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The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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COPPER-NICKEL MINING

ALJ deals another blow to PolyMet

Recommends that DNR deny permit to mine over failure to comply with state rules on reactive mine waste

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

ST. PAUL— In yet another major blow for the proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes, an administrative law judge is recommending that the Department of Natural Resources deny the company its all-important permit to mine for failure to comply

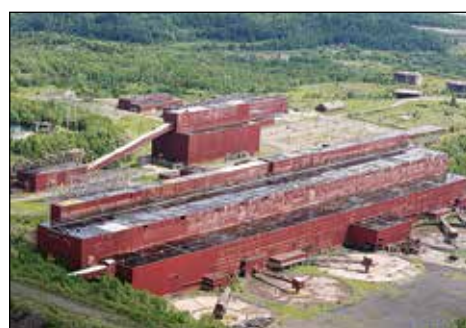
with state mining rules. The DNR issued the permit back in 2018, but the company has seen most of its major permits rescinded by the courts for failure to comply with state or federal rules.

In a decision issued Tuesday by the Office of Administrative Hearings, or OAH, ALJ James LaFave found that the conditions included in PolyMet's original

permit to mine did not comply with the state's rules pertaining to reactive mine waste, such as the sulfide-containing waste rock that would be produced by PolyMet's proposed operations.

PolyMet had proposed to use a bentonite clay liner on the bottom and sides of its planned tailings

See...POLYMET pg. 9



Left: An aerial view of the former LTV taconite processing plant now owned by PolyMet, a subsidiary of Glencore.

file photo



VERMILION COUNTRY SCHOOL

Serving up **COMMUNITY**

by **JODI SUMMIT**
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- It has become an annual tradition at Vermilion Country School, and the all-school Thanksgiving meal once again did not disappoint. Students in Chef Chris Glazer's culinary class prepared almost all the food from scratch, and students in the art class created table decorations and learned the classic art of folding linen napkins. Other staff and students set the tables and created a formal seating chart. Each

Above: Carving up the fresh-roasted turkeys just ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday.

Right: Elspeth O'Brien smiles while enjoying the meal at school.

place setting had a place card, with teachers and staff interspersed between the 50-plus students.

As it moved closer to the dinner hour of 12 noon, students moved prepared side dishes into the warming

See...SCHOOL pg. 10



PUBLIC SAFETY

Suspect in Ely knife attack seeks guilty plea

by **CATIE CLARK**
Ely Editor

ELY- Tate Jordan Cly, is seeking to plead guilty in the Sept. 23 knife attack against Richard Joshua Petrizilka in Ely. Cly, age 20, petitioned the district court on Nov. 21 to accept a guilty plea for one of two felony charges he faces from the knife attack. Cly allegedly attacked Petrizilka during an argument at Petrizilka's home.

According to court records, Cly stated that he had been intoxicated at the time when he allegedly attacked Petrizilka and, after attempting to apologize, fled the scene.

Petrizilka was treated at the emergency room at Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital with multiple knife wounds on his head and upper body after the alleged attack. According to the initial complaint, the hospital contacted the Ely Police Department, which could not locate Cly immediately afterward. Ely police later found Cly at Petrizilka's home, where they arrested him.

Cly was incarcerated by St. Louis County Sheriff after his arrest and was charged with two felony counts, including second-degree assault and threats

See...PLEA pg. 9



Tate Jordan Cly

LOSSES

Fires destroy residences in Morcom and Britt

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Area fire departments were called out to battle structure fires in Morcom Township and Britt this past week, both with devastating outcomes.

On Tuesday, Nov. 21 at 7 p.m., firefighters from Bearville, Evergreen,

French, and Cook responded to the 9200 Block of Range Line Road in Morcom Township to find a trailer home fully engulfed in flames and heavy smoke. The home was a total loss, and the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office reported that three dogs died in the fire. One firefighter was treated at the scene for smoke

inhalation by Cook Ambulance personnel.

The owner of the residence, Richard Holm, was not home when the fire was discovered but was contacted and returned to the scene. The Red Cross was called to assist with

See...FIRES pg. 10

Right: The smoldering remains of a trailer home that burned Nov. 21 in Morcom Township.

photo courtesy of Bearville Fire Dept.



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Community notices

Sending young people to National Youth Gathering is as easy as cookies

ELY – The young people of Grace Lutheran church are looking for all cookie lovers. Next July, eight students and three chaperones will be traveling to New Orleans to attend the 2024 ELCA National Youth Gathering to worship with youth and adults from around the country and participate in mission work. Anyone who has ever attended the national youth gathering (held every four years in locations all around the country) knows what a momentous experience it is for a young person and how the memories of it last a lifetime. Fundraising is now underway for this once in a lifetime trip with the holiday cookie bake sale.

Pre-orders are open now through Dec. 8. Containers of cookies include one dozen assorted, home-baked cookies that will include all those holiday favorites for \$20. Please email orders to maryplarsen@gmail.com or text 218-235-1770. Cookies will be ready and available for pickup at Grace Lutheran Church located at 301 E Conan St. Sunday, Dec. 10 starting at 10:30 a.m.

Ladies of Kaleva, Lokka Tupa #1 to hold Christmas celebration Monday

VIRGINIA - Lokka Tupa #1, Ladies of Kaleva, will meet for their annual Christmas celebration on Monday, Dec. 4 at 1 p.m. for members and guests.

Sons of Norway to hold annual family potluck Christmas party Dec. 7

VIRGINIA - Sons of Norway Haarfager Lodge #40 will meet at the Virginia Senior Citizen Building located at 511 Chestnut St. on Thursday, Dec. 7 at 5:30 p.m for the annual family potluck Christmas party. Please bring a dish to share. Kristen and friends will present our program. We expect the Julenisse to appear. The evening's serving committee includes: Chris Culbert, Lisa Minehart, Donna Perrault and Sharon Crep. Anyone interested in Norwegian culture and heritage is welcome to attend.

Ladies Aid of First Lutheran to hold annual Christmas cookie and baked goods sale

ELY - The Ladies Aid of First Lutheran Church will hold their annual Christmas cookie/baked goods sale along with a small craft table and coffee and dessert on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 1-3 p.m. in the fellowship hall of the church, located at 915 E Camp St. Cookies are \$8 per pound. There will be a few gluten-free options. All other items are priced individually. Coffee and dessert is a freewill offering. All monies will be donated to local charities. Come with a friend, select your cookies and then have a cup coffeewith dessert and visit.



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HO-HO-HO

Mrs. Claus announces new time for annual party

ELY- The Ely Chamber has just received notice from Mrs. Claus that she has made arrangements for her annual Mrs. Claus Party in Ely. The party will be Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Grand Ely Lodge. Due to Santa's busy schedule, the event has moved from afternoon to morning. Santa has many stops on Saturday to visit all the girls and boys across several Northwoods communities.

All youth attending Mrs. Claus' Party will receive a goody bag filled with treats, small activities, and crafts. There are some arts and crafts tables for onsite activities too. Mrs. Claus will collect letters to Santa at her party for Santa to take back to the North Pole and read. Hope to see you there.

Here are some of the other activities happening on Saturday, Dec. 9:

- ▶Mrs. Claus Party, 10 a.m. – noon, Grand Ely Lodge
- ▶Christmas at the Nelimark Homestead Museum, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Embarrass
- ▶Maker's Market & Mixer, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m., Ely Folk School



Mrs. Claus greets a young attendee at last year's holiday party.

- ▶Ely Folk School Holiday Party, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m., Semer's Park
- ▶Santa Hayride & Boutique Sale, 3 p.m. – 8 p.m., Babbitt Municipal Gym
- ▶Christmas at the State, 7 p.m., Ely's Historic State Theater

HERITAGE HOLIDAY

Nelimark Homestead Museum opens for Christmas shopping Dec. 7-9

EMBARRASS- With the holiday season on its way, it is time to find items to fill the stockings. There are many items available at the Embarrass Nelimark for you at reasonable prices, created and crafted by community artisans. Old-time memories can be experienced and captured from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on Dec. 7-9.

The list is endless: hand-crafted figures, homemade soap and oils, small trees, mantle and entry decorations, sauna signs, repurposed and recycled items attractively made new again, Finnish glassware, unique children's books, gift books, t-shirts, hats and mittens, baseball caps, aprons, ironing board covers, throw pillows, long-lasting rag rugs, postcards from olden days, bird feeders, old marbles, games for kids, and local photographs of sites you love.

If you're not in the market for stocking stuffers or collectibles, there will be an amazing selection of freshly baked holiday goodies available to add to your taste enjoyment. Past year's offerings have included fudge, tea rings, Christ-



Gwen Lilya's added to her holiday treat stash at the Nelimark in November.

mas coffee cakes, potica loaf, cinnamon and braided rolls, wild fruit jams and jellies, variety of relishes, jars of home processed dill and sweet pickles, including beet pickles, spicy salsas, rhubarb preserves, cardamom biscuit (pulla) sprinkled with sugar crystals and other ethnic breads, "Iimpu" rye bread, artisan breads, and other yummy delicacies.

Come out early and enjoy hot apple cider or coffee 'an on the house and help ring the sleigh bells for the holiday season. It's time to enjoy this wonderful time of the year.

Join the Grinch at Timber Hall for Pancake Breakfast Dec. 2

EMBARRASS- Join the Grinch for breakfast between 8 and 11 a.m. at Timber Hall Dec. 2. Enjoy all-you-can-eat pancakes, choice of ham or sausage links, fruit cup, juice, a bottomless cup of coffee. Cost is \$6 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6-10, and kids 5 and under are

free. And don't BE a Grinch! Timber Hall Event Center will host a chance to give blood from 8:30 a.m. to noon:

- ▶Holiday Craft Sale – Support our local crafters and small businesses with a purchase of handmade blankets, jewelry, décor, baked good and more.
- ▶Donate Blood-

Give the gift of life. Go online to mbcherohub.club to pre-register or sign-up inside Timber Hall Saturday morning. Walk-ins welcome!

- ▶Donate Gifts – Drop off an unwrapped gift or gift card for a child in our community. All gifts will be delivered to the Timberjay for Operation Santa (see information on

page 6).

- ▶Donate clothing – Once again Disabled American Veterans (DAV) will be accepting donations of gently used clothing. Please pack in white garbage bags.

And don't forget to check out our brand new Little Free Library under the eaves.



Santa & Mrs. Claus are Coming!

When: Saturday, December 9 from 10 a.m.-Noon

Where: Grand Ely Lodge

All youth receive a goody bag, plus there are a number of art & craft tables to enjoy.

Don't miss the fun.



www.Ely.org 218-365-6123

CITY OF ELY

Vacancies in police department hard to fill

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- The national problem of retaining law enforcement professionals has come home to roost in Ely, as the third patrol officer in less than four months resigned in mid-November.

At its Nov. 21 meeting, the Ely City Council accepted the resignation of Officer Zachary Ward, who is leaving to accept a position in Winona. City council member Jerome Debeltz moved to send Ward a letter of thanks for his service to the city, a motion the council approved unanimously.

Former Ely Police Officer David Wimmer resigned in October. At the time, Police Chief Chad Houde was able to hire Courtney Schurhammer and two other part-time officers to shore up Ely's normally seven-person force. The city is actively advertising for more officers.

The city council approved a budget committee recommendation for Houde to develop a recruitment and retention plan for the department, which may be difficult since wages are one of the two major drivers for retaining employees according to a recent Gallup Poll report, the other being workplace environment. Ely shares a problem with many other rural Minnesota law enforcement agencies: non-competitive wages.

The wage problem is not immediately obvious when looking at wage patterns for patrol officers. Minnesota ranks eleventh in the nation for the highest law enforcement wages, according to the most recent data available (May 2022) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, with a mean hourly wage for patrol officers of \$36.74.

That average is skewed by the high pay offered by large Twin Cities police departments. Rural police departments can't compete with the urban and suburban communities around the Twin Cities, Rochester, and Duluth. The mean hourly wage in the Twin Cities and its suburbs is \$39.69, equivalent to \$82,540 annually.

The patrol officer position posting on the city of Ely's website advertises a starting hourly wage of "\$29.95, reaching \$33.58 by year two." In addition, benefits include "health, dental, health savings, uniform allowance, 14 paid holidays, 2 personal days, vacation and sick leave."

Houde's officer recruitment and retention situation was not improved by the department's failure to receive a U.S. Dept. of Justice COPS grant to fund a School Resource Officer (SRO) to serve at ISD 696. The department applied for the grant earlier this year but was not selected.

If the application had been successful, the \$125,000 would have funded the SRO position for two years with a minimum required grant match of 25 percent from the city. The award statistics published by the DOJ for this year's successful COPS grants, show that only four Minnesota communities received grants to hire new SROs, which was disproportionately low compared to most other states. Overall, states with the largest metropolitan areas received the majority of these grants.

Grace period for calendar parking now expired

The grace period for compliance with calendar parking here is now over. Ely Police Chief Houde told the city council at

their Nov. 21 meeting that his department will now begin issuing citations for violations of the city ordinance. Calendar parking, which took effect Nov. 1, will remain in effect until May 31, or until the city council votes to lift it. During snowplow season, cars must park on the odd side of streets on odd numbered days, and on the even side on even days.

Other business

In other action, the city council:

► Heard the report of Cindy Smyka, who gave a presentation regarding local event support conducted by the Tourism Bureau. During a brief discussion after the presentation on visitor versus local support for Ely's tourism-focused businesses, Mayor Heidi Omerza asked Smyka, "What can you do for locals?" Smyka replied succinctly, "reach out," and briefly outlined ways to do so.

► Approved a recommendation by the Projects Committee for the city staff to work with the Ott family to draft a development agreement for the redevelopment of the former Ely Depot property.

► Noted that the city's truth-in-taxation meeting for the budget will be on Dec. 5.

► Approved a recommendation of the Budget Committee to purchase a scan tool for the city's shop for \$4,790.

► Approved a recommendation of the Budget Committee to purchase a snow bucket for the skid steer for \$1,590 from L and L Rental.

► Approved a recommendation of the Budget Committee to increase the 2023 Fire Department budget "to reflect the additional \$16,000 received to cover training expenses. "This is state money we received," said Fire

Chief David Marshall. "We had \$9,600 and we used it up. There was a reallocation (by the state) in June and we asked for more money. We should have asked for more because we got fully funded, which we didn't expect." Marshall explained that the state money was dedicated funding that had to be used for training.

► Approved the mortgage satisfaction for the Ely Steakhouse, recorded on Dec. 13, 2019, for their storefront rehabilitation loan.

► Discussed the situation at the Ely Senior Center. Linda Maki of the senior center wrote the city council, stating, "The senior center has been without heat for a week... Any help with the cost of the new pump and extra electric use would be appreciated."

The city council did not discuss any additional funding for the senior center at the Nov. 21 meeting.

Langowski informed the council, "The repair is on order and we will work with them," to get the heating system fixed.

► Approved claims for payment for the city and the Ely Utilities Commission for \$311,313; for the 2024 Range Association of Municipalities and Schools membership dues of \$840; for an invoice from SEH of \$21,188 for Prospector ATV trail development; and for an invoice of \$10,819 from AE2S for work at the waste water treatment facility.

► Approved a resolution of support for the St. Louis County reconstruction project for Harvey Street. Langowski said, "We were hoping (the project would be) for 2024, but it will have to be 2025. We have to be patient for another year. Harvey is one of the several roads in Ely which the county, not the city, maintains."

► Approved a resolution to apply for funding from the Community Development Block Grant program for the Ely Water System Improvement Project.

► Approved the amendment and revision of the joint powers agreement with the Ely Area Lodging Tax Board. Council member Paul Kess informed the council, "This updates the agreement and modernizes the language."

► Approved the hire of Premier Pyrotechnics to shoot the 2024 Fourth of July fireworks for \$20,000.

► Heard the recommendation of Ely resident Frederica Musgrave during the open forum portion of the meeting that the city hold a third study session with the Planning and Zoning Commission to discuss Ely's noise ordinance.



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Pictures with SANTA 3-5 PM

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Ash River, Orr-\$59,000 Lot 5 in Bear Ridge CIC. Lot has electric, shared community septic, and shared water from central pumphouse. Ownership also gives you access to private docks on 155 ft of shared shoreline, a personal slip, gazebo near lake with grill and 1/10 share of all common areas. **MLS#145782**

Buyck-\$360,000 200 acres off the Crane Lake and Hoffman Rd in Buyck offers privacy and seclusion. Near the Vermilion River with an easement into the property across state land. 1000s of acres of state and federal land borders this beautiful hunting property. **MLS#143352**

Crane Lake-\$275,000 20-acre boat access Crane Lake Property. 6 BR, 3 BA home has new septic and drilled well, water heater, gas forced air furnace and new metal roof. Deeded access across federal land from your private dock to the property. 200 amp electric. **MLS#144617**



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OPINION

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e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

Editorial

Time for action is now

The world can't afford to fail at the current climate change conference

Thirty years from now, there won't be much argument about climate change. Even today, only the truly deluded or utterly ignorant continue to deny the warming that is fueling extreme weather events all around the world as the planet heats up even faster than many scientists had once predicted.

The litany of change happening today, from the disappearance of glaciers to unprecedented wildfires to heat waves that flirt with the limits of human endurance, is astonishing to most researchers and the pace of that change is only going to increase as we continue to pump ever more heat-trapping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The scientists who study climate change began warning humanity about the threat more than 40 years ago, but those warnings were cautious and reasonably hopeful in those early days, as everyone assumed that we had time to adapt, and that humanity would take the necessary steps to ward off catastrophe before it was too late.

Scientists are nowhere near as sanguine these days. They watched in frustration for years as the oil and gas industry funded lies intended to thwart the changes needed to reduce greenhouse emissions. Companies like Exxon understood the potentially existential impact of climate change because they had funded their own research on the subject in the 1970s and 80s. But they decided that their short-term profits were more important than the future habitability of our planet.

As the world gathers in Dubai over the next two weeks at the COP 28 summit to address climate change, scientists are warning that humanity is living on borrowed time and is sending the planet hurtling toward a disaster of our own making. While many countries, including the United States, are seeing progress in their needed transition toward renewable and non-carbon-based forms of energy, the pace of change is far too slow. Even as we make progress, carbon emissions here and elsewhere continue to increase at a time when they must begin declining if we're to have any chance to hold the Earth's temperature in check.

Back in 2015, the world's nations pledged to seek to limit greenhouse warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as a way to head off the truly catastrophic effects should average global temperatures increase by more than that. Most climate scientists now believe it's too late to hit that mark. Indeed, 2023 is likely to end very close to that 1.5 degree C increase over the pre-industrial climate. At the current pace of emissions

growth, the world may well be headed to a hellish future with average temperatures of twice that amount.

That world, which will be here in the lifetimes of many young people alive today, will be unrecognizable. Much of the planet will be uninhabitable. Low-lying countries, states, and islands will be swamped by the rising oceans, creating hundreds of millions of refugees who will create a human flood that will inundate virtually every country. The border issues of today will be inconsequential in comparison to what's to come.

Tipping points, which will activate feedback mechanisms that will exacerbate the problem, will have been breached, potentially sending the planet into a spiral that could well lead to the end of human civilization. There are those who still scoff at these projections, yet the warnings of climate scientists have not only come true, they've done so sooner and with greater impact than many of them had predicted.

We are facing two options: to finally get serious about addressing climate change, which means fundamentally reshaping our energy economy globally, or to fail and leave future generations to suffer the consequences of our lack of political will. And let's be clear about that. We have the technology today to make the transition. It is a lack of political will that is preventing us from doing so.

As we look ahead to the 2024 election, few candidates for Congress and none of the candidates for President has fully embraced the necessity of real and rapid change in our energy systems. President Biden, however, does recognize the problem, and is willing (if pushed by the public) to implement strong policies to advance the shift to carbon-neutral energy sources. He has, in fact, implemented the most significant spending package in U.S. history to encourage our transition to renewable sources of power. The Biden administration will have representatives in Dubai over the next two weeks who will be pushing for more aggressive action to address climate change.

Unfortunately, what was once an area of bipartisan agreement, has become a litmus test for too many Republicans, who continue to parrot Donald Trump's mindless mantras on the topic. At a critical time for leadership on an all-important issue, we have only one party that is willing to operate with the reality of our situation in mind. The other has opted for delusion and denial, and that decision is threatening all of us.



Letters from Readers

It's Time-save our tradition

After over sixty years of hunting whitetailed deer in northern Minnesota, I feel compelled as well as obligated to write this letter. I am very concerned about the steady decline in deer numbers over the past 5-10 years. What are my kids, grandkids and those down the line going to hunt? Deer hunting in northern Minnesota is a family tradition...we cannot let that end! Thirty-five percent down last year, 17 percent down this year—add them up. License sales are down and deer camps are empty!

Excuses we hear and read about every year:

Severity of winter – of course severe winters will take their toll on the herd. I remember when I was 15 years old we had snow half way up the windows in our house. Yet we always had deer, some years not as many, but nothing like we are seeing now. But even the DNR can't control the weather. Let nature do it's work. Get rid of the severity index.

Habitat – Sure logging is down as small loggers have been forced out because of state regulations and fuel costs. We can't do anything about that.

Road kills – Yes, vehicles do kill deer, but again we have no control over that.

Youth hunt – It's a joke. The goal is to get our youth interested in the outdoors and hunting. Well, I hate to tell you, it's not working. It's the complete opposite. How many hours do you think a 15-year-old will be in the woods without seeing a deer or a track, scrape, or rub before they say, "this is not for me."

Changes must be made before it's too late! I hope it isn't too late already.

1. Why is the DNR, which is designed to work for us to maintain natural re-

sources, afraid to print the "W" word? Every night at my hunting shack I can hear the "W's" howling.

2. Bucks only – The DNR is notorious for printing STATS. I have yet to see a stat regarding the ratio of bucks to does. It takes "two to tango" – the ratio is totally out of whack. How about "earn a buck?"

3. What ever happened to the traditional nine-day season, either sex? I guess it was working way too well, so the DNR had to change it.

In conclusion, read Rep. Dave Lislegard's article in the Nov. 25 *Mesabi Tribune*. He hit the nail on the head. The gray wolf issue must be addressed. Why should we sit back and allow someone from California ruin our beloved tradition? Hunters cannot control wolves, but trappers can. The DNR must stand up and be our voice! Let's work on the things we have control over instead of making excuses. It's time for the DNR to step up to the plate and call a spade, a spade!

Jerry Chiabotti
Soudan

RV Park is in the wrong location

There is a proposal for an RV campground to be located at the northeast end of Miners Lake. This is not a good location for a RV park. Very few RV'ers can or would like to walk from the park to downtown Ely and back, especially on a hot summer day. Yet, they would like to explore the attractions and services that are offered in the various seasons in Ely. Some of their interests might be visiting Boundary Water's outfitters, bait shops, bike stores, souvenir stores, restaurants, the farmers market, outdoor music in the Whiteside Park, children's playgrounds, the Ely Folk School, the historical Ely theater, public library, local artists' gallery, histori-

cal museums, local schools' sports and other activities, the marathon, 4th of July parade, the Harvest Moon and Blueberry Festivals and the grocery store. There are also churches within walking distance.

The list is by no means complete. What's the point of the above enumeration? The proposed RV park is not well located to take advantage of these attractions. Moreover, finding a parking space in the summer in the downtown area is challenging. Parking time is limited to two hours and is strictly monitored and enforced by the Ely police.

Mr. Peterson, the RV park's proposer, should reconsider the present proposed location, and look for a location near or on Sheridan Street so that his guests have easy walkable access to downtown Ely. Remember the old real estate adage, "location, location, location."

Your chances of building a sustainable business will improve greatly. Concurrently, he could avoid the strong continuous opposition from the neighbors of the proposed site. This project adversely impacts neighbors well beyond the legal notification distance of 350 feet.

The existing 20-acre RV park for sale in the downtown area might be a viable alternative. With the input of good imagination and hard work it could be a success and a valuable contribution to our community.

Gerry Snyder
Ely

We welcome your letters

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

COMMENTARY

Your child's next best friend could be an AI robot

There's a host of new friends for young children with names like Miko, Roybi, Moxie, and Zivko, but they're not new classmates or neighbors. They can't play football or soccer in the back yard or go on bike rides, but they can talk and play lots of games with kids much in the same way humans can.

Mike, Roybi, Moxie and Zivko are just a few of the new wave of clever robots powered by artificial intelligence (AI) that aim to transform children's playtime through adaptive social relationships based on their real-time interactions

with children.

What separates AI-based toys from older computer-based ones is their ability to intelligently change their interactions with someone over time. Rather than punch a button to execute a pre-programmed script, AI toy robots can "listen" to children and make choices about how they respond. The more sophisticated robots learn over time and increasingly shape their responses

to their user's interaction style, emotions, likes and educational needs.

The use of AI to create meaningful social relationships for adults is already well-documented in the press. Using both text-based and voice-based interfaces on computers and smartphones connected with visual avatars, AI chatbots such as Replika, Eva, and Paridot tailor their relationships to be responsive to the person who created them and

interacts with them, engaging in anything from intellectual discussions to steamy erotic encounters. The interactions are such that many users believe their chatbots to be sentient and have actually fallen in "love" with them, some to the point of proclaiming they're married and having "children" with them. And the pain of personal loss was exceedingly real for Soulmate app users when that company ceased operation and

abruptly terminated their "significant others" earlier this fall. Rather than mull about the people so caught up in technology, I'd urge you to consider the incredible sophistication of AI for mimicking human responses that allows for such emotional attachments to form.

And now, we're introducing AI relationships to children.

See **ROBOT**...pg. 5



DAVID COLBURN

Letters from Readers

Thanks to KGM for a job well done

As Chairman of the Hwy. 169 North Task Force, I would like to take this opportunity to compliment KGM Contractors on the mill and overlay job this past summer and fall that was completed from the Pike River bridge through the Y-Store intersection to Tower. (MnDOT Project SP6903-17)

From the milling job that preceded the overlay, the road surface was very smoothly done and you knew the end result was

going to be good!

The leveling and eliminating the dip in the road grade near the Junction of Hwy. 169 and Hwy. 135 just south of the Tower bridge was superbly done.

The excellent ride quality of this complete project, from one end to the other, the high quality road and lane striping paint job, shows the professionalism in construction and completion of this MnDOT District One project here on Hwy. 169 North in northeastern Minnesota.

The public and others

should look to this job constructed by KGM Contractors as an excellent example of how a mill and overlay project should be built and completed!

Thank You, KGM and MnDOT for an excellent job in using our transportation dollars!

Speaking for the Task Force, we extend our appreciation and thanks for a job well done!!

Bill Erzar
Chair, Highway 169 North Task Force, Ely

Another source of questionable information and ideas?

What will AI, or Artificial Intelligence, bring to our country?

I think it will be very like Wikipedia's impact on people's understanding of historical events and facts:

Full of misinformation that will have to be carefully parsed and even more carefully evaluated.

We have a long time ahead

of us while new social and political frameworks battle for common acceptance.

Our whole scenario parallels the social revolutions in Europe following Luther's Disputations at Heidelberg. The printing press and cheap paper combined to broadcast novel ideas and concepts of varying value to people of even more varied intellectual and emotional capacities.

Dave Porter
Minneapolis

COMMUNITY EVENTS

North St. Louis County 4-H is holding holiday food and hygiene drive

VIRGINIA – North St. Louis County 4-H is currently seeking donations for its food and hygiene drive that runs through Dec. 15. Donated items will be used to provide food and hygiene baskets to those in need. 4-H is seeking donations of the following items: boxed stuffing mix, potatoes, jars of turkey gravy/dried gravy mix packets, macaroni and cheese, pasta, canned yams, cranberry sauce in jars or cans, canned vegetables (green beans, corn, peas), dinner rolls/French bread, salt and pepper, marshmallows, rice, Jello/pudding mix, paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, paper towels, dishwashing detergent, toilet paper, toothbrushes, toothpaste, lotion, body wash, shampoo, dental floss, mouth wash, hairbrush, hair accesso-

ries, socks, etc.

Donations along with monetary donations can be dropped off or mailed to St. Louis 4-H, Government Service Center, 201 S 3rd Ave. W, Virginia, MN 55792. With questions or for more information please call or email Nicole Kudrle at 218-404-6596 or vande422@umn.edu.

Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church invites all to annual lutefisk and meatball dinner Dec. 5

VIRGINIA – All are invited to come enjoy a lutefisk and meatball dinner at Gethsemane Lutheran located at 901 S Fourth St. on Tuesday, Dec. 5 from 3-7 p.m. The dinner includes lutefisk with drawn butter and cream sauce, hand-made Swedish meatballs, pota-

toes and gravy, lefse and bread, vegetables, beet pickles, coffee, milk and a cupcake. The cost for dinner is \$20 for adults, \$8 for children 6-12, and kids five and under eat free. Call 218-741-4961 with questions or for more information.

Mesabi Community Band to present holiday concert Dec. 14

EVELETH - The Mesabi Community Band under the direction of Larry Baker and Bill Lavato is presenting "A Holiday Concert", Thursday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. at the historic Eveleth City Auditorium. The concert will be a delightful evening of traditional Christmas carols, along with fun pieces such as "Christmas 'ala' Big Band", arranged by Larry Clark, "A Canadian Brass Christmas", and Minor Alterations "Christmas

Through the Looking Glass", by David Lovrien. Please join us to celebrate the upcoming season of joy. Admission is a free will offering or non-perishable food item to be given to the Quad Cities Food Shelf.

Toys to Make Together at ALS this month

MT. IRON – In December, area libraries will be offering handmade toy take-and-create art kits as the Arrowhead Library System's (ALS) newest Legacy event. The kits will be available from Dec. 4-30.

This art experience, created by 321 Art Studio, explores toy making for beginners. Take-and-create art kits will include supplies to create these four unique toys including a yarn doll, string/button spinner, swing and catch cup and craft stick catapult. Follow-along instructional videos for each toy

will be shared in the kit and online.

This program is geared towards ages 6 and up, as younger kids may need assistance, making it a great multi-generational activity.

"My youngest just turned six, and I'm always looking for something to keep his hands busy," said Leah Ryan, ALS Legacy Program Specialist.

Please note, each location has a limited number of kits. Feel free to contact your local library for more information: Babbitt Public Library, Cook Public Library, Ely Public Library, Virginia Public Library, Arrowhead Library System Bookmobile, ALS Mail-A-Book. This program, sponsored by Arrowhead Library System, was funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

ROBOT...Continued from page 4

Let's take a closer look at Moxie, "the learning robot with heart," as it's billed on their website. Moxie is a one-foot-tall stationary turquoise robot that has an animated, expressive video screen face with movable arms that can also spin on its base. Moxie interprets the context of conversations to respond with appropriate facial expressions such as sadness or excitement, and has visual sensors to interpret body language. Moxie uses AI to create conversations to personalize its content for an individual child, adapting to the child's needs and personality. Here's a testimonial from the father of a seven-year-old girl describing some of how Moxie interacts: "Moxie teaches kids emotional intelligence (you read it right). It also reads with your child and discusses books, does meditations and mindfulness activities, dances, draws, discusses complicated issues like making mistakes, being kind, and navigating emotions, tells jokes and fun facts from history."

Moxie's parent company, Embodied, Inc. developed Moxie to help promote social, emotional, and cognitive learning, and the *New York Times* reports that Moxie was originally conceived in 2017 as a way to help children with developmental disorders practice emotional awareness and communication skills. The company has solid research to back up Moxie's beneficial effects for social-emotional development – in a six-week study of Moxie users, 71 percent of children displayed improved social skills as a result of their interactions with Moxie. Researchers noted in their report that over 1,000 research studies have found positive effects for socially-assistive robots incorporating various elements of Moxie's design.

Parents can monitor their child's Moxie activity through a phone app,

tracking their progress through Moxie's "learning missions," and gives them the ability to control when Moxie can be used. Additional parental support is available on a website, including a more expansive blog that goes beyond Moxie-child interactions to encompass other learning activities and child development principles.

The research and instructional base for Moxie appears sound and evidenced-based, and it's equipped with appropriate data-encryption safeguards for privacy. But at a list price of \$1,499, your child's new AI buddy doesn't come cheap, although it can be found on sale for \$599 right now. This puts it well beyond affordability for many families who are struggling to make ends meet who have children who might well benefit from Moxie's capabilities, further deepening the digital divide that currently exists.

But as to the bigger picture of AI learning companions for children, the question dogging AI in general is germane: is the pace of advancing technology outstripping our understanding of its possible implications for society? The impact of AI

on our society is already having significant economic, legal, political and regulatory implications that we seem ill-prepared to address.

Long a proponent of the power of early experiences to promote positive social-emotional development in children, I recognize the value of what socially assistive robots can bring to the table, but it there an unforeseen cost in entrusting our children to the power of AI? Most of the ethical discussion going on today centers on the opposite end of the age spectrum, as most of the research on socially assistive robots has targeted issues in elder populations, not childhood. Yet even that discussion is relatively unfocused and disconnected.

Social media gives us a prime example of how good intentions haven't been enough to shield our children from harm. Originally promising greater connectivity and community-building, today nearly half of all teens report being the target of cyberbullying, and higher percentages of minority students report cyberbullying as a problem than white students. Social media, a tool intended for good, has become a tool for di-

visiveness and destructiveness.

Cyberbullying isn't an issue for socially assistive robots, but what about their potential effect on other relationships? As a responsive, affirming companion, could a robot become a child's preferred playmate over other children? Evidence from adults and chatbots suggests it's a concern worth considering.

Could socially assistive robots unintentionally transmit cultural biases? They operate using large language models fed by data from a wide array of sources, and large language models like ChatGPT and Google's Bard have been shown to generate racially biased answers to certain types of questions. AI image generators such as Midjourney have been shown to generate racially stereotyped images of people based on basic descriptors such as attractive or poor. Surely research-based bots like Moxie are trying to pay attention to potential bias, but the proliferation of AI robots for children does not guarantee that all are doing the same. Should there be some overarching regulation of AI robots for children to safeguard against potentially biased

content?

"Advanced AI could represent a profound change in the history of life on Earth and should be planned for and managed with commensurate care and resources," said a March 2023 letter signed by dozens of AI tech leaders. "Unfortunately, this level of planning and management is not happening, even though recent months have seen AI labs locked in an out-of-control race to develop and deploy ever more powerful digital minds that no one – not even their creators – can under-

stand, predict, or reliably control."

Are we wise enough at this point to trust our youngest, most eager minds to the AI revolution? Do we have the foresight to know the possible benefits will outweigh the possible costs? We need to be asking the questions at a larger scale than just the developers who stand to profit from their work. But the biggest question may be this: is society willing to wait for the answers?



the TIMBERJAY

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

Christmas at the Nelimark Holiday Craft & Bake Sale

Nelimark Homestead Museum

Hwy 21, Embarrass, across from Timber Hall

November 9-11 10 am to 3 pm
December 7-9 each day

*Visit the museum and shop for crafts,
baked items and enjoy great treats and
conversation!*

Week of Dec. 4

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 Dec. 19.

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.

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

**TSHS weekly winners**

The Week 17 Winner of the Charlemagne's 52 Club \$100 prize is Bob Carlson of Honolulu, Hawaii.

History Tidbit:

Soudan, very much a company town, was one of the most successful "locations" established on the Iron Range in the early years of mining. Separated by distance, function, and social class from Tower, Soudan was intended by "the Oliver" to house workers who would concentrate upon one activity, the mining of its iron ore. By limiting institutional facilities to those serving health, recreation, and religious needs, Soudan was viewed by mining company executives as an enclave for the housing of contented and efficient workers.

The winner of Week 18 Charlemagne's 52 Club \$100 cash prize is Mary Jo Wiermaa of Tower.

History Tidbit: The original wooden tower on top of Jasper Peak was built in 1919. It was only 10 feet tall, but at the time most of the area was still clear from early logging so it afforded a good view. The current 60-foot steel tower was built in 1934, and was used into the 1990s by the State of Minnesota for fire watch. The current name comes from the red jasper which is the major constituent of the peak's bedrock.

Tower Ski Trails work day on Dec. 9, brush burning help needed

TOWER- The Howard Wagoner Trails Club is holding a volunteer work day on Saturday, Dec. 9 starting at 10 a.m. Volunteers should meet at the southern trailhead on Hwy 135. The club will be burning brush piles built up during trail clearing this summer, depending on the weather (hoping to have more than three inches of snow). Wear fire resistant clothing such as canvas jackets, or cotton material. Do not wear flammable material like fleece. Good boots, leather gloves, and a hat will be helpful as well. If available, bring a shovel or saw.

Tower Holiday Craft Show set for Saturday, Dec. 2

TOWER- Now is the time to make plans for this year's Holiday Craft Show on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Lamppa Civic Center. The Tower-Soudan Civic Club will be selling coffee and scones in the morning, and then chili, childdogs, hot dogs, chips, cookies and water for lunch.

Vendors will be selling handmade and handcrafted items, candles, hats and mittens, beaver fur items, woodworking, pottery, baked goods, candies, potica,

baby quilts, fair trade items, lots of holiday-themed gifts, and VCS students will be selling holiday crafts they have created as a fundraiser. There will be vendors selling Scentsy and Norwex items. Terah Rinerson will be offering neck and scalp massages.

This annual holiday shopping event is sponsored by the Friends of Vermilion Country School.

Any questions, call Jodi Summit at 218-753-2950.



Operation Santa toy drive underway

TOWER- Donations have started to come in for this year's Operation Santa toy drive, but we still have a long way to go to reach our goal. We already have over 160 children on our list, so it is looking like the need will be higher than in the past few years.

Operation Santa is a local fundraiser that purchases Christmas gifts (toys, gift cards, and warm winter items) for children whose families use the Tower Food Shelf.

This year, the Embarrass Region Fair Association will also be collecting gifts and donations for Operation Santa at their Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 8 a.m. – 12 noon.

Take advantage of the great deals, many of which are being offered right now, to bring some joy into a child's life.

We have started to receive some donations, but much more is needed to make sure every child in our community receives gifts and warm clothing this Christmas season.

The effort is organized by the Timberjay and the Tower-Sou-



dan Civic Club, with help from many area groups, churches, organizations, and individuals. If your group or church is planning to donate this year, please contact Jodi at 218-753-2950. (This helps with planning!)

Lake Country Power's Operation RoundUp® program has once again made a very generous donation to the Tower-Soudan Civic Club to help cover the cost of purchasing warm items for the children.

We are looking for donations

of toys, games, art supplies, and sporting equipment for children, and gift cards to either Target or Walmart for our teenagers (\$10 or \$15). Stocking stuffer type gifts and holiday candy are also appreciated. We are always in need of gifts for infants and babies (must be labeled as safe for children under three). Gift ideas for children include games, action figures, building toys, dolls with accessories, craft sets, art supplies (including crayons and markers), sporting goods (bas-

ketballs, footballs, playground balls, sleds), puzzles, cars and trucks, and science kits. Please don't worry about picking out the right gift; I promise there will be a child on our list who will love whatever you pick out!

If you purchase a toy that uses batteries, please also send a spare set! Donations of batteries (especially AA and AAA) are appreciated.

We also accept gently-used holiday decorations and gifts for the adults who use the food shelf. We do assemble gift bags for the senior citizens who use the food shelf, so small gifts for them are appreciated also, such as boxes of Christmas candy, candles, puzzles and puzzle books, holiday scented lotions and soaps, holiday décor, and warm socks.

Donations can be dropped off at the Timberjay in Tower, and will be distributed at the food shelf on Dec. 19. Families who use the Tower Food Shelf and have not yet signed up, can call Jodi at the Timberjay at 218-753-2950, or email editor@timberjay.com to get your children on the



The McNeal family visited with Santa. Katrina Broten did free photos during Small Business Saturday. To learn how to schedule a family photo session, visit www.katrinaphotography.com.

Small Business Saturday

TOWER- Tower's first annual Small Business Saturday, organized and sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Area Events Board brought crowds of shoppers to Tower all day long. Event organizer Amber Zak said area businesses were busy all day, and shoppers filled the raffle bucket

with receipts from Saturday shopping sales in Tower.

Katrina Broten has posted all her wonderful photos of families and children with Santa on Facebook (search for Katrina B Photography).

See the raffle winners and more in the article on page 3B.

Below: These two vendors were part of the Tower Winter Market set up at Pike Bay Products during Small Business Saturday. Both will also be selling their wares at the Tower Craft Show on Saturday at the Civic Center. submitted



Over 70 attend community Thanksgiving meal at St. Paul's Lutheran Church

SOUDAN- St. Paul's Lutheran Church hosted their first community Thanksgiving meal and over 70 area residents stopped by for a holiday meal.

"The turkey was unbelievable," said congregation member Joan Dostert, "the best-tasting turkey I ever had."

The meal was catered by Chris Glazer, who is the chef and a teacher at Vermilion Country School. Several of his culinary class students helped with meal prep the day before, and some were on hand Thursday to assist as well.

"We had a lot of compliments on the food," said Dostert. The only thing

that ran out was the stuffing, but there was enough for the last group of diners, who came late in the afternoon.

The mood in the hall was festive, she said, and they even had the football game on.

The meal was free but donations were taken for the Tower Area Food Shelf, and over \$400 was raised.

Chef Chris Glazer (center) with assistants Blayne Hill (left) and Landon Wellander (right). photo by M. Helmberger

COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Martin's schedule

TOWER- St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower will have "The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary" service on Friday, Dec. 8 at 9 a.m. at St. Martin's and at 5:30 p.m. at St. Mary's in Cook.

"Peace, Joy, and Fun" as holiday choral concert resumes

TOWER- The Tower-Soudan Area Singers are completing rehearsals in preparation for "Peace, Joy, and Fun," a festive holiday choral menagerie.

Everyone is invited to the

concert at the Tower School gym on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 2 p.m.

There will be lots of familiar holiday tunes and a few new and entertaining pieces will be featured.

Julie Horihan and Michelle Anderson will provide keyboard and guitar accompaniments. Santa Claus has been invited to make

an early appearance for everyone's enjoyment.

Refreshments will follow immediately after the performance.

A freewill offering will be taken to defer concert and music costs.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Ely Public Library

ELY- The library board will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 6, at 5:30 p.m.

The Library Scientists group will meet on Friday, Dec. 8, from 3-4 p.m. The topic is aerodynamics with lots of paper airplanes to make and use to explore concepts of flight. Pre-register in advance so the library can order enough supplies.

The Friends of the Library Bookclub will meet on Monday, Dec. 11, from 3-4 p.m. The book for discussion will be "Rebecca" by Daphne DuMaurier.

The Friends of the Library monthly board meeting will be on Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 1-2 p.m.

A Kahoot on the "Bad Guys" series by Aaron Blabey will begin on Wednesday, Dec. 13, at 3 p.m. and run until Tuesday, Dec. 19, at 8 a.m. Pre-register in advance to provide an email address. The library will email the link to the game when it starts.

The library will celebrate Games Day on Wednesday, Dec. 20, from 3-4 p.m. This is an activity for all ages. Board games, card games, and more will be set up and available to play.

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., unless otherwise noted.

Babbitt Public Library

BABBITT- The current art display is driftwood art.

Starting on Dec. 4 while supplies last, the library will have take-and-create art kits to make four handmade toys per kit. Created by 321 Art Studios, the kits include all the materials to make a yarn doll, a string-and-button spinner, swing-and-catch cup, and a craft stick catapult. The kits are for patrons ages six and older.

The book club will meet on Monday, Dec. 4, at 2 p.m. The book under discussion will be "French Braid" by Anne Tyler.

The Friends of the Library is currently selling tickets at the library for a holiday raffle. \$1/ticket, for a fresh wreath or holiday-themed bowl, towel, and spices. The drawing will be on Dec. 7.

The library will host an adult crafting class on Monday, Dec. 11, at 4:15 p.m. on making a wool ornament. Participants must pre-register for this program.

The library will host free bingo on Monday, Dec. 11 at 1 p.m. The prizes are books.

The library will hold a holiday party on Tuesday, Dec. 19, from 6-7 p.m. There will be refreshments and music by Gerry Mealey on the accordion.

Preschool Storytime is held every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m.

All library events are at the Babbitt Public Library at 71 South Drive unless otherwise noted.

Makers' Market and Mixer on Saturday, Dec. 2

ELY- The next Makers' Market and Mixer will be on Dec. 2, from 3-6 p.m., just in time to buy Christmas presents, at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan. There is no admission fee. This is an updated date. The previous date of Dec. 9 listed on the NLAA and Ely Chamber of Commerce calendars is incorrect.

Frozen Fundraiser set for Dec. 2 at First Presbyterian Church

ELY- As a fundraiser for the Ely Memorial High School production of "Disney's Frozen—The Broadway Musical," baritone Elias Mokole and pianist Linda Turpening will perform an evening of music on Saturday, Dec. 2, at 7 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church, 226 E. Harvey St. The concert is free. Donations for the musical will be accepted at the door.

Game Night on Dec. 4

ELY- The Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan, will host its December Game Night on Monday, Dec. 4, starting at 6:30 p.m. This is a free event. Come prepared to learn a new game or bring your favorite to share with everyone.

**Hospital Foundation to meet on Dec. 4**

ELY- The annual meeting of the Ely Health and Hospital Foundation will be on Monday, Dec. 4, at 7 p.m. in the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital community conference room. All foundation member stakeholders are welcome to attend. Registration for the meeting will be from 6:30-7 p.m. The agenda will include the election of new members of the foundation board.

Networking Breakfast

ELY- The Ely Chamber of Commerce quarterly networking breakfast will be on Tuesday, Dec. 5, from 8:30-9:30 a.m. in the banquet room at the Grand Ely Lodge. The breakfast will feature a presentation from the newly founded Ely chapter of the North Country Trail group. All businesses and interested parties are welcome to attend. Breakfast is pay-your-own-way. Please RSVP to director@ely.org, or call 218-365-6123 to ensure enough space for everyone attending.

Medicare 101 class on Wednesday, Dec. 6

ELY- Ely Community Education will offer a Medicare 101 class on Wednesday, Dec. 6, at 5:30 p.m. in the media center. Enter the center door (door No. 1) into the new addition to the Ely School District campus (between the elementary and high school buildings). Turn right after the entrance hallway. The media center is on the right, across from the new gym and underneath the Workman murals. Register at ely.k12.mn.us/medicare-101-fall-2023.

Forest Service Open House on Dec. 7

ELY- The Kawishiwi Ranger District will hold an open house on Thursday, Dec. 7, from 4-6 p.m., at the district ranger station, 1393 Highway 169 in Ely.

Call of the Wild poetry reading on Dec. 7

ELY- The next Northern Lakes Arts Association Call of the Wild Poetry Reading Night will be on Thursday, Dec. 7, from 5-6 p.m. at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan St. The theme is "The naughty list: coal, creation, and coniferous." Sticking to the theme is optional. Bringing someone else's poem to read is okay. Just coming to listen is fine too. The event is free.

**Northwoods Partners Festival of Trees continues through Dec. 3 at noon at Grand Ely Lodge.****Mrs. Claus in Ely on Saturday, Dec. 9**

ELY- The Ely Chamber of Commerce will host a Christmas party for kids with Mrs. Claus and her elves, at the Grand Ely Lodge, from 10 a.m. until noon.

Hayride and Boutique Sale

BABBITT- The annual Santa Hayride and Boutique Sale will be on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 3-8 p.m., at the Babbitt Municipal Gym, 71 South Drive.

Holiday Concert at the State Theater on Dec. 9

ELY- On Saturday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m., Ely's Historic State Theater will host the annual Hometown Holiday Concert, featuring caroling, the Northern Lakes Arts Association Ely Community Choir, and other musical numbers. Cost is pay what you can or bring a donation for the Ely Food Shelf.

Beach Party on Dec. 9

ELY- Bring your surfboards, beach towels, sun umbrellas, and marshmallows to roast over the campfire because it's once again time for the Ely Folk School holiday party on Semers Beach, Saturday, Dec. 9, from 3-5 p.m. All this beachside fun is free.

Winter Dance

ELY- The Reflections Dance Company Winter Showcase will be on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4 p.m., at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, 1900 E. Camp St. Cost is pay what you can, suggested donation \$10.

NLAA Collage Class

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association will host "Piecing Together: a Collage Work-

Community Thanksgiving Potluck at the Folk School

The Ely Folk School hosted a community potluck on Thanksgiving afternoon. This annual tradition started by the folk school has become a great way to celebrate the day, for those who don't have family in the area, as well as many families who chose to celebrate with this community of friends. While many who attended brought a dish to share, it was not required, and there was an amazing variety of dishes to share. photos by C. Clark

shop with Cecilia Rolando" on Wednesday, Dec. 13, from 5-7 p.m. at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, 1900 E. Camp St. Join local artist Cecilia Rolando as she guides participants through the world of collage. Register online at northernlakesarts.org/ programs, and click on the date in December, enter the sign-up pop-up. Cost is \$15.

Take a Hike on Dec. 14

MORSE- The Ely Chapter of the North Country Trail Association will take a hike on Thursday, Dec. 14, at 1:30 p.m., on the Bass Lake Trail. Meet at the Bass Lake Trailhead parking lot on the Echo Trail (County Rd. 116). Note: Google maps labels the Echo Trail as the Ely-Buyck Rd. This program is designed to be an opportunity for Ely-area residents to meet new people while being active. The hike will be canceled in case of a blizzard, thunderstorm, or temperatures colder than -20 degrees. All are welcome.

Cookie Swap on Dec. 14

ELY- The Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan, will host a Christmas Cookie Swap, on Thursday, Dec. 14, from 4-6 p.m. Bring your best holiday cookies and swap them for other cookies. This is a free event.

On the morning of the event, the Ely Folk School is seeking volunteers to help make cookies during their Makers Morning from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Email info@elyfolkschool.org for more information.

Knights of Columbus Bingo on Dec. 17

ELY- The Knights of Columbus will hold an evening of bingo on Sunday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m., downstairs at St. Anthony's, 231 E. Camp St.

NLAA Art Show

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association art show for December is "Emotions" by Rita Fortunato Sterling. The show runs from Dec. 18 through Dec. 31, in the lobby of Ely's Historic State Theater, 238 E. Sheridan St., whenever the theater is open.

List your event

Do you have an upcoming Babbitt, Ely, or Winton event? Email event details, location, time, place and event cost to catie.timberjay@gmail.com by close-of-business on the Tuesday the week before the event takes place for a free notice.

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. Tuesday Group is now on winter holiday hiatus.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

- Jan. 2: Through Hiking the Appalachian Trail with Cory Kolodji
- Jan. 9: Capturing the Aurora Borealis with Alex Falconer

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2023



a sudden big wind blowing under the full moon

winter advancing

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.

AA FRIDAYS - 7 p.m.

Fridays, First Presbyterian Church, 262 E. Harvey St., Ely.

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

BABBITT AA - 7 p.m. Thursdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church.

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

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.

TIS' THE SEASON FOR CELEBRATIONS



Giving thanks

The communities of Cook and Orr are thankful for the many volunteers who make Thanksgiving joyous for others. Left and above: The 37th annual Cook Community Thanksgiving dinner took place last Thursday at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Right: The Orr Lions Community Foundation with help from the Grace Communion Church of Orr packed and delivered food boxes to the less fortunate on Tuesday, Nov. 21. Pictured are Tom, Ezra, Zeke and Isarah Kennebeck and Lions member Sandy Bushnell.

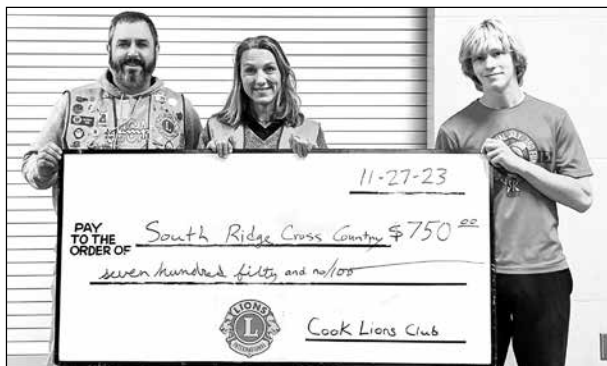


LIONS AND GRIZZLIES



Lions Steve Kajala and Julia Maki present \$500 to North Woods Choir Director Lorenda Daugherty for the purchase of concert microphones.

Lions Steve Kajala and Julia Maki present \$750 to North Woods cross country runner Lincoln Antikainen to help with the team's travel expenses to the state meet.



Sunday Funday attendees enjoy food and conversation together.

First Sunday Funday is a hit

COOK- Snow and biting cold wind, and perhaps a Thanksgiving turkey hangover or two, may have slowed the rush to Cook Community Center a bit on Sunday for the first ever Sunday Funday, but turnout was good enough that organizers proclaimed the inaugural event a good success.

Those who braved the elements were treated to a pulled pork sandwich luncheon served in the brightly decorated center, and they took full advantage of 23 raffle baskets donated by businesses and individuals. Prize winners included: Tammy Palmer, Tony Little, Linda Flack, Therese Cheney, Bec-

ca Widmer, Colette Huisenga, Diane Brunner, Theresa Martinson, Tom Hed, Dan Meyer, Chester Talberg, Lacey Bixby, and Jeannie Taylor. Rita Cheney won \$95 in the 50/50 raffle.

Funds raised will go to support future community center activities.



The Cook Lions Club recently donated \$500 to the North Woods One Act Play program. Lions Julia Maki and Steve Kajala are shown presenting to the several One Act Play group members. submitted photos

Snow City Christmas is Saturday in Orr

ORR - An event that began its life as the Calvary Lutheran Bazaar in the 1960's continues to delight holiday revelers today as Orr's Snow City Christmas, this year scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 2.

The Orr Fire Department will kick off the day at 7 a.m. with a pancake breakfast, and vendors will be selling goods from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The day's biggest event, the Christmas parade, will be at noon, with Santa appearing at Patten's Café from 1-3 p.m.

Food highlights include street tacos by Sugarcious and More from 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.; and a chili dinner by North Woods Travelers from 4-7 p.m.

New this year is a bean bag tournament from 5-7 p.m., and music performers will be at The Dam from 2-5 p.m. and at the Orr Muni from 8 p.m.-midnight.

Also going on in Orr on Saturday is a Christmas fair at the Orr Center, 10960 Hwy. 23, where a variety of vendors will be offering goods from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and baskets, gifts, and other items will be offered in a silent auction. Kids will have the opportunity to get their pictures taken with Santa from 3-5 p.m.

Operation Rudolph will be Saturday at Cook VFW

COOK- A holiday charity event in Cook gets underway at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2 with "Operation Rudolph," the annual event sponsored by Northwoods Riders at the Cook VFW that turns four hours of fun for participants into Christmas cheer for others by raising funds to help local families during the holidays. Enjoy a \$10 a plate meal and participate in the raffles to make the holidays brighter for others in need. Operation Rudolph officially ends at 7 p.m., but folks are invited to extend the fun with karaoke and music lasting until 11 p.m.

Santa's Workshop will be open on Sunday in Cook

COOK- The celebration of the season continues on Sunday, Dec. 3 with "Santa's Workshop," sponsored by the Cook Friends of the Parks. There will be a free movie shown at the Comet Theater beginning at 12:45 p.m., and the main event will be at the Cook Community Center from 3-6 p.m. All food - pizza, cookies and beverages -- and activities are free thanks to generous community donations. Enjoy games, crafts, an animal walk and Hanson's horse-drawn rides.

LaCroix forest office to host Dec. 5 event

COOK- Superior National Forest Supervisor Tom Hall invites the public, businesses, tribes, organizations, and partners to attend an open house at the LaCroix District Office, 320 N. Highway 53, Cook on Tuesday, Dec. 5 from 4-6 p.m.

Hosted by Forest Supervisor Hall and District Ranger Sunny Lucas, attendees will meet staff, learn about career opportunities, and engage with project and program managers on current and upcoming forest projects, including the LaCroix Landscape Project. For more information, call 218-666-0020.

Quilters display works at NWFA for December exhibit

COOK- A fantastic array of original, one-of-a-kind quilts crafted by local quilt artists will be on display at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook from Thursday, Dec. 7 to Saturday, Dec. 23., The exhibit will include both pieced quilts and appliquéd quilts. Appliqué is a cut fabric design hand-sewn on top of another fabric. There will be quilts made of scraps of fabric, intricate paper-pieced quilts, twister template quilts, row quilts and round-robin friendship quilts.

On Saturday, Dec. 9, from noon-2 p.m. take the opportunity to enjoy

a tea reception at the gallery in honor of the quilt artists whose works are on display, including JoAnn Anderson, Dede Doi, Lois Garbisch, Cheryl Harelsstad, Vickie Lange, Kathy Lovgren, Kris Musto, Lyn Reed, Kathy Sacchetti, Barb Schmidt, Barb Schroeder and Alberta Whitenack.

The gallery is located at 210 S River St., and the exhibit is open during regular gallery hours from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Trinity to serve Scandinavian meal

COOK- The ninth annual Lutefisk and Meatball Dinner at Trinity Lu-

theran Church in Cook is this Saturday, Dec. 2 from 4-6:30 p.m.

Plan to join others from the community for this traditional Scandinavian dinner to raise funds for the Cook Area Food Shelf and Trinity's National Youth Gathering Krewe.

The dinner is open to the public and all are welcome.

Dinner will be \$18 per person, and \$7 for ages 10 and under.

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

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Ash River Trail Canister Site 11391 Ash River Trail Winter Hours Sat: 12:30pm-4:30pm	Kabetogama Lake Canister Site 10150 Gamma Rd Winter Hours Wed: noon-4pm Sat: 8am-noon	County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77 Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm
Orr Canister Site 4038 Hwy 53 Winter Hours Tue, Thu: 9am-noon Sat: 8am-noon	Portage Canister Site 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Winter Hours Tue, Sat: 1pm-4:30pm	Cook Transfer Station 2134 S. Beatty Rd. Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm
Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm		
Household Hazardous Waste Facilities 5345 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia 3994 Landfill Rd, Hibbing Tue, Sat: 8am-1pm Sat: 8am-1pm		

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Little interest in latest COVID vaccines even as cases rise

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Minnesotans have shown little interest in additional protection from COVID-19, this fall, even as hospitalizations are on the rise again in the state. New bivalent boosters were released for use in September, but the public has shown little interest in the vaccines.

Hospitalizations for the week ending Saturday, Nov. 18 were the highest registered since last February at 389, an 80-percent increase over the week ending Nov. 4 according to data reported by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. CDC health service areas encompassing 15 Minnesota counties are rated at medium to high community risk levels for COVID-19. Increased contact through Thanksgiving holiday gatherings could further boost those numbers as happened in earlier phases of the COVID pandemic.

The other oft-used indicator of COVID activity, the measure of COVID viral load in wastewater, also corresponds with the increase in hospitalizations. In the

past two weeks, the viral load in the northeast region of the state has increased by 44.7 percent, mirroring a statewide increase of 44.2 percent.

Meanwhile, response to the boosters formulated to combat more recent mutations of the coronavirus has been lukewarm. Since the new shots became available in mid-September, only 14.2 percent of Minnesotans, one in seven, are reported to be up to date with the booster as of Nov. 21, according to the most recent Minnesota Department of Health update. MDH data for St. Louis County shows slightly greater vaccine uptake at 15.6 percent. Both figures trail the national total of 17 percent booster uptake to date.

Unsurprisingly, the age group most likely to have received the booster are those 65 and over, as this group is more vulnerable and more likely to experience complications that could lead to hospitalization, and a higher percentage live in congregate care settings. About four-in-ten seniors 65 and over have received the updated booster, and uptake

steadily declines with each successively younger age group to around five percent for elementary and preschool-age children.

Booster uptake is lagging well behind initial projections that about half of those vaccinated would get the shot, and a recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that lack of public concern about getting sick from COVID-19 may be the reason why.

Only 26 percent of the public is concerned that they will get COVID over the holidays, the survey found.

However, about half of adults surveyed said they plan to take some precautions against COVID, including avoiding large gatherings, wearing masks, limiting travel, and taking COVID tests ahead of visiting families and friends.

Health officials have attributed much of the diminished concern about COVID-19 to "COVID fatigue," a general societal tiredness of all of the restrictions and lifestyle changes imposed by the long pandemic. Relatively low levels of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths

throughout the late spring and summer and milder variants of the virus helped to create a perception of a "return to normal" in which COVID was not perceived to be the threat it once was.

Long COVID research

Meanwhile, the U of M Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) highlighted a study earlier this month suggesting that one in seven Americans have or have had long COVID, a set of persistent symptoms that last well beyond an initial COVID infection. Those who reported experiencing long COVID also experienced more anxiety, low moods, and difficulty with memory. Women were more likely than men to report long COVID.

Long COVID has been a somewhat elusive condition to pin down due to the variability and timing of symptoms and a lack of consensus in the medical community about how to identify and classify the condition. But in a separate CIDRAP report a new "Core Outcome Measure Set" was described that was developed through the input of 594 individ-

uals from 58 countries that should put researchers and clinicians on the same page regarding long COVID. Twelve core outcomes of long COVID were identified, including fatigue or exhaustion, pain, post-exertion symptoms, work or occupational and study changes, and cardiovascular, nervous system, cognitive, mental health, and physical outcomes. The group also narrowed down the types of assessment tools that should be used to measure these effects. This work was considered to be an essential step toward developing long COVID treatment options.

Free COVID tests

Every home in Minnesota is eligible to order eight rapid at-home COVID tests per month for free from MDH while supplies last by going online to <https://sayyeshometest.org>. An additional eight free at-home tests are available through the federal government's covidtests.gov website. Federal COVID tests orders may also be called in to 1-800-232-0233.

PLEA...Continued from page 1

of violence. Second degree assault with a dangerous weapon carries a maximum sentence of seven years and a maximum possible fine of \$14,000. The felony of "threats of violence-reckless disregard (of) risk"

carries a maximum sentence of five years and a maximum possible fine of \$10,000. Cly's bail was set at \$50,000. He was released on Oct. 4 after he posted a bond.

Cly's petition requests

that the court accept his guilty plea for the threats of violence charge. The petition lists seven details of a plea bargain under which the county prosecutor will dismiss the more severe charge of second-degree

assault in exchange for the guilty plea on the lesser charge. Other terms include no contact with the victim and no probationary jail time. Conditions three and six of the plea agreement were handwritten and are

essentially illegible on the petition.

The court is not obligated to accept the terms of the plea petition and Cly can also choose to withdraw it. If either of those things happens, Cly

could stand trial for both felony counts.

If the court accepts the petition, Cly is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 2.

POLYMET...Continued from page 1

basin, which the company proposes to build on top of the existing taconite tailings basin created by the former LTV Mining. Whether PolyMet's proposal complied with state rules was brought before Judge LaFave after the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled last year that the matter should go to a contested case hearing at the OAH. LaFave presided over that hearing earlier this year and issued his findings and recommendations this week.

Judge LaFave agreed with PolyMet and the DNR that the bentonite clay has been shown to be an effective liner in similar circumstances, but concurred with environmental plaintiffs that the plan would, nevertheless, fail to comply with rules on treating reactive mine waste.

At issue was whether the bentonite liner was a "practical and workable" technique for addressing PolyMet's mine waste. To comply with state rules, the method must either render the waste unreactive or must "permanently prevent substantially all water from moving through or over the mine waste."

As LaFave noted, the bentonite clay was never intended to render PolyMet's tailings unreactive. Instead, the clay liner was supposed to meet the

rule by reducing seepage of water and air through the tailings in order to prevent the discharge of water that was contaminated through contact with the reactive rock. When exposed to air and water, reactive mine waste can allow the release of heavy metals and other pollutants into the environment.

While PolyMet and the DNR had concluded that the clay liner would substantially reduce the seepage of water through the mine waste, LaFave concluded that the volume of polluted water that the tailings basin would discharge into the environment was still substantial. LaFave noted that PolyMet acknowledged its plan would allow seepage of 160 million gallons of polluted water annually from the tailings pond, with an additional 138 million gallons of seepage from the tailings dam and beaches along the sides of the pond.

"This means that, by design, 298 million gallons of water will move through or over the tailings every year," wrote LaFave.

While he agreed that that is a small percentage of the 32.1 billion gallons of water contained within the basin, he concluded that the amount discharged was still substantial. "298 million gallons is an enormous amount of impaired

water," wrote LaFave, who tried to put the scale in context. "For example, if 298 million gallons were measured in Olympic-sized swimming pools, the water would fill 451 pools. Lined up end-to-end, the pools would stretch for a distance of nearly 14 miles." He further noted that 298 million gallons, if hauled by large tanker truck, would require 27,091 truckloads. Stretched end-to-end, he wrote it would form a convoy stretching 271 miles.

What's more, the judge found that the bentonite liner would have the tendency to break down over time due to a number of environmental forces. Yet, according to PolyMet modeling, the mine waste the plant would produce would remain reactive for at least 500 years.

Next steps

Judge LaFave's ruling

does not require the DNR to take any specific action, since his findings of fact and recommendations are non-binding. But the ruling is likely to be influential in that the DNR would face substantial legal jeopardy were it to disregard the ALJ's findings, which become part of the administrative record.

Should the DNR seek to comply with the ALJ's recommendations, it would require additional testing of the bentonite liner or, more likely, would prompt the agency and PolyMet to look at different alternatives entirely, a process that could take years and many millions of dollars to pursue. The cost of an alternative solution could also render the PolyMet project uneconomical.

Reaction

Environmental plaintiffs in the case hailed the decision and used their

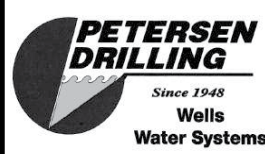
latest legal win to urge Gov. Tim Walz to move to end the state's backing of the PolyMet project. "It's time for the Governor as well as Minnesota's state agencies to take a hard look at whether it is time to pull the plug on the PolyMet mine project," said Paula Maccabee, head legal counsel for Water Legacy, one of several plaintiffs in the case. "Glencore, the multinational owner of PolyMet that has been convicted of corruption and bribery, may be used to cutting corners and evading laws to enhance its profits. But this is not the right way to do business in Minnesota."

Kathryn Hoffman, CEO of the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, urged the DNR to heed the ALJ's recommendations.

"This is yet another repudiation of the permits

issued to PolyMet and should be the final nail in the coffin of this failed proposal," she said.

PolyMet spokesperson Bruce Richardson said the company is still reviewing the ALJ's findings and recommendations and had no immediate comment.



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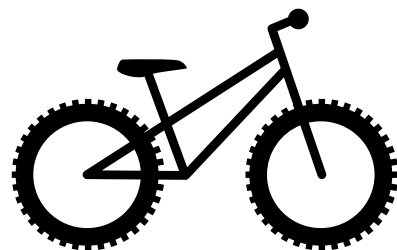
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COUNTY SCHOOLS

ISD 2142 teachers green light health insurance changes

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

CHERRY- Superintendent Reggie Engebritson had some good news to pass along to the ISD 2142 school board at their regular meeting at Cherry School on Tuesday – the teacher’s union voted to approve the switch to Blue Cross/Blue Shield for health insurance, insuring that the district will realize the full savings projected for making the change.

The board learned at its October meeting that switching from their current provider, the Minnesota Public Employees Insurance Program (PEIP), to Blue Cross/Blue Shield could save the district and its employees \$344,192, as well as lock in a second-year increase cap of nine percent. But the figure presented was based on existing participa-

tion levels in the PEIP, and as the district’s largest union, state law gave the teachers a choice of staying with PEIP if they wanted. Such a move would have sent the district’s health insurance consultant scrambling to recalculate the possible benefits with a smaller-than-projected employee participation rate in the new plan.

The board had already approved the change for the rest of the district’s employees at a Nov. 14 special meeting with the understanding that the teachers would make their decision by Nov. 30.

Engebritson also told the board that the district will receive two years of additional partial funding from St. Louis County for the three-year old Check and Connect program, which provides mentors in schools to help stu-

dents improve academics, attendance and behaviors. The extra money to fully fund the program will come from a specialized fund and will not affect the district’s general fund, Engebritson said.

In other business, the board:
 ▶Hired Matthew Nelson as a part-time Check and Connect mentor for Vermilion Country School.

▶Hired Blake Scofield and Jordan Villebrun as assistant boys basketball coaches at North Woods, with Villebrun being compensated at half of the regular stipend.

▶Accepted the resignation of Kandi Olson as head volleyball coach at North Woods.

▶Passed a resolution establishing combined polling places for school district elections not held on the same day as a state-

wide election, designating Orr City Hall, Cook City Hall, Tower Civic Center, and Babbitt City Hall as polling places for Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

▶Approved an application to the Minnesota State High School League for Northeast Range School to participate in a cooperative boys basketball program with Ely, along with the Krekelberg Home School.

▶Approved revisions to policies for family and medical leave and for development, adoption and implementation of policies.

▶The next regular school board meeting will be Tuesday, Dec. 12 at the district office at 5:30 p.m. The Truth in Taxation public meeting will follow at 6 p.m.

▶Entertained a question from board member Bob Larson about a presentation at the

October meeting by North Woods Industrial Arts teacher Bruce Black regarding insufficient funding for his program. The budget has remained flat while materials costs have skyrocketed, Black said.

“Is that something we need to look at as a board?” Larson asked. “He took the time to come and talk to us and we should think about it. I understand there’s only so much money, but if there’s a way we could do something.” Engebritson noted that some new equipment was purchased for Black’s classroom and that she and finance director Kim Johnson could look over the budget to see what options there might be.

SCHOOL...Continued from page 1



Left: VCS chef Chris Glazer, of Ely, arranges a plate of deviled eggs as part of last week’s school-wide Thanksgiving meal.

photo by J. Summit

ovens to free up space in the kitchen, while school director Sam O’Brien carved up the turkey. Glazer had a student dish-washing crew keeping up with the all the huge pots and pans.

And then the entire school sat down at tables arranged in a large rectangle, with students

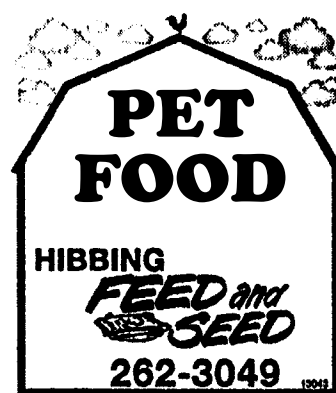
and staff taking turns reciting what they were thankful for, and then going through the buffet line to load their plates with side dishes, with other serving dishes strategically placed on the tables.

This year’s feast included turkey with gravy, stuffing, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, glazed carrots, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, dinner rolls, winter squash, grilled corn, smoked deviled eggs, and a green salad. It honestly didn’t all fit on a dinner plate. For dessert there was pumpkin pie, and an assortment of quick breads.

There was plenty of food, and plenty leftover. Many expressed thanks to Chef Chris for the amazing meal. And knowing how Chef Chris manages his kitchen, the leftovers would be frozen to become ingredients in upcoming school lunches.

But the Thanksgiving food preparation wasn’t quite over. Glazer and some of his culinary students were back at school on Wednesday, which was a vacation day for students, having been hired to prepare the community Thanksgiving meal sponsored by St. Paul’s Lutheran Church

in Soudan, where they served over 70 community members.



FIRES...Continued from page 1

finding a place for Holm to stay.

The sheriff’s office report indicated the fire did not appear to be a criminal act but the cause of the fire is still under investigation and the State Fire Marshal’s Office was also notified.

Just days later, at 12:02 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 25, St. Louis County Sheriff’s deputies along with several area fire departments and the Minnesota State Patrol responded to a fire at a quad-plex multi-family home located in the 8400 block of Nelson Road in Britt. The sheriff’s office report said that the fire was started by a candle that was in a bedroom.

Pike-Sandy-Britt, Virginia, Mt. Iron, Embarrass, Cook, and Vermilion Lake firefighters responded, but upon arrival the apartment was fully engulfed in flames and was

completely destroyed. One person was evaluated at the scene for smoke inhalation. No other injuries were reported.

County property tax records indicate the building was owned by Barbara

Aysta, of Virginia, and was valued at \$83,400.

The fire is being investigated by the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office and the State Fire Marshal’s Office.

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TOWER CRAFT SHOW

LONG MAY IT WAVE?

Finalists selected for new Minnesota state flag

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The Minnesota State Emblems Redesign Commission (SERC) unveiled their top design picks for a new state flag and state seal last week, and a large swath of Minnesotans appear to be less than inspired by their choices.

The 13-member commission was created by the legislature last spring to redesign a flag that has faced criticism for its outdated design and lack of representation. Featuring the state seal, a complicated design that many have derided as racist for its depiction of a Native American on horseback being displaced by a white farmer, the current flag breaks virtually every principle of good flag design as outlined by the North American Vexillological Association, the world's largest group devoted to the study of flags. The current flag is also difficult to distinguish from the flags of other states which also display state seals on a field of blue.

Commissioners drafted a set of design objectives to guide submission creators and provide a framework for making their selections. Those objectives included:

- **Simplicity and Recognizability:** The flag should be so simple that a child can draw it from memory and can be easily recognizable from a distance.
- **Distinctive Colors:**



Utilize a color palette that represents the state effectively. Blue, green, and white are often associated with Minnesota's natural beauty, while red and yellow can symbolize its vitality. Limit the number of colors on the flag to three to four.

➤ **Enduring Appeal:** While honoring the state's history, the flag design should also represent Minnesota's enduring values and aspirations, emphasizing inclusivity

and unity.

➤ **Symbolism:** The flag's images, icons, colors, and/or patterns should relate to what it symbolizes.

➤ **Symmetry:** The design should be symmetrical to a degree.

➤ **Mandatory:** Symbols, emblems, or likenesses that represent only a single community or person, regardless of whether real or stylized, may not be included in a design.

Commissioners met

for hours on Tuesday, Nov. 21 to narrow down over 2,300 possible flag design submissions from the public to five but ended up choosing six. They also chose five finalists for the state seal.

Design elements

Each of the six finalists feature a representation of the North Star, a nod to the state's motto "L'Etoile du Nord," the star of the north. The North Star is the single prominent element in one of the designs, while a large yellow version overlaid with a white snowflake dominates another. Smaller versions in both yellow and white are depicted on the other four. The North Star was the most frequently used symbol among all submissions.

All incorporate the colors blue and white into their designs. Two flags use two different shades of blue to represent the sky and water. Four of the flags use green to depict the state's lush landscapes, forestry and agriculture. Yellow is used for the North Star in three of the designs, and one uses yellow stripes on a border to represent the state's Native Tribes, while using similar white stripes to represent the state's counties. Three of the flags incorporate a horizontal stripe motif, while one has a stylized polygon reflective of the state's unique shape.

While the commission has not identified the designers, several have spoken publicly about their work.

Sarah Agaton Howes, a Fond du Lac Ojibwe artist and small business owner, submitted design F1435 based on Ojibwe loom style that features a large yellow North Star and stylized green trees, with small border stripes representing tribal nations and counties. "The flag that we currently have is really harmful and really based on Native nations disappearing," she said. "And so I'm really excited to just represent who we are as Minnesotans, and also, as a Native person."

Todd Pitman, a St. Paul graphic designer, created F944, which he

calls "Mirror of the Sky." The flag was a family effort: he designed it with input from his parents.

"I just truly love my home state, and I really feel like it deserves a flag as unique and dynamic as the people who make it such a wonderful place to live," he said.

Pitman's design features two large swirls, the lower one in blue representing the state's pristine bending waters and the upper in white reflecting snow, clouds, and aurora, with a four-pointed yellow North Star inspired by the

See...FLAG pg.12



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MARIJUANA IN MINNESOTA

Cohasset company seeks license to grow marijuana

by PETER CALLAGHAN
MinnPost Staff Writer

M.N. Technology is second company seeking financing from IRRR

REGIONAL — A second company that wants to grow cannabis on the Iron Range in time for the beginning of retail sales in the spring of 2025 has requested financial help from the state agency charged with spurring economic development on the Iron Range.

M.N. Technology of Cohasset has submitted a pre-application for financing from the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation and agency staff are working with the company to consider financial assistance, which usually includes below-market-interest loans, some that can be forgiven if a certain number of jobs are created and sustained.

One officer in M.N. Technology said it will ask the IRRR for a similar level of assistance it gave a Missouri-based company last month.

"We just want fair," said Craig Maturi, vice president for operations for the Harris Township-based company. "We want a fair chance and a fair shot like we were supposed to get."

The new application raises questions about whether the IRRR will take a stake in two different companies to build grow operations within three miles of each other. The comparison between M.N. Technology and the similar proposal that went before the IRRR also highlights one of the concerns raised by Gov. Tim Walz and others in the fledgling cannabis industry — that a goal of the new law was to spur small businesses from Minnesota.

M.N. Technology, whose officers are two married couples who live in Itasca County's Harris Township — Mandy and Andy Nintzel and Jamielee and Craig Maturi — are also working with the city of Cohasset to pur-

chase land in a city-owned business park and to create a tax increment financing district. The proposal, according to materials submitted to the city, would be to build a structure in the city that would include a 30,000-square-foot marijuana growing area plus space for processing of the plant.

At full operation, the business would employ about 70 people. No retail sales are included in the plan.

The IRRR would provide no further information about what it calls a pre-application. But the company told Cohasset city officials that it would purchase land in the city's industrial park for the grow operation plus space for support functions such as product curing, packaging and quality control.

While recreational cannabis is now legal in Minnesota and the state will issue licenses to grow and sell it in time for an expected start of non-tribal retail sales in the spring of 2025, it is still illegal federally. That makes it difficult to borrow money, and much of the money for cannabis businesses comes from personal wealth or private investors. Loans from government agencies, therefore, are a significant potential source of money.

House File 100, which legalized, taxed and regulated recreational marijuana recognized that by creating a special fund. Called CanStartup, it can loan up to \$150,000 for eligible businesses. The entire program was funded at \$6 million over the first two years of legalization while other programs to help train people to enter cannabis businesses and to navigate the complexities of the industry received an additional \$6 million.

That is a small amount compared to what the

IRRR pledged to HWY35 last month. The advisory board made up mostly of Iron Range legislators, voted 8-5 to support a pair of loans — \$10 million from an IRRR-controlled fund and \$10 million from a fund distributed by the state Department of Employment and Economic Development — to HWY35. That company, led by a Missouri-based cannabis entrepreneur, proposed a \$67.8 million investment in cannabis cultivation as well as manufacturing of products such as edibles and oils.

Along with a TIF deal worth \$2 million, the government financing would make up a little less than one-third of the capital needed for the project. Backers said the rest would come from private investors. Of the \$20 million in state funds, up to \$15 million could be forgiven in \$5 million increments if the company employs 150, 175 and 350 people. Its officers told the IRRR board it expected up to 400 employees if it is allowed to expand to a 60,000-square-foot plant canopy. That is about the size of a football playing field, including end zones.

HWY35 is led by Jack Mitchell, who has both medical and recreational operations in Missouri. In Minnesota, he and a Minnesota-based business partner John Hyduke have created a cannabis trade organization with a board populated by people connected to their businesses. Hyduke is chair and Mitchell is vice chair.

Maturi said he was told by IRRR staff that M.N. Technology should join that group.

"Us being naive, we tried to join them but no one would call us back," Maturi said. "Of course they knew who we were but we didn't know who they were."

state seal design included a loon.

The commission acknowledged that after the North Star, the loon was the most popular image among flag submissions, but those entries were ruled out because the loon is not found statewide.

Moving forward

The SERC website, <https://www3.mnhs.org/serc>, will remain open to receive comments until Dec. 1. The commission will have until the end of the year to choose a final design. The commission can make changes to colors or design elements as they deem appropriate.

Once the commission makes its choice, the state legislature will have the chance to weigh in. Legislators have the option of rejecting the commission's recommendation. If they accept it, then the new flag and seal will be introduced on May 11, Minnesota Statehood Day.

The winning designer will receive public recognition, but there is no monetary award attached to winning. The commission, whose work is being facilitated by the Minnesota Historical Society, was allocated \$35,000 from the legislature to conduct its work.

MPR News (92.5 FM and 89.3 FM) contributed to this article.

DEED says funding for Missouri-based cannabis operation not a done deal

Mitchell's operation in Missouri was the subject of recent reporting by the *Kansas City Star* about a plan to create a cannabis-themed entertainment district called Smokey River Cannabis. The plans were withdrawn after the newspaper detailed connections between the town's government and the project's backers.

A day after the IRRR board approval, Gov. Tim Walz raised questions about the deal that focused on why one potential company in the new recreational cannabis business would get state help. Walz also questioned why a large out-of-state company would get preference when the state law legalizing recreational marijuana wanted it to promote small, state-based businesses.

After Walz raised his questions, DEED released a statement that said its participation in the HWY35 proposal and funding was not final and that it would be conducting its own investigation of the proposal.

Maturi said interest in M.N. Technology increased after media reports about HWY35 and Mitchell appeared following the IRRRB vote. He said the officers received interest from potential investors. M.N. Technology (which stands for the names of the officers, Maturi and Nintzel) alluded to the HWY35 plan in an announcement about the company and its plans.

"Keeping everything as local as we can is just good for business," said Mandy Nintzel, the chief executive officer of M.N. Technology. "The cannabis industry has large multi-state operators who use big business tactics to pursue licenses in every state that becomes legal. They push out local businesses and residents pursuing licensing to build monopoly-style control of the entire multi-state cannabis industry."

Craig Maturi described M.N. Technology as "the little guy, what the bill was supposed to be for versus an out of state company."

During the meeting of the IRRR board on Oct. 17, one member who supported the HWY35 loan asked how the board might respond to additional requests for help.

"If 20 of these show up and say, 'Hey, we want the money too, we want the deal.' I can promise you that it would be difficult to fund 20 at this level because I would call it saturation," said Rep. Roger Skraba, R-Ely.

"We can't do it all. But we can do some."

But Maturi said he and his partners have been told that only one company will receive IRRR funding from money that comes from a tax on tacotine production.

Max Peters, the city administrator for Cohasset, said the city has been working with M.N. Technology about both the sale of industrial park land and the tax increment financing proposal. The city has also been helping the company seek financing

and incentives from the IRRR, the Itasca County economic development board and DEED.

Peters said he expects the request from M.N. Technology to the IRRR would be proportional to the HWY35 request — about one third of M.N. Technology's \$34 million project cost. The TIF district could produce another \$900,000 to \$1 million over nine years.

Peters highlighted the local connections of the backers of the Cohasset proposal. The Maturis own a building insulation company as well as a Grand Rapids coffee and nutrition shop and a real estate business. Mandy Nintzel is a registered nurse and Andy Nintzel owns a business that makes wakesurfing and boating products.

Andy Nintzel has studied at a cannabis college in Holland and will be vice president of cultivation. The company is being advised by a Boulder, Colo., consultancy called Canna.

But Peters said the city will be watching the IRRR response to the request from a second cannabis cultivator.

"I'll be shocked if they put two facilities a few miles apart from each other," he said of HWY 35 in Grand Rapids and M.N. Technology in Cohasset.

"Certainly, as an area, we would like one. Two would be better. But is that even realistic?" It puts IRRR in the position of picking a winner between two proposals, and it would be using financial resources that would not be available to other jobs proposals, Peters said.

FLAG...Continued from page 11

symbols and astronomy of the Dakota and Ojibwe tribes.

Twin Cities-based product designer and writer Brandon Hundt said he's been working on his design, submission F29, since 2015. His design features a large yellow four-pointed North Star overlaid with a white snowflake, laid out on a field of blue.

"The land of 10,000 lakes. The Great Lakes being in Duluth. The mighty Mississippi is formed in our state. If any state has a case to have a blue flag, it's Minnesota," Hundt wrote in his designer statement.

Hundt leaned into the guideline that the flag should be simple.

"Flags should be simple because they're up on a flagpole, often very high," Hundt told MPR News. "And I think that's the thing that often gets overlooked. We need to think about how these flags are going to look on a flagpole."

Public reactions

The flag redesign could be generating the most public feedback of any state initiative since the imposition of mandated COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. With 24 hours of posting the finalists for comment on their website, the SERC received thousands of comments. Social media has been flooded

with comments, and unsurprisingly they've been mostly negative.

One camp is firmly of the belief that the current state flag is fine as is and shouldn't be changed at all.

"What's wrong with our current flag?" was a common refrain on numerous Facebook posts.

"The current flag is fine and rather classy looking," someone said.

Another category of comments focused on the designs themselves. A sampling of comments includes the following:

"None of these designs scream pride in Minnesota. It is like they went with the most generic designs to make sure no one could possibly be offended by it."

"I agree with those who say they look cartoonish or drawn by kindergarteners."

"They all look like corporate logos."

"To say I'm disappointed is an understatement. I'd rather say thanks, but we haven't found anything that really checks the boxes, so we'll hold off and do another round of submissions in a few months."

"They all look like the symbols from the NY-Times game 'Tiles.'"

A subset of design critics lamented the exclusion of the state bird, the loon, from any of the flag finalists, although one

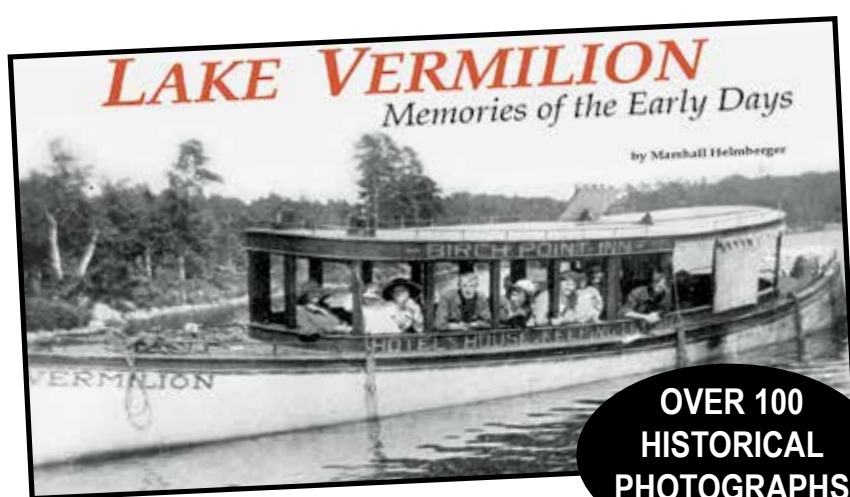
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2023 REGULAR FIREARMS DEER SEASON

Deer registrations continue long decline

This year's numbers correlate well with the drop in antlerless tags and winter severity

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Preliminary deer registrations continue to run below last year across all of northeastern Minnesota. The regular firearms deer season ended in the region back on Nov. 19, so the numbers currently available from the Department of Natural Resources should reflect something close to the final figures for the 2023 season.

The muzzleloader season runs through Dec. 10 in northeastern Minnesota, which could add marginally to the final totals.

The continuing decline in

hunter success has put the focus on the impact of wolf predation on deer numbers, at least in conversations with hunters. Biologists with the DNR continue to cite winter severity as the biggest factor impacting deer numbers and hunter success.

While wolves are a key predator of white-tailed deer, the pattern of hunter success this year appears to correlate strongly with two primary factors— the number of antlerless permits issued by the DNR and the impact of winter, as measured through the winter severity index, or WSI.

Among the eight deer permit areas regularly tracked by the *Timberjay*, the decline in antlerless

Right: Deer numbers in the region dropped sharply in the aftermath of severe winters in 2012-13 and 2013-14 and have yet to recover. file photo

permits clearly account for most of the drop in registrations, particularly in PAs 176, 177, and 178, which typically see the highest registrations in the local area. “We cut the antlerless permits in those areas by 50 percent across the board,” noted DNR Tower area wildlife manager Jessica Holmes. “That is absolutely a factor,” she said. For example, so

See **DEER...**pg. 2B



Left: Two disabled riders using adaptive mountain bikes were able to enjoy the new mountain bike trails at Hidden Valley this year. The trails have proven to be extremely popular, attracting thousands of visits in their first year. submitted photo

Below: The trails are known as single-track and have a nice mix of challenges along the way. file photo

HIDDEN VALLEY

TRAILS FOR ALL

Ely's new mountain biking trails have been a huge hit

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

HIDDEN VALLEY— The opening of the new singletrack mountain biking trail system earlier this year has prompted an almost immediate boom in off-season traffic here. While Hidden Valley has long been a mecca for Nordic skiers, the opening of the new mountain biking trails have already made Ely a destination for mountain and winter fat tire bikers, with more trails in the works. As of October, a trail counter on the trail had nearly 10,000 user days for the year.

Early June brought the final

installation of a number of ramps on the Ely Airlines jump loop, completing the nine-mile system of singletrack mountain bike trails. The summer included a ribbon-cutting grand opening for the trail system, the inaugural five-week Hidden Valley Hammer race series and the start of the third season for Team BOREALIS the grades 6-12 competitive mountain bike team.

The new trails are not only attracting traditional mountain bikers, they've seen use by adaptive bikers as well. In September, Alex Van Horn and Linda LaReau

See **TRAILS...**pg. 2B



HOCKEY

Ely notches back-to-back victories in season debut

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

HALLOCK— Times may be changing for the long hapless Timberwolves hockey team. The Wolves came away from a season-opening weekend road trip here with back-to-back wins over Kittson County Central thanks to an effective offensive attack and solid defense.

Ely took the Friday night tilt 6-2 on the strength of a hat trick by senior Drew Marolt along with two goals by fellow senior Deegan Richards.

Junior Garrett Rohr opened the scoring for the Wolves early in the first period with assists from Jace Huntbach and Ty Walker. Richards put his first puck in the net at the 7:19 mark in the second period with an assist from Rohr, but Kittson County struck back 58 seconds later to narrow the margin to 2-1. Marolt put Ely up 3-1 at the 11:29 mark of the stanza, with assists from Richards and Jayden Zemke. Richards notched an unassisted goal late in the period to put the Wolves up 4-1.

Marolt went on to add two insurance goals in the third period, with assists from Richards, Walker, and Sean Merriman. Kittson added a late goal but it was too little too late.

“Our forecheck was really productive,” noted Ely Head Coach Jake Myers. “We got a lot of pucks to the net and it paid off for us in the end.”

The Wolves outshot Kittson 54-20 on the night. Timberwolves goalie Ben Leeson turned away 18 shots.

It was largely rinse and repeat for the Wolves in Saturday's contest, as the Wolves came out ready to rumble, notching four goals in the first period to take a 4-1 lead. Marolt tripped the buzzer at the 2:44 mark with an assist from Richards and Walker. Senior Chase Anderson scored nine minutes later on the power play, with the assist going to Alex Merriman. Marolt was

See **HOCKEY...**pg. 2B

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GIRLS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies drop girls hoops opener at Chisholm

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

CHISHOLM- The North Woods Grizzlies girls basketball team hit the road to Chisholm for their season opener on Tuesday and squandered a promising early lead to fall to the Bluestreaks 86-56.

The Grizzlies were poised and confident at the outset,

working the perimeter with crisp passes that set up their long-range shooters. Senior Helen Koch drained the team's first trifecta of the season to give the Grizzlies a 3-2 lead, and a deuce and a triple by junior Dakota Schwarzenberger put North Woods up 8-4.

But after a Brynn Chosa charity gave the Grizzlies a 14-6 advantage, a four-minute

scoring drought gave Chisholm the opening they needed to retake the lead 15-14. Koch drained a two and senior Talise Goodsky canned a pair of free throws to go back in front 18-15, and with 7:25 left in the half the score was knotted at 19-19.

North Woods again went cold from the field and committed multiple turnovers as the Bluestreaks went on a rampage, outscoring

the Grizzlies 25-4 down the homestretch to halftime, taking a commanding 44-23 lead into the break.

North Woods Head Coach Liz Cheney pushed the reset button at halftime and the Grizzlies returned to a more even keel in the second half, but lacked the firepower and defense necessary to cut into the Bluestreaks' big lead. A late Chisholm flurry

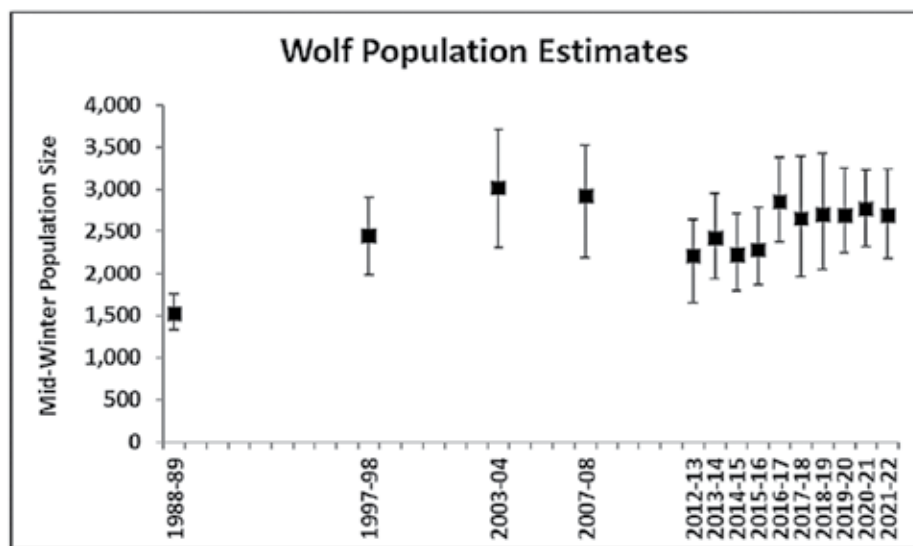
pushed their winning margin to 30, 86-56.

Schwarzenberger had a strong outing for her first stint as a varsity player, draining four threes and chalking up a team-leading 14 points. Koch knocked down 11 as the only other Grizzly in double-figures.

DEER..Continued from page 1B

far in 2023, hunters in PA 177 have registered 137 antlerless deer, as opposed to 228 last year. That accounts for 92 percent of the registration decline this year over last. In PA 176, antlerless registrations are off by 49, accounting for 31 percent of the decline in registrations this year, while the drop in doe tags accounts for 50 percent of the registration decline in PA 178.

Winter weather also had an impact. While the last two winters have been generally considered severe due mostly to deep and dense snowpack, the track of winter storms varies from year-to-year, meaning that deer in some areas are harder hit than in others. Last winter, the deepest snows fell along the North Shore of Lake Superior in Cook, southern Lake, southern St. Louis and Carlton counties, and deer registrations in those areas showed some of the steepest declines in the region. Permit areas 183 and 156, both in Carlton County, saw deer registrations fall 39 and 40 percent respectively this year over last, based on preliminary totals in the wake of the regular firearms season. Reductions in deer numbers due to winter mortality and cuts in antlerless permits combined to account for most of that drop.



The results of the DNR's regular wolf surveys, which suggest a stable population of wolves in Minnesota. Courtesy MNDNR

The seven northeastern Minnesota permit areas that experienced the highest WSI readings last winter saw a collective registration decline of 34 percent over last year and 44 percent over deer registrations in 2021.

By contrast, areas near the Canadian border, such as permit areas 107, 109, and 119, saw 2023 registrations increase slightly over last year. Permit area 118 was an exception, as registrations fell by about eight percent over last year, although the final numbers could well trim that margin slightly. These border areas saw significantly less snow last winter than permit areas to the south, which left

conditions considered generally moderate throughout most of the those permit areas.

Registrations far lower than a decade ago

Even with the slight registration rebound in permit areas near the border this year, hunters are certainly correct in their perception that hunting success has fallen dramatically in much of the North Country when compared to results from a decade ago.

Back in 2012, hunters registered a whopping 4,649 deer in PA 178, compared to just 1,237 to date in 2023. Hunters in PA 177, which encompasses Lake Vermilion and farm country west of Cook, registered

1,451 deer in 2012, compared to 550 this year so far. Hunters in PA 176 registered 2,796 deer in 2012, compared to 566 this year to date, while hunters in PA 118 registered 697 deer in 2012 compared to 355 this year. PA 119, which used to attract large numbers of hunters to the western portion of the Superior National Forest northeast of Orr, saw 859 deer registered in 2012. While the 231 deer registered in that permit area so far this season reflect a slight increase over last year, it's a drop of 73 percent from 2012 levels. Direct comparisons aren't entirely accurate in all cases since the boundaries of some permit areas have

changed somewhat over the years. In addition, the DNR typically implemented more liberal bag limits during periods of high deer numbers, which allowed hunters to take many more antlerless deer than has been the case in recent years.

Deer registrations, which ran historically high in the region in the 2000s and early 2010s, dropped sharply beginning in 2014, after back-to-back severe winters with deep snow that lasted into late April or early May.

By the 2014 deer season, with bag limits similar to recent years, deer registrations plummeted. In PA 177, registrations dropped to just 556, an almost identical number to this year. Hunters in PA 178 registered 1,190 deer, less than a quarter of the deer registered just two years earlier. Registrations in PA 119 fell from 859 in 2012 to just 330 in 2014.

While deer have the capacity to recover quickly from setbacks like severe winters, Holmes noted that the recent trend has been for snowier, if somewhat milder, winters. While the WSI adds points for both temperature and snow depth criteria, Holmes notes that snow depth and the length of the period of deep snow are the biggest factors in deer winter

survival. "Eight of the last ten winters have been high-moderate to severe," she said, noting that deer recovery has not been possible, with or without wolves. "We just can't get a break, weather-wise," she said.

DNR surveys suggest stable wolf population

While many in the region have laid the blame for the declining deer population on wolves, it is worth noting that the historically high deer numbers and harvest experienced during the 2000s and early 2010s coincided with a wolf population in the region that was largely in line, if not higher, than today. According to the DNR, the wolf population in northeastern Minnesota has been essentially at carrying capacity for the past couple decades, and that carrying capacity would be expected to decline along with deer numbers based on well-accepted ecological principals.

Based on DNR wolf surveys, the state's wolf population appears to have peaked at just under 3,000 animals in 2003-2004, during a period of high deer numbers, and has fallen about ten percent since. The most recent estimate of the state's wolf population, made in 2021-22 came in at just under 2,700.

TRAILS..Continued from page 1B

discovered the trail system has great potential for welcoming riders with disabilities. During a stay at Veterans on the Lake, the ladies reached out to Ely Nordic about riding their all-terrain handcycles on the trails. The three-wheel bikes are powered by arms rather than feet, and with beefy tires, full suspen-

sion, and an electric-assist, they allow riders without the use of legs to have a dynamic mountain biking experience. Along with Ely Nordic Chair Brett Ross, Alvin Goesser of Ely Bike and Kicksled and Scott Anderson who spearheaded the Ely singletrack trail initiative, Van Horn and LaReau demonstrated their

arm strength and riding skills on the first two trail loops. Arriving back at the trailhead, both riders were eager for another lap. With the accessibility offered by Vets on the Lake and the Hidden Valley trails (and a night of northern lights over Fall Lake) LaReau described her adventures in Ely as a "life changer!"

While not officially designated as "adaptive" trails at this time, the visit by LaReau and Van Horn has planted the seed for that possibility.

With the success of the Hidden Valley singletrack system, the city of Ely along with Minnesota North College Vermilion Campus and the U.S. Forest Service's Kawishiwi Ranger District,

are planning additional trails. Connectors from Hidden Valley and the Trezona Trail are planned, adding another five miles of trail. Adam Harju of Grand Marais based Dirt Candy Designs is at work on the engineering of the new trails, expected to be shovel-ready in 2024. Supporters of mountain biking in Ely will continue to look for funding for the build, as well as locations for more trails. According to Anderson, "from an economic development standpoint, 20 miles of trail is the sweet spot to make Ely a singletrack mountain biking destination."

With the winter snow season now here, a new grant-funded grooming snowmobile and personnel including five part time groomers, will create an impeccably groomed setting for both classic (tracked) and skate skiing on nearly 30 kilometers of trails at Hidden Valley and the Trezona Trail. Two additional part time personnel dedicated to fat bike grooming stand ready to make the most of snow on the singletrack with the

Club's Trail Tamer fat tire bike trail groomer. Winter events at Hidden Valley include the Ely Invitational High School Nordic Ski race on Saturday, Jan. 27 and the combined Skinny/Fat Bike Race and candlelight ski on Saturday, Feb. 3.

Trail grooming on the Trezona and Hidden Valley trails, along with year-round maintenance and management of the Hidden Valley Chalet, are funded in part by annual memberships in The Ely Nordic Ski and Bike Club. At just \$75 for individuals and \$125 for a family, membership allows keyless access to the Hidden Valley Chalet for warming, water and restrooms. The chalet is also available for rental for private events, daily or by the hour. Additional donations are always welcome, and trail sponsorships of \$100 (bronze) \$250 (silver) and \$500+ (gold) are recognized on the signboard facing the trailhead parking lot. Checks can be sent to Ely Nordic, PO Box 346, Ely, MN 55731.



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Written by Marshall Helmlinger • Published by the Timberjay



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HOCKEY..Continued from page 1B

was back for his second goal of the period at the 14:25 mark, again on the power play with an assist from Zemke. Rohr punched the net two minutes later with an assist from Marolt and Mason Kurnava.

Kittson added their lone goal of the contest at the 10:09 mark.

Ely's Brady Eaton scored unassisted at the 13-minute mark in the second period, which was

the final goal of the night for either team, leaving Ely on top 5-1.

Ely, again, outshot Kittson 56-21, while Leeson was nearly flawless at the net, with 20 saves.

The Wolves were set to host Mora on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 1 and 2. They'll visit Silver Bay next Tuesday and will be in Ashland, Wis. on Thursday.

Obituaries and Death Notices



Reginald J. Childs

Reginald John "Reggie" Childs, 73, of Tower, passed away on Thursday, Nov. 23, 2023, at New Journey Residence in Eveleth. A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Pike Township on Hwy. 169. Visitation will be for one hour prior to the service at the church. In lieu of flowers, the family would welcome donations to Gloria Dei Lutheran Church or the Lewy Body Dementia Association. Arrangements are with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

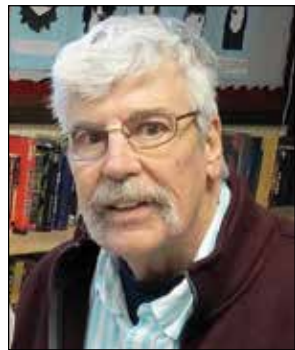
Reggie was born on Jan. 1, 1950, in Virginia, to Richard and Josephine Alexander Childs. In the mid-1950s, he and his brother Don moved to Tower, into the home of Oliver and Gertrude Heikkila Huttula. He graduated from Embarrass High School in 1968. After attending tech school in Duluth, Reggie worked as a painter for the railroad for four years. During that time, he stayed with his cousin and his cousin's wife, Dick and Bonnie Tuominen, in Saginaw and became a member of their family.

Reggie married Connie Harma on April 3, 1976, and they made their home in Vermilion Lake Township. Reggie was a logger and contractor, a volunteer with the Vermilion Lake Fire Department, and an active member of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. He greatly enjoyed spending time with family and friends, helping others, and taking a good sauna.

He is survived by his wife, Connie; daughters, Gina (Jerod Rauk) Childs, Sara (Brett) McNeal, Amber (Aaron) TerBest and Sommer (Lee Anderson) Pyne; grandchildren, Zoey, Travis, Sienna, Axel, Aili, Brooklyn, Reghan "Reggie" and Kynsie; Bonnie Tuominen and family; brothers, Roger Childs, Donald (Diane) Childs, Gerry Hanson, Gary Childs and Ronald Childs; sister, Carol (Allen) Mathwig; sisters-in-

law, Bonnie Harma and Lois Childs; brother-in-law, Len Clough; and members of his large extended family.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Richard and Josephine Childs and Oliver and Gertrude Huttula; daughter, Lori; Dick Tuominen; brothers, Edward, Dennis and Kenneth Childs; and sister, Joanne Huttula Clough.



Dennis Johnson

Dennis Johnson, 72, of Duluth, passed away at home on Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023, surrounded by his family after a difficult battle with lung cancer. The family would like to thank St. Luke's Hospice for their incredible care of Dennis, and Dr. Patel and the wonderful nurses on 2W. A celebration of life will be held at 11 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10 at The

Buffalo House in Duluth.

Dennis was born on April 6, 1951, to Jean and Arthur Johnson. He was raised in Tower with his mother and stepfather George Zupanich.

Dennis served in the U.S. Army and studied electronics. He became the service manager at JayEn for many years and eventually opened his own business, Duluth-Range Communications. He loved fishing on Lake Vermilion, building wooden models, and spending time with his family.

He was a wonderful husband, father and friend and will be deeply missed by all who loved him.

Dennis is survived by his wife of 44 years, Denise; son, Joseph (Stacy); daughter, Julie (Matt) Benfield; grandchildren, Carter, Riley, Jack and Henry; beloved brother, Roger (Dawn); and sister, Paulette Jallen.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Brian G. Pelletier

Brian Gene Pelletier, 36, of Tower, passed away on Monday, Nov. 13, 2023. A celebration of life will be held in conjunction with his father's memorial pool tournament.

Family services provided by Bauman-Vermilion, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower.

He is survived by his mother, Margaret Jewell (Paul Forsman); sister, Jean Pelletier; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, extended family and friends.

Robert A. Martinson

Robert Arthur Martinson, 87, of Blaine, passed away on Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Monday, Nov. 27 at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Orr. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook.

Roger M. Billington

Roger Merrill Billington, 84, of Angora, passed away on Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023. A celebration of life was held at Kristen Billington Majeski's residence on Sunday, Nov. 26. Burial with military honors will be held privately. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Geraldine Wilkinson

Geraldine June Wilkinson, 97, of Cook, passed away on Monday, Nov. 20, 2023. There will be a private burial at a

later date. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Randall J. Fry

Randall John "Randy" Fry, 78, of Orr, passed away peacefully at St. Mary's Hospital on Monday, Nov. 20, 2023. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Wednesday, Nov. 29 at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Orr. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Mary Lou "Lulu" Vukelich Fry; sister, Suzanne Nelson (Cordell Hull); brother-in-law, Tony Vukelich; nephew, Jeff (Amy) Nelson; grandnephews, Sam and Theo; grandniece, Delaney; and cherished nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

Gayle M. Carlson

Gayle M. Carlson, 70, of Ely, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2023, at Carefree Living in Ely. Funeral arrangements are pending with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

Shoppers support small businesses during Tower's Small Business Saturday

TOWER- Tower's first annual Small Business Saturday, held on Nov. 25, got off with a bang, and organizers hope to make this an annual event. Tower's Main Street businesses saw increased traffic and sales. Families and over 40 children got a chance to sit with Santa, Mrs. Claus, and Cookie the elf, and the event's receipt raffle box nearly overflowed with entrants. The Tower-Soudan Area Events Board gave out \$300 worth of raffle prizes with the help of local donating businesses. Winners were as follows:

- Good Ol' Days customer Lisa Ledman received a \$40 gift card package
- Sulu's customer Amy Dorey received a \$30 gift card package
- Winter Market customer Paula Barnes received a \$30 gift card package
- Northern Lights Salon & Co customer Gen Bjorgo received a \$35 gift card package
- Nordic Home North Customer Kassie Bjorgo received a \$35 gift card package
- Winter Market customer Michelle Jackman received a \$35 gift card package
- Pike River Products customer Lynn Billett received a \$40 gift card package
- Pike River Products customer Amy Berglund received a \$35 gift card package
- Winter Market customer Sue Cramer received a *Timberjay* Newspaper Subscription
- Larry Suihkonen received a *Tower News* subscription.

Linda Haugen was the winner of the split-the-pot raffle benefiting the Tower-Soudan Area Events Board. Linda provided a generous donation back to the group with her winnings.

Dianna and Terry Sundahl provided hot cocoa, cider, and cookies to those who stopped by event headquarters at Pike River Products. They also provided a children's craft area. Other area businesses offered specials throughout the day. Six area vendors participated in the Winter Farmers Market. Jarri Ankrum was the winner of Nordic Home North's raffle of the personal fireplace. Katrina B's photos of children and their families with Santa are posted online on her Facebook page.

This event would not have been possible without the time, energy, and talents from our event volunteers: Charles and



Payslee Olson (at left with her mother Paige) was not a fan of the man in the big red suit, but Ada Gornick gave Santa a big hug. Photos courtesy of Katrina B photography (www.katrinabphotography.com)

Lorna Winger; Dianna and Terry Sundahl, owners of Pike River Products and Tower's Gathering Gallery; Katrina B. Photography; and The *Timberjay* newspaper.

The Tower-Soudan Area Events Board would also like to thank the following businesses for their generosity in donating additional prizes for the raffles: Nordic Home North, Zup's Foods, The *Timberjay*, Sulu's Espresso Cafe, Tower-Soudan Agency, The *Tower News*, UBetcha Antiques and Uffda Gifts, D'Erick's Tower Liquor, and Little Green Pantry. Thank you to all of the community members who took part in

the event including shoppers, merchants, Santa visitors, and those out just enjoying the day.

Ignore the risk; try Lutefisk!

9th Annual
Community Lutefisk & Meatball Dinner

Trinity Lutheran Church, Cook
231 2nd St. SE

Saturday, December 2
4 to 6:30 PM
Adults-\$18, Children under 10-\$7
Take out meals available

Join us for a traditional Scandinavian dinner! Lutefisk, white sauce and/or melted butter, meatballs, potatoes and gravy, green beans, rutabaga, lefse, homemade bread, cranberries, pickled herring, desserts and more.

Net proceeds will be donated to Cook Community Food Shelf and Trinity's National Youth gathering Krewe

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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

Area Solid Waste Facility site hours

Northwoods Transfer Station 9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt Winter Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: 11am-5pm	Aurora Transfer Station 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
Embarrass Canister Site 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Thu: 10am-5pm Sat: 12:30-4:30pm	Soudan Canister Site 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am-5pm
Household Hazardous Waste Facility 5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department
218-749-9703
Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday
www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

Area Solid Waste Facility site hours

Northwoods Transfer Station 9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt Winter Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: 11am-5pm	Cook Transfer Station 2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm
County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm	Soudan Canister Site 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun 8am-5pm
Embarrass Canister Site 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30-4:30pm Thu: 10am-5pm	Aurora Transfer Station 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
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218-749-9703
Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday
www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle



Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

2023 REGULAR FIREARMS DEER SEASON

Soudan youth bags buck in honor of his grandpa

Told his sister he was going to shoot a buck with his grandfather's deer rifle

SOUDAN— Fourteen-year-old Jack Anderson had a feeling two weeks ago as the deer season wound down. He had hunted deer before with his grandfather, Frank Gornick, of Soudan, but Frank had died just over a year ago and he had been missing him this deer season.

"It was fun," said Jack. "I used to hunt with him a lot." Then one day, about

halfway through the recent deer season, he told his sister that he was going out to get a deer with his grandpa's gun after getting home from school. "I was just kind of joking, but I had a feeling that I would," he said. He figured he might have better luck using his grandpa's gun, and he wore his grandpa's hunting cap for good measure.

Jack, the son of Mike and

Jill Anderson, of Soudan, rode with a buddy out to an area just south of town, where his grandfather and great-grandfather before him had hunted for decades. Jack had been out there the day before and had seen several does, so he went back there to see if a buck might show up this time.

See DEER...pg. 5B

Right: Fourteen-year-old Jack Anderson smiles big as he poses with the eight-point buck he shot Nov. 13 using his late grandpa's rifle.

submitted photo



WILDLIFE

Lislegard pushing for wolf hunt

Cites damage to deer population and hunting traditions

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— State Rep. Dave Lislegard, DFL-Aurora, is advocating for a managed wolf hunt in Minnesota as soon as federal protections are lifted on the once-threatened predator. The gray wolf was delisted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2019, but a federal judge in California reversed that decision last year after finding that the federal agency had failed to fully consider the implications of its de-listing.

In Lislegard's recent newsletter to constituents, he said he'll be reaching out to Minnesota's federal delegation to push for a federal law to de-list the gray wolf. Lislegard said an over-abundance of wolves has been negatively affecting the deer population in northern Minnesota, which he blames for another year of declining deer registrations during the fall hunt.

"In fact, the DNR reports that we saw another 17 percent reduction in northern Minnesota in 2023 after an already low 2022 season," wrote Lislegard. "The truth is these declines are happening for a reason and it is because there are fewer and fewer deer to harvest due to the out-of-control gray wolf population. Not only that, but the wolves are wreaking havoc on our communities by attacking family dogs and livestock. You need not look far to hear yet again about another recent wolf attack."

In addition to seeking a change in federal law Lislegard said he'll continue to support state legislation to reinstate a managed wolf hunt in Minnesota if and when the gray wolf is de-listed. "I will continue to fight for this legislation and push back against a wolf hunting ban at the state level," he said.

Lislegard said the state also needs to be pro-active in developing ways to foster the white-tailed deer population in northern Minnesota and called for the creation of a task force made up of hunters, wildlife managers, and other stakeholders to explore means of rebuilding the deer population in northern Minnesota.



Dave Lislegard



VOYAGEURS WOLF PROJECT

How wolves affect forests

By restricting beaver foraging range, they limit the impact of beaver cutting

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK— A new study just published by the Voyageurs Wolf Project has provided data to confirm the idea that predators, like wolves, can shape the ecosystems in which they live by affecting the foraging habits of their prey.

In the case of Voyageurs, the new research, published by *The Royal Society B*, has demonstrated the degree to which wolf predation is affecting the foraging behavior of the beaver, the most influential mammal, second only to humans, in the North Woods.

Beavers are known as ecosystem engineers because of the way their activities routinely transform forestland into complex wetlands that can persist for decades. Unlike most herbivores, such as deer or moose, which range across a relatively large territory as they browse, beaver use their ponds and lodges as a home base. From there, they create foraging trails in a hub and spoke pattern, focusing their foraging as close to the relative safety of their ponds as possible.

For beaver, it's a balancing act between the need for food and the risk of predation. During the ice-free season, beaver make up just over 40 percent of the diet of most wolves in and around Voyageurs, where beaver are abundant. The Voyageur Wolf Project has previously

documented how wolves wait in ambush for beavers as they forage along established carry trails. Their latest research has confirmed a logical but, to date, largely unproven notion that beavers are more likely to face wolf attack the further they travel in their foraging forays.

The notion would seem to be common sense, but as the research team, led by Dr. Tom Gable, noted, there has been little scientific evidence, until now, to validate it. Through their ongoing research, Gable had noted several years ago that wolves seemed to spend more time hunting on those portions of beaver trails furthest from the safety of the pond.

Through the use of trail cameras and field observations, the research team was able to analyze beaver activities in detail. They found that beavers ranged as far as 80 meters, or about 260 feet, from their home ponds but spent 50 percent of their foraging time no more than 15 meters, or about 50 feet, from the safety of their ponds. While wolves were occasionally successful in catching beaver near their ponds, those short foraging trips accounted for just 24 percent of wolf ambushes and just 15 percent of wolf kills.

By contrast, the 50 percent of beaver foraging forays that extended further than 15 meters from their pond accounted for 76 percent of wolf ambushes and fully 85

See WOLVES...pg. 5B



Top: A study wolf in Voyageurs National Park.

photo courtesy Voyageur Wolf Project

Above: A beaver swims in a pond. These remarkably ambitious mammals can have a major impact on the forest environment.

Below: An aerial image showing the change in forest composition surrounding a longstanding beaver pond.

photo courtesy Voyageur Wolf Project



PLAY IT SAFE

Be extra cautious on early season ice this year

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The recent colder weather has put ice on many area lakes and ponds, but folks should keep in mind that the ice may still be too thin to support most activities on the ice, such as ice fishing, skating, or snowmobiling.

Unseasonably warm weather during the first half of November slowed the formation of ice this year, which means the ice that has formed may not be as thick as is typical for this time of year.

Falls through the ice can turn tragic quickly, and the effects of cold water mean even strong swimmers likely will find it difficult to save themselves from an unexpected fall. Parents and guardians need to be especially vigilant to watch kids and ensure their innate curiosity about early ice doesn't put them at risk.

Capt. Adam Block, boating law administrator with the DNR Enforcement Division, urges parents and guardians to talk with their children and neighbors about staying away from lakes, ponds and rivers this

time of year unless there's an adult supervising.

The best way to stay safe on the early-season ice is to wear a life jacket (foam is better than an inflatable in cold water). Block also recommends people carry a phone or other communications device to call for help, to let others know where they're going and when they plan to return, and to be prepared to deal with an unforeseen incident. Also consider traveling in pairs, and bring a rope to help rescue a companion who falls through the ice.

Keep in mind that ice

is never entirely safe and the thickness can vary significantly depending on things like springs and current. That's why it's a good idea to keep close watch on the ice as you travel and test it regularly to ensure it remains safe for travel. A minimum of four inches of ice is considered necessary for safe walking.

Right: Fresh ice on the East Two River in Tower looks inviting for a skate, but be sure to test any ice before venturing out and wear a life vest as well.

photo by M. Helmberger



WOLVES...Continued from page 4B

percent of kills. This predation pressure effectively limits the distance that beaver will range from their home ponds in search of food, at least in a region like northeastern Minnesota where wolf densities are among the highest in North America.

The researchers also surmise that wolf predation may be placing a strong selective pressure on beaver populations, by eliminating more of the breeding

animals that tend to range the furthest, while killing fewer beavers that limit their foraging close to the water's edge.

"We speculate that overtime, breeding beavers that forage closer to water might have higher fitness and produce offspring with similar foraging behaviors," wrote the researchers.

Limiting the influence of beavers

Perhaps the most interesting finding of the

research is the degree to which wolves, through predation pressure, limit the impact of beaver on surrounding forests. Unlike most herbivores, that mostly lightly browse or graze as they feed, the impact of beavers on a forest can be dramatic, equivalent to a logging clearcut. And because beaver select for favored tree species, particularly aspen here in the North Country, and largely ignore conifers,

they can dramatically alter the makeup of forests.

The latest study estimates that the predation pressure created by wolves reduces the foraging range of beavers by 43-69 percent. Through aerial photography and other documentation, the study was able to demonstrate how beaver altered the landscape in which they forage over time, often converting areas of forest once dominated by aspen

to conifers such as balsam fir or spruce, which beavers don't consume. Over time, this can create rings of conifers, or less preferred deciduous trees, around beaver ponds that often extend out to the usual foraging limit of the beavers using the pond. By limiting that foraging range, through predation pressure, wolves are, in effect, limiting the geographic scale of that forest conversion.

The researchers

noted that beavers that exist elsewhere in largely predator-free areas range much farther from the safety of water, as much as 400 meters, than beavers in places like northern Minnesota. Without wolf predation pressure, the research concludes, beavