taxes, but we don't get anything for it."

All agreed the levy was a bargain, and others piped in with what the township did have to offer.

"We provide 911numbers, a precinct for voting, maintenance for the recreation area, a tennis court, and fire department," said John Bassing. "We also provide drinking water." The township maintains an outdoor spigot where residents who have lake-water systems can access clean and safe drinking water. Marilyn Mueller said the township also maintains a paved recreation trail.

"Townships are the last unit of government where we have local control," said Dave Koski. "If we start losing control, Duluth makes those decisions. The fire department is huge and keeps our insurance costs lower. We have a nice building to meet in, and maybe we don't utilize it enough. We have a helicopter landing area. It's a bargain."

"Our average township tax rate is the lowest in St. Louis County," said John Bassing, who had prepared the budget report, and looking at the township's net tax capacity, divided by the levy, we are one of the 10 lowest in the state, not the lowest 10-percent, but the lowest 10 total."

Township taxes in Greenwood work out to \$26.36 per \$100,000 in areas," Peterson said, "it is kind of astonishing." Peterson said the township could attract younger business owners to land on the non-lakeshore side of County Rd. 77.

Bassing's calculations showed local tax rates ranging a little higher than \$1,000 per \$100,000 in value in both Tower and Cook. Both small cities have a much higher level of service, including maintaining streets and city infrastructure than Greenwood, which only has one small portion of a township road they need to maintain. Other township comparisons included Beatty at \$83.56, Breitung at \$323.20, Unorganized 63-17 (west end of the lake) at \$161.48, Vermilion Lake at \$59.32, Owens at \$66.83, Eagles Nest at \$149.82, and Kugler at 130.47. Bassing said this data came from the St. Louis County Land Explorer and the Minnesota Department of Revenue.

The township's levy has been set at \$150,000 since 2018.

The 2024 budget does include a \$60,000 set-aside for capital replacement costs, and \$43,000 for the fire department equipment, repairs, and training. This is up from \$17,700 budgeted in 2023. The 2024 budget does not include an amount for the Tower Area Ambulance Service, though the 2023 budget does include a \$16,000 amount. The 2023 budget also included \$100,000 for broadband projects.

area," said Lee Peterson, who asked if the township had any input in making the map. The coverage area will not include Isle of Pines, and some other more remote and water-access areas.

The township was not involved in Bois Forte's grant proposal.

Mike Ralston, who has worked on broadband grants for the township while on the town board, noted that the township had unsuccessfully submitted grant proposals for a broadband project two years in a row.

"Both were turned down," he said.

"CTC is working 100percent with the Band on the project," said Ralston. "Everyone else is just hanging on the shirttails."

"Getting coverage in the outlying areas will require money from the township," Ralston noted. "We need to continue to address the shortfall and raise the money out of Greenwood Township pockets."

"CTC is willing to work with us," said John Bassing. "We have the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money, but it won't cover nearly all those areas. We will need to be strategic with it."

Bassing said it is important for those living in areas that won't be covered, and who are interested in broadband, to let the township know they are willing to subscribe to broadband if it is available in their area. CTC helps subsidize the installation of broadband, so decisions made are often dependent on the number of customers in an area. "It still bothers me that the map was drawn without township comment and approval," said Peterson. But John Bassing responded that this was common during the broadband plan-

#### ning process.

**Fire department** Fire Chief Jeff Maus reported on the fire depart-

reported on the fire department activities for the year. He said the town board had approved raising the hourly wage for fire fighters from \$10 to \$15 for trainings, and had increased the number of annual trainings from 12 to 24.

"All our trucks and fire boats have been serviced," he said. While the trucks are all "up to snuff," Maus said the larger fire boat is having issues with its engines, which were found during fall maintenance, and the department was working with the manufacturer to solve the issue.

The department has also instituted an automatic mutual aid agreement with the Virginia Fire Department for any structure fire at Fortune Bay Resort Casino.

Maus noted the department had had a lot of turmoil and turnover in employees. The department now sits at 10 members, with seven firefighters (some of whom are also EMRs), and three EMRs. The department also hired an administrative assistant last year.

#### **Other actions**

➤ A motion to ask the board to appoint The *Timberjay* as the township's official newspaper passed with two no votes. Interim Clerk JoAnn Bassing said the township had received a quote from the *Timberjay*, that the township website "doesn't function well," and that the board is looking at upgrading the website. A motion was put on the floor to have the board also request that the company who maintains the current website, TechBytes, be hired to get notices and other information added to the website.

Township residents can also request to be on an email notification list, to receive regular meeting packets and notices of special meetings.Requests can be emailed to clerk@ greenwoodmn.com.

► All four candidates for the four open township seats were reelected. Incumbent Paul Skubic received 59 votes. John Bassing received 72 votes for the open supervisor seat. Interim clerk JoAnn Bassing was elected to the one-year clerk seat with 71 votes, and interim treasurer Jeff Maus was elected to the two-year treasurer seat with 71 votes.

► Mike Ralston gave the road report. The only township road is Birch Point Extension with is a little over 8,000 feet long. "The road is becoming worse and worse every year," Ralston said. "It will need some attention, either we'll need to invest money in upgrades or let it deteriorate back to gravel.' The township did receive an estimate on the cost to repave the road which came in at over \$440,000.

➤ The town board met after the annual meeting to canvass the votes and pay bills. The board will hold their reorganizational meeting on Thursday, March 23 at 6:30 p.m.



property value.

"If someone is complaining about township taxes," John Bassing said. "It can't be possible."

Lee Peterson said the township should be promoting their tax rate to attract commercial businesses, including land available that is not on the lakeshore.

"Compared to other

#### Broadband

Broadband was another area of discussion at the meeting. The majority of Greenwood Township will have broadband installed as part of a larger project overseen by Bois Forte, who received a \$20 million federal grant.

"I am taken aback by the map of the coverage but not from the Tower News at this point in time. She noted the *Timberjay* offers online access to all its legal notices, and the *Tower News* has no current website. "That is a definite plus for the *Timberjay*," she said.

A resident asked if the township could post notices on their own website. JoAnn Bassing replied Peter Schamber, Executive Director info@gardnertrust.org | 218-365-2639

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#### **MORSE**...Continued from page 1 by the reelection of Bob area) ambulance by Berrini, who was running ing – otherwise we w

unopposed for his current supervisor position. A total of 49 residents cast ballots this year, an increase from the 38 cast in last year's election.

The meeting started with the announcement of Berrini's reelection followed by a vote for the township clerk, Nick Wognum, as the meeting moderator.

#### **Finances**

Township treasurer Mary Ann Lekatz gave the financial report, noting that the township's beginning balance for the 2022 fiscal year was \$467,822. Incoming receipts were \$780,153 and disbursements were \$918,167, leaving a year-end balance of \$329,808.

"The difference is about \$150,000," remarked Berrini. "That \$150,000 actually went to that (Ely area) ambulance building – otherwise we would have the same as we had last year."

Responding to a question from an attendee about the poor 0.01-percent interest rate earned on Morse's reserve of \$45,594, Lekatz responded that higher rate short-term equities are not made available to a township government: "You have to remember, this is government, and we can't go in and get certificates of deposit (at higher rates of interest). I will admit we do have three of them ... For a whole year, we got \$21.36 (in interest on them). That has changed because there are new figures coming in in January. And yes, we have switched them all to different certificates that are making more money."

The 2024 general budget passed unanimously. Lekatz noted that the budget for wages and benefits, "went up quite a bit," from \$1,500 budgeted in 2023 to \$4,500 for 2024. Lekatz explained that the added expense is to cover running four elections during the fiscal year. The elections are the presidential nominating party election, the township election, the primary election, and the general election.

Other items that increased were the ambulance budget, which went from \$25,000 in 2023 to \$30,000 in 2024. The fire budget also increased, from \$60,000 to \$65,000.

The 2024 road and bridge budget was also approved at \$114,300, which is \$17,500 less than 2023. The reduced expenses were for snowplowing, brushing, chloride and crack seal.

In other matters of business, the annual meeting:

► Approved a 2024 levy of \$365,730, which is the same amount as both 2023 and 2022. The revenues from the levy will be split, with 49.5 percent going to the general fund and 50.5 percent going to the road and bridge fund.

