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The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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\$1⁵⁰

BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

Concerns aired over planned “sober house”

by **STEPHANIE UKKOLA**
Staff Writer

SUDAN- A proposal to convert the Vermilion Park Inn to an adult “sober house” prompted more than 40 residents here to turn out for a special meeting of the Breitung Town Board on June 14, with many expressing concerns about the plan.

Cathy Harvieux, originally of Aurora, said she has more than 40 years of experience in substance abuse treatment and is a licensed drug and

alcohol counselor who has designed more than a dozen treatment programs over that time. She said she is hoping to finish her career by opening a new adult treatment facility on the Iron Range and she has an agreement in place to purchase the Vermilion Park Inn for that purpose.

Harvieux’s for-profit company, Care Crossings, would offer sober housing and outpatient treatment for men 18 or older, with a maximum capacity of 20. She said it could be open as early as September.

Right: The Vermilion Park Inn in Soudan could become a treatment center for adults struggling with addiction. photo by S. Ukkola

That may be optimistic, however, as Harvieux had yet to apply for a conditional use permit for the facility from St. Louis County as of late last week. Interim St. Louis County Planning Manager Donald Rigney stated that the inn, located at 30 Center

See...**SOBER** pg. 9



HISTORY

Molter Museum celebrates 30-year milestone

Plans a full summer of activities and memories of Dorothy Molter

by **CATIE CLARK**
Ely Editor

ELY- The Dorothy Molter Museum turns 30 this year and has a summer full of events and new features to celebrate the milestone. The first item of note is the new root beer exhibit showing how Dorothy brewed and bottled her root beer. As the last resident in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Molter brewed around 10,000 bottles of root beer every summer to sell to visitors to her off-grid home and resort on the Isle of Pines.

The exhibit is in the screened porch of Dorothy’s Winter Cabin and includes the original equipment Molter used to make root beer. “This isn’t where Dorothy made the root beer, but it shows her equipment and explains her process,” said the museum’s executive director, Jess Edberg. Molter used the Winter Cabin to live in during the off-season. She lived in a tent cabin in the summer so she could rent out the Winter Cabin to visitors.

The exhibit was installed over last winter. “The new exhibit was funded by donations of around \$3,000 that we raised during the 2022 November Give to the Max Day,” Edberg explained. The rest of the Winter Cabin displays many of Molter’s personal possessions and effects.

See...**MUSEUM** pg. 10



SHOP LOCALLY

Summer’s here!

And area farmers markets are back in business

It’s farmers market season once again in the North Country. With the hot and dry conditions, most area gardens are running ahead of schedule and that should mean plenty of summer veggies and all of the other goodies found at area farmers’ markets.

The Cook market is open on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon, in the Cook City Park on River St., while the Ely market is open Tuesdays from 5-7 p.m. in Whiteside Park. Tower’s market is held from 4-6 p.m. on Fridays at the train depot.

Pictured above is Mickey White at last Friday’s opening day of the Tower market. At right is George Pliml selling his honey at the market in Cook last Saturday.



IMPACTING WILDLIFE?

Fireworks display could run afoul of federal law

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

LAKE VERMILION— It appears that a July 5 fireworks display, sponsored by the Lake Vermilion Resort and Tourism Association, is going forward despite the potential impact to hundreds of federally protected birds and their young.

The association announced recently that it is planning a fire-

works display to fill the void left by the city of Tower’s decision to not put on its own display this year. The association’s original plan called for launching its display from a barge anchored off Potato Island, an isolated, half-acre island in the middle of Big Bay that is a

major rookery for herring gulls and double-crested cormorants. As of this week, at least 200 cormorants were nesting on the island along with about 50 herring gulls, and dozens of gull chicks could be

See...**FIREWORKS** pg. 9

Right: Potato Island, located in the middle of Lake Vermilion’s Big Bay is home to hundreds of herring gulls and double-crested cormorants.

photo by M. Helmberger



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Community notices



Godspell now on stage in Ely through July 1

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association's (NLAA) production of "Godspell" opened on Thursday, June 22 with subsequent evening shows on June 23, 24, 29, 30 and July 1, all at 7 p.m. Matinee performances are at 2 p.m. on June 25 and July 2. The Thursday, June 29 performance is a "pay what you can" show, with a suggested donation of \$10 per seat.

The musical is on stage at the Fine Arts Theater at the Vermilion Campus of Minnesota College North in Ely. The show is the first of NLAA's "Broadway in the Boundary Waters" summer season productions, performed by a summer theater company with a mix of professional and local actors.

The production of "Godspell" presented by NLAA's Broadway in the Boundary Waters Company is not the 1971 version, but the version from the second Broadway revival of 2011-12. The changes are minor revisions of staging, the addition of some music and lyrics, and some modernizing of humor.

Tickets are available by visiting northernlakesarts.org/tickets or calling 218-235-9937. Ticket prices are: general admission \$25, NLAA members \$20, and 16 and under \$15, excluding June 29, which is a "pay what you can" admission.

Medicare 101 class offered Tuesday, June 27

COOK - The Senior LinkAge Line is offering a Medicare 101 class at the Cook Hospital Conference Room, 10 5th Street SE. The class is from 9 to 11 a.m. on Tuesday June 27.

This class is an overview of Medicare, including what is covered under part A & B: enrollment guidelines; Minnesota options, including Medicare Part C and D. Attendees will learn about Medicare's role in their health insurance, timelines when applying for Medicare, components of Medicare coverage, as well as questions to consider when choosing a health plan.

Those interested must pre-register by calling the local office of the Senior LinkAge Line at 218-285-9156, leaving a voice message with name and telephone number saying you want to register for the class in Cook.

The Senior LinkAge Line is a free, statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with Minnesota's area agencies on aging. The Senior LinkAge Line helps older Minnesotans and caregivers find answers and connect to the services and support they need.

Minnesota Rural Health Association offers grants for ultrasound training

STATEWIDE - The Minnesota Rural Health Association (MRHA) received a grant from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust to help fund tuition assistance for healthcare organizations serving rural and underserved communities in Minnesota to increase their ultrasound services and ensure ultrasound services continue within their community.

Through this tuition assistance program, MRHA will provide healthcare organizations in rural and underserved communities with funding to cover tuition, study materials, and testing fees.

"Currently, facilities are not able to meet the ultrasound needs of their residents because of lack of ultrasound technician staff. Staffing needs include general ultrasound technicians and those trained for specialty scans in cardiovascular, obstetrics/gynecology and other specialties," said Mark Jones, MRHA Executive Director. It is expected that the outcome of this program will expand and sustain ultrasound capabilities.

MRHA's Ultrasound Tuition Assistance Program application can be found on the MRHA website at <https://www.mnruralhealth.org/training> along with additional information about the program.

This funding is part of a \$26.4-million initiative by the Helmsley Charitable Trust to provide hospitals and health centers with ultrasounds and sonography training to benefit rural and underserved communities in Minnesota.

The Good Stuff For Less BIG SALE

Watering Can Garden Shop
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218-666-5398
Mon-Sat 9 - Mid Day
Wateringcangardenshop.com

POWWOW

Lake Vermilion Reservation Powwow features dancing, friends, and food June 23-25

VERMILION RESERVATION - The Lake Vermilion Reservation Traditional Powwow will be held Friday, June 23, through Sunday, June 25, on the Vermilion Reservation powwowgrounds at the Vermilion Government Center. Events will include a Two Step contest and a weekend long Heads or Tails contest. Grand entries for contests are at 1 and 7 p.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. on Sunday. The event is co-hosted by the Lake Vermilion Singers and the Night Sky Singers. The Powwow's Spiritual Advisor will be Darrel Kingbird, MC will be Terry Goodsky, and Arena Director will be Corey Goodbird. Camping is available. Contact Muriel 218-750-7772 or Tracey 218-780-1478 for information.



Traditional shawl dancer (left) and jingle dancer (above) at 2022 powwow gives a preview of what attendees can expect at this year's upcoming event June 23, 24 and 25.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

International Wolf Center celebrates 30-year anniversary in Ely

On June 26, the IWC will roll back admission to 1993 prices.

ELY - On June 26, 1993, the International Wolf Center (IWC) opened the doors to its interpretive center in Ely. Now, 30 years later, the center is celebrating all those years by rolling back its admission prices to 1993 levels for all visitors on Monday, June 26.



Grayson (above) and Blackstone and Caz are three members of the pack visitors can look forward to seeing at IWC.

Admission prices when the center opened were \$4 for adults and \$2.50 for seniors, children and veterans. Those same rates will be charged to visitors on June 26. The center is open throughout the summer from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

"We're so excited to hit this anniversary," said Interpretive Center Director, Krista Woerheide. "For 30 years, we've played an important role in attracting visitors to Ely. We really appreciate the support of the Ely community over these 30 years. We're working hard to show that appreciation, and events like this admission rollback are evidence of that."

of work is important. That's 1.2 million people who left the center knowing the truth about wolves."



Since the center opened, 1.21 million visitors have come through the front doors.

Over the years, the center has continued to update its facility. A major update occurred in 2019 when a new interactive exhibit was built inside. New exhibits also include an amazing moose mount showing the size disparity between wolves and moose. New this year is a musk ox display that teaches visitors about life for an arctic wolf and their sources of prey in the far north.

hibit Pack of five wolves, which live in a 1.2-acre enclosure. In the pack there are five wolves: Axel and Grayson (both 7 years old), Rieka (2 years old), Blackstone and Caz (both 1 year old).

"We work really hard to inform as many people as possible the truth about wolves," Woerheide said. "To think that we've been able to reach 1.2 million people in that time is a testament to the hard work all of our employees have done over the years. It's also a sign that this kind

In addition to those displays and exhibits, the center has an Ex-

For more information about the International Wolf Center, visit wolf.org.

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Opening Night Concert
JULY 1 • 7PM Aurora

Festive Fourth! Concert
JULY 4 • 4PM Aurora
Salvatore Scarpa conducting NLMF Orchestra: Gershwin Cuban Overture; Fiddler on the Roof and opera Hits sung by the cast of La boheme

Vivaldi's Four Seasons
Vivaldi's Four Seasons with NLMF Orchestra and Alexander Markov, soloist
JULY 8 • 4PM Aurora
JULY 10 • 7PM Ely

Winners Concert
CONCERTO COMPETITION WINNERS
JULY 20 • 7PM
At the iconic Hibbing High School Auditorium

Puccini's LA BOHÈME
JULY 14 • 7PM Aurora
JULY 16 • 3PM Chisholm
La boheme for Tweens and Teens
JULY 13 • 3:00PM Aurora
One hour abridged version with full sets, costumes & orchestra performed by the NLMF Opera Apprentices

MINNESOTA FARMERS UNION

Cook meeting focuses on climate change and agriculture

Agriculture seen as contributor, victim, and solution

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Off Editor

COOK- The Minnesota Farmers Union brought its “Conversation about Climate and Agriculture” community engagement series to Cook on Tuesday, the fourth such event the organization has staged recently as it seeks input from local communities about how to best address the effects of global warming on land and agricultural practices.

A well-engaged group of about 20 people, many but not all engaged in agricultural production, filled the Cook Community Center to listen to presentations and engage in focus groups around current and future impacts of climate change on farming practices. St. Louis County Farmers Union President Missy Bakker Roach served as host of the event.

“This is a great turnout,” Roach said, looking around the room as she opened the evening’s event. “I’m wearing a few different hats tonight. I’m the chapter president for St. Louis County Farmers Union, and I’m also an organizer for Northern Progressives, and I’m also the executive director for the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability. These are the organizations that are here today, and we’re excited that you all are here to talk about climate and agriculture.”

“Minnesota Farmers Union takes climate change very, very seriously,” Roach continued. “I’ve watched it come from part of a small thing that we need to keep our eye on and track to something that’s become so important that we have new staff dedicated solely to climate change. We don’t get a lot of attention in this part of the state when it comes to these kinds of conversations, so I’m thankful that they’re doing this.”

MFU Climate and Working Lands Program Director Ariel Kagan then offered additional context.

“Climate change and climate resilience has become a huge priority for us because of our members identifying that as something that they care about,” Kagan said. “Members of the public are looking to working lands and agriculture for a solution to climate change. And businesses are, too. We’ve got some of the biggest companies in the world looking at agriculture as the way that they’re going to reduce their carbon footprint, either through carbon credits or through investments in their supply chain. And then we also have a lot of policymakers looking at agriculture, with huge investments coming from the federal government and the state and local as well. In all of those big investments, farmers are being asked to do new things, whether that’s change

their management practices or grow new crops or adapt to more severe weather.”

Kagan also talked about a new MFU initiative, a pilot grant program called Cooperatives for Climate, which will empower farmer-led cooperatives to build capacity for organizing business that leads climate action. She also talked about a new “Farmers Guide to Carbon Market Contracts in Minnesota,” created in partnership with Farmers’ Legal Action Group and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, which will help farmers successfully navigate the world of establishing contracts with companies looking to offset their carbon emissions by paying farmers to sequester more carbon in the ground by the farming practices they use.

Kagan highlighted MFU’s advocacy work during this spring’s state legislative session, including helping to secure an additional \$48 million in new funding for the Department of Agriculture, \$100 million for rural broadband, ag tax credits and property tax relief, and \$30 million for climate resilience investments in green fertilizer production, soil health financial and technical assistance, and planning funds for the University of Minnesota Extension Service. She also noted \$33 billion that has been committed at the federal level for climate change



Leah Rogne reports on a small group discussion during the climate change event. photo by D. Colburn

initiatives.

St. Louis County Extension Educator Troy Salzer was up next, and while his remarks focused on cover crops and pasture lands that are beneficial to soil health and the climate equation, the audience seemed most curious for his take on the challenged dairy industry in the county. Concern was expressed that dairy farms in the county don’t have a local buyer for their raw milk and must depend on a Wisconsin-based dairy to buy and transport their product.

“I definitely do not think dairy farming is dead at this point in time,” Salzer said. “We have currently five operations, I believe, that are producing milk, and there is a dynamic of each

of them working together. They are very united. I have personally lobbied on their behalf, as have folks like (Minnesota Agriculture) Commissioner Thom Petersen – I’ve had him on their farms to hear some of their concerns. And I also work quite closely with the coop that is purchasing their milk and have twisted arms because I think it’s critical to let them have their own autonomy in relationship to their operations, even though they are working quite closely together. I really would count it as a great loss if any one of those dairy farmers went out of business.”

High interest rates, the need

See CLIMATE...pg. 5

Capture Ely Photo Contest

Pick up your entry form today. Deadline to enter is August 31, 2023 at 5 p.m. Contest details and form available at Ely.org/capture-ely.

Your photos may be used in our Business & Visitor Guide, website, social media, or other Ely area promotional materials.



Four Categories :

- Outdoor Recreation
- Family Fun
- Nature
- Shopping

Chamber Buck prizes awarded within each category:

- 1st Place—\$200.00
- 2nd Place—\$100.00
- 3rd Place—\$50.00
- Honorable Mention—\$25.00

Tips for photographers entering the contest:

- No shopping entries were received in 2022
- No winter, fall, or spring photos were received in 2022
- Ely has many opportunities for recreation and family fun



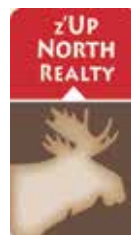
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OPINION

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The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

Editorial

What next for Tower's ambulance service?

Joint powers proposal doesn't fly

It appears the proposal for an ambulance joint powers board to operate the Tower Area Ambulance Service is all but dead, and that's probably just fine. As we've seen in recent months in Ely, the creation of a joint powers board is no guarantee of either harmony in the management of an ambulance service, or of financial stability.

Most townships in the area are small and it appears some simply aren't interested in playing a role in the management of an ambulance service. That's hardly unexpected.

That doesn't mean that the search for alternatives should end, but it may reflect that it's time to explore another direction to maintain the ambulance service. Several years ago, the city of Tower and Breitung Township had all but merged their fire departments and were discussing other ways of combining emergency services. For reasons that still aren't entirely clear, that combination was conditional upon the construction of a multi-million-dollar emergency services building that seemed to just keep growing in size and cost as the discussions over the project went on. Given that Breitung, which was in the process of inheriting the MINOS building, had little need to invest in an entirely new facility, and that the increasing size and cost of the building was being pushed by Tower representatives, the township finally put its foot down.

When discussions on the new facility broke down, the merger, which was already largely underway, fell apart. It was unfortunate.

Of course, the best thing about remembering history is that it gives us the opportunity to learn from our mistakes. The merger of Tower and Breitung's emergency services was a good idea and it still is. But it shouldn't be conditional on the construction of a new facility that Breitung clearly doesn't need. At the same time, Tower's fire department is grossly understaffed and already relies heavily on Breitung's manpower and leadership experience at fire scenes. Merging the two departments would not require a new facility, just paperwork, much of which was completed during the first merger attempt.

A merger would almost certainly save both the city and the township money on their fire departments, would ensure more consistent joint training, and would expand the number of trained personnel within the joint department.

The city and Breitung are

in the best position to jointly operate the ambulance service as well, since they've already demonstrated they can work productively together on joint services, such as municipal water and sewage treatment. What's more, city and township residents already make up the bulk of the ambulance workforce.

By combining the administrative functions of a fire chief and an ambulance director, a joint operation could reduce the number of administrative personnel for these functions from three at present, potentially down to one. A new joint entity could also look at a modest adjustment to the ambulance service's exceptionally high on-call pay, instituted in 2018, which has crippled the department since it began complying with state law regarding on-call staffing.

The breakdown in the previous merger left some bad feelings on both sides, but most of the players behind that earlier breakdown are no longer involved. A merger made sense then, with or without a new facility, and it continues to make sense today. And by including the ambulance service in the merger, it can reduce expenses for the service and help maintain its financial viability.

It's understandable that most townships want nothing to do with running the ambulance. But Breitung, which operates more like a small city than a rural township, is in a better position to work with Tower to maintain the ambulance service.

It's increasingly clear the city can't do it alone. As we reported last week, the city of Tower has already had to subsidize the ambulance service to the tune of \$20,000 this year just to make its whopping payroll. The city, which is still recovering from its 2018-19 financial crisis, can hardly afford to continue to subsidize an ambulance service, particularly when the bulk of its runs are outside the city.

There really is no alternative but to find a sustainable path forward, and a merger of emergency services with Breitung could provide savings needed to maintain the ambulance service until higher-level governments develop a funding mechanism to support rural and small-town ambulance services. Ultimately, additional funding has to be part of the solution. Ambulance services across the state and country are facing financial emergencies. It's time to dial 911.



Letters from Readers

What's the hurry for boys?

Last week's Timberjay included my reference to the article in the October 2022 *Atlantic Magazine* about the need to give boys a better chance at succeeding in school. I'd like to see more attention given to this idea, along with comments from teachers. This is important.

Granted, most parents are happy to see their children—particularly the most active and demanding ones—out of the house so the parents can get back to work and/or not have to arrange and pay for childcare.

On the other hand, as more than one child psychologist has suggested, “What's your hurry?”

Girls grow up faster than boys. “Very young ladies” is an apt description for most of them. From my own experiences, I can honestly say that we males naturally tend towards imbecility, and failing in school is far more likely for us. Failure and frustration within the rigid structure of an overly academic environment leads to alienation and bad citizenship.

What would it take to acknowledge reality?

Dave Porter
Minneapolis

Americans missing out on true freedom

In response to the *Timberjay's* June 9 editorial, I completely understand your points and would agree with them if I were political and voted. But I'm not. I consider myself a true Libertarian by NOT voting in the political institution of an election that is only about power and who will control it to inflict their values, views and prejudices on others who don't agree with them. In a country founded and fought for on the basis of LIVING free, Americans have done little to understand the difference and history between the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

As documents they are totally antithetical to each other

in terms of values and beliefs. It is instructive to read George Mason's Declaration of Rights for the state of Virginia upon which the Declaration of Independence is based. It identifies the ideals and values that these early Americans believed England was violating and why they were going to fight them over it.

The violation of the same principles is at the heart of the Civil War when the Southern states felt the need to protect themselves from the power the North used through the Constitution just 70 years after it was signed. That power is the same power that England had over the early colonies through the English Constitution that the Founders were willing to fight against at the cost of their “lives, fortunes and sacred honor”.

So, what can we say about democracies or republics and the Constitutions that form them? Are they good or bad and why do we think that democracies or any other forms of government lead to a person's idea of a good life or lead to the ideal freedoms that come from God as the Declaration says.

In a paraphrasing of James Madison in the *Federalist Papers*, “If men were angels they would NOT need a government....if men were devils and fallen, why would you give them one?”. My point is that institutions that are based on FORCE as a means of creating order and “freedom”, and that includes dictatorships, communism, socialism, fascism and republics will always fail at any level it is used because as Lord Acton said, “POWER CORRUPTS AND ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY.”

It makes no difference whether Republicans or Democrats, Biden or Trump are in the government, people in power will do what they can with their power...they are not about ethical principles. They are certainly not about giving or protecting freedom. They are about forcing order or control through passing laws.

How else could we be \$30 trillion in debt? My father always told us, “The only

thing you need to know about politics and politicians is that it makes no difference which madam is running the whorehouse it is still a whorehouse.”

People know America is in trouble. Some want to change the party running the government and think things will get better. Or they want to keep the same party and think it will keep getting better, in their opinion. Neither one will work because whether their candidate wins or not, they are really only giving up their individual sovereignty to choose their own way to live for themselves and affirming an institution that has a monopoly on coercive force to order things for them whether they like it or not.

Can you image what kind of culture that is developed in a country where people fight over who has power to execute their desires forcefully over others. We are seeing it right now. Where are the churches in this struggle to proclaim “Love your brother” as the means to order instead of force?

There is something called the Tytler Cycle that was developed by a Scotsman whose writings are mostly lost. It would be of interest to all people who worry about America from either standpoint because we have been here before and we'll be here again in a different generation unless we talk more openly and FREELY to each other about how we can live our differences and diverse lives openly with each other without the fear of a law being passed to restrict our neighbors and ourselves being free with each other and not suffering retribution or political correctness.

Remember, thoughts, values, and prejudices on how we should live together are just opinions until government's institutions of coercive force get involved with them through voting or political influence of force. Then they become instruments of control by some over others. In this way slaves are made.

Randy Love
Cook

COLUMNIST

When “pushing through” proves better than “backing out”

In late March, I received my first ever Evite. It was announcing the 2023 Mihos family reunion to be held June 11 at the home of my cousin in Metamora, Mich., just outside of Flint. That surprise email set something in motion that would present some unexpected challenges and valuable lessons.

Throughout my adult life, most of my traveling has been done solo. My spouse is just not a wanderlust. Lucky for me, he is most con-



KATHLEEN MCQUILLAN

stantly staying home and “holding down the fort”. But this trip felt special. It would gather my mother's side of our family including my two brothers who I hadn't seen since her death in June, 2018. We'd always been a pretty close-knit crew. My mother and her four siblings had very close relationships and hung together like the proverbial “peas in a pod”. I

guess you could say it was modeled that family was everything! And a reunion was an event not to be missed!

It surprised me when my husband, John, agreed to go with me! I got right on the “RSVP for two” and began researching plane fare, hotel accommodations, and a rental car — all things for which I was totally out of practice. As I dove more deeply into trip logistics, I discovered how much had changed since I'd last boarded an airplane back in 2016. My anxiety level began to rise with every step of the process. In addition, I was having

trouble reconciling the massive carbon emissions that air travel creates, along with the high cost of the flight and related expenses, for such a short three-day vacation.

After many sleepless nights of second-guessing the path I was on, there occurred a seismic shift in the plan. After having reviewed the travel itinerary, John suddenly decided that he couldn't go, after all. I would have to change the arrangements. “Oh no!” I thought. “Not starting all over again.” Feeling (irrationally) overwhelmed, I just wanted to blow the whole thing off.

My mind began swirling with possible excuses to wiggle out of it but that didn't seem right. So, I kept pushing forward to revamp the plan, this time just for one.

I could hear the harried call-center agents as they prodded me to try rebooking again on-line. Co-mingled with this pressure, I still fretted over all that carbon dumping into our fragile atmosphere — all for my measly three day get-away. The whole trip seemed like a bad idea.

See TRAVEL, pg. 5

COMMENTARY

Keeping our kids safe online, from social media to human trafficking

Recently, the U.S. Surgeon General released a report warning about the negative impacts of social media on children's mental health, saying that it presents a profound risk of harm. The advisory also urged social media companies to help parents with the burden of managing the effects of social media on kids.

It's true, social media has made it a really hard time to be a parent. In fact, a mom once told me that trying to keep her kids safe on social media felt like trying to mop up the water from an overflowing sink. Every time she'd get them off one site, she discovered they had found a workaround or discovered a new one.

Big tech companies have shown time and time again that they cannot be trusted to protect kids' data or safety online.



U.S. SEN. AMY KLOBUCHAR

We've spent years talking about these problems, but it's time to actually do something about them.

First, tech platforms need to cut down on the addictive and otherwise dangerous content they are showing kids. There is growing evidence that kids are literally getting addicted to apps like Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. According to a recent report, around one-third of girls ages 11-15 say they feel "addicted" to a social media platform and over half of teenagers report that it would be hard to give up social media. Big tech companies don't see this as a problem—in fact, they see it as a success—but parents know that the combination of social media

addiction and dangerous online content has been disastrous for everything from kids purchasing deadly drugs laced with fentanyl to constant distractions from homework. Facebook's own research showed that 13 percent of teen girls reported that Instagram worsened suicidal thoughts, and there have been too many examples of content that encourages eating disorders among teen users on TikTok. I am working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass a bipartisan bill that makes it clear that big tech companies need to do more to protect kids on their platforms and give parents the tools to keep their kids safe.

Additionally, we need to make sure big tech companies can't collect data about children without their parents getting a say. Using social media generates all sorts of information about who a person is, where they are, and what they like. That

data can be used by platforms to create addictive content or target kids with ads. That's why I'm working to pass legislation to require these platforms to get explicit consent from users aged 16 and under, as well as their parents, before collecting data.

It's also critical that we address the impact of social media on drug addiction and trafficking. I will never forget the story of Minnesota teenager Devin Norring. Devin was struggling with dental pain and debilitating migraines, so he bought what he believed was Percocet over Snapchat to deal with the pain. But it wasn't really Percocet. What that dealer gave him was laced with fentanyl, and it killed him.

Devin's story is sadly too common. That is why I have long pushed to strengthen efforts to detect and intercept fentanyl at our borders. I am also leading and cosponsoring several

bipartisan bills to stop fentanyl trafficking online, including legislation to bolster federal law enforcement's ability to investigate online fentanyl trafficking, including on the dark web, so we can crack down on these crimes. Social media has been a gateway to drugs for too many kids, and it's past time we meet this threat with the all-hands-on-deck response it requires.

Parents deserve the peace of mind that comes with knowing that their kids are safe online. That means being protected from big tech companies profiting off of their personal data, dangerous content that harms their mental health, and drug traffickers moving deadly substances. I am going to continue working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass meaningful reforms that address social media's harms to children head-on.

CLIMATE...Continued from page 3

for capital investments, and high transportation costs have all contributed to the challenges dairy farmers face, Salzer said, and the economic pressures have been exacerbated by a downturn in raw milk prices, which have dropped almost 40 percent in the past year.

"Ultimately, they are producing milk at a loss every single day," Salzer said.

Conservationist Becca Reiss, from the North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District, talked about how the conservation district system grew as a response to the extreme conditions of the 1930s Dust Bowl, and how working in northern St. Louis County is a bit different than districts with more ag production.

"We were created in order to help private landowners, especially farmers, do conservation that they wanted to do, both to benefit them and their soil and the water," she said. "Up here in northeastern Minnesota, many people say that our farming is more forestry, necessarily then row crops or even pasture, so our district does do a lot more work with forestry than it does with traditional farming."

The district covers three different watersheds, and "soil and water are intricately connected, because what's good for the soil is usually what's

good for the water."

Reiss drew parallels between what's happening with climate change related to forest stewardship and what's happening in agriculture, particularly with respect to carbon sequestration and carbon credits. She also talked about the option for farmers to participate in the Minnesota Water Quality Certification Program, a process that would make them eligible for additional funding to implement best practices in their operations. Participants also receive technical assistance to bring their farms into compliance with regulatory changes without being penalized.

After hearing from speakers, it was time for the audience to get to work. Clustered around tables, groups were provided a list of questions about climate change and agricultural practices intended to stimulate brainstorming and discussion. After 15 minutes, groups reported on their discussions.

The first group noted that agriculture is subsidized by things that aren't widely recognized as such, as in federal and state funding of highway systems and subsidized purchase of fertilizers from foreign sources.

Subsidizing large corporate farms has had a detrimental effect on the environment, they said,

and more subsidies should be directed to local farming operations instead of corporations.

Another group talked about the need to encourage more people to grow their own food. They suggested that it would be beneficial to have a program that would connect would-be growers with farmers who have available land they could use in a responsible manner. Salzer noted that a program like that operated in the Duluth area for a number of years.

The next group to report focused on forestry for the bulk of their discussion, noting that forest management in the region isn't as proactive as it needs to be for the health of the forests, with a significant amount of timber that could be responsibly harvested instead going uncut and falling over on its own without being utilized. The group also mentioned the decline of family farms, with families who had longtime relationships with the land, and the corresponding loss in the number of agriculture advocates as a result.

Another group talked about advancements in precision farming and the potential for maximizing yields while reducing chemical usage. However, they expressed concern about the entry costs to the profession for a new

generation of farmers. As equipment has become more sophisticated and expensive and farms have grown in size, younger would-be farmers have been priced out of the profession unless they happen to inherit a family farm, they said.

The last group expressed concern about the lack of habitat for pollinators and the uncertainty created by climate change. Because of this year's late winter, pollinators didn't arrive at the right time to pollinate chokecherries. They also questioned the rationale used by the county and others for mowing roadsides, as that can destroy habitat for pollinators. They also suggested promoting more solar power would be beneficial, as would encouraging the use of electric mowers rather than ones that use fossil fuels.

Kagan took a few minutes after the meeting to reflect on the proceedings.

"This was a fantastic group who were really thinking hard about these issues of resilience, community strength, and our environment and natural resources," she said. The Cook meeting, she said, added to their growing knowledge base about climate change issues that are important to local communities.

"This is actually our

fourth meeting," Kagan said. "We did one in the Twin Cities, we did one in Thief River Falls, and then we did one last night near Duluth. Each one is different. In Thief River Falls, for example, we heard that with the climate warming it's allowing for more growing days for corn, so it's been somewhat positive. But there are also other pressures like pests and extreme weather, drought and heat, that is new. In the Twin Cities we heard a lot about local food and the concerns of consumers, because there was obviously more of a focus on the consumer side rather than the production side." And particular takeaways from the Cook meeting?

"I think hearing about forestry is a big one," Kagan said. "And, also, the concerns about water quality and where the water goes. I heard from the Soil and Water Conservation District speaker that the watersheds here go to Lake Superior, Hudson

Bay and the Mississippi River, and those are three of the most important bodies of water in the world. It's all being affected by what's happening on the landscape here."

Kagan noted that discussions around climate change and agriculture are complex and multifaceted.

"Agriculture is complicated when it comes to climate change," she said. "Agriculture contributes to climate change. We produce greenhouse gasses through nitrogen fertilizers, through tractor passes releasing carbon when you till. Agriculture is also affected by climate change – drought, rain, heat – but it can also be a solution for climate change by sequestering carbon and creating more resilient landscapes. It's all three of those things at the same time, which makes it dynamic and challenging and exciting. I think that's why we're having conversations like this."



the TIMBERJAY

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TRAVEL...Continued from page 4

My inner pessimist raised a panoply of fears (trouble at airport security, mechanical failure at take-off, terrorists or even worse, snakes on the plane!) My silly superstitious streak got me ruminating that these "complications" were actually meant to save me from some imagined tragedy. "Oh," I lamented, "I used to be so brave. What's happened to me?"

It had been seven years since I'd last flown. Then three years of isolation through a pandemic. Of course, the world had changed! I felt like I'd been left behind in a cloud of dust. I drew a simple conclusion. Traveling had become just too daunting for me. Shortly before departure, I decided to stay home.

John responded with an emphatic, "No way, Kath. You can do this!" Then, as if by divine intervention, I received a phone call from my older brother in St. Louis, Mo. providing an additional nudge.

He exulted our upcoming visit after five years apart. Those two voices rang in my ears. I couldn't chicken out.

On schedule, I boarded Flight 1907 to Detroit Metro Airport. As planned, my younger brother was waiting for me with his warm welcoming smile and comforting pat on my shoulder. The stress that had been building up for weeks instantly melted away. When he'd tucked my carry-on into the back seat of his Ford Fiesta, I knew I had landed safely.

Later that afternoon, my brother from Missouri arrived. We sat in Jason's backyard, doing what human beings who have known and trusted each other their whole lives will do. We recapped our trips, caught up on life's happenings, some routine while others not, shared health concerns, etc. etc. etc. — gradually exploring deeper and more nuanced details of the changes and challenges of retirement. We closed the gap that devel-

oped from separation and the passing of time. It felt so good!!

Reunion day was soon upon us. We drove to our cousin's farm and were met by 50 other members of the Mihos clan who'd come from near and far. Three generations! Mine now counted as "the elders". We over-indulged in the best BBQ potluck we could remember, all seated under one very large tent. No rain could dampen our spirits. The food was fantastic and the love of being together overflowed.

After dinner, folks leafed through stacks of photo albums, piecing together stories of our grandparents migrating from Greece and Canada culminating into our present-day family. Indeed, we were their legacy!

At 5 p.m. everyone was handed a shot glass. We filled them from bottles of Ouzo, a liqueur made from licorice-flavored anise seeds. A cousin hollered above our murmurings, "To Grampa and

Gramma, George and Mary Mihos!" And with that, we held our glasses up, whistled, and shouted in unison, Opa!!

We downed our shots, in celebration of our heritage which, in that moment, we were all very proud! Hugs were shared. Some tears were shed and our long good-byes exchanged at the end of a beautiful day together. We vowed to meet again, sooner next time. Early the following morning, I left my birthplace of Detroit, Mich. and returned to a hearty welcome home in northern Minnesota.

It's been weeks since arriving back in the northland but I'm still feeling the joy of belonging after being with "my people", even if only for three short days. The image of us raising our glasses in a jubilant toast to Life still reverberates, reminding me of what really matters! And by the way, I know now that I'm not too old to travel!

Week of June 26

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

Tuesday
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is July 18.

Greenwood Fire Dept.- Training 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.

Tower-Soudan-Embarrass Bookmobile Schedule

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobiles will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesday, June 28, July 19, and Aug. 9 & 30.

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, 218-741-8840, email at als@alslib.info, or website at alslib.info.

Tower-Soudan Class of '73 to hold 50th reunion on July 2

TOWER- The Tower-Soudan High School Class of 1973 will hold their 50th reunion on Sunday, July 2 from 4 - 7 p.m. at Benchwarmer's in Tower. Attendees will purchase their own drinks and food.

St. James to discuss closing the church

TOWER- St. James Presbyterian Church in Tower will hold a congregational meeting on Sunday, July 2, following the worship service. All members are urged to attend. The purpose of the meeting is to take a vote to close St. James.

TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY



Over 30 youth participated in this year's spring soccer program, sponsored by Tower-Soudan Community Education. Amy Banks once again led the program, with help from Sam O'Brien, J.T. Almeida, and Ed Williams. Anyone interested in helping out with this program next spring, call Amy Banks at 612-281-5808. photo by J. Summit

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Local students named to CLC spring honors lists

BRAINERD- Central Lakes College, Brainerd and Staples, has announced its 2023 spring semester honors lists. The President's List includes 399 students who earned a grade-point average of 3.75 to 4.0 while enrolled for at least 12 credits. The Dean's List includes 302 students who earned a grade-point average of 3.25 to 3.74.

Natalie Nelmark, of Embarrass, was named to the President's List.

Austin Landgren, of Tower, was named to the Dean's List.

Central Lakes College is a comprehensive community and technical college in the Minnesota State System. The college serves about 5,500 students annually in liberal arts and career education programs.

Free community meal at Immanuel Lutheran on Wednesday, June 28

TOWER- Everyone is welcome to attend a free community meal at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower on Wednesday, June 28 from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., or until the food is gone. This month's meal is lasagna, salad, bread, and dessert. Eat-in or take-out. No cost for the meal and no donations will be taken.

Charlemagne's 52 Club raffle fundraiser

TOWER-SOUDAN- The Tower-Soudan Historical Society is thrilled to announce the launch of its first annual Charlemagne's 52 Club Raffle, an exciting fundraising event to support the Historic Fire Hall Restoration Project

and contribute to the preservation of our local history.

Only 300 raffle tickets will be available for sale, exclusively from July 1 to July 31. The price of each ticket is \$52, representing a nominal investment with significant winning potential.

On Aug. 1, all 52 winning raffle tickets will be drawn, one for each week of the year. Weekly winners will be notified, creating an air of suspense and anticipation as cash prizes are awarded throughout the year until the final week of July 2024. The lucky weekly winners will receive a prize of \$100 during 49 weeks of the year, while 3 fortunate winners will receive an even larger prize of \$250. Holders of raffle tickets have the opportunity to win multiple times, as the ticket drawn is returned to the ticket bin for subsequent drawings.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older to purchase tickets or to be eligible for a prize. Only cash or check are accepted as payment, no credit cards. Winners need not be present at the time of the drawing to claim their prize. The purchase price of the raffle ticket is not tax-deductible.

To join the excitement and support the Tower-Soudan Historical Society's restoration efforts, you can enter Charlemagne's 52 Club Raffle by contacting a Tower-Soudan Historical Society Board member to purchase. The Historic Fire Hall at 504 Main Street will be open on July 3 and 4, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., for a small Charlemagne's Attic Sale, and raffle tickets can be purchased during the sale.

For further information or inquiries, please text or call Tower-Soudan Historical Society President Nancy Larson at 218-750-7514.



The Tower Farmers Market is now open for the season, every Friday from 4 - 6 p.m. by the train. The first week had fresh greens, plants for the garden, sourdough bread, baked goods, jams and jellies, and much more. Pictured above is Linda Wagoner, who was selling house and garden plants, home-canned goods, and bakery items. photo by D. Colburn

"History Happy Hour" to begin on June 23 at the Tower Farmers Market

TOWER- There will be a new table at the Friday Farmers Market in Tower. The Tower-Soudan Historical Society (TSHS) will be offering free non-alcoholic beverages on the fourth Friday of the month from 4-5 p.m. from Car 81 by the Train Depot Museum. Folks will be invited to sip a drink and enjoy the ambience of the newly redecorated train car also dubbed the "Party Car".

"On June 23 we will be serving lemonade", announced Nancy Larson, TSHS board president. "This is a way that the TSHS can say thank you to the many members of the local Tower, Soudan and Lake Vermilion community who have supported us. We cannot do it without everyone helping out. The work we do is a team effort."

Other dates for History Happy Hour will be July 21 and Aug. 25. The TSHS looks forward to offering refreshment and thanks to one and all.

Get your memberships now for Old Settlers

BREITUNG TWP- The annual Old Settlers Reunion and Picnic will be held on Saturday, July 15, with booyah dished up at 12 noon sharp. Memberships are \$10 paid in advance. Please

make checks payable to Vermilion Range Old Settlers, and mail to P.O. Box 724, Tower, MN 55790. Memberships are also available the day of the picnic, but pre-payment is preferred to make the registration line move more quickly at the picnic!

Membership in Old Settlers is open to anyone born or living on the Vermilion Iron Range. The money raised through memberships pays the expenses of putting on the annual picnic. If you have never tasted Old Settlers booyah (meat and vegetable soup prepared from the same recipe year after year), you are in for a treat. The meal is cooked overnight over wood fire in 100-year old iron kettles, and it always tastes amazing. Take-outs are also available if you are unable to stay for the picnic, live music, and raffles.

Tower-Soudan Fourth of July donations

TOWER-SOUDAN- The Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board would like to thank the following individuals and

families for their donations this year.

Donations are still needed and can be mailed to: PO Box 461, Tower, MN 55790.

- Judith Averett
- Fortune Bay Resort
- Casino
- Peter Esala
- Gail & Ted Esala
- James Rowe
- Lee & Greta Tuominen
- Nordic Home North
- Marjo Firemen's Relief Association
- Brotten Construction
- Monica & Tom Pustovar

Upcoming ball games

SOUDAN- Everyone is invited to stop by the Soudan Ballfield and watch baseball action, all the way from t-ball to high school. Concessions are available. Sit and visit, and support our youth athletes.

T-S Little League T-Ball: (All Games at 5 p.m.)

Wednesday, June 28 vs. ME-Biwabik

T-S Little League Coach Pitch: (All Games at 6:30 p.m.)

Wednesday, June 28 vs. ME-Biwabik.



Proud grandparents Andy and Fran Larson attended their granddaughter Eva Larson's book-signing event on June 17 at Sulu's in Tower. Eva illustrated a book titled "Brave, Courageous, and Bold." Books can be purchased from Eva's family (call Desirae Larson at 218-252-7559) or online at www.bellasteri.com. Proceeds from the sale of the book are donated to cancer awareness campaigns that focus on pediatric and young adult cancers.

TOWER CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

To All,

Your support is needed. Give what you can. It will help pay for a new water line. Hopefully the Tower Cemetery will get monies from the IRRRB, but it won't be enough to cover the cost for this water project.

You know who you are that have given in the past. We ask for your continued support and we hope to get newcomers to help.

Thank You.

**Donations can be sent to:
Tower Cemetery Association
PO Box 874
Tower, MN 55790**

VOLUNTEER GARDENERS

Mulch ado about Ely gardening

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Every Tuesday morning from May until mid-September, a handful of volunteers arrive at 9 a.m. in Whiteside Park for a labor of love. Since the 1980s, volunteer gardeners have maintained the gardens in Whiteside Park. With the demise of the gardening club and a shift in what people volunteer for, there are only a handful of people left to tend the park's gardens.

"The Ely Garden Club started in 1967," said Kathryn Farion, who organizes the gardening volunteers. "Back then, there were over 40 members, but it dwindled over time and eventually dissolved." The Ely Garden Club was the original entity that tended the gardens at the park.

"Now there are only six to eight people who continue, on and off, to take care of the gardens here."

The City of Ely does not do the gardening in the park, a chore that has always relied on volunteer labor. "I've been doing this for, well, a long time," Farion commented. "I'd like to turn it over to someone new." One of the oddities of Farion's current set of volunteers is that most of them do not live within city limits but drive to Ely to garden anyway.

"If I step down and no one takes my place, I'm



Kathryn Farion at the cloverleaf garden in Ely's Whiteside Park. Farion organizes the volunteers who keep up the gardens in the park. photo by C. Clark

afraid that no one will keep up the gardens," Farion said. "The gardens here are special, especially for the festivals so I'd hate to see them go."

Whiteside gardens

Whiteside Park hosts two gardens maintained by Farion's small knot of volunteers. The Cloverleaf Garden is mostly shady and dedicated to perennials. "The (Cloverleaf) garden was originally an Eagle Scout project with the Ely Garden club by one of the Harri boys," Farion explained, referring to Ely's

Harri family.

The other garden at the park is the Lawn Garden, which is along the diagonal walkway that starts at the northeast corner of the park. "That garden got started around 1989, and it gets a lot more sun," Farion commented.

On the morning that the *Timberjay* visited the garden volunteers, Farion was out watering well before 9 a.m. before anyone else arrived. "This year is very dry," she said as she soaked the soil of the Cloverleaf Garden. "I've never had to water like this before."

Shrinking efforts

When the Ely Garden Club was still alive and well, its volunteers did much more than just the city's welcoming signs and the two gardens in Whiteside Park. In previous years, when there were enough helping hands, the gardening volunteers also did the weeding and planting around the city's "Ely Welcome" signs on Highways 1 and 21.

"We used to get a lot of help," Farion explained how volunteer efforts have dropped off over the years.

"Outward Bound used to help with the trees in the park," a task that her volunteers can no longer manage. "Ely Community Resource helps sometimes in the spring to clean up the gardens. Also, different church groups have helped with the highway signs in the past."

"We used to do the garden at the school too, with different classes helping out," Farion related. Now that construction at the Ely schools is over, "We hope to be cleaning the area out this year and would like to replant it next year."

The group no longer takes care of trees in the park or with landscaping and planting at the structures in the park like the bandstand. In the garden club days, the club hosted fundraisers to pay for gardening supplies.

"We no longer fundraise," Farion said. "The city pays for mulch, and they send some summer employees to help with the heavy lifting when they can. Summer is a busy time for folks, and we just don't have enough people."

The volunteer gardeners would be happy to welcome more helping hands. "These are easy gardens to take care of," Farion said. "Most of the work is in the spring. By the time it's summer, we're mostly watering and weeding." The gardening volunteers meet every Tuesday at Whiteside Park at 9 a.m.

Capture Ely photo contest now underway

ELY- The challenge is on to capture the essence of Ely through photos. Grab your camera or phone and snap away to capture the special, unusual, or unique moment. The Ely Chamber of Commerce will give out a total of \$1,500 in Chamber Buck prizes in four categories: Outdoor Rec-

reation, Family Fun, Nature, and Shopping. Chamber Buck prizes will be awarded in each category as follows: 1st place - \$200, 2nd place - \$100, 3rd place - \$50, and honorable mention - \$25.

Photographers can enter more than one photo. Email submissions should be sent to director@

ely.org. Print submissions may be sent to the Ely Chamber of Commerce, 1600 E. Sheridan St, Ely, MN 55731, or dropped off at the office. Print submissions must also be accompanied by a digital copy.

Photos submitted to the contest may be used on the Ely.org website, social media posts, or in

the chamber's business and visitor guides. Photo credit will be provided. Photos can still be used by the photographer for personal or professional use. All entries must be received by 5 p.m. on Aug. 31. For more details and an entry form, visit ely.org/capture-ely, or call 218-365-6123.

Two injured on Echo Trail

ELY- According to the St. Louis County Sheriff's department, first responders and county law enforcement officers were dispatched at 2:37 p.m. on June 16 to the scene of a personal injury accident involving a motorcycle. The location of the incident was the 2700 block of the Echo Trail north of Ely

Upon their arrival on scene, public safety authorities located a

65-year-old male driver, who was the only person involved in the accident. The driver indicated that he lost control of his motorcycle while attempting to navigate a corner causing him to fall. The driver was transported by ambulance to the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital before being transported to a Duluth Hospital with what were believed to be non-life-threatening

injuries.

While investigating this crash, law enforcement learned that there was another motorcycle accident a short distance south of the first accident. The 73-year-old driver, who was the only person involved in the second incident, reported he lost control of his motorcycle on the roadway causing it to fishtail and slide out. The driver of this motor-

cycle was treated and released for minor injuries on scene.

Both motorcycle operators were wearing helmets. A foreign substance on the roadway is believed to be a contributing factor in both accidents.

The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office did not reply to a request for more information by the *Timberjay*.

Morse Township rollover accident

MORSE TWP- A 75-year-old Ely woman suffered a single-person injury accident just before 5 p.m. on Monday, June 20. The accident occurred while the driver was traveling west on Highway 169 southbound near the inter-

section of West Boundary Road, approximately five miles west of Ely city limits. The sole vehicle involved was a 2015 Toyota Rav4.

The vehicle left the roadway and rolled, coming to rest on its roof. The driver was transported

to Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital by ground, and then to St. Mary's in Duluth by air.

The driver was wearing her seat belt. The Minnesota State Patrol (MSP) reported that alcohol was not involved. The Morse Fall

Lake Fire Department, the Ely Police Department and the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office also responded to the accident.

The MSP did not respond to a request for more information by the *Timberjay*.

Upcoming Events

Ely Public Library

ELY- The spice for July will be mustard.

The library will host "Climb Theater: The Ant and the Grasshopper" on June 28 from 1-2 p.m. This is an audience participation performance based on Aesop's Fables for all ages.

On June 29, from 11 a.m. to noon, the library will celebrate International Fisherman's Day with crafts and activities for all ages. Please preregister. Space is limited to 25 people.

The library board meeting for July will be on Wednesday, July 5, from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

On Thursday, July 6, the library will hold "Jack's Bean Sprouts," which is a program designed for preschoolers to help them learn fine motor skills based on the fairy tale "Jack and the Beanstalk." Activities include reading the story and planting a "bean stalk" to bring home. Please register in advance so the library can order enough supplies.

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

All library events are at the Ely Public Library at 224 E. Chapman St.

Racial Justice Group

ELY- The Racial Justice Group will be meeting next on Sunday, June 25 at noon at the First Presbyterian Church of Ely,

226 E. Harvey St. We will have special guest speaker Kes Ebbs sharing highlights from his experience bringing BIPOC urban youth up to the boundary waters. All are welcome. The group will meet in the study, which is straight in from the front door. ADA access to the elevator is through the rear entrance on the alley.

Ely Community Band

ELY- The revived Ely Community Band will give its first concert on Tuesday, June 27, at 6 p.m. at Whiteside Park.

Rock The Park

ELY- The second annual family-friendly Rock The Park event will be on Saturday, July 1, at Whiteside Park with two

musical acts: Steve Ernster from Nashville from 5-6:30 p.m. and the Northwoods Band from Two Harbors from 7-11 p.m. Beverages will be provided by the Ely Fire Relief Association.

Art and Soul Gallery

ELY- The gallery will host an open house for its July exhibition, "Journey North - Captivating Images" by Heidi Pinkerton, on Saturday, July 1, from 1-3 p.m., at 427 E. Sheridan Street.

Boundary Waters Connect

ELY- Boundary Waters Connect (BWC) will host a free BBQ at the Chapman Street Commons, the pocket park next to the BWC headquarters,

16 N. 1st Ave. E., on Sunday, July 2, from 4-6 p.m. This event will feature live music, including a few musical numbers by Northern Lakes.

July 4 in Ely

ELY- Times and locations for the flag raising, race, parade, picnic and carnival, and fireworks, are at www.ely.mn.us/ely4thofjuly.

Farmers market and Arts in the Park

ELY- Ely's farmers market and the Northern Lakes Arts Association Arts in the Park program are every Tuesday evening, from 4-6 p.m. The evening music presentation starts at 5 p.m.

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.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

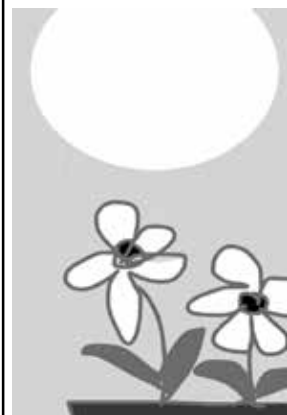
► June 27: I Can't Hear a Thing! with UCLA Professor Emeritus Robert Winter

► July 4: There will be no Tuesday Group meeting on July 4

► July 11: Trust for Public Land

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2023



a smoke covered sun parched ground would welcome a drench

head into more heat

Libraries

Ely library

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

Babbitt library

Monday 10 am-6 pm
Tuesday 10 am-6 pm
Wednesday 10 am-6 pm
Thursday 10 am-6 pm
Friday 10 am-6 pm
Phone: 218-827-3345

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics

Anonymous

OPEN AA - 7:30

p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely.

ELY WOMEN'S OPEN

AA - Every Monday at noon at Ledgerock Church, 1515 E. Camp St., Ely.

BABBITT AA - 7 p.m.

Tuesdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church.

AL-ANON - Sundays

8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely.

For persons who encounter alcoholism in a relative or friend.

BABBITT AL-ANON -

Thursdays, 7 p.m., at Woodland Presbyterian.

CO-DEPENDENTS'

12-step support group, 5:30 p.m. Thursdays, Wellbeing Development, 41 E Camp St. Ely.

ADULT BASIC

EDUCATION GED

Study materials and pre-test available. Call 218-

365-3359, or

1-800-662-5711.

CAREGIVER

SUPPORT GROUPS:

Babbitt: 3rd Monday of Month: 6-7:30 p.m. at Carefree Living.

Ely: 4th Monday of

Month: 10-11:30 a.m. at Ely-Bloomenson Hospital.

Conference Room B.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Found object art class coming in July to NWFA Gallery

COOK- Favorite NWFA instructor Jeanne O'Melia is back in Cook and will be teaching a "Found Objects Sculpture" class on Thursday and Friday, July 6-7 from noon to 2 p.m. each day at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery. This two-day workshop is a "curious and creative" collage making class for youngsters ages 7 to 90 and beyond.

From trash to treasure, let your creative juices flow in an art medium where objects and the class are free - clean candy wrappers, broken jewelry, litter - whatever you can find can be used for art.

Call Alberta at 218-666-2153 to register for the class to be held at 210 S. River St. The gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and you can register for classes in-person. You may also use email at nwfamn.org@gmail.com.

The Gallery in June is featuring the art of 46 artists in the annual Spring Art Expo. Check the website, www.nwfamn.org and download the list of scheduled art classes so you don't miss exciting events at this gem of a gallery in the north woods. Contact and information can be found also by email at nwfamn.org@gmail.com, on Facebook or Instagram.

Spring Art Expo boasts 46 Artists

COOK- The annual Spring Art Expo is in full swing at Northwoods Friends of the Arts in Cook, with 46 artists displaying and selling their work.

Visit the gallery on Wednesdays, Thursdays or Fridays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at 210 S River St. in Cook.

The Divas return for Music in the Park

COOK- The always popular trio "The Divas" will perform again at Music in the Park at 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 28. This delightful Vegas style musical group impresses with their warm captivating harmonies. Shannon, Sharon and Rosie, from right here on the Iron Range, have a wide variety of tunes in their repertoire and feature Shannon on the keyboards, Sharon with her guitar and drums, and Rosie with various rhythm instruments. These ladies love to perform, and feel lucky to be able to do it together.

Every Wednesday this summer from 6 to 8 p.m. grab a blanket or a lawn chair or sit in your car to hear a different act perform in the city park gazebo. Enjoy food and refreshments provided by St. Paul's (Alango) Lutheran Church. In case of rain, the concert will be moved to the Cook VFW.

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

Writers group to meet on July 8

COOK- Writers and aspiring writers are invited to join Dr. Ellie Larmouth on Saturday, July 8 from 2-4 p.m. at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook, 218

S River St., for a writer's workshop.

Participants are encouraged to bring personal pieces of writing to share.

Larmouth has volunteered as coordinator of the Writer's Groups, summer and winter, for the past eleven years, except for one year during the pandemic.

Heart quilting is focus of July 12 class at NWFA

COOK- Quilters can learn Kathy Lovgren's technique for making a heart design quilt easier and less cumbersome to construct by attending her class at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery, 210 S. River St., on Wednesday, July 12 and Thursday, July 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

Lovgren will make the Twisted Heart technique easy. Fabric kits and templates will be supplied for the class.

To register call Alberta at 218-666-2153 or email nwfamn.org@gmail.com, or drop by the gallery during open hours from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Your registration holds your place in class. See more about NWFA on Facebook and Instagram.

Levar returns to teach Water Lilies class July 12

COOK- Join experienced artist and teacher Diane Levar as she teaches how to paint water lilies from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Wednesday, July 12 at the Cook Community Center, 510 Gopher Dr.

Explore color mingling techniques to make textures, capturing the depths and reflections in the water. Reference photos will be available for participants.

Levar has 40+ years of art teaching experience and was a candidate for Minnesota Teacher of the Year in 2009. Last year she taught "birch landscape" and "blueberry" watercolor classes for NWFA.

The artist materials list will be sent to participants upon registration. All levels are welcome. Your registration with payment confirms your place in the class. To register, call Alberta at 218-666-2153 or email nwfamn.org@gmail.com, or drop by the gallery during open hours from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Art classes and events for children and adults are ongoing at Northwoods Friends of the Arts. The classes are all different, taught by local talent and easy on the pocket book.

Crane Lake Chapel bazaar scheduled for July 19

CRANELAKE- Mark your calendar and plan to get in on all the valuables and goodies for sale at the Crane Lake Chapel Bazaar on Wednesday, July 19 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at 7399 Handberg Rd.

Organizers are accepting quality donations of items for the event, and ask that clothes and electronic items, including TVs and CD and VHS players, not be donated. Donations can be brought to the fire house back garage.

The event will feature a good selection of crafts, antiques, and collectibles, as well as a raffle and used and new books. Baked goods and lunch will also be available..

BEAR RIVER FARM FRESH MARKET



The kids of Stony Brook Farm and Bearville Ranch were integral to the operation of a joint booth at the Bear River Farm Fresh Market at the old Bear River school on Saturday. Pictured are, front, Levi and Logan; middle, Elise, Della, and Cassandra; and back, Jace. Future editions of the market are scheduled for July 15, Aug. 5, Aug. 26, Sept. 16 and Oct. 7, each day from 9 a.m. to noon. Put an extra check on your calendar for Aug. 26, because the Bear River Fair will return that day as a one-day family-oriented event.

COOK FARMERS MARKET



Cloudy skies and a slight chance of rain didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the vendors who turned out at Cook City Park on Saturday for the first Cook Farmers Market of the summer. Above: Missy Bakker Roach of Bear River Farm talks with a customer at her stand. Right: Kelly Dahl's produce from Aspen Falls Farm was a big hit with market patrons. photos by D. Colburn



LIONS CITYWIDE CLEANUP



A concerted group of volunteers showed up Saturday to spend their morning collecting trash from the streets of Cook as part of the Cook Lions Club's cleanup day event. Above: Marleen Zak keeps a watchful eye on her husband Jim as he slides waist deep into a ditch to collect trash. Left: Laurin Glass, left, and Lyla Rautiola team up on River St. photos by D. Colburn

Orr Council navigates light agenda

ORR- Operating shorthanded without a permanent city clerk or deputy clerk and down a member of its own following the resignation of Lloyd Scott, the Orr City Council caught a bit of a break at its June 12 regular meeting with a lengthy agenda of largely routine items that could be acted upon with little discussion or controversy.

Actions taken by the council include:

- Approved a lease with Jerry Stanke for the office space at Old City Hall for his State Farm Insurance agency. Stanke and his wife have recently moved to Orr and Stanke, a State Farm agent for 17 years, wanted to move his business from Elk River to Orr. An amount for the lease was not stated by council nor provided in

the sample lease included in the council packet.

- Approved a short-term rental permit application from Go Big Investments LLC/Skoglund Investments LLC for the property at 4553 Hwy. 53.

➤ Approved submitting an application to the IRRRB Community Development Infrastructure Program for funds to apply to repair the water tower standpipe.

- Approved two-year grant agreement from MnDOT Aeronautics for maintenance and operation reimbursement for the airport.

➤ Approved a memorandum of understanding with Local 49 establishing Juneteenth as an official holiday.

- Accepted a donation of a parcel of land offered by the Orr Center.

➤ Approved a credit card application for the fire department.

➤ Approved payment of additional clock hours for Laura Manai for working in the clerk's office, over and above her responsibilities as liquor store manager.

➤ Approved payment to former city clerk Cheri Carter for time devoted to preparation of documents for council meeting and for training.

- Approved a permit for a beer garden for July 3rd Fun Day.

➤ Approved the installation of ATV trail marking signs in the city, to be put up by Voyageurs Country ATV Club.

- Authorized replacement of the air conditioning unit in City Hall.

➤ Approved a build-

ing permit for P4T Holdings for an 11'x11' deck at 4568 Lake St.

➤ Heard a presentation from Lake Country Power Business Development Manager Dan Cooper describing various economic development loan programs offered by the utility to support both businesses and communities.

**Read It
HERE
and
ONLINE**

SOBER...Continued from page 1

St., in Soudan, is zoned RES-12, which would allow a residential treatment center as a conditional use.

Harvieux seemed unaware at the meeting of the need for a conditional use permit and acknowledged she had not yet applied for one. Rigney confirmed that he had to receive an application from Harvieux.

Township residents sound off

Several Breitung residents asked questions and raised concerns about the proposal, while others spoke in favor of the program. Former Breitung Supervisor Greg Dostert said that such services in the area are currently inadequate and noted that he had worked alongside people in a similar program and found them to be excellent workers. "Don't sell this program short," he said. "When we had Parkside here, we had all kinds of people in there. I lived three houses from Parkside at the time, never once was I afraid of anybody that walked there."

Parkside was a group home for mentally ill adults, which was later closed due to restructuring of the state's mental health placement system. It later became the Vermilion Park Inn.

"I'm happy to see a proactive program," said Mary Batinich, the current owner of the inn, who is planning to live next door to the facility in a former garage at the inn, since converted for housing. In a later interview, Batinich said she was a bit dubious when first approached by Harvieux but became more amenable to the proposal as she learned more. "This kind of help and intervention is so important, it helps the whole community,"

she said.

Others in attendance shared concerns.

Angela Zavodnik asked if someone with a history of sex offenses would be allowed to stay there. Harvieux explained that they only take level I sex offenders, which are at the lowest risk to re-offend. Zavodnik asked if the clients were expected to remain sober while they're there, and Harvieux said yes and that any suspicious activity is met with breathalyzer or mouth swabs and, if positive, they would have an intervention and action specific to that client.

Others questioned whether Soudan was the right location for such a facility, given the lack of job opportunities in the almost-exclusively residential community.

Another resident asked if the clients would have cars. Harvieux responded that most would not and would not be allowed to use them until Phase 3 of their program. She said staff would drive the clients to their jobs most of the time.

Board member Matt Tuchel, who also serves on the Tower Area Ambulance Service, said he agreed that there's a need for this kind of treatment facility but he questioned if Soudan was the right place for it. "Typically, you don't put a treatment center in a small town and the reason being is that we have limited resources, we have a volunteer ambulance service that may or may not cover a second call, you may be waiting 30 minutes for an ambulance. We don't have 24/7 law enforcement and there was a period of time we had no law enforcement here. I agree it's needed, 100-percent, but is Soudan the right place to put this? I don't think so personally."

Several of those in attendance expressed support for Tuchel's comment.

"In the last year and a half that we've been working with these sober houses I've not had any police calls to these houses that I'm aware of. I've not had ambulances to any of the clients that we've had in those houses," Harvieux said later.

Others had concerns about the potential risk to children. "A lot of people here have young kids, we're worried about young kids," said another resident. "This is the center of our town, where all the kids go," said one resident. "It's right next to the candy store," another responded.

Will it be a locked facility?" asked another resident.

"No, the facility is not locked," Harvieux said.

Dan Wiirre asked how security is dealt with in-house. "We do 15 minute rounds and checks on people, so we know at all times where people are," responded Harvieux. "The doors aren't locked, people will walk out and we will handle that."

Making her case

Given the concerns, Harvieux took pains to make her case, noting the growing need for treatment service. "Substance abuse affects all of us, and it's not getting any better. Unfortunately, it's going to continue to be a part of our lives and it's going to continue to touch us personally and it's going to continue to cost thousands and thousands of dollars," she said. Harvieux said there would be a live-in house manager, two additional live-in substance abuse counselors and would also employ peer recovery specialists. In a subsequent interview she

said she would be living there as well.

Harvieux suggested it's a misnomer that people in recovery from addiction are somehow dangerous. "What we see is that people take ownership of their home, on top of having staff live there," she said. "It's a family, they take ownership, they protect it, they tell on other people. It's their house. We plan on putting a fence up around the place. We're planning on more cameras, alarms and bells on the doors."

Care Crossings has a three-phase program, according to Harvieux. During Phase I, clients are getting focused, acclimated and engaged in treatment. During Phase 2 clients are integrating into their jobs, and in Phase 3 clients are continuing employment, treatment and transitioning to their next place where they will be living. She said the support continues once people have moved out of the facility to make smooth transitions back into their communities. "The people who come to our programs are just like you and me," she said. In addition, Harvieux said the clients in the facility will all be coming from northeastern Minnesota, not the Twin Cities.

Harvieux said she's already begun forming partnerships in the area. In a later interview, she said she has been working with Wellbeing Development in Ely and the Ely Behavioral Health Network and is in the process of securing partnerships with area agencies including the faith community. "The majority of our staff are Christians and in recovery themselves," she said.

While addressing the concerns of residents, Harvieux expressed con-

fidence that her proposal could not be stopped due to local opposition. "I'm familiar with this process... we intend to move forward with this project. We intend to carry out what we're going to carry out and utilize whatever means we might need to move it forward so we'll go through due process and this kind of thing. We are well aware of the meetings we have to go through. It's happening across the nation actually, where there's sober homes being put up in communities that don't want them and ultimately the precedence is ruled by a federal judge that they go up.

"So, we have no voice?" asked two members of the audience.

"I'm just telling you what's out there, I'm giving you the facts, so you're not surprised. There was a township in Chicago in February that went up against the federal judge and the township paid \$800,000," Harvieux said she'd rather not have to go that route. "We'd rather just hear your concerns, be able to move forward, address what needs to be addressed. Certainly, there's budget issues, things that we need to take a look at, safety concerns we need to take a look at, but we certainly don't want to throw more money at this then we might need to, on both our parts."

Town board chair Tim Tomsich didn't dispute Harvieux's point, but noted that the proposal is not a done deal until a conditional use permit is issued by St. Louis County. Residents chattered about drafting a petition and attending the St. Louis County hearing on the project, asking to be notified of when it would be. Clerk Dianna Sundahl confirmed she would post the information

at the township's three legal posting areas outside the community center, inside the post office, and at the Soudan Store.

The Vermilion Park Inn building has a long history as a medical facility. First built as the Soudan Miner's Hospital in 1891 it was later Parkside Homes, a home for people with mental illnesses from the late 1960s until it closed in 2004. After several years of revolving ownership, the building was purchased and renovated in 2016 by Mary Batinich and Jane Turner and turned into a bed and breakfast. Harvieux had tried to buy the same building once before around 2008.

In other news, the Breitung Town Board:

► Raised the lawn mowing rate from \$15 an hour to \$100/hour. The charge is usually only given when a property that has already received an official warning about blight fails to resolve the problem themselves, then the township maintenance department will do it for them and send a bill. Tuchel said the cost reflects wages, unemployment, insurance or possible accidents.

► Passed a motion to allow Police Chief Dan Reing to hire B&B Remodeling to clean up a blighted house on Jasper St. so long as the quote is under \$2,500. They have been notified, fined and have refused prior offers for help from several people.

► Heard that there are six more properties in Soudan that will receive blight warnings, mostly for unmowed lawns.

► Passed a motion to recognize Juneteenth as an official holiday. Supervisor Tuchel abstained.

The holiday will affect two union contracts as well as close township offices on June 19.

FIREWORKS...Continued from page 1

seen wandering around the island. Both species are federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which makes it illegal to, among other things, "take" any of a long list of migratory birds, including both herring gulls and double-crested cormorants.

A 2012 study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service demonstrated that a municipal fireworks display conducted 0.62 miles from a coastal rookery in Oregon, led to the abandonment of between 5-10 percent of the cormorant nests at the site. Meanwhile, a second fireworks display located 1.32 miles from another Oregon rookery, appeared to cause minimal disturbance.

The planned display on Lake Vermilion, at least as originally planned, would be much closer than the 0.62 miles cited in the federal study. Causing nest abandonment could be considered a taking under federal law.

In an interview earlier this week, Dan Deban, executive director of the resort association, said the barge used for the display would be anchored just off Potato Island, since it makes an easier anchor point than the deeper surrounding waters of Big Bay. A family donated the island to the resort association in 2013 and the organization

still owns the island.

Deban said he had contacted the DNR about the association's planned fireworks display and had heard little concern. He said he had also contacted the township and the county. "I talked to everybody but the pope," he said.

Breitung Town Clerk Dianna Sundahl said she had no record of any contact from the resort association. All but a tiny fraction of the island is located in Breitung Township, although a small piece of the island's west end is located in Greenwood Township. Greenwood Town Clerk JoAnn Bassing was on vacation this week, but former clerk and current supervisor Sue Drobac responded to an emailed message to the clerk and said she'd heard nothing from the resort association about the planned fireworks.

Deban, when questioned for this story, seemed initially unaware that the birds on Potato Island are protected. "I know at one time they were trying to control the population," he said of the cormorants on the island. "So, I don't think that's going to be an issue. They're not protected."

The effort to control the population was under a depredation order issued by the USFWS, which gave

federal officials the authority to oil some cormorant eggs to reduce a burgeoning population of cormorants, which has since leveled off. The order is no longer in effect and the birds remain protected.

While Deban said he spoke to Matt Hennen, the DNR's large lake fisheries specialist, he had not spoken to a DNR non-game wildlife specialist about the plan, who would be more authoritative regarding a wildlife matter. Gaea Crozier, a DNR regional non-game specialist based in Grand Rapids did speak to Deban after the *Timberjay* reached out to her for comment late last week.

Crozier said she informed Deban that the birds on Potato Island were protected and advised him that any fireworks display should be at least a mile away from the site.

Crozier said Deban had informed her that the barge would be floating in Big Bay, not anchored near Potato Island as he has told others, including the *Timberjay*.

Yet, in a June 20 email sent to area resort owners after his conversation with Crozier, Deban reiterated that the fireworks display was still on for July 5, "near Potato Island." Deban added that the DNR "is

requiring us to keep a safe distance from Potato Island as the double-crested cormorant is a protected bird."

Deban, in the same email, appeared to dismiss the issue. "Matt Hennen is aware of the concern and is not concerned," he wrote.

Crozier, however, took issue with Deban's characterization. Crozier said Hennen had a conversation with the resort association about the issue. "They discussed the importance of not harming the colonial waterbird colony. Matt gave them the recommendation to stay one mile away from the colony and they agreed to stay away from the island." Hennen was on vacation this week and was not available for comment.

Crozier said she reaffirmed Hennen's recommendation when she spoke to Deban and suggested that if they plan to deploy fireworks from a floating barge they should pay attention to the wind speed and direction to choose a starting point that will keep the barge at least a mile from the island as it drifts.

It's not clear, however, whether the resort association is planning to abide by the DNR's direction. Deban did not respond to an email from the *Timberjay* asking for more information about the association's intentions. During an

earlier interview, Deban appeared not to take the matter seriously. "Maybe we should be passing out ear plugs for the birds," he quipped.

Fish and Wildlife Service advice

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials did not return repeated messages seeking comment and answers to questions for this story. But the USFWS website does offer guidance for the use of fireworks near wildlife habitat.

"As we enjoy the bright colors and thunderous explosions, it's easy to overlook the impact to wildlife around us," notes the agency on their website. "We know what to expect, but wildlife don't. The abrupt lights and sounds are often seen as a threat by nesting bald eagles and easily startle great blue herons and other colonial nesting birds. The shock of fireworks can cause wildlife to flee, ending up in unexpected areas or roadways, flying into buildings and other obstacles, and

even abandoning nests, leaving young vulnerable to predators."

The threat to wildlife doesn't stop at startling lights and sounds, notes the USFWS. "Fireworks also have the potential of starting wildfires, directly affecting wildlife and destroying essential habitat. Litter from firecrackers, bottle rockets and other explosives can be choking hazards for wildlife and may be toxic if ingested."

Large fireworks displays do leave considerable debris behind, including plastics, papers, and residue from the explosive materials as well as the heavy metals that provide much of the color in the fireworks. In displays over water, most of that debris ends up in the water.

Deban said the company actually lighting the fireworks would be out in a boat the following day looking for duds or other debris that might still be floating.

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CITY OF TOWER

Council seeks balance between hikers and ATVs

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER— The balance between motorized and non-motorized recreation proved to be the one point of concern by members of the city council here at their regular meeting June 12, even as they approved a proposal by the Howard Wagoner Trails Club to pursue the construction of new trails on city land.

The club, which was involved in the creation of the Ancient Cedars and Pine Ridges trails in Tower, is looking to add some connecting trails, most of which would cross undeveloped city land. Most of the new trails would be built by volunteers and would likely be limited to footpaths, although in some cases the new routes could incorporate old logging roads or unofficial and infrequently used ATV paths. The agreement included a number of routine conditions, although the one that proposed to limit some portions of hiking trails to foot traffic caught the attention of councilors, who were concerned it could prompt community push-back. Mary Shedd, past president of the trails club, told the council that the club has no concerns over existing motorized use, most of which is long-established and not in conflict with the hiking trails. "I agree we can co-exist on about 90-95 percent, but there is one short segment that should be closed," she said. Shedd was

talking about a short stretch from a picnic table at the top of the north side hill to an impressive ledge overlook a few hundred feet to the north. That short route has had limited ATV traffic over the years but has become somewhat overgrown.

Current club president Victoria Ranua said the areas of concern to the club have seen very little motorized use recently but that it could increase if the club takes steps to improve trail corridors for hiking. According to Shedd most of the new hiking trails are narrow and occasionally rugged, which makes them largely inaccessible to ATVs in either case.

The council struggled to finesse the issue in language for a motion but, in the end, granted the request with the caveat that the clerk-treasurer engage with the club to work out any designations limiting trail uses.

"We love the trails," commented council member Kevin Norby. "They're a real asset to the community."

In other business, clerk-treasurer Michael Schultz gave the council a report on the city's continuing funding shortfall for its planned new drinking water plant. He noted that the final pieces are now in place for the city to receive \$3.375 million in federal funds for the project from the U.S. Army Corps but said that still left the project about \$2 million short.

The city had hoped that the shortfall would be covered in this year's state bonding bill, but it was left out in the final version approved by lawmakers. "It does appear there is a path for us to obtain bonding money next year," said Schultz. "We'll do whatever we can to get bonding money for that." The council voted 4-0, with council member Josh Zika absent, to authorize Schultz to file a bonding request for the project for consideration in 2024.

At the same time, Schultz said the city will see some benefits from the most recent legislative session, including an additional \$10,000 in local government aid.

In other action, the council:
► Held a public hearing on whether the city should consider changing street names in honor of significant citizens of the community. Mike Korpi was the sole speaker at the hearing and he argued that some recognition for the late teacher Carol Ahlstrom would be valuable.

The council took no action on the issue but is considering a commemorative street sign that would make the change unofficially.

► Heard a report from Schultz about the ways in which the city of Tower contributes to the Fourth of July celebration. That includes arranging road closures and detour routes, arranging and paying for portable johns, paying for advertising and candy for distribution during the parade,

and city maintenance for clean-up following the events.

The city will not be doing a fireworks display this year for a variety of reasons, said Schultz, although given the current dry conditions, the display might have been canceled, as occurred in 2021. The Department of Natural Resources has already banned fireworks displays outside of the limits of cities in much of northeastern Minnesota. Schultz noted that the Lake Vermilion Resort and Tourism Association has made arrangements to have fireworks shot off on July 5 from a barge anchored near Potato Island. That plan is the subject of a front page story in this week's edition of the *Timberjay*.

► Heard an update from Schultz noting that a county judge has approved the change in the Gunderson Trust, allowing the trust to transfer its funds to the Duluth-Superior Community Foundation for management. Once the written order is received, the trust will finally be in a position to transfer the funds.

► Held a brief discussion on the recently completed Tidy Up Tower days, held earlier this month. While the intent of the program was originally to address blight conditions, council member Joe Morin noted that the effort doesn't seem to address the properties he'd like to see improved. Council member Bob Anderson suggested the program could do more to address public

spaces that benefit everyone.

► Under the consent agenda, approved a memorandum of understanding with the AFSCME union making Juneteenth an official holiday.

► Approved transferring some of the savings from the Hoodoo Point Campground fund into CDs to boost the financial return on those funds.

► Hired Makenna Villebrun as an emergency medical responder for the Tower Area Ambulance Service contingent on a background check.

► Approved liquor licenses effective July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024 for Good Ol' Days, D'ericks, and Benchwarmers and cigarette sale licenses to Bob's Standard, D'erick's, Vermilion Fuel and Food, and Zup's.

► Set July 10 at 5 p.m. as the date and time for a public hearing on an easement request by Dave Rose to access property he owns on the west side of the East Two River. Rose has put up over \$19,000 in a city-managed escrow account to pay for costs associated with the easement.

► Noted that the city had been assessed an administrative fine (which was later forgiven) by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for the failure of Tower RV Resort to file for a sewer connection permit before connecting to the Tower-Breitung municipal sewer system.

MUSEUM...Continued from page 1

Root beer classes

One of the other celebratory activities sponsored by the museum is a summer full of root beer classes, taught by Edberg at the Ely Folk School. "The root beer classes were here (at the museum) in the past," Edberg remarked. "Now they are at the folk school, and they are different from the former classes ... Now the class includes the history of brewing root beer as well as how to make your own the Dorothy way."

The classes are every Wednesday afternoon through August and cost \$34. The class also includes admission to the museum. Those wanting to take the



class can sign up through the folk school's website at elyfolkschool.org.

Upcoming events

Other events scheduled for the 30th anniversary year include three open

houses, the first of which is "Dorothy Day" this Sunday, June 25. Admission to the museum is free during the open house days.

The July "Donuts at Dorothy's" open house is July 30, on the same weekend as the Blueberry Art

Left: Jess Edberg, executive director of the Dorothy Molter Museum, at the newly-opened root beer exhibit on the porch of Molter's Winter Cabin.
photo by C. Clark

Festival, with local donuts from Brainstorm Bakery and coffee from Ely's Gene Hick's coffee. The "Supporter Appreciation Day" open house is set for Aug. 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"At the August open house, we'll have cast and crew from the upcoming Root Beer Lady Musical." The musical based on Molter's life will be coming

to Ely's Historic State Theater Sept. 7-10.

As part of the celebration of the museum's thirty years, the State Theater will also show the documentary, "Living in the Boundary Waters" on Aug. 18, starting at 6 p.m. with a question-and-answer panel after the film. The documentary uses four years of eight-millimeter film shot on the Isle of Pines in the early 1980s.

The museum will cap its thirtieth-year activities with its annual root beer

and beer garden and the root beer run on the weekend of the Ely Marathon, Sept. 22-23. More details are available on the museum's website at rootbeerlady.com.

The museum is open daily through Sept. 4 and will be open Friday-Sunday until Sept. 30 and then Friday-Saturday through the end of October. With adult admission priced at \$7, the museum remains one of the best tourist bargains in the Ely area.

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EBCH Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital

BWCAW LEGAL BATTLE

Judge denies motion for injunction on towboats

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The U.S. District Court for Minnesota has denied a preliminary injunction request by Montana-based Wilderness Watch to stop all towboat activities in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. At the same time, the court ruled that the U.S. Forest Service can "continue its moratorium on new special-use permits for towboat operations." Current towboat operators are unaffected by the ruling and can continue to operate for now.

Wilderness Watch, a nonprofit dedicated to the preservation of federally-designated wilderness areas, filed a lawsuit against the Forest Service back in February (case 0:23-cv-00284-NEB-LIB), alleging that the federal agency has violated at least three different federal acts with its management of towboats.

The group's initial complaint included a request for a permanent injunction on "permitting any motorized use beyond the statutory cap and the quotas set out in the Forest Service's wilderness management planning provisions." The *Timberjay* covered the filing and its economic consequences for outfitters in the May 5 edition.

Preliminary injunction

Wilderness Watch requested a preliminary injunction, shortly after filing its lawsuit, to shut down all towboats in the BWCAW for 2023 until the current litigation was decided. The two sides argued their opposing view-

points on the injunction in briefs and oral arguments back on March 29 before U.S. District Judge Nancy E. Brasel.

Then Brasel took over two months to deny the motion while the outfitting season got underway under a cloud of uncertainty.

Brasel issued her denial of the preliminary injunction on June 6, finding that "a preliminary injunction banning all towboat operations in the BWCAW is inappropriate... Nor is the Court persuaded that now is the time for an injunction," noting that the Forest Service was preparing an analysis of towboat use in the BWCAW.

In her decision, Brasel

added, "it is unclear how an artificial limit (through a preliminary injunction) would impact that analysis. The balance of harms and public interest favor completion (or at least further development) of that analysis before the Court alters the status quo with an injunction limiting towboat trips in the BWCAW."

Jurisdiction

The latest decision was not a complete loss for Wilderness Watch. In her consideration of the group's arguments, Judge Brasel touched on the matter of jurisdiction in the limited case of Wilderness Watch's preliminary injunction request.

Her determination on jurisdiction may foreshadow what might happen with the Forest Service motion to dismiss the case, filed in mid-May. The Forest Service had challenged the lawsuit on several points, including a claim that the district court lacks jurisdiction under the federal Administrative Procedures Act because "Wilderness Watch identifies no final agency action that authorized excess towboat use. The Forest Service also argues that challenging day-to-day operations is not enough to confer jurisdiction."

That argument shaves some legal points that only a lawyer could recognize or

love. The word "final" here refers to what determines a "final" regulatory action by a federal agency. Brasel found that the special permits issued by the Forest Service to towboat operators did satisfy the case law definition of "final" action, and therefore the court did have the standing to adjudicate the case.

Brasel stated that the determination over jurisdiction was made "at this point in the litigation with a limited record," reflecting that the case has not yet been heard in court. Despite the preliminary and limited development of the lawsuit to date, Brasel's determination regarding the court's jurisdiction may be

a preview of what could happen in the upcoming July 26 hearing.

The hearing in question will consider the Forest Service's motion to dismiss, which is made on the basis that the court lacks jurisdiction.

Wilderness Watch must file its reply to the Forest Service motion to dismiss by June 19, while the Forest Service will have until July 19 for its rebuttal. The *Timberjay* will continue to follow this case which affects both the BWCAW and the outfitter industry that is a major support of the economy in northern St. Louis and Lake counties.



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Briefly

Man injured in garage fire

COOK- A Cook area homeowner suffered non-life-threatening injuries from a garage fire on Saturday.

Cook and Evergreen firefighters were dispatched at about 11:12 a.m. Saturday to the 8900 block of Hwy. 73 in Sturgeon Township to battle the blaze, which was reportedly started by a lawnmower inside the garage.

The homeowner was transported to the Cook Hospital and later transferred to a Duluth hospital for treatment of what were believed to be non-life-threatening burns to his arms.

Damage to the garage was considered light and mostly smoke-related, while the lawnmower was a complete loss. A water tender from Pike-Sandy-Britt was canceled before arriving on scene. St. Louis County Sheriff's deputies also responded to the call.

LOTS OF NEW TRADES!

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<p>2020 FUSION TITANIUM AWD</p>  <p>\$23,741 #8006</p>	<p>2019 DODGE JOURNEY AWD 40K</p>  <p>\$20,972 #7909</p>	<p>2016 MKX RESERVE AWD</p>  <p>\$22,975 #25341A</p>	<p>2020 GRAND CARAVAN SXT</p>  <p>\$21,980 #7993</p>	<p>2015 FOCUS SE</p>  <p>\$11,437 #7998</p>
<p>2018 EQUINOX LT AWD</p>  <p>\$17,471 #7931A</p>	<p>2015 DURANGO SXT AWD</p>  <p>\$15,390 #8004</p>	<p>2018 EDGE SPORT AWD</p>  <p>26,978 #7956</p>	<p>1999 ALERO GL 96K MI</p>  <p>\$3,900 #7904B</p>	<p>2019 EDGE ST AWD</p>  <p>\$32,724 #7978</p>
<p>2020 F150 XLT SPORT CREW</p>  <p>\$37,471 #25427A</p>	<p>2017 FUSION SE 115K MI</p>  <p>\$12,980 #7996</p>	<p>2017 PACIFICA TOURING</p>  <p>\$18,741 #25493A</p>	<p>2010 RX 350 AWD</p>  <p>\$13,978 #7943A</p>	<p>2015 YUKON XL SLE</p>  <p>\$24,980 #25374A</p>
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Celebrate our Nation's Birthday in Tower-Soudan This Year

This Tower-Soudan Fourth of July schedule of events has been brought to you by these community-minded businesses:

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- Bauman's Vermilion Funeral Home
- Benchwarmer Grille
- Bob's Service & Towing
- Breitung Township
- Broten Construction
- Como Oil & Propane
- D'Erick's Tower Liquors
- Docks on Wheels
- Embarrass-Vermilion Federal Credit Union
- Fortune Bay Resort Casino
- Frandsen Bank - Tower
- Glenmore Resort
- Gruben's Marina & Village
- Harbor View Spa & Wellness
- Janisch Realty
- Lake Vermilion Houseboats
- Lake Vermilion Cultural Center
- Lamppa Mfg.
- Little Green Pantry & Flexspace
- Marjo Motel
- Nordic Home North
- Northern Lights Salon
- Northwoods Land Office- Tower
- Northwoods True Value- Tower
- Pier 77 Mini-Golf
- Pike Bay Lodge
- Pike River Products
- St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Soudan
- Scenic Rivers Medical & Dental
- Sulu's Espresso Cafe
- The Timberjay Tower-Soudan Agency
- Tower's Gathering Gallery
- Ubetcha Antiques & Uffda Thrift
- Vermilion Classic Boatworks
- Vermilion Club
- Vermilion Design Co.
- Vermilion Fuel & Food/ Soudan Store
- Vermilion Land Office
- Vermilion Park Inn
- Vermilion Senior Living
- Vermilion Storage
- Vermillion Roofing
- Y Store
- Your Boat Club
- Zup's Grocery - Tower

Parade – July 4th

Judging begins at 10 a.m. at Tower Civic Center parking lot

Honored Citizen
Carol Alstrom
Parade Marshalls
Al & MaryBeth Reller

Flag Raising at 10:15 a.m.
at Tower City Hall.

Come join us and sing along as the Star Spangled Banner is played by a local musician.

Kiddie Parade at 10:45 a.m.

Kiddie Parade lines up between UBetcha and the Birch & Main Bldg (across from City Hall)

All participating children will receive \$5, a lanyard, vinyl sticker & flag. All children welcome to come march in the parade.

Decorations welcome but not required!
Kiddie Parade Gift bags available at 10:30 a.m.

Parade starts at 11 a.m.

Adult Parade Prizes

Best of Show \$450
1st \$350 • 2nd \$250 • 3rd \$150
Best Family Float \$100 • Most Patriotic Float \$100 • Best Business/Commercial \$100

Please Pre-Register Parade Floats/
Entries with Jolene Mroszak (218) 255-2131
or tseventsboard@gmail.com

Tuesday, July 4 Pancake Breakfast

Tower Civic Center
8 - 10:30 a.m. • \$10 adults, \$5 kids 8 & under
Pancakes, sausage, juice, coffee
Sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Civic Club

July 4th

FOOD, FOOD, FOOD...and more!

Benchwarmer Grille

Cheeseburgers & Fries, Brats & Chips
(Full Menu Indoors)
Green Machines, Special Drink Prices
\$1 off malts & shakes

D'Erick's Beer Garden

Pulled Pork and Chicken Sandwiches,
Hot Dogs, Green Machines, Beer, Pop & Water.
Bloody Mary Garden. Beanbags all weekend.

Sulu's Espresso Cafe

9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Coffee drinks,
baked goods & scones inside

Pins 'n' Needles

Free Hot Dogs & Beverage for
Children after the Parade!
plus....Temporary tattoos

Good Ol' Days

Frozen Margaritas, Turkey Legs,
Fresh Hamburger Patties

Check out all the
Food Booths on Main Street

Tuesday, July 4th

40th Vermilion Walk & Run
Starts on Main Street • 8 a.m.
(Lake Vermilion Cultural Center lawn)

10K Run- 8:00 a.m. • 5K Run/Walk 8:05 a.m.
1-Mile Kids Fun Run- 8:15 a.m.

Race shirts for sale and Vermilion Run stickers for all participants. Race courses are the same as in 2022. Race will start/end at same spot!

Pregister:

Pick up a registration form at the Timberjay office or email jsummit@vermilioncountry.org
Questions, Call Jodi Summit at (218) 753-2950

Register on race day from 6:30 a.m.-7:45 a.m.

10K or 5K \$15 (\$20 on race day)
Kids Fun Run is FREE • 5K Family Rate is \$40.
Kids 12 & under race free (5K or 10K) with paid adult.
Sponsored by Friends of Vermilion Country School and the Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board.

July 4th Children's Races & Sawdust Scramble

12:30 p.m. – Sawdust Scramble
at the football field (west end)

Children's Races at the school field – following the Sawdust Scramble
Be sure to thank the race volunteers!

- 6-yard dash ages 2-3 (boys & girls races)
- 10-yard dash ages 4-5 (boys & girls races)
- 20-yard dash ages 6-7 (boys & girls races)
- 50-yard dash ages 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15 (boys & girls races)
- Backwards Race (boys & girls races) ages 2-3, 4-5, 6
- Wheelbarrow Race (boys & girls races) ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14
- Sack Race (boys & girls races) ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14
- Adult Races: Prizes for 1st, 2nd, ages 15-25 and 26 & up
- He/She Race, Water Balloon Toss

Actual races subject to change & new races may be added!

FIREWORKS ON JULY 3 & 5

At dusk on Niles Bay (west end) on July 3 and Big Bay (east end) on July 5. Please stay 150 ft. from barge launching the fireworks!

Fireworks sponsored by Lake Vermilion Resort & Tourism Association

Sunday, July 2 from 12 - 3 p.m. Community Picnic Breitung Recreation Area in Soudan

Sponsored by Breitung Township
Free community picnic, hot dogs, popcorn, root beer floats, games and fun for all ages.
4th of July Raffle Drawing will be held



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NORTH COUNTRY NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

Just keep walkin'...

For Bernie Krauss, the good life is found on the hiking trail

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

BREITUNG TWP- When I ran into Bernie Krauss on a recent Sunday morning on the Mesabi Trail in Soudan, he was fresh off a hot breakfast at Good Ol' Days in Tower. He was headed to Ely, for a night in a motel, and then to Snowbank Lodge for an overnight and a day off to take in the scenery.

He was making his way on foot.

Krauss is a man for whom hiking is a passion and he was passing through the area earlier this month as part of his traverse of the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST), all 4,800 miles of it. He had begun his hike in North Dakota, at the western terminus of the trail and had made it this far despite extraordinary insect

outbreaks that had proved a challenge. Ticks were outrageously abundant in North Dakota, he said. One day he removed up to over 1,000 of the little critters, mostly from his legs. Mosquitoes, as locals are well aware, are also abundant this year, and were particularly horrible on the trail section in Itasca County, he said. The NCNST follows the Mesabi Trail in our area, and the bugs and

ticks were not an issue for him on Sunday, and he was enjoying the cooler weather.

Krauss is a retired wildlife biologist who spends most of his time hiking and traveling. He does not keep a "home address," and to him, wherever he is at the moment is where he calls home. He is a seasoned hiker, and mostly averages 30-40 miles a day

See **HIKING...** pg. 4B



LAKE VERMILION CULTURAL CENTER

Midsummer a salute to southern Slavic culture

Annual fundraiser was packed as interest remains high in completing the center

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- If the enthusiasm shown at this year's annual Midsummer fundraiser is any indication, raising the remaining funds needed to finish the restoration of the former St. Mary's Episcopal Church into the Lake Vermilion Cultural Center (LVCC) will happen sooner rather than later. The project has taken longer than expected due to the costly logistics of updating the more-than-century-old church into a modern building capable of serving as a cultural center for the region. Yet, the cultural center board is hoping to complete the interior of the building by the end of next year.

“When we talk about culture, we’re talking about who we are.”

St. Louis County Commissioner Mike Jugovich

“This means a lot for the city,” said Mayor Dave Setterberg. “It will draw people in for educational programs and cultural programs. This is not just for the city of Tower. This adds to our city and makes it a place where people want to live.”

St. Louis County Commissioner Mike Jugovich, from Chisholm, spoke about the importance of the area's culture. This year's Midsummer hit close to home for him because it celebrated the culture of the



photos by J. Summit

Top: Singer Debbie Prutsman belts out a tune from the musical, “Hello Dolly.”

Above: Auctioneer Steve Solkela calls for bids on a four-day stay in an Italian B&B as part of the live auction.

Right: County Commissioner Mike Jugovich, of Chisholm, offered his thoughts on the event and the importance of maintaining the region's cultural roots.



The much-reduced Pike River, south of Tower, is showing signs of the drought.

DROUGHT

Rainy River watershed now in drought watch status

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The Rainy River watershed has been designated in “drought watch” status as outlined in the state’s drought plan. The plan was developed and is overseen by the Department of Natural Resources.

The Rainy joins several other watersheds, including the western Superior and Mississippi headwaters in drought watch status, which means a significant portion of each of the watersheds is either abnormally dry or in moderate drought. The more intense “drought warning” phase, which much of Minnesota entered in 2021 and 2022, means more severe and widespread drought. Some degree of drought occurs in Minnesota nearly every year.

The dry conditions intensified dramatically in northeastern Minnesota in June due to abnormally hot conditions and minimal rainfall.

The weekly U.S. Drought Monitor map released last Thursday, June 15, showed significant amounts of abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions over much of the state, with a small portion of severe drought developing in central Minnesota. That map was expected to show expanding drought conditions in Minnesota in the latest version, which was scheduled for release June 22, after the *Timberjay's* weekly presstime. As of last week, all but a small portion of central St. Louis County was listed as abnormally dry, while areas along the North Shore were in moderate drought.

The DNR encourages water users and suppliers in drought watch areas to consider voluntary measures to reduce water use. Per the Statewide Drought Plan, no mandatory restrictions or new water appropriation suspensions are being implemented at this time.

The DNR is taking the following actions:

► Notifying the State Drought Task Force of these conditions. The

See **DROUGHT...** pg. 4B

See **MIDSUMMER...** pg. 4B



Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

INTENSIFYING DROUGHT

Exceptionally dry June raises fears of 2021 repeat

Forest Service lifts most of Spice Lake closure as fire contained

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

THE BOUNDARY WATERS—Here we go again? That's the concern from outfitters and lovers of the Boundary Waters in general as one of the driest Junes on record is fueling wildfires and prompting closures in the 1.1-million-acre wilderness area to protect public safety. It all brings back memories from the summer of 2021, when all or portions of the Boundary Waters were closed for

weeks.

For now, the closure, centered around Spice Lake, won't impact many wilderness users entering the wilderness from Ely area entry points, but the situation is raising alarm bells for businesses that rely on trips to the Boundary Waters. "I'm worried," said Steve Piragis, who operates a wilderness store and outfitting company in Ely. "This is not good. June has traditionally been a rainy month and a cold month," he said.

Right: The Spice Lake fire was burning actively as fire crews accessed the site on June 14. It has since been contained.

photo courtesy USFS

Instead, June this year is running several degrees warmer than normal, and much, much drier than average. While June typically brings a bit over four inches of rain for the month, most reporting stations in the area have reported less than half an inch

See **DROUGHT...**pg. 3B



LAKE VERMILION

POTATO ISLAND

Vermilion's largest bird nesting site is a hub of activity

LAKE VERMILION—Way out in the middle of Big Bay sits one of the region's most robust hubs of bird life. It's called Potato Island, presumably for the many potato-shaped boulders found along its rocky shoreline. It's currently owned by the Lake Vermilion Resort and Tourism Association, donated in 2013 in memory of Shaver Strand and family, according to the small sign that stands on the island's highest point.

It's a small island by Vermilion's standards, just a half acre of rock with scattered low vegetation, but it has become a major rookery for both double-crested cormorants and herring gulls. It's also become a focal point for folks who use the lake and are regularly drawn to this remarkable display of life.

On a recent visit this past weekend, anglers were bobbing off the island's west end and a pontoon full of nearly a dozen tourists slowly circled the island, as those aboard watched the constant activity.

Birds come and go incessantly, creating a cacophony of the high-pitched calls of the gulls, the loud peeping of the gull chicks, mixed with the low grunting of the cormorants. The island is mostly bedrock, capped by a white-



MARSHALL
HELMBERGER



Above and left: Double-crested cormorants and herring gulls more or less peacefully co-exist on Potato Island, a nesting site for both species.

Below: A mama herring gull and her chick.

Bottom: A cluster of cormorant nests.

photos by M. Helmberger



Wildflower Watch

This week's featured flower
BUNCHBERRY



Without a doubt, the **Bunchberry**, *Cornus canadensis*, can produce among the most stunning arrays of wildflowers found anywhere in the North Country. This member of the dogwood family is actually found in cool, moist locations around the world, from Greenland to northern Asia and northern North America.

It is a distinctive wildflower, with its showy, white, four-petaled flowers and deeply-veined leaves. Later in the summer, the flowers turn into a cluster of bright red berries that are edible, but not particularly tasty.

Outdoors briefly

Ribbon cutting set for new Ely mtn bike trails

ELY—The official ribbon-cutting for Ely's new purpose-built mountain biking trail system is set for this Friday, June 23 at Hidden Valley Recreation Area.

The new trail system, consisting of six singletrack loops totaling nine miles, was designed by Minnesota-based Dirt Candy Designs and was largely built by Pathfinder Trail Building.

From a progressive skills loop for riders to practice and hone bike handling techniques, to the newly complete "Ely Airlines" jump line, the Hidden Valley MTB trails appeal to all levels of trail riders.

The project was made possible by support and funding from the Federal Recreation Trail Program, the Iron Range Resource and Rehabilitation Board, the U.S. Forest Service, the Minnesota DNR and the city of Ely, along with generous support from Ely Nordic Ski and Bike Club members and community donors.

The Hidden Valley Recreation Area is located at 1258 Hidden Valley Rd. in Ely.

Light refreshments will be available along with an atmosphere of race excitement as the fifth and final Hidden Valley Hammer MTB race series event of the season starts at 6 p.m.

See **POTATO...**pg. 3B

EXPLORING NATURE



Sax-Zim BioBlitz set for July 8

SAX-ZIM BOG— Anyone interested in learning more about the biodiversity of the Sax-Zim bog is invited to take part in the 11th annual BioBlitz focused on the abundant life of this unique area. The event is set for Saturday, July 8, rain or shine.

Field trip options will allow participants to venture out with experts in any number of fields, including insects, spiders, butterflies, birds, plants, galls, moths, aquatic species, and fungi.

More than 3,200 species have now been recorded over the past ten years during these annual events.

Participants will meet at the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog Welcome Center at 8793 Owl Ave. in Toivola

at 9:00 a.m. Participants will choose their field trip and spend the day learning, exploring, and documenting what they find. The groups will gather back at the welcome center around 2 p.m. to discuss their discoveries and share their best finds. This event will take place outdoors, so come prepared for the weather, plenty of biting insects (which will be documented), and walking over uneven terrain. Bring swampers if you have them. People who are interested in volunteering to be a part of the field trip groups are encouraged to register through the website saxzim.org. There is no cost to participating in this event. All ages are welcome.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
78 58					76 56					70 54					71 49					72 49				
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
06/12	69	47	0.00		06/12	69	38	0.00		06/12	70	43	0.00		06/12	79	45	0.00		06/12	70	38	0.00	
06/13	77	41	0.00		06/13	77	38	0.00		06/13	78	47	0.00		06/13	81	43	0.00		06/13	78	39	0.00	
06/14	81	53	0.00		06/14	80	38	0.00		06/14	80	49	0.00		06/14	64	52	0.00		06/14	81	50	0.00	
06/15	66	30	0.00		06/15	68	37	0.00		06/15	65	50	0.00		06/15	70	48	0.00		06/15	67	42	0.00	
06/16	66	43	0.00		06/16	68	35	0.00		06/16	70	44	0.00		06/16	75	39	0.00		06/16	68	36	0.00	
06/17	76	48	0.00		06/17	75	36	0.00		06/17	73	45	0.00		06/17	73	54	0.00		06/17	75	40	0.00	
06/18	77	55	0.00		06/18	80	49	0.00		06/18	74	53	0.00		06/18	79	57	0.00		06/18	79	50	0.00	
YTD Total	8.20				YTD Total	8.82				YTD Total	6.03				YTD Total	NA				YTD Total	7.49			

POTATO...Continued from page 2B

to-greenish layer of guano, and it's home to hundreds of birds, with probably 200-300 cormorant nests and dozens of herring gull nests as well. The birds seem to get along for the most part, although there was a brief moment of drama during our recent visit when one of the herring gulls ended up with a cormorant chick, which it proceeded to eat to the accompaniment of some loud and angry cormorants and excited gulls. The gull chicks, which were wandering at will on the rock, seemed not to be at risk from the nesting cormorants, which are pretty exclusively fish eaters. Gulls, by contrast, will eat just about anything they can catch.

While people are plainly attracted to the island, and all its hubbub, it's most certainly the domain of the birds. There is no

convenient landing spot and even if one did manage to land, the island is covered in guano and the herring gulls would almost certainly make your visit unpleasant. When protecting their young, herring gulls can be very aggressive. They'll fly up behind and hit you on the back of the head with their feet, an action that is often timed as well with the release of some pretty noxious gull poop. There's nothing like the prospect of a stinky goo running down the back of one's neck to encourage most of us to avoid landfall on their isolated refuge.

This is one spot best left to the birds.



DROUGHT...Continued from page 2B

through the first three weeks of the month. Some, like Ely, have reported less than a tenth of an inch, although the forecast for the weekend holds out hope for some potentially significant rainfall and a return to a more seasonable pattern after that.

The region began the summer with plentiful moisture after a snowy winter lingered into late April, but May proved drier than average and June has been exceptionally dry. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, virtually all of the region is now rated as abnormally dry or in moderate drought.

While the current conditions are reminiscent of the summer of 2021, the fire danger is ramping up even earlier than at that time.

Spice Lake closure

The Spice Lake fire was first reported on June 13 and was initially estimated at about 30 acres. Two days later, despite relatively little fire activity, the Forest Service issued a closure affecting a large portion

of the north-central BWCAW. The closure includes the eastern two-thirds of Knife Lake and east along the border to Saganaga and south to Makwa, Boulder and Fraser lakes. Most of that closure was lifted as of Wednesday as crews completed containment of the blaze.

The Forest Service defended its closure decision even as it acknowledged the impact it will have on area businesses and communities that serve wilderness visitors. "Due to the complexity of the Spice Lake fire, the closure is necessary," stated the Forest Service in a Q&A posted online. "These are not normal circumstances, the drought, warm temperatures, unpredictable high winds and fuel loads are creating a dangerous condition for our fire-fighters and the recreating public." The area is also highly remote and has limited communication capability, according to the Forest Service. "It takes an extended length of time to paddle the area, the capacity for

extreme fire behavior and excessive fuel conditions all lend to a large fire growth potential. These factors combined require a large closure area until we have complete containment."

Beyond the closures for the Spice Lake Fire, the Superior National Forest remains open to the public, although campfires are currently prohibited due to the dry conditions.

A case in point highlights the risk, said Joy VanDrie, a public information officer with the Superior. She said canoeists on Spider Lake recently encountered a small campfire that had been built and then abandoned outside of a fire grate. The fire burned into the underlying duff and was moving toward a thicket of dense balsam fir when the canoeists saw the smoke and proceeded to douse the fire. The canoeists then notified the Forest Service, which sent additional personnel to ensure the fire was fully extinguished.

Fishing reports

Ely area

Walleye anglers continue to find walleyes in water 12 feet or shallower. Boulder flats or on top of sunken islands, have been the locations to look for. We've also had several reports of walleye throwing up crawfish. As a result, orange jigs and half a crawler have been very effective. Anglers are also catching walleyes with slip bobbers, spinner rigs and trolling large minnow baits over shallow flats.

Topwater fishing for smallies continues to be fantastic for bass anglers. Anglers continue to find bass on shallow boulder flats and around trees laying in the water. Classic small-mouth spots. Wacky worms, ned rigs and in-line spinners have also been very effective for bass anglers.

Crappie anglers have had a harder time finding crappies this last week. Reports of successful trips

have been few and far between. Anglers should be looking for crappies to slide into weed beds during the evening hours. Small jig and twisters, beetle spins and crappie minnows fished under a bobber have been effective for anglers.

Lake trout anglers had a good week catching good number of trout. Anglers have been using trolling spoons and deep diving crankbaits, that dive to 20-foot-plus. Leadcore will help pull these lures down to lakers. Lakers are being found between 20-80 feet of water.

Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors. See more at Arrowhead OutdoorsElyMN.com.

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STATE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Local golfers participate in the state meet

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Three golfers from area schools competed in the Class A State Golf Tournament at Pebble Creek Golf Club in Becker on Tuesday, June 13 and Wednesday, June 14, with all finishing in the top half of their respective fields.

On the girls side, North Woods' Tori Olson and Ely's Abby Koivisto both completed the 36-hole event in 185 strokes, 41 strokes over par, tying for 22nd

with three other players. When tie-breakers were applied, Olson topped the group and remained at 22nd, while Koivisto slotted in at 25th.

After opening with a par, regulation was elusive for Olson on the front nine as she tallied seven bogeys and a double. She carded her first birdie of the event to open the second nine, but that magic slipped away as quickly as it came, and she finished the first round with a 91.

The front nine was even more of a puzzle for Olson on day two,

finishing with a 51. She regained her composure on the back side, striking three pars and a birdie to finish with her best nine of the tourney, a 43, and an 18-hole total of 94.

Koivisto was four over through six in her opening round, but the next 11 holes were feast or famine for the Ely ace, as she recorded three triple bogeys and four bogeys against four pars and finished out with a 94.

Koivisto cut way down on the major miscues in the second round, scoring a birdie on the

third hole and playing the front nine in 41, just five over par. The back nine was not so kind, as Koivisto tallied a double, triple, and quadruple bogey in a nine that featured only one par, finishing with a 50 and a 91 for the round.

On the boys' side, North Woods' senior Eli Smith tied for 43rd in a field of 86 and held that position after the tie-breaker. He shot 167 for the tournament.

Smith's performance on the first day was relatively consistent, as he shot 43 on both the front and back nines for an 86, 14 over

par. The highlight of the day was a birdie on the par-4 15th hole.

Save for a triple bogey to open play on day two, Smith was more zoned in for the second round. With birdies on the fifth and sixth holes, he was just two over after seven holes, but finished the nine bogey-double-bogey for a 41. After another double on the tenth hole, Smith regained his composure and finished out with six pars against two bogeys for a four-over 40 and an 18-hole total of 81, a five stroke improvement.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment down but wages up in residential care

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A labor market analysis by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) found that northeast Minnesota has experienced the largest decline in the state in nursing and residential care facility employment since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The region lost 1,536 employees, 14.7 percent of the nursing and residential care facility employee base, from the pre-pandemic level in 2019. That was nearly double the statewide decline of 7.6 percent.

While the majority of that drop was related to people leaving the industry due to the

trials of doing the work under highly restrictive COVID regulations and having to cope with large numbers of sick residents, another contributing factor has been the closure of care facilities. Since 2019, 32 nursing and residential facilities in northeastern Minnesota have shuttered their doors, 24 of them between 2021 and 2022. Employment in the industry dropped by 668 in 2022.

A large number of women and workers over 50 left the job market completely during the pandemic, due to a shortage of child care and older workers electing to take early retirement rather than subjecting themselves to environments where they were at greater risk of contracting COVID. With a smaller overall labor pool and an abundance

of job openings, nursing and residential care facilities have had to raise wages in order to fill vacancies. The average annual wage in the industry has increased by 23.4 percent since 2019, six points higher than the average wage growth in the Northeast region. A portion of that increase can be attributed to emergency CARES act funding in 2020, and a \$50 million boost from the Minnesota Department of Human Services allocated in 2022 to address staffing shortages at nursing facilities.

However, despite above-average wage growth, nursing and residential care facilities wages remain significantly lower than the larger health care and social assistance sector average, as well as the all-industry average of

\$22.57 per hour.

The reason the nursing and residential care facility sector continues to lag in overall wages is the proportion of its jobs that have traditionally been low paying. Home health and personal care aides, nursing assistants, and food servers represent over half of total employment in this sector, and all of those positions are paying \$4 and more less than the regional median.

Only registered nurses and licensed practical nurses earn more than the regional median hourly wage, \$37.92 and \$24.51, respectively. Housekeeping workers are the lowest paid at \$14.60, while food servers and personal care aides make around \$15.50 per hour.

The pandemic exposed how

much communities rely upon the services of nursing and residential care facilities. The pandemic also increased demand for workers in these facilities. As it is in many care-providing professions, pay is often lower than average, but has been rising faster than average over the past three years. Higher wages will aid in attracting the next generation of nursing assistants, LPNs, and personal care aides, although the industry will continue to face competition from higher paying jobs in other sectors of the economy. Demand for nursing and residential facility employees is expected to remain high as the population in Northeast Minnesota continues to age and makes greater use of those facilities.

MIDSUMMER...Continued from page 1B

southern Slavic region, where his own family originated.

"When we talk about culture, we are talking about who we are," he said. "We are here to help preserve it... We need to make sure our kids understand our traditions."

The dinner, catered by LVCC President Mary Batinich's husband Mike Skorich and family, included roast lamb, sarmas (cabbage rolls), kupus (coleslaw), Chuspice (a potato and broccoli dish), and a dessert of potica and strudel. About

175 attendees dined inside the Herb Lappa Civic Center, then walked across the street to the LVCC for the evening's entertainment. The silent auction and live auction raised funds for the ongoing project to complete the interior of the new building.

Auctioneer Steve Solkela kept the live auction action moving, and also brought along his accordion as part of the evening's entertainment.

Midsummer favorite Debbie Prutsman, from California and sporting an amazing dress and

Right: U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar addressed the Midsummer crowd via a video message aired inside the cultural center.



hat, opened up the show with reworked lyrics to the tune "Hello Dolly," renamed as "Hello Rangers," which included talk of strudel, potica, and dancing the Kolo Mika. Barb Baldrice and Mike Indihar took turns leading the audience in Slovenian hymns and songs.

DROUGHT...Continued from page 1B

task force comprises representatives from state agencies, local governments and related organizations.

►Updating the DNR Drought webpage.

►Notifying public water suppliers in the

Drought Watch Response Phase watersheds and encouraging them to implement demand reduction and water conservation measures.

►Closely monitoring conditions.

"Drought watch is a reminder that Minnesotans should not take water for granted. Water use increases as conditions become drier, and that strains water supplies," DNR Conservation Assistance

and Regulation Section Manager Randall Doneen said. "It is important for all water users to look at how much water they're using and commit to using less, not just during drought but on an ongoing basis."

Minnesotans are encouraged to learn how much water they are using (mndnr.gov/waters/water-mgmt_section/appropriations/conservation.html) compared to the average American home and iden-

tify ways to reduce water use now and in the future. More than 75 percent of Minnesotans rely on groundwater for their water supply. Reducing use today saves water for the future.

HIKING...

Continued from page 1B

while backpacking. Krauss plans to hike to Ohio and then do a flip, traveling to the eastern end of the trail in Vermont before hiking back west to Ohio.

According to a Facebook post he made on May 6, Krauss plans to take a month or two off after completing the NCNST, then hike the 444-mile-long Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail and the 425-mile-long Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

You can follow Krauss's progress on the Facebook page, North Country Trail Thru Hikers, where hikers share photos and posts of their experiences on this trail and others.





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ELY CITY COUNCIL

Ely creates annual license fees for food trucks

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- To address past and current disparities in fees charged at the Blueberry/Art and Harvest Moon Festivals, the Ely City Council, at its meeting on Tuesday, raised the fee for food trucks to \$300 for a year-long license starting in 2024.

"It's too late for 2023," remarked city council member Al Forsman. "We're looking forward to the future to get in line for next year for other transient merchant fees."

The issue addressed by the fee increase is the disconnect between the current \$25/day for food trucks compared to the \$300 peddler's license required of non-food vendors at the festivals.

City council member Adam Bisbee questioned the new fee recommendation, "Why the ambiguity? ... It doesn't seem equitable."

The council approved the fee increase for 2024 with a 5-1 vote, with Bisbee casting the only dissenting vote. Mayor Heidi Omerza was absent.

Other business

In other business, the council:

➤ Heard from council member Angela Campbell, who

reported that the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority was installing new windows and doors at the Pioneer apartments.

➤ Heard a presentation by Gerald Tyler of the nonprofit Up North Jobs about the decline in Ely's population and businesses, the health of the mining industry, and the lobbying efforts to prevent Twin Metals Minnesota from receiving approval for their proposed copper-nickel mine between Ely and Babbitt.

➤ Heard a brief presentation by Becky Rom, mostly to rebut some of the points presented by Gerald Tyler.

➤ Approved a recommendation from the Projects Committee to vacate a turnaround on Chandler to David Franks for \$6,000 with Franks paying the closing fees and retaining easements for utilities and existing access for the adjoining property.

➤ Approved a recommendation from the Projects Committee to proceed with the grant application and bid solicitation for the demolition of blighted properties 726 E. Camp and 131 Central Avenue.

➤ Approved a recommendation from the Projects Committee to authorize Ely's Clerk-Treasurer to work on the



Food trucks not part of regular festivals will now require an annual license fee of \$300. file photo

application to the IRRR for the planned renovations to the Community Center, including hazardous material abatement and demolition.

➤ Approved a recommendation from the Budget Committee for new computers, a receipt printer, and upgraded parts for the City Hall server from Voltz Technologies for up to \$7,576.

➤ Approved sending a letter to Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith and Rep. Peter Stauber asking for "guidance and possible support to determine any options to get funds (for the water main into the Ely schools) released for

the work that was completed." Funding of \$245,000 was originally appropriated for this purpose but securing the funds has been complicated by inflationary costs and administrative complexities introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

➤ Approved the proposal from the engineering firm Bolton & Menk to perform a \$3,500 independent fee evaluation required by the Federal Aviation Administration for improvements at the city airport.

➤ Approved recommendations to appoint Erin Kelly as a probationary firefighter with the Ely Fire Department and hire Adam Borchert and Josh

Ojala as new fire department captains.

➤ Approved sending the library staff to the Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference in September.

➤ Approved claims for payments, as follows: City of Ely and Ely Utilities Commission claims for June 20 for \$544,288; Ely Community Resource 3rd quarter payment of \$5,125; invoice #87713 to AE2S for the Waste Water Treatment Facility Improvements Project for \$35,207; pay estimate No. 15 for the Waste Water Treatment Facility Improvements Project to Rice Lake Construction for \$167,997.

➤ Approved change order No. 4 for the Prospectors ATV Phase 6 Beaver River Crossing.

➤ Approved John Hunn for the open seat on the Heritage Preservation Commission for a term ending Jan. 31, 2024.

➤ Council Member Angela Campbell reported that there is currently an open seat on the Tree Board, and she has information for any Ely residents who may want to serve on this city committee.

This article was written with assistance from college intern Jen Shuster-Dahlin

Obituaries and Death Notices



John D. Rykken

John D. Rykken, 85, formerly of Babbitt, passed away on Friday, June 2, 2023, in Prior Lake after a long battle with Alzheimer's. He will be laid to rest at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Bloomington with a memorial service to follow this fall.

John was born in New Ulm to Clifford and Vicky Rykken on Feb. 9, 1938.

He graduated from Minneapolis Southwest High School and continued his education at the University of Minnesota with a degree in Engineering followed by completing his masters, also at the U of M.

In 1959, he married his late wife Mayleann "Toots" Trask. They had three sons together, Ron, Bob and Tom. John worked for Control Data Corporation for over 20 years which included two tours in Europe, one in Frankfurt, Germany, and the second in Brussels, Belgium. While in Europe, John and Toots had a lot of opportunity to travel and visit several countries throughout the continent.

In 1980, sharing a love for the outdoors, John and Toots purchased Timber Bay Lodge and Houseboats on Birch Lake which they successfully ran for twenty years. Throughout their time owning and operating Timber Bay, they grew the resort into one of Minnesota's premier vacation destinations. They met many friends while at the resort and had the opportunity to enjoy the woods and water they both loved.

John was President of the Minnesota Resort and Campground Association in 1991 and was named

Minnesota Resorter of the Year in 1998. In 2000, John and Toots passed the resort on to their son Ron and his wife Beth. John and Toots purchased a home on Birch Lake where they spent their summers. John continued to enjoy coming to the resort throughout his retirement to visit with guests, join into a volleyball game, or enjoy a meal. In retirement, John enjoyed playing golf and volleyball and traveling.

John is survived by his sons, Ron (Beth) Rykken of Babbitt, Bob Rykken of Prior Lake and Tom (Joni) Rykken of Credit River; six grandchildren, Kristi (Brett) Frydenlund, Cortney (Sam) Carlisle, Ben (Anna) Rykken, Bailey (Anthony) Reynolds, Tessa Rykken and Brianna Rykken; six great-granddaughters; sisters, Rodi (Dick) Whiting and Jeanne Kane; sister-in-law, Pauline Weinhaus; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 59 years, Toots Rykken; parents; and older brother, Ken.

Frank Brula

Frank John Brula, 86, of Babbitt, passed away on Tuesday, April 25, 2023. A Funeral Mass will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, July 1 at St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower with burial at Lakeview Cemetery in Tower. Arrangements are by Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

Barbara J. Richtsmeier

Barbara Jean Mehling Berg Richtsmeier, 84, longtime resident of Babbitt, left on her own terms for a long-awaited two-step in heaven with her favorite dance partner on Wednesday, April 19, 2023. She peacefully departed this world while holding her daughter's hand. Barb's family wants to thank the wonderful staff of Prelude Homes Compassion Cottage, who wrapped her in love during the last year of her life. Memorials are preferred to breast cancer or dementia research. A celebration of life will be held from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, July 2 at the Wood Lake Nature Center Fireplace Room in Richfield. Inurnment will take place in Babbitt at a later date.

She is survived by her sister; four brothers-in-law; four children and their spouses; three stepchildren and their spouses; grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews; and an extended family that includes anyone who shared a meal at her table and became family forever.

Shirley M. Aronen

Shirley Mildred Saarela Aronen, 92, of Mt. Iron, formerly of Lake Vermilion and originally of Ely, died on Sunday, June 18, 2023, in the Edgewood Vista Senior Living Center. The Aronen family wishes to thank Edgewood Vista and Caring Edge Hospice for the tender care and support shown to her. Funeral services were held on Thursday, June 22 at Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church in Virginia. Interment was in the East Pike Cemetery. Family services were provided by Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her son, Brian (Robin) Aronen and his family Kristen Aronen, Leevi and Mikko, Ashley (Johnathon) Bishop, Graeme and Robin; daughter, Sherry Wiitala

and her family Heather Wiitala, Hannah, Selina and daughter, Shelley (Ed) Zeidler and her family Clayton (Emily) Zeidler,

Jillian, Vienna, Genevieve and Jeff (Brandi) Zeidler; extended family and friends.

Frank John Brula,
age 86, of Babbitt, MN
passed away on April 25, 2023.
His funeral mass will be held
at 10 AM on
Saturday, July 1st at
St. Martin's Catholic Church,
Tower, MN.
Burial will be at Lakeview
Cemetery in Tower.
Arrangements are by Landmark
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For both programs, a household is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Services are not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in these programs. Consumers who willfully make false statements to obtain these discounts can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from these programs.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, visit <https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html> for additional information about applying for these programs or call 1-800-201-4099 with questions.

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WHEELERS, TRAILERS AND SPORTING '18 Arctic Cat Alterra XT700 4x4 Wheeler; Honda Foreman 400, 4x4 Wheeler; New Power Winch; '19 Alumina 8115-W Alum. Flatbed Trailer, 8x15-Ft., Sgl Axle, w/Tip-Down Ramp and Removable Sides, Looks new; '08 Fun Finder Cruiser RV LLC, 12-ft. Travel Trailer, hardly used; Canvas Fish House; Jars; Grill; Etc. SHOP-Chain Saw; Leaf Blower; Miter, Band, Table and Radial Arm Saws; Grinder; Ladders; Vise; Straps; Hand and Handled Tools; Chains; Jacks; Caddies and Supplies; Lumber; Many Misc. Shop Items

For complete listing see www.reinhardtuctions.com, or call **218-845-2260**.

Reinhardt Auction Service- "Work hard-Sell right!"

EMPLOYMENT

Marketing & Fundraising Manager

The Mesabi Symphony Orchestra is seeking an experienced and self-motivated Marketing & Fundraising Manager. Only candidates who live within an hour of Virginia, Minnesota will be considered. The successful candidate will serve as the primary MSO public liaison, fundraiser, event coordinator, and as the main administrative staff person for the MSO and MSO Board.

This is a flexible, work from home position of approximately 15 hours per week. It requires attendance at MSO concerts and events, networking events, and engaging with the business community. A home office, computer or laptop, and reliable internet service are required. Anticipated start date for this position is at the end of July, 2023.

Apply by sending an introduction and your resume to generalmanager@mesabisymphonyorchestra.org, or use the link to our Indeed job posting at <https://www.indeed.com/job/marketing-fundraising-manag-er-dc0e7e0ed425e3f6>



6/23

Program Accountant

Closes: 06/30/2023

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

Excellent Benefits:

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

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

Published in the Timberjay, June 9, 16 & 23, 2023

POSITION OPENING

Ely Public Schools

Paraprofessional (7 positions)

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for Paraprofessionals for the 2023-2024 school year; background check required.

Qualifications include:

- > Associate's Degree/equivalent or complete a Para Pro exam with a passing score (www.ets.org/parapro)
- > Preferred experience working with school-age children
- > Evidence of ability to work cooperatively and communicate effectively in a collaborative setting
- > Ability to perform job description duties

Benefits include:

- > Paid sick leave, personal days and vacation
- > Health and life insurance
- > Flexible spending account
- > PERA retirement

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

A complete application must include the following:

- > District Application
- > Resume
- > College Transcripts
- > 2 letters of recommendation

Return materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email lwestrick@ely.k12.mn.us. Contact the District Office for a complete job description.

Starting Rate of Pay: \$17.23/hour

Hours: 6.5 hours/day

Deadline to apply: June 28, 2023; open until filled.

Published in the Timberjay, June 23, 2023

JOB OPENING – CITY OF ORR

FT CLERK/TREASURER

The City of Orr is currently seeking qualified candidates for the position of City Clerk/Treasurer. This is a full-time position with competitive benefits. Primary duties include utility billing, payroll, accounts payable/receivable, monthly financial statements, meeting minutes, preparation of annual budgets, assist with city audit, and maintenance of city ordinances and record keeping. Applicants must possess strong analytical, organization, math, and computer skills. Must be able to work with the public; have excellent oral and written communication skills; and the ability to work independently and efficiently. Experience with Fund Accounting is preferred. Must pass drug test, background, and credit checks. The City of Orr is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

To obtain an application, contact the Orr City Hall, 4429 Hwy 53, PO Box 237, Orr, MN 55771 at 218-757-3288; or email: orrmn@centurytel.net Position will remain open until filled. tfn



STEGER MUKLUK COMPANY IS HIRING FOR THE SUMMER

We are looking for bright motivated people to enhance our Sales Team!

Full-time hours, 7 days a week
Apply in person at 100 Miners Drive, Ely
email: office@mukluks.com



COME JOIN OUR TEAM!

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

WANTED!

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

FT JOB OPENING – CITY OF ORR

MAINTENANCE/PUBLIC WORKS ASSISTANT

The City of Orr is seeking candidates for a full-time General Maintenance/Public Works Assistant. Minimum qualifications include a valid driver's license, high school diploma or GED, mechanical aptitude, and ability to obtain required water and wastewater certifications. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, daily/seasonal operations of streets and parks, water and wastewater systems, operation and maintenance of works equipment and machinery, and the municipal airport. Hiring Range: \$14.47 to \$18.47/hr (DOQ) and competitive full-time employee benefit package. Must pass drug test and background check. The City of Orr is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

To obtain an application, contact the Orr City Hall, 4429 Hwy 53, PO Box 237, Orr, MN 55771 at 218-757-3288; or email: orrmn@centurytel.net Position will remain open until filled. tfn



DRIVER WANTED

Competitive wages, Class A or B CDL

Call Cody 218-349-4207

Schulze Excavating, Inc., Ely, MN 6/30



Sewing Technician

(Full-Time or Part-Time availability)

Wintergreen Northern Wear creates quality outdoor apparel on the main street of Ely

We are looking for creative, talented individuals to sew our garments. If you love to sew, we'd love to have you on our team! Sewing experience is required; experience with garments is preferred. We'll train you on our industrial machines. A cheery, clean work environment and benefits included. Competitive wages based on skill level and experience. Call 218-365-6602 or email michele@wintergreen-northernwear.com for more information. Apply online, by email or at our store located at 205 East Sheridan Street, Ely, MN. 6/30



OPEN POSITIONS

10 Fifth Street SE Cook, MN 55723

Care Center

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

Radiology

FT Radiologic Technologist (\$4,000 sign-on bonus)
Casual Ultrasound Tech (Independent Contractor)
Casual Radiologic Tech (Independent Contractor, weekend only)

Hospital/ER

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

Dietary

PT Dietary Aide/Cook

Environmental Services

PT & Casual (Environmental Tech I)
Housekeeping and Laundry Aide
Casual Laundry Aide

TO APPLY:

www.cookhospital.org/join-our-team/

More Info? Contact Human Resources

218-666-6220

humanresources@cookhospital.org

The Cook Hospital is an equal opportunity provider and employer

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



Retail Associate

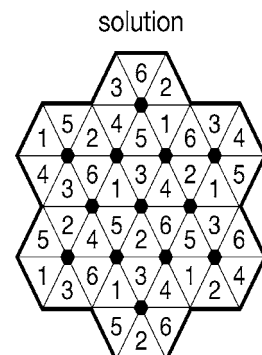
(Full-Time or Part-Time availability)

Wintergreen Northern Wear creates quality outdoor apparel on the main street of Ely

We are looking for a friendly, outgoing and experienced individual to join our retail team! If you're looking for a dynamic position with competitive wages that will keep you busy full time or part time and year round, apply online at WintergreenNorthernWear.com or at our store located at 205 East Sheridan Street, Ely, MN. Experience in customer service or sales required; knowledge & experience of outdoors or manufacturing are preferred. 6/30

CryptoQuote answer

To love yourself as you are is a miracle, and to see yourself is to have found yourself, for now.
— Anne Lamott



PUBLIC NOTICE

2023-2024

Cook Hospital Bids For Propane

Sealed propane bids will be accepted until 3:00 pm, June 26th.

Propane Bid for Maintenance Building: 3,000 gallons for 2023-2024 with contract to begin September 2023.

The sealed bids must be marked "Propane Bid Maintenance Building" and be delivered or mailed to Cook Hospital, Teresa Debevec, CEO, 10 Fifth Street SE, Cook, MN 55723.

Bids will be opened at the Board Executive Committee Meeting of the Cook-Orr Healthcare District on June 27th at 4:30 PM.



Published in the Timberjay June 16 & June 23, 2023

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Read us online at
timberjay.com
218-753-2950

Super Crossword

Answers

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



TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

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

AUTOMOTIVE

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

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Superior Quality
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• Trim
• One-Of-A-Kind Moldings
• Industrial Lumber
218-744-1788
8825 Hwy 101, Iron, MN 55751

HAIR CARE

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

HOSPICE

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

PET CREMATION

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

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

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

TOPS- Meetings every Monday at 4:45 p.m. at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Virginia.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Try out the Timberjay classifieds

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

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Hwy 53, Orr • Call 218-757-3150

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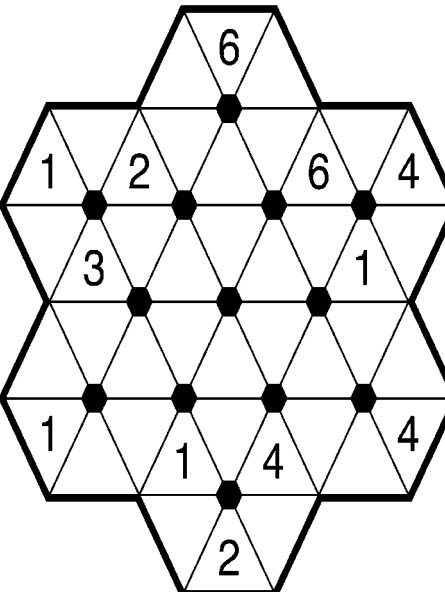
Pinehaven
Youth and Family Services, Inc.

For more information please contact us at (218) 828-2027

SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

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



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆◆◆
◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆◆◆ Difficult

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CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

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

SE AEBW JERTZWAL QZ JER
QTW DZ Q CDTQNAW, QVO SE
ZWW JERTZWAL DZ SE GQBW
LEROV JERTZWAL, LET VEK.
— QVVW AQCESS

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Answer

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

Super Crossword

INTERPLANETARY

- ACROSS**
- 1 Flip out
 - 6 City in Florida
 - 11 Nerve-racking
 - 20 Rock guitarists, slangily
 - 21 After-bath garments
 - 22 What a dipstick is dipped into
 - 23 Rip open eagerly
 - 25 Budapest native
 - 26 Put up with
 - 27 Actor Erwin
 - 28 Chocolate syrup brand
 - 29 Bone-dry
 - 30 Je ne — quoi (elusive quality)
 - 32 Tools facilitating weapon-launching
 - 35 Asset of Hercules and Samson
 - 39 Road coating
 - 40 Young miss
 - 41 Aerobic exercise promotes it
 - 44 Greek region
 - 49 Work unit, in physics
 - 50 Morales of "La Bamba"
 - 51 Infant
 - 53 Drain cleaner
 - 54 Hiker's printed guide
 - 58 Result of a lucid mind
 - 63 Like scalawags
 - 65 Prefix with commuting
 - 66 Making haste
 - 67 Aid in diagnosing an injured meniscus
 - 71 In dreamland
 - 74 Dragon killer, say
 - 75 Some pudding bases
 - 79 "Hamilton" duet sung by Burr and Hamilton to their children
 - 83 Literary alias
 - 84 Big cat's lair
 - 85 Beet or turnip
 - 86 "I don't give —!"
 - 88 Olympic runner Sebastian
 - 89 Ghosts
 - 93 Paul Lynde's role on "Bewitched"
 - 97 What a dipstick is dipped into
 - 98 Faux —
 - 100 Diner patrons choosing dishes
 - 101 Danger of atomic weapons
 - 108 Drink mixer
 - 109 Just slightly
 - 110 Trembled
 - 111 Victory sign
 - 113 "Au —" ("So long for now")
 - 117 Wedding party
 - 119 Tolkien's imaginary world (that hints at this puzzle's theme)
 - 121 Rear-end or sideswipe
 - 122 Hit of the past
 - 123 Prefix with fiche
 - 124 Quality of a dirty chimney
 - 125 Howled wolfishly
 - 126 Does in, as a dragon
- DOWN**
- 1 Jetway locale
 - 2 Plow pullers
 - 3 "Diary of — Housewife"
 - 4 Careful reader
 - 5 Race joiner
 - 6 Bruin Bobby
 - 7 Pigeon calls
 - 8 Sits next to
 - 9 Helpful boost
 - 10 Oar wood
 - 11 NPR journalist Daniel
 - 12 Depend on
 - 13 Cattle home
 - 14 Congest with fluid
 - 15 Kin of reggae
 - 16 Prints messily
 - 17 Savoir- —
 - 18 Onetime TWA rival
 - 19 Gives temporarily
 - 24 "— -Ho" ("Snow White" song)
 - 28 Sheep call
 - 31 Church tower
 - 33 Archaic verb ending
 - 34 Alliance of the W. Hemisphere
 - 35 Clip, as wool
 - 36 On — firma
 - 37 Is furious
 - 38 Possesses
 - 42 Fond du —, Wisconsin
 - 43 Up to, in ads
 - 44 Med. exam involving a forearm jab
 - 45 Sneaky laugh
 - 46 Et — (and others, in footnotes)
 - 47 "Fist City" singer Loretta
 - 48 Safecracker, slangily
 - 51 Boxer Max
 - 52 Guthrie of folk
 - 55 "Angel" actress Amy
 - 56 French artist Édouard
 - 57 First Hebrew letter
 - 59 Set of values
 - 60 "Would that it were true!"
 - 61 — the bud (forestall)
 - 62 Single out as especially important
 - 64 Boorish types
 - 68 Make over
 - 69 Race pace
 - 70 Ones outdoing all rivals, informally
 - 71 Appends
 - 72 Flow slowly
 - 73 Race space
 - 76 Secret stash
 - 77 Love, to Celine
 - 78 Foretellers
 - 80 Botch it up
 - 81 Bond creator Fleming
 - 82 Circle portion
 - 87 Nobel-winning U.N. agcy.
 - 90 Most frigid
 - 91 Put a knot in
 - 92 Skin protein
 - 93 Draw upon
 - 94 Venerate
 - 95 Makes good
 - 96 Hard work
 - 98 Players of LPs and 45s
 - 99 Noah's boat
 - 101 DEA agents
 - 102 In — (not yet born)
 - 103 Tree that's a chocolate source
 - 104 Mannheim's river
 - 105 Horn sounds
 - 106 Home to St. Teresa
 - 107 Soft toy bear
 - 112 Emmy winner Falco
 - 114 Bicolor whale
 - 115 Possible response to "Good job!"
 - 116 Greek consonants
 - 118 Greek consonant
 - 119 Rowdy crowd
 - 120 Conducted

Get Results!

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Sign up for the free Ely and St. Louis County emergency alert system

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

REGIONAL- With the 20-acre fire at Lucky Boy ponds fresh in everyone's mind, Ely Police Officer Bradley Roy spoke to the Ely City Council on June 6 about the area's pair of regional emergen-

cy alert notification systems, known as Northland Alert.

Northland Alert is a free, automated alert system, hosted by a partnership of St. Louis County and the cities of Duluth, Hermantown, Hibbing, and Virginia. The alerts are sent out in a variety

of emergency situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, and evacuations of buildings and neighborhoods in case of flood, fire, or other disasters.

"Anyone can sign up for the Northland Alert system," Roy explained. "It only takes a few minutes, and you can choose what sorts of alerts you want to receive." A user can subscribe to the service online on a PC. A user can also access the service through the Everbridge app on a smart device.

The *Timberjay* explored the different routes to sign up for the service. Overall, the easiest way to access it is through northlandalert.com. The sign-up process was more complicated and confusing using the Everbridge app. Signing-up through the northlandalert.com URL will forward the user to a webpage hosted by the city of Duluth. Despite being hosted on the Duluth municipal website, using the subscribe button on this webpage will take you to the sign-up forms for the entire county and the partner cities.

The subscription process sends you to three forms: one for your identity, so the system knows where you are located for

regional alerts; one for your email, text and phone contact information, and how you want your alerts delivered; and one for which alerts you wish to receive. The last form also allows you to set a quiet time of your own choosing for those who want alerts muted during sleeping hours. All the information on the site is confidential and not shared outside of public safety agencies sending alerts. Once a user sets up an account, it is easy to sign back in to change alert choices or delete an account. Because this is a public service of the county and partner cities, the system does not ask for any payment or financial information.

For the *Timberjay's* trial subscription sign-up, we chose to receive alerts from the Ely Police Department, Ely public works and utilities, the Ely Library, the Ely Fire Department, Ely Community Events, and St. Louis County emergency notifications. Since the choice of alerts is up to the user, someone who lives outside one of the partner cities could go ahead and just choose emergency alerts from the county.

Northland Alert also has severe weather alerts and these were not optional when signing-up. The program automatically includes weather alerts, regardless of whether a user wants to receive them. For those who have a severe weather alert app on a smart phone or an emergency radio that delivers National Weather Service severe weather alerts, the Northland Alert system will be redundant for weather alerts.

The subscription process took only a few minutes online at northlandalert.com. "The virtue of the Northland Alert system is that we reach out to a large number of residents very quickly," Ely Police Chief Chad Houde told the *Timberjay*. "For example, with the high fire danger, if we had a large fire approach Ely and wanted to evacuate a neighborhood—heaven forbid anything like that ever happens—we could alert everyone in the city with a subscription to Northland Alert, which is a lot more effective and efficient than going from door-to-door."



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Requirements include a High School Diploma or General Education Degree (GED) and experience providing exceptional customer service are required. This position requires excellent communication with various team members, including physicians, nurses, patients, and visitors, while maintaining strict confidentiality and HIPAA requirements. Applicants must pass a typing test. The minimum typing requirement is 30 wpm with 5 error maximum.

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HEALTH CARE

Hiring outpaces exits at state's hospitals, reversing multi-year exodus

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- While the health care staffing shortage in Minnesota is far from over, a positive trend can be found in the 2023 Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) Workforce Report – the state hit an all-time high for hiring direct patient care staff this year.

However, that isn't enough to offset the flight of health care staff experienced from 2019 and running through the COVID pandemic.

The MHA report covers only Minnesota's hospital systems and not other settings such as long-term care facilities that also experienced significant losses during the pandemic. While hospitals added nearly 14,000 workers in the 2023 report, the rate of vacant positions remains high at 17 percent. Vacancy rates for various full-time positions include:

- Medical assistants, 57 percent (554 open positions)
- Other clinical staff, 18 percent (3,114 open)
- Registered nurses, 17 percent (2,632 open)
- Certified nurse assistants, 14 percent (304 open)
- Physicians, 13 percent (312 open)

The exit rate for health care workers in hospitals decreased from a high of 15,624 in 2021 to 12,840 in 2022. About 6,000 of those were full-time employees. Physicians showed the largest proportional decline in exits, dropping from 1,302 to 644.

But overall, Minnesota's hospitals and health systems added 1,123 more employees than left. This is the first year since 2019 that hiring exceeded the numbers of workers leaving the field.

It should be noted that the MHA numbers do not reflect health care workers who have left their careers, but simply report hires and separations. Many of those represented in the totals left jobs at one

facility to take positions at another. And other health care staff, notably many RN's, left institutional employment to become independent contractors, referred to as traveling workers, who are hired by hospitals to cover existing staff vacancies. For example, Cook Hospital CEO Teresa Debevec reported to her board in April that the hospital was using traveling staff in the Care Center as well as the Imaging, Lab, and Radiology departments.

Hospitals may have to do more piecing together of staff to cover full-time positions, as the MHA report found that more health care workers are opting for part-time employment. Thirty-two percent of workers are

working part-time schedules of between eight and 32 hours a week, and 13 percent work a "casual schedule" of less than eight hours a week.

More than half of registered nurses do not work full-time, with a seven percent increase in the number who choose a casual schedule from 2022 to 2023. While 72 percent of physicians work full-time, there was a ten percent increase in the number opting for a casual schedule.

The hospital workforce is becoming more diverse, according to the MHA report. Since 2017, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) representation has risen by 84 percent. Greater Minnesota has seen a 124

percent increase in diverse staffing since 2019, and 14 percent from 2022 to 2023. Certified nurse assistants are the most diverse job category at 41 percent.

"The daily hard work and focus of health care leaders on continuous recruitment, retention, and enhancing diversity is showing results with improvements noted in key metrics since last year's report," said Dr. Rahul Koranne, president and CEO of MHA. "In order to ensure access to health care for current patients and for generations to come, this work needs sustained support from the state."

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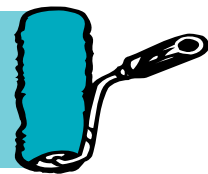
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