> Voted to set the polling hours for next year's township election to be from noon to 8 p.m., the same as this year.

► Approved the date of the next annual meeting to be March 12, which is the usual second Tuesday of March mandated by Minnesota statute Sec. 365.51

Discussed brushing, snowplowing and the width of road right of ways, in a foray initiated by Bill Erzar.

Discussed the trials of trying to get better broadband service for the township. The meeting adjourned 61 minutes after it began. Your local source for news, music and entertainment!



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#### **REPORT**...Continued from page 1

thousands of dollars on materials.

In June of 2022, with their five-year certification period coming due, the company sent the EPA a letter indicating its wish to renew. That's when the EPA delivered their bombshell. Due to two minor issues, neither of which was the fault of Lamppa Manufacturing, the company would need to repeat the entire testing program before the EPA would renew its certification. What's more, the company's certification would expire on Sept. 1, preventing them from either selling or advertising their wood furnaces.

It was the worst possible timing, noted Garrett Lamppa, now the fourth generation of the Lamppa family to run the company. "Business was booming," said Lamppa, given that the company had geared up for its biggest year ever. And, suddenly, just as the heating season was getting underway, the EPA pulled the rug out. "They were willing to put us out of business. They made that clear," said Lamppa.

At the same time, notes Lamppa, the EPA continues to allow companies that had failed to meet the standards. for certification to sell their stoves as certified products.

#### **Emissions** a critical issue

For years, wood stoves reduced heating costs for many homeowners, but created an enormous public health hazard due to their emissions, which include extremely fine particulates, known as PM 2.5, as well as carbon monoxide and volatile organic compounds. Air quality concerns are most acute in communities in the northern U.S., where a significant percentage of homeowners burn wood. The EPA estimates that the estimated 340,000 tons of fine particulates emitted by wood-burning devices nationwide account for 10,000 to 40,000 excess deaths due to heart disease, lung cancer, and other

ailments. The Clean Air Act required the EPA to take steps to reduce those emissions and the result was a certification program which, at least on paper, appeared designed to do just that. Under new rules adopted in 2015, any wood furnace sold beginning in 2020 would need to meet standards that many manufacturers argued could never be met. That is until Lamppa Manufacturing met the standard in 2017, becoming the first wood furnace to be certified under the new program. Since then, the EPA has certified two other wood furnace manufacturers, in part because of a testing effort that EPA's inspector general describes as "dysfunctional."



Sauna stoves wrapped in preparation for shipping at Lamppa Manufacturing. The company was able to sell its high quality sauna stoves through the past several months, since they weren't subject to the same certification process as their wood furnaces.

photo by J. Summit

years about flaws in their testing program and took issue with the agency's certification of two other wood furnace manufacturers. He had reviewed their test results and was convinced that neither had actually met the standards for certification.

He wasn't the only one with concerns. "Flawed test methods and a lack of EPA oversight of the wood heater program have created uncertainty for states," wrote the inspector general in his Feb. 28, 2023 report. "State regulators from Alaska and California said that they are concerned about relying on the EPA's certification process to identify wood heaters to sell in their states or for their changeout programs."

In New England, the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management, a regional regulatory body issued its own analysis of the EPA's program, which highlighted deficiencies in lab testing and reporting that neither the EPA nor the third-party certifiers identified through the certification process or their oversight.

Among the concerns was that the EPA had established alternative testing methods that state regulatory agencies argued created unrealistic conditions that allowed passage of wood-burning devices that would never achieve emissions targets in real world circumstances. The EPA, under pressure, withdrew those alternative testing methods in early 2022. The inspector general's report faulted the EPA on several fronts. "For example, the EPA lacked policies and procedures detailing how to review certification test reports, did not conduct compliance audit tests, did not have standard templates for certification test reports, did not use staff with the appropriate subject-matter technical expertise, and did not exercise regulatory or oversight authority," wrote the inspector general."This lack of internal controls resulted in deficiencies in certification testing and certification test reports that the third-party certifier or the EPA should have caught during the certificate-of-compliance process."

depend on the EPA certification process to determine which wood-burning devices should qualify for rebate or tax credit programs.

The federal rebates are also dependent on the EPA's conclusions.

Yet, notes the EPA inspector general: "If the EPA's certification process is not reliable, the EPA and states involved in changeout programs may be wasting millions of dollars by subsidizing new appliances that may not be substantially cleaner in real-world conditions compared to the older appliances."

#### **Vindication for** Lamppa

Representatives of Lamppa Manufacturing have been making similar arguments for years, and have been frustrated at the way the EPA has ducked any kind of accountability, at least until now."It's been frustrating that they've been able to skirt responsibility for the problems," said Garrett Lamppa. "As soon as anything comes up, they put it on the manufacturer or the test lab."

In the end, it was the EPA's lack of transparency that created most of the problems for Lamppa Manufacturing, including the requirement that the company go through an expensive and time-consuming testing procedure yet again. While the manufacturers weren't supposed to have to test with every five-year recertification, a success. Yet, without changing the standard, the EPA quietly began requiring manufacturers meet a limit of 0.14 pounds, to provide an extra margin to reflect real-world circumstances.

"We've done everything we're supposed to do," said Daryl Lamppa. "It's been a nightmare," added, noting that he because of that one minor discrepancy, he nearly lost the company.

And the toll was more than financial. Both Lamppa and his plant manager, Dale Horihan, describe the testing process itself as incredibly stressful and time consuming. In addition, it takes time to schedule a slot at most test labs, and it wasn't until November that Horihan could line up a test window, but it took two more weeklong trips to the facility to complete the four burns required under the testing regimen. That's in part because of a new EPA requirement that the testing lab use a Teflon filter, a requirement that had apparently never been tested for compatibility. Horihan said the new filter was initially a disaster, absorbing enormous amounts of water vapor and halting testing. Since each test can take as much as eight hours when all goes right, every glitch in the process wastes an entire day.

By the time of the first round of testing, Lamppa Manufacturing had been unable to take new orders for wood furnaces for more than two months. Workers had been put on reduced hours and everyone there understood that the very future of the company

rested on the success of the tests. Horihan said the pressure and stress was intense.

While that first round of testing made progress, problems with the filter prevented the testing lab from completing all four of the burns within the week. In the end, Horihan was forced to make two other trips to Intertek to finally complete the tests.

As it had back in 2017, Lamppa's Kuuma wood furnace proved that its wood furnace is the cleanest and most efficient wood furnace on the marketand it's the only one that's met the 0.14 pounds per million BTU rule. Daryl Lamppa notes that the three other manufacturers currently certified have never met that new rule, yet are allowed to continue to sell their furnaces, at least until they're up for renewal.

Lamppa Manufacturing received its official green light to begin sales again on March 1, but the impact of losing six months of sales during the heart of the heating season has left the company strapped. Besides lost sales, Garrett Lamppa figures the company spent close to \$100,000 for the latest round of testing.

And the company is likely to have to retest in five years, because of an error made by the testing lab. While the lab was supposed to conduct certain test burns with 40 pounds of wood, the test lab had granted the manufacturers a ten-percent margin either way, which was based on their understanding of the EPA's testing guidelines. At least one of Lamppa's most recent tests was conducted with slightly less than 40 pounds of wood, although it was well within the ten-percent margin. But because of the discrepancy, the company expects it will have to retest in five years.

#### EPA changes its tune

While the EPA has yet to issue a response to the inspector general's report, officials at Lamppa say they've already noticed a change in the agency's attitude."They completely changed their tune after the report came out," said Garrett Lamppa. While the EPA had initially been resistant to suggestions for improvements, he said the agency is now making many of the changes that the company had recommended, such as better communication with the manufacturers. With only three wood furnace manufacturers in the country, it made no sense to keep manufacturers in the dark about the changing regulatory landscape. "They made all these changes and never let anyone know," said Garrett Lamppa.

Meanwhile, notes Garrett Lamppa, the EPA is allowing companies that likely can't meet the latest standards remain certified and on the market, "which means tax credits are being flushed."

Those companies, which were initially certified two years after Lamppa's Kuuma wood furnaces, will need to re-test before they can be recertified in 2024. And that could provide Lamppa Manufacturing with the window for dramatic growth down the road... provided they can avoid the vagaries of the federal EPA.



#### Inconsistencies and lack of oversight

The findings of the EPA's inspector general came as no surprise to Daryl Lamppa, who had overseen development of Lamppa Manufacturing's exceptional wood furnaces. He had also overseen testing at the certified laboratory in Madison, Wis., which became the go-to laboratory for wood furnace makers seeking EPA certification.

Daryl had seen firsthand the many problems that plagued the testing program, in large part because of unclear directions and oversight from the EPA, as well as unannounced changes in the standards.

Daryl had complained bitterly to EPA officials for

#### Millions of dollars potentially wasted

At the state level, many regulators were under political pressure to improve air quality in communities, particularly in mountainous regions, where winter inversions often trapped wood smoke for days. Those states often invested millions of their own tax dollars to provide incentives for wood stove users to change out their old, polluting wood stoves and furnaces for cleaner, more efficient models. As the EPA inspector general noted, those states often

the EPA required that Lamppa do exactly that, for one very technical discrepancy in the original test.

On one of the four original test burns conducted on the Lamppa wood furnace, the device had emitted 0.147 pounds of soot for every million BTUs, an amount of heat equivalent to about two-and-a-half weeks of burning. The standard set by the agency was 0.15, so the burn would appear to have been 12 S River Street, Cook MN **Open Monday - Friday** (218) 666-5958

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#### PANNING THE WASTE STREAM

# Study suggests big job gains from new kind of mining State support for recycling e-waste could generate nearly 1,800 jobs statewide

**RESULTS 2023 DATA** 

#### by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

REGIONAL - A new pilot study suggests a new type of "mining" could create more than 1,700 direct jobs in Minnesota and help address the country's need for valuable metals like copper and silver.

The study, conducted by a Macalester College in partnership with Repowered and the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability, concluded that a more concentrated, statewide effort to recycle the valuable metals contained in electronic devices could also generate about \$2.8 billion in annual revenue, creating a major value-added industry for the state.

"In public conversations about mining, we only usually talk about mining for virgin metals, but there are a lot of opportunities to reuse the metal that's already been dug out of the ground, and it seems wholly irresponsible to not look there first before we alter



even more landscapes and communities," said Professor Roopali Phadke, who is one of the study's principal investigators and a scholar of environmental politics and policy at Macalester College.

Researchers with the study had two primary questions to answer: how much electronic waste (also known as e-waste) is actually generated in Minnesota each year, and how much of it can feasibly be recycled.

Using peer-reviewed research, market prices of metals, and local data on e-waste, the researchers found that there is real potential in e-waste recycling. If



100 percent of the 266 million pounds of e-waste generated in Minnesota each year were captured for recycling or refurbishment, the effort would generate: ▶1,738 direct jobs.

➤78 million pounds of valu-

able metals. ► Enough copper for 155,000

electric vehicles. ► Enough silver to produce 441,000 solar panels.

Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability President Marlise Riffel noted that her organization has long advocated for sustainable jobs on the Iron Range. "Because e-waste has no foreseeable endpoint, this is a golden opportunity to harvest all we can from this resource. Capturing value from 100 percent of the e-waste we generate is a win-win for jobs, revenue, and the environment."

Annual value of 62

critical elements

2,838,056,020

The researchers argue this pilot study, which is based in part on data from Repowered's St. Paul e-waste recycling facility, demonstrates the need for a more comprehensive review of every e-waste facility in Minnesota.

A real policy commitment, like legislation providing free and accessible e-waste collection, would contribute to the circular economy of metals and would put Minnesota at the head of the pack among states.

NEW JOBS CREATED DIRECT + 1,607 INDIR 3.345 TOTAL

"There is an ethical problem here. We can't just keep making stuff without paying attention to the ingredients that go into the stuff," said Phadke."I am sympathetic to the Republican argument that, right now, our supply of metals comes from places that are known for human rights abuses and all kinds of dirty politics. And, so, we should consider obtaining these metals from our own backyard, but we can't do it by just green-lighting every mining project and trespassing over Native treaties to get those metals. E-waste might be a real solution."

#### MOSQUITOS...Continued from page 1 -

"I was given a box of parts," he said. "It was a bit overwhelming. It didn't even have an instruction book.

The team has moved from learning the basics of robotics to now competing at the highest level, after earning a coveted spot at the FIRST Robotics World Championship in Texas this April.

So, in addition to learning robotics, Lindsay is now leading the effort to raise the funds needed to take the team of 20 students to the Lone Star state.

Lindsay has been learning robotics alongside his team members, who range from eighth graders to seniors

He admits their team is limited somewhat by his own expertise. But the team is slowly adding mentors, including a computer programmer, Walter Harrier, who moved to Cook during the pandemic, and has been working with his team members along with a new team formed at North Woods School.

"The program is designed so kids can be mentored by professionals," he said. "But up here, it tends to be mostly led by teachers." Teams in the Twin Cities, he said, often are led by professional engineers.

# Fundraising underway

The Iron Mosquitos are working to raise money to pay for a bus, hotel room, and associated costs for the trip to the world championships in Texas, which Lindsay estimated will total between \$30,000 and \$40,000. Any local businesses or individuals who would be interested in supporting the team as they represent the Iron Range before the world, please check out our gofundme page at https:// gofund.me/2178249d. The team would also like to thank their current sponsors Bois Forte Band, AISES, Pebble Spa, Ely Marathon, Apple, and the Gene Haas Foundation.

Team members include Noah Axelsson, Natalie Backe, Matthew Bock, Connor Doyle, Brandon Hancock, Amaya Johnson, Isaiah Johnson, Owen Koivisto, Tuuli Koivisto, Molly Lindsay, Hailey Lindquist, Leo McKrahl, Eva Morgan, Raiden Pratt, Greyson Reichensperger, Alora Hanson, Makana Bodas, Ian Sunsdahl, Simon Bartnick, Samantha Daugherty, and Rafael Marroquin.

coming in with the fourthplace alliance team (teams work together during the competition). Sixty teams competed at the event.

'We had the highest point total of the tournament," Lindsay said. "We do okay." The team was grouped with a team from Wayzata and WICORI (a large, consolidated district) in the finals.

Lindsay said. "But the last 10 days before the tournament, we often worked past 10 p.m."

NER senior Owen Koivisto got hooked on robotics after seeing a team demonstration when he was still in elementary school at Tower-Soudan.

"Over the years he has done many midnight build sessions, given up summer days and weekends, and figured out how to lead a team full of teenagers. He and the local mentors he's recruited have challenged kids to step outside their comfort zones and accomplish more than they ever thought possible," Denzer-Johnson said.

Koivisto also credits the dedication shown by Lindsay.

"He is honestly the idea coach," Koivisto said. "He pushes us, but he also knows how to have a good time. He puts in so much time. We are at school so late some nights."

Koivisto has decided to study engineering in college and is planning on attending Itasca Community College next fall.

The team is now headed to their second regional competition in Peoria, Ill., March 17-18.

Most years, the team will compete in two Minnesota tournaments during the winter season, but this year they had to travel further from home to fit a second tournament into their schedule.

The team was also invited to an event in California this past fall, hosted by Apple, where they showcased their outreach work in the community. Team members also spent time over the past few years doing outreach at other area schools, doing workshops with the Boys and Girls Club at Nett Lake and Vermilion, and even offering robotic grocery delivery from inside the store to the parking lot at area Zup's during the lockdown period of the

pandemic. Team members bring a variety of the skills to the group. While some are more interested in the technical aspects like 3D-printing and welding, others focus on software programming, electronics, as well as graphics and marketing.

"They all learn something technical," Lindsay said. The younger team

members have to learn basic skills like drilling a hole in metal, he said, older students learn to design pieces on the 3-D printer or use the CNC tool to cut aluminum into precise shapes.

Team members grow their skills and expertise year to year, and many have moved on to study science and technology in college or move on to technical jobs out of high school like welding or diesel mechanics.

"Through the Iron Mosquitos, so many kids have realized they have a gift and a passion for something that without robotics, they never would have known. Whether that passion be welding, wiring, engineering, programming, mechanics, CAD, grant writing, or countless other things. So many students first discovered that passion and gifting through being a part of the robotics team,' said Denzer-Johnson, who has two children on the team.

"We really could use a retired mechanical engineer," he said. "If anyone knows of one who might be interested!"

But like the mosquito, this team is "small, per-sistent, and highly effective," which also happens to be the team's motto.

Working with about 20 students from Babbitt, Tower, Ely, Embarrass, and Cook, the Iron Mosquitos won the highest award given at the regional competition in Duluth earlier this month, the First Impact Award. The team is definitely small, but mighty. Some teams at the competition, Lindsay said, had more than 80 students, more than the entire student high school body at NER.

"The award is not given out for what you have done this year," said parent and volunteer coach Ryan Denzer-Johnson. "It is given for the impact that is being made in kids' lives, the schools, the community, and the region by bringing awareness and opportunity for people to experience robotics.'

The team also had a good showing at the regional competition in Duluth,

Last year the team won a design and engineering award at the Minnesota State Robotics Competition, where they were able to use the school's new CNC (computer numerical control) machine to create custom metal parts.

This week the team was busy repairing their robot, which needed some work after the competition in Duluth. Lindsay said they are still seeing issues with sourcing parts, a problem that started during the pandemic. They were not able to get some of the commercial grade parts they needed for their robot this year and had to make due with lighter-weight options." "We couldn't get commercial grade slides this year," he said, "and also all the motors we ordered were delayed and didn't get here on time."

The team meets after school four days a week, and then again on Saturday. The season starts in January and ends in March. Each year teams are challenged to build robots that can perform specific tasks during the competition, so each year the design process can start from scratch. Robots can be designed to be offensive or defensive on the playing field.

"They spend at least 30 hours a week on this,"

"It was a real eye-opener," he said. "I hadn't ever seen anything like that before."

Koivisto has learned a lot over the years as a team member, but perhaps the most important lesson has been about the importance of teamwork. He said the team members treat each other like family, and he also had enjoyed getting to know the members of other robotics teams during competitions.

"I'm not a theater kid," he said, "robotics is for me."

As the lone senior on the team, he is in his second year as "drive captain," charged with controlling the robot during the competition. He is also one of four co-captains of the team. Other co-captains are Greyson Reichensperger, Natalie Backe, and Hailey Lindquist.

"You really have to know the controls," he said. "And you need to have good social skills to work with the other drive captains in your alliance.'

Depending on when the robot is finished, the drive captain may have no time to practice before the actual competition.

"My only drive practice was at the regional competition this year," he said."It's a lot of pressure."

Denzer-Johnson said the team's success is a testament to Lindsay, and all he has invested in the lives of these students.

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# SPORTS

#### SECTION 7A BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

# Ely falls to Northland

Season ends for Wolves after opening round win over the Huskies

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

DULUTH- The sixth-seeded Timberwolves' playoff hopes came to a convincing end here last Saturday as the Northland Eagles poured in 21 three-pointers enroute to a 93-59 win. "We really ran into a buzzsaw," said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. "I don't remember any team shooting that well in any game I have coached in my career. There was very little we could do to stop it."

Elv's defense was rendered largely useless as Northland players didn't need to work the ball inside. Time after time, they approached

Ely's perimeter and simply launched another trey before the Wolves could even respond. It was a deadly assault, the kind that few teams could overcome.

"We actually didn't play too poorly," said McDonald."We had only seven turnovers on the day and our

It was a bad ending to a very nice season for us.

> **Ely Head Coach** Tom McDonald

shooting wasn't terrible. They just shot the ball that well. It was a bad ending to a very nice season for us," said McDonald.

Senior standout Joey Bianco finished his high school career with 28 points on the night along with eight assists. Senior Jason Kerntz had a good night as well, adding 12 points.

Saturday's loss to Northland came on the heels of Ely's 66-39 win over Bigfork last Thursday night. Playing on their home hardwood, Ely took control of the game from the beginning and never let up. "Jumping out to a

See WOLVES...pg. 2B



Above: Ely senior Joey Bianco runs into a gauntlet of Bigfork defenders as he goes in for a layup during Ely's opening round playoff tilt with the Bigfork Huskies. The Timberwolves went on to win that game 66-39.

Top right: Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald gestures as he talks endgame strategy with his team during the final minutes of the Bigfork game.

Middle right: Ely senior Jason Kerntz works the ball around a Bigfork defender.

**Right: Ely sophomore Caid Chittum looks to pass** while under pressure at midcourt. Chittum was among just a small handful of younger players with considerable varsity playing time this season on the senior-dominated team.

photos by M. Helmberger







## Stabu nus u rizziies North Woods tops Littlefork in opening round of Section 7A playoffs

#### by DAVID COLBURN

Cook-Orr Editor

**REGIONAL-** The North Woods Grizzlies returned to form in their sectional hoops tourney opener March 9 against Littlefork-Big Falls, winning 89-71, but failed to advance against Cherry, 105-76.

After closing out the regular season with a road loss to Deer River, the Grizzlies were looking to regain a bit of their swagger against the tenth-seeded Vikings. The contest was tight to start, as L-BF kept pace 12-12 in the early going. But the Grizzlies shattered any illusion this one would be close by amping up the pressure on defense and reeling off a 10-0 burst that would snowball, leading to another blitz ahead of the break. The Grizzlies headed into halftime staked to a 23-point lead, 52-29.

The Vikings trimmed that margin a bit in the second half when Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich began rotating his bench into the lineup, but North Woods was never seriously threatened in posting the 18-point victory.

The Grizzlies used a familiar formula to score the win, forcing 21 L-BF turnovers that they turned into a 24-8 advantage in points scored off turnovers. North Woods also rebounded well in this game, pulling down 53 boards to the Vikings' 38.

Jonah Burnett and Brenden Chiabotti each scored 22 to lead the Grizzlies. Jared Chiabotti added 17, and Kaden Ratai had 11.

See GRIZZLIES...pg. 2B



Above: North Woods' Kaden Ratai puts a smackdown on a Cherry shooter.

Above right: The Grizzlies' Louie Panichi looks for an opening through Cherry's tight defense.

Right: The Grizzlies' Ben Kruse and Eli Smith both go up for a rebound.

photos by B. Smith





#### STATE OFFICES

# Rukavina confirmed as IRRR commissioner

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

R E G I O N A L — The Minnesota Senate has confirmed the appointment of Ida Rukavina to serve as Commissioner of the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilition.

Gov.TimWalzhadannounced Rukavina's appointment on Dec. 21, to replace outgoing commissioner Mark Phillips. Rukavina



Ida Rukavina was born and

raised on the Iron Range and served most recently as the executive director of the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools, or RAMS. She was formerly a staffer for U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar and before that worked in the union movement.

Her educational experience includes a Bachelor of Arts in Government and American Politics with a concentration in Race and Ethnic Relations from Clark University and a Master's Degree in Advocacy and Political Leadership from the University of Minnesota – Duluth.

"I'm proud that Ida Rukavina willserveasthenextCommissioner of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation," said Governor Walz. "With a proven track record serving schools, townships, and cities on the Iron Range, she is well-positioned to ensure the Northland doesn't just survive, but thrives."

Rukavina said she was

humbled by the support she's received and looks forward to her new position. "I am committed to working toward a future that includes jobs that support families, a strong educational system and thriving cities and towns."

Rukavina is the daughter of the late Tom Rukavina, a legendary Iron Range politician.

#### WHERE TO RENT IN ELY?

# **Resignation airs housing challenge for many workers**

by CATIE CLARK Ely Editor

Rachel Frey, formerly of Ely, resigned her paraprofessional job at Ely Memorial High School, effective March 10, primarily over her inability to find affordable housing in the community.

"Finding housing in Ely is a complication that I have been unable to surpass despite lots of searching," said Frey in her resignation letter. "My current lease is soon ending, and my rental home placed on the market."

Frey did indeed search for a solution. She posted in the "Ely MN Rentals" group on Facebook in January that she needed to find a new place to stay through the end of May.

Ely's rental housing market has been a challenge for years. Looking at statistics from realtor. com, there are more houses for sale in Ely than there are houses or apartments for rent. According to a canvass of currently available rentals, a one-bedroom apartment in Ely can range from \$750 to around \$1,000 per month. Twobedroom apartments typically rent for more than \$1,000.

#### A living wage

Frey's resignation prompted the *Timberjay* to investigate just how much money one needs to make to afford living in Ely.

The school district hired Frey for the 2022-2023 school year. The position involved six and a half hours, five days per week.According to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 295, Ely paraprofessionals make between \$16 to more than \$17 an hour. The *Timberjay* used \$17/ hour for its analysis.

A full-time job at \$17/hour is equivalent to \$34,000/year when working 50 weeks per year. Total federal and state taxes, including FICA, will be \$6,050 for a single filer with no children, assuming the worker takes the standard deduction for income tax. Aftertax income will be \$17,300/year or \$1,442/month. The *Timberjay* used the tax calculator at smartasset.com to determine tax rates.

Using the usual rule that housing should take between a quarter to a third of one's gross earnings, this corresponds to a monthly affordable housing cost of \$708 to \$935 per month. A wage of \$17/hour for a single person can certainly provide enough money in Ely for a rental.

The *Timberjay* also looked at how little one can earn and still afford an Ely apartment with a rent of \$750/month. That wage is approximately \$14/hour for a single person with no dependents. This assumes, of course, that there are rentals available in Ely's rental market, which wasn't the case for Frey.

#### Not enough to live on

Frey's problem wasn't her wage, it was the number of hours she worked. Her paraprofessional position paid her for the 180-day school year. Using \$17/hour and six and a half hours a day, this is a gross of \$19,890 spread over ten months. Taking out state and federal taxes yields a takehome pay of \$1,730/month for 10 months, or \$1,442/month if those earnings must last for an entire year.

Using the 10-month figure and a low-ball rent of \$750, this

leaves \$980/month for all other expenses like food, utilities, and transportation. If rent is \$1,000, then there is only \$730 for all other expenses.

The *Timberjay* looked at two different cost of living calculators to gauge how far a dollar can stretch in Ely: The Living Wage Calculator at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Cost-of-Living Calculator at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

The closest location for which the MIT calculator had data was Duluth, where the living wage was \$15.79 for a single person with no dependents. In comparison, DEED had cost of living numbers for St. Louis County, with a living wage of \$14.67.

The MIT calculator estimated that monthly housing costs averaged \$666/month. DEED estimated \$767, which is closer to actual rents in Ely. Both are on the low side for current market conditions.

Excluding housing and taxes, the MIT calculator estimated

that all expenses other than taxes or housing were \$1,676/ month and the DEED calculator estimated \$1,562/month. Given ongoing inflation, food costs for both calculators are low: \$334 for MIT and \$394 for DEED. Transportation costs were also high, which is odd since Ely is a walkable community: \$446 for MIT and \$729 for DEED. We suspect the DEED number was higher due to longer commutes in St.Louis Co., especially for those working in the mining industry.

What does this mean for someone like Frey working in Ely for \$17/hours? If Frey was taking home a net income after taxes of \$1,730/month, she would barely make ends meet if she had a rent of \$750 and walked everywhere instead of using her vehicle. Raising expenses beyond that subsistence level was unaffordable.

The *Timberjay* reached out to Frey for comment and received no response.

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

big lead was huge for us," said McDonald. "I thought we really played well defensively and we shot the ball well at times and even when Bigfork tried to make a run against us I thought we held our composure and hit some big shots."

The Wolves put the

**GRIZZLIES...** 

Continued from page 1B

," Huskies behind the eight ball from the beginning and built a 41-18 lead by the half. While Bigfork kept it closer in the second half, thanks to better success from beyond the arc, the Wolves only needed to keep pace. That they did, outscoring the Huskies 25-21 in the frame.

Bianco notched a double-double in the contest, with 25 points and ten assists. Freshman Jack Davies tallied 21 points and senior Erron Anderson posted eight rebounds.

The Wolves finished their season at 20-8, a mark

they'll struggle to surpass next year. "We have five seniors and it will be tough to replace them," said McDonald. Among them is Bianco, the team's leading scorer, and Anderson, the team's leading rebounder. "The bulk of our scoring and rebounding will be

gone and we will have to have some development of some players in the off-season if we will be able to have some success next year."McDonald notes that a few younger players, most notably Davies and sophomore Caid Chittum, have plenty of varsity

experience, while junior Gavin Marshall put in some varsity time as well. "Everyone else will be untested at the varsity level," said McDonald.



Cherry

Bracket builders didn't do the Grizzlies any favors when they slotted Cherry second in the section, making them the next opponent for North Woods. Using the Quality Ratings Formula, Cherry was rated the fourth best team in the state in Class A, and had already beaten the Grizzlies 84-65 in the regular season.

Playing Saturday at Duluth Denfeld, the Tigers took a early lead, but North Woods steadily reeled them back in, drawing to within 33-30. From that point, it was largely a case of the Grizzlies having woken a slumbering giant, as Cherry closed out the first half on a 25-8 run to lead 58-38 at the break.

The Tigers were at their strongest when taking advantage of the Grizzlies in the paint, where they enjoyed a 70-20 advantage over North Woods. Neutralized inside and unable to mount a running game, North Woods didn't have the weapons to counter Cherry and watched their season come to an end with the 29-point loss.

The Grizzlies' trio of 1,000-point career scorers led the offense, with Brenden Chiabotti leading the way with 24. Jared Chiabotti scored 17 and Burnett added 16.

North Woods finished the season at 17-11.



\*\*\*\*\*\*

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## NORTHERN LAKES ARTS ASSOCIATION Tickets now on sale for Little Shop of Horrors musical

Musical opens March 23 and runs through April 1 at the Vermilion campus of Minnesota North College

Opening night of Northern Lakes Arts Association's production of "Little Shop of Horrors" is a week away. The musical opens at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 23 and 30, Friday, March 24 and 31, Saturday, March 25 and April 1, and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 26 at the Fine Arts Theater at the Vermilion campus of Minnesota North College. Tickets are available online at northernlakesarts.org or at the door.

Due to traumatic content and some unsavory language, this production is not recommended for children under eight.

Little Shop of Horrors is a comedic romance, horror story, and morality tale filled with farce and dark humor. The story follows Seymour Krelborn, a nerdy orphan with a sweet crush on his Mushnik's Flower Shop co-worker, Audrey. During a total eclipse of the sun, Seymour discovers and nurtures a mysterious plant that craves blood. Because of the unusual plant, Seymour gains fame and fortune, but at a deadly cost. A Greek chorus of doo wop girls musically guide the audience through the tale of Seymour, Audrey, the carnivorous plant and the residents of urban Skid Row.

Scenes portraying the despair of unescapable poverty, relationship abuse and trauma, are lightened and balanced by the musical's R&B, light rock and pop-flavored score and its many hilarious moments and gags.

#### Cast

The cast for the production includes Ian Lah as Seymour Krelborn; Wendy Lindsay as Audrey; Peter Kess as Mr. Mushnik; Jim Lah as Orin Scrivello, D.D.S; Emily Weise, Jennifer Merhar, and Grace Klein as the doo wop trio; Olin Weise as the Audrey II Puppeteer; Karin Schmidt as the voice of Audrey II; and Grey Kurnava, Bailey McLinn-Belehar, Matthew Janeksela, Sandra Tuominen form the ensemble.





#### History

The original "Little Shop of Horrors" was a 1960 comedy horror film that became a cult classic. It inspired the 1982 off-Broadway musical, which had a five-year run. The stage musical was adapted into the popular 1986 musical film of the same name with a cast that included Rick Moranis, Bill Murray, and Steve Martin.

The stage version of "Little Shop of Horrors" is popular with community theater groups because of its small cast and manageable set requirements.

#### In the pit

Marcia Homer is the musical director leading a pit of live musicians. Three of the musicians bring years of rock 'n' roll experience to the musical. Alan Phillips on electric guitar, Rich "Dunny" Dunstan on drums, and Irene Hartfield on piano, bring over 150 years of performing experience to the production.

Phillips specializes in guitar, having played professionally since his teens. He is also an accomplished drummer and singer. He is self-taught and has



#### Actors and musicians are getting ready for the premier of Little Shop of Horrors on March 23. submitted

what Hartfield calls "big ears," which is the talent to listen to music and then play it by ear. He says he learned this skill from his grandmother, an accordion virtuoso who also played by ear.

Rich "Dunny" Dunstan has played drums since high school. He went on to play in three Ely rock bands: the Bop Cats, the James Street Band and Desperado. Dunstan has played for countless musicals in Ely, as well as for community concerts. He is also a co-founder of the always entertaining Ely Klown Band.

Trained in classical piano, Hartfield has always loved playing popular music. Growing up in Ely gave her the opportunity to play for musicals, talent shows, church services, choirs, and soloists. She eventually ended up in New York City, covering popular songs with her own trio in night clubs throughout the tri-state area, Las Vegas, Florida, Venezuela, Sweden and on cruise ships. Her favorite rock experience was playing with the Roadhouse Jam Band with the late Earl Bulinski.

About the current production, Hartfield remarked, "It's so fun to play the 'Little Shop of Horrors' which contains many familiar rock feels."

Also in the pit are Emily Roose on bass, Sam Coleman on acoustic guitar, and Karin Schmidt on keyboard two. Two in the pit band, Roose and Hartfield, also play with the Mesabi Symphony Orchestra.

#### **Obituaries and Death Notices**



and the Orr American

Post 1757 Honor Guard de) Anderson and moved Jeff (Kathy); sisters-inback to Minnesota where Legion Post 480 Honor he continued his life of Guard. Lunch will be of- service. He was a proud member of Vietnam Veterans of America 1, DAV Chapter 23, Kolstad. American Legion Post 780, VFW Post 1757, where he served as Commander, adjutant and treasurer, and a member of the Honor Guard. He was VFW District Commander and a member of Military Order of Cooties 5, Cloquet. Bob was an integral part of the "We Honor Vets" program of Essentia Hospice. His vision was always to provide dignity for a Veteran's end of life, and he honored each of those with a certificate, a flag, and a serviceman's pin. Bob spent eight to nine years in the program and over 250 visits at Veterans end of life in the Iron Range.

Jewel; 24 grandchildren: Cron-Sheehy

of Life will be held Frilaw: Jill, Joy (Jim), and day, March 17, 2023, at Funeral Jonah, Carlton (Melody), Home from 5-7 p.m. in Eveleth. Mass of Christian Burial will be held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Virginia at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 18, with visitation at the church 1 hour prior to the service. Fr. Brandon Moravitz celebrating. Burial will be at Lake View Cemetery in Buhl. Family services provided by the Cron-Sheehy Funeral Home. He is survived by his spouse of 55 years Jo Anne; his son, William (Amy Vesel); daughter, Amy; grandchildren, Emily (Kyle), Ryan, Hanna and Ruby; brother, Joseph (Emilie); sisters Lois Hadrava, Jean (Russel) Voss, JoAnn (Rich) Halverson; sisters-in-law, Connie Deminsky, Jacky Kveton, and Linda McConn; and several nieces and nephews.

of Embarrass, and Amy "Pumpkin" Bozicevich (Scott) of Virginia; grandson: Matt Bozicevich



Robert "Bob" Posch Robert "Bob" F. died Thursday, Posch March 9, 2023 at the St. Cloud VA Care Center. His heart stopped after a seven-year battle with ALS, at 78 years plus. He was a beloved husband, father, grandpa (papa), great-grandpa (great-papa), friend, and brother. We all will miss his smile, his quick but quiet sense of humor, his passionate follow through of anything he did, his well thought out way of expressing his thoughts, the twinkle in his blue eyes, and his care for those he loved.

A Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, March 18, 2023, at 1 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, Cook. Visitation will start at 12 noon with a Knights of Kaleva Ceremony at 12:45 p.m. Military Honors will be accorded by the Cook VFW

fered at the church immediately after the service, with social time following the lunch at the VFW in Cook. Burial will be held on Monday, March 20, 2023, at 11 a.m. at the Duluth Veterans Cemetery.

Bob was born in Duluth to Edward and Elvera (Haikonen) Posch. He attended St. Jean's, then Denfeld High School in Duluth. After graduation he joined the Navy, traveled the world for 3 years, then sailed to Vietnam for a year as part of the "brown water" Navy where he served as a radioman on his ship, the USS Samuel B. Roberts. After an honorable discharge in Newport, R.I., he stayed out east, met his first wife Nancy, and raised six children. He worked 34 years for Vermont Electric Co (VELCO) as a power coordinator; shifting electricity from power generating plants to power companies throughout eastern Canada and the Northeastern United States. After 35 years of marriage, he and Nancy parted ways. Although his job required shift work, he became a Boy Scout leader, a rider of Hondas and Harleys, a ham radio operator, a chaplain for some organizations, and continued his devout life as a Christian which began as a child.

At retirement in 2004, he married Judy (Schel-

Bob continued in martial arts, gardening, tinkering, volunteering at the Cook Hospital Auxiliary Thrift Shop, wood carving, painting, fishing, and writing. He never stopped sharing his love of Christ and "telling the story", even at the VA Hospital.

Bob is survived by his beloved wife Judy; children: Stacey (Randy), Tom, Darcy (Phil), Travis (Mandy), Jeremy, and Angela (Rob); daughtersin-law: Sunny and Jessica; stepsons: Jody (Peggy), Chris (Dawn), and Jeremy (Paula); brother Terry; sisters: Janice and Karen; brothers-in-law: Jack (Vicki), Jay (June), Leigh (James), William, Samantha, Taylor (Paul), Elizabeth (Joe), Dominic (Julia), Johnathan, Eliana, Sean, Virginia, Grace, Peter, Kittredge, Colin, Ashley, Randi, Taylor, Carlie, Paige, Keegan, Alicia (Mike), and Levi (Kristianna); 20 great-grandchildren: Jacob, Addison, Evelyn, Emmerson, Felicity, Jon, Colt, Jordan, Phoenix, Kyron, Lily, Bayden, Harven, Rowan, Grayson, Kassidy, Evalynn, Adilynn, Aleida, and Emilia; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and the mother of his children, Nancy.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers-in-law. Jim and Charlie; two sisters-inlaw, Jean and Jane; and his beloved golden Max.

In lieu of flowers, Bob would prefer donations to be sent for research into ALS: ALS Association, MN-ND-SD Chapter, 1919 University Ave W., St. Paul, MN 55104. Note: there will be a Celebration of Life in Rutland in June which will be announced. Online condolences to www.mlakerfuneralhome. com

#### **Earl William Milton**

Earl William Milton, 77, of Leonidas, went home to be with Jesus Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at Essentia Health, Virginia. A Celebration

#### Alan Bozicevich, Sr.

Alan Bozicevich, Sr., age 75 of Pine Island, Lake Vermilion, died unexpectedly Thursday March 2, 2023 in his home. A Celebration of life will be held at a later date. Family services provided by Bauman-Vermilion, A Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower.

He was born April 29, 1947 in Virginia, the son of Matt and Dena (Nevin) Bozicevich.

Al will be missed by his kids Al "Little Al" (Paula) Bozicevich, Jr.

of Mt. Iron; brother: Ed (Barbara) Bozicevich of Fayal Twp.; niece: Mona Pittman of Virginia; Fiancée Cathie Kishel and her family; extended family and friends.

#### **Evelyn Larson**

Evelyn Larson passed away on Friday, March 3, 2023, at the Cook Hospital. Evelyn was born on September 19, 1925. A Celebration of Life will be held in Arizona at a future date. Family services provided by Mlaker Funeral Home.

Evelyn is survived by her sister Mary George; daughters: Bonnie Grosshauser and husband Terry; Jodie Banks and husband Jeff; only grandchild Joseph; and many great nieces and great-great nieces/nephews.

#### **Steven (Steve)** Urman

Steven (Steve) Urman, 69, passed away at his home on March 14, 2023, with his family at his side. The Funeral Service is at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 18, 2023, at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely. Visitation is prior to the service from 10 - 11 a.m. Funeral arrangements are entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home.



# SPRING FLOODING OUTLOOK Mixed news in latest flood outlook

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

REGIONAL- The National Weather Service office in Duluth is offering both good news and bad news on the prospect for spring flooding in the North Country.

Exceptional amounts of snow have fallen across much of northeastern Minnesota in recent weeks, substantially raising the flood risk come April and May. That's the bad news. The good news is that much of that recent additional snow has fallen in the southern half of the

Arrowhead, which means runoff from the eventual spring melt won't necessarily impact the Rainy River watershed, which experienced the worst flooding in the modern historical record last spring.

In an online briefing held March 10, National Weather Service meteorologist Ketzel Levens said the current circumstances in the Rainy River basin suggest a lower risk of the kind of flooding experienced last year. Levens said the snow/water equivalent, or SWE, in the current snowpack is about one to two inches lower than at this same time last year. Levens made her comment, Right:Widespread flooding, like this at Pine Aire Resort on Lake Kabetogama, affected hundreds of lake properties in the border country last year. Will this year see a repeat? Only time will tell.

file photo

however, before this past weekend's snow event, which left several more inches of fresh snow on the ground throughout the watershed. A second storm was forecasted to drop even more snow on the area Thursday and Friday, after the Timberjay's

See FLOODING...pg. 5B





# **COMING AND GOING** Grosbeaks on the wing

#### THE LEGISLATURE

# **Bill would** establish carbon reserve in peatlands

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

REGIONAL - Anew bill that would establish a Lowland Conifer Carbon Reserve in Minnesota has been laid over for possible inclusion in an upcoming omnibus environment and natural resources bill

The measure, authored by Rep. Kristi Pursell, of Northfield, would establish a permanent reserve designed to sequester carbon in the fight against climate change. The measure would also require a portion of any future forecasted budget surpluses go to reimburse the Permanent School Trust Fund for any lost revenue resulting from establishment of the carbon reserve.

The measure is co-authored by Rep. Rick Hansen, of South St. Paul, who currently serves as chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee.

## The sudden disappearance of a favorite feeder bird is right on schedule

There did the pine grosbeaks go so suddenly?

That's a question I get a lot this time of year. Of all the common feeder birds here in the North Country, few if any are as regular in their habits as the pine grosbeaks, the largest of our finches. Every

year, in the first week of March, the male pine grosbeaks start disappearing and within just a few days, they've vanished. The females and immature male grosbeaks hang back a bit longer, a week to ten days in most cases, but even they are typically gone by right around March 15.

As of early this week, we were down to our last three or four stragglers.

The weather seems to make little difference. In a mild March or a cold and snowy one, the

pine grosbeak's internal calendar (which is set mostly by daylength) works the same, and by the time we're setting our clocks forward, the pine grosbeaks are thinking spring as well. The breeding hormones kick in first among the male grosbeaks, which is typical of most birds. The males are the chief defenders of breeding territories so they depart a week or so early to get territories established before the arrival of the females.

I suspect the disappearance of pine



grosbeaks was more noticeable to folks this year since they were so abundant at many feeders for the past few months. It's actually been an exceptionally good winter in our area for most finches, which include pine and evening grosbeaks, pine siskins, goldfinches, and redpolls. We had at least two dozen pine grosbeaks

every morning at our feeders this winter, and they were joined daily by nearly as many evening grosbeaks. I have heard many similar reports from around the area. While it was a good year for pine grosbeaks, it was probably the best year in a quarter century for evening grosbeaks, which have been a species of concern for a more than a decade. I know we went through twice as much sunflower seed as we do in a typical winter. Feeding nearly 50 grosbeaks will empty a 40-pound

bag of sunflower seeds in about ten days to two weeks.

But now, they've mostly vanished, although they haven't gone far. The breeding range of the pine grosbeak begins just north of the border and ranges up nearly to the tree line. Pine grosbeaks have proven to be highly successful as a species and are one of only a few birds that are found in boreal forests around the world, with a range that extends throughout northern North Right: A lone male pine grosbeak was still in the feeder early this week but had moved on as of Wednesday. photo by M. Helmberger

America, temperate portions of Siberia and northern Russia, all the way to Scandinavia. Only a few other finches, like redpolls and crossbills, have such vast ranges.

While we might think of pine grosbeaks as primarily seed eaters, since they readily devour sunflower seeds at our feeders, they actually eat more fruit than anything. They're partial to mountain ash berries and crab apples, but they also eat tree buds and even conifer needles. All this vegetation can be difficult for their nestlings to digest, so pine grosbeaks feed their young a pre-digested paste of vegetation and insects, which they store in pouches in the lower part of their jaw and regurgitate once back at their nest. The females do all the egg incubation although males are known to feed the females while on the nest.

Pine grosbeaks are known to be quite tame and I know one of our regular readers, Steve Wilson, formerly of Tower, now an Isabella resident, was able to feed some of them from his hand this winter. I'll have to try that next winter.

While our pine grosbeaks may be gone for the summer, they'll be back soon enough. I start listening for their sweet warbling whistle in the woods right around mid-October.

#### **Outdoors briefly**

#### Another state record northern certified

MILLE LACS LAKE-An angler caught and released a 46-1/4 inch northern pike on Mille Lacs Lake that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources certified as a tie with the current catch-andrelease state record.

Brad Lila caught and released the fish through the ice on Jan. 22.

"Immediately, I knew it was a very large fish because it peeled out drag and there was no stopping it. After about 10 minutes of fighting the fish, I knew that it might take more than me to land it."

Lila hollered and waved for help and two nearby anglers came to his aid. After about 30 minutes, Lila was able to get the fish through the ice and get quick measurements before releasing it back into the water. The fish was most likely a female

that was carrying eggs before spawning.

"It was so satisfying seeing her swim away," Lila said. "It's great to know that she's out there passing along those incredible genes and that someone else may have a chance of landing her someday."

Forest managers in Minnesota have known for years that forests can serve to sequester large amounts of carbon dioxide (CO2), which is absorbed by trees and other plants as they grow. Carbon dioxide is emitted from a wide range of sources, but most significantly from the burning of fossil fuels and the increasing amount of CO2 in the atmosphere is believed to be the primary driver of climate change.

Some types of forest are more effective at removing and keeping carbon out of the atmosphere, according to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC), which drafted a report on the subject in 2021. According to the MFRC, the state's vast stretches of peatlands and the predominantly black spruce forests that grow there, provide the most effective forest type for sequestering carbon. In total, Minnesota has just under five million acres of peatlands. According to the MFRC: "Around 3 million acres of those peatlands are forested, many by black spruce and other lowland conifers, and are a natural trove of both living and dead organic material. Preserving these peatlands and avoiding their conversion and drainage should be a top priority of any carbon storage and climate mitigation strategy for the state of Minnesota. Working to restore degraded peatlands and improve their hydrologic function may also help to enhance carbon storage on the Minnesota landscape."

The new legislation, known

See BILL...pg. 5B

#### **REMOTE PLACES**



A red pine snage and a frosted ancient white pine rise above a small upland island on a recent day in the Lost Lake Swamp.

#### FLOODING...Continued from page 4B —

Wednesday deadline, which was expected to further add to the moisture content in the snowpack.

Throughout northern St. Louis and Koochiching counties the SWE was only slightly above the historical average as of Leven's March 10 briefing, varying from just over three inches in parts of Koochiching and far northwestern St. Louis County to about five inches in central portions of the watershed. The snowpack in the eastern portion of the watershed does contain substantially more water, as much as seven inches or more, which is well above the historical average for this time of year.

Watersheds feeding into Lake Superior or the Mississippi headwaters region are running closer to historical records for SWE, according to Levens, and that has substantially elevated the spring flooding risk in these areas. The Mississippi River, near Aitkin, has a better than 95 percent chance of minor flooding this spring, an 84 percent chance of moderate flooding, and a 28 percent chance of a major flood event. Such risks diminish to the far north, where snowfall has been much closer to average. The lack of frost in the ground, due to the thick snowpack and mild temperatures this winter, should also help allow some meltwater to soak into the soil, according to Levens, which has the effect of reducing flooding. At the same time, she notes that the soil moisture was relatively high coming into winter, which may reduce the soil's ability to absorb meltwaters. "The current setup for flooding is somewhat less than last year [within the Rainy River watershed], but there is still considerable uncertainty," said Levens. "We don't know what April or May will bring," she said. While the amount of water in the snowpack is

a significant factor, it is only one of several that determine the risk of flooding. She said additional snow or rain added to the snowpack between now and the end of the snowmelt and the timing and speed of the melt are key unknowns going forward. At least through the month of March, the current weather outlook calls for seasonable-to-slightly below average temperatures through the end of March. That's likely to push any substantial snowmelt off into April, notes Leven, which increases the risks of flooding. "The further into the spring we go without losing the snowpack, the higher the risk of rain events that could substantially worsen the situation," she said.

The National Weather Service plans to issue its fourth and final spring flooding outlook on

#### LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST from NOAA weather Monday Saturday Sunday Friday Tuesday 12 16 Emb. Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Cook Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Tower Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Ely Hi Prec. Sn. Orr Lo 03/06 03/07 00 0 21- 20 41 16 0.00 03/06 42 0.00 03/06 02/27 1 41 0.00 03/06 37 18 0.00 39 12 0.00 03/07 38 0.00 03/07 38 11 0.00 02/2 03/07 34 3 27 0.00 0.5" 03/( 1.0" 03/( No readings 03/08 17 6 25 37 0.00 03/08 39 0.00 03/08 33 7 0.01 0.2" 03/08 34 0.06 03/09 36 22 0.01 03/10 35 15 0.00 0.02 0.8" 03/09 36 0.00 03/09 37 25 0.3" 25 0.04 1.0" 03/09 36 at presstime 03/10 36 19 0.00 03/10 36 18 03/0 03/10 30 19 0.00 03/11 30 6 0.00 30 0.00 29 0.00 03/0 03/11 10 03/11 03/11 12 0.00 25 03/12 22 12 0.36 4.9" 03/12 25 0.33 3.7" 3.8" 03/12 21 03/05 16 03/12 24 12 0.18 0.00 12

#### **Fishing reports**

2.71 65.1"

YTD Total

2.31

YTD Total

#### Ely area

YTD Total

Lake trout fishing generally improved this last week for many anglers. While tip-ups fished with a dead or live minnow on the bottom continues to be your best bet for a trout, anglers reported having good success with bucktails and jigging spoons. 30-50 feet of water, around sunken islands and mud flats continued to be the areas to focus on when targeting lakers. Eelpout continue to be active this last week as they wrap up their spawning. Heavy jigs, tipped with minnows and pounded on the bottom, around river mouths or sunken islands have been very effective on eelpout. Key depths vary night to night, so be sure to look for active eelpout before setting up. 15'-35' is generally the best depth for them.

1.43 66.0"

YTD Total

Panfish activity has slowly been increasing as days get longer

and warmer. Recent snow events haven't helped the bite, but anglers venturing out did manage to catch some crappies and sunnies. Classic deep mud flats are the areas to target panfish. Small crappie minnows were very effective on both crappies and sunnies this last week.

YTD Total

NA

NA

1.57 53.1"

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

#### BILL...Continued from page 4B

as HF 2353, would establish a state lowland conifer carbon reserve, comprised of "all stands in the state forest system identified as lowland conifer... and includes the underlying peatlands associated with the stand or adjoining stands."

If approved, the DNR commissioner would have until Jan. 1, 2024 to identify the areas encompassed by the reserve. Establishment of the reserve would not prohibit timber harvesting, but would limit harvesting to stands that are 90 years of age or younger and that are accessible to heavy logging equipment.

While timber harvesting would be allowed in some cases, the measure would permanently prohibit peat mining in the designated reserves. Many of the areas that would likely be included in the reserve are highly inaccessible since many of the state's peatlands are vast, stretching dozens of miles in some cases, with limited or no road access.

Similar legislation was introduced last year in St. Paul but failed to advance.





Thursday, March 23.



Waschke

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is required, or as agent of

the person(s) whose signa-

ture would be required who has authorized me to sign this

document on his/her behalf.

or in both capacities. I further

compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes.

I understand that by signing

this document I am subject

to the penalties of perjury as

set forth in Section 609.48 as

if I had signed this document

Published in the Timberjay,

March 17 & 24, 2023

Dated: March 9, 2023

under oath

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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to

be able to identify the true owner of a business Assumed Name: Northlands

Roll-off PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 6413 Dusek Rd., Floodwood, MN 55736 USA NAMEHOLDER(S): Above Summit Construction Services LLC. 6413 Dusek Rd., Floodwood, MN 55736 USA

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature



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

Clue: G equals O

FVQS HGWBC RGW HQBB SVK

GUKJVKQC ZGMKR MKKCKC SG

ZQTMSQTM Q ZGUTME OSQTJFQR?

certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in

SIGNED BY: Dakoda Hudak

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

(Independent Contractor) Casual Radiologic Tech (Independent Contractor, weekend only)

Dietary PT Dietary Aide/Cook

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More Info? Contact Human Resources

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(Wage starting at \$14.53/hr.)

TO APPLY:

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## **Even Exchange**

	answer	S	
1.	Cellar, Collar	6.	Athena, Athen
2.	Parson, Carson	7.	Scare, Stare
3.	Ravel, Raven	8.	Wager, Wafer
4.	Twirl, Twill	9.	Brooke, Brook
5.	Muster, Master	10.	Safer, Saber







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Cr	yp	toQ	uo	te

#### AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

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

BXL FCT EHTQ AXJUPB HT BXLP JMJPBQCB NHEJ, BXLP KJKXPB, HT VOCU AJXANJ WCB XT UOJ SLW, HT UOJ TJVW, XP ILWU

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S N O

# Weekly SUDOKU

## by Linda Thistle



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:



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

#### **AUTOMOTIVE BUILDING** SERVICES Langevin Auto

EAST DHU RIVER SAWMILL INC

Superior Quality

One-Of-A-Kind Moldings

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8825 Hwy 101, Iron, MN 55751

WANTED

SELIGA CANOES WANTED:

We'll buy old Seligas in Good Shape. Turn your classic canoe

into cash. Call Steve at 365-6745. tfn

**ELDER CARE** 

NEEDED

LONG-TERM, PART-TIME

IN-HOME ELDER CARE NEEDED. Soudan area. Must have all-wheel-drive vehicle.

Good pay, Experience valued

Contact Áyan at 651-333-0561

Plank Paneling

Industrial Lumber

• Trim

"Put A Piece Of Northern

Minnesota In Your Home"

& Truck Repair Full Service Auto Repair & Garage Hours: 8 AM-5 PM M-F 2 Miles South of Tower **218-749-0751** 

#### HAIR CARE

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

#### HOSPICE

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

#### PET CREMATION

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

#### SUPPORT GROUPS

Ely AA OPEN GROUP MEETINGS- in person meet-ings, Wednesdays & Saturdays 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 rsdays at 7 p.m. in upstairs of Woodland Thursdays 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 any one 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 For information Sunday 218-666-2820 or 218-780-7670



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

#### MARINE



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MARINE

# Super Crossword

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INTERNAL

**IDENTIFICATION** 

88 Lyricist



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



ACROSS

218-993-2214

www.handbergs.com

HELP WANTED

NOW HIRING COOKS & WAIT STAFF at Good Ol' Days, 316

within

Main St., Tower. Inquire wit or call 952-594-1163. 3/17c

Volunteer

**Opportunity!** 

Do you care about your community and

vant to help kids succeed in sch

Volunteers in Education (VinE) is looking for tutors to help K-8 students with reading, math, and other content areas. VinE currently serves North Woods School (Cook), NE Range

School (Babbitt), Tower/Soudan School (Tower), Mt. Iron/Buhl School (Mt. Iron), and Cherry School (Iron).

Please call or email VinE if you are interested: 218-404-5742 · teresad@vine-mn.org 3/24

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- 36 She voiced Elsa in
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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.

OPEN MEETING Thursdays at 7 p.m. a Woodland Presbyterian Church at 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.

YOU THINK YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH DRUGS, give yourself a break. There 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, tollfree 1-888-647-RAAN(7226).

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS East Range meetings and infor-mation, 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.



Solution time: 24 mins.

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THE TIMBERJAY



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1. Basement	E	Neck band	_ 0
2. Preacher	P	City, Nevada	C
3. Untangle	L	Poe's bird	N
4. Spin a baton	R	Woven fabric	L
5. Congregate	U	Chess expert	A
6. Goddess of wisdom	• A	Parthenon's city	S
7. Petrify	C	Gawk	_ T
8. Gamble	G	Thin cookie	F
9 Shields	E	Babbling streams	S
10. More secure	F	Calvary weapon	B

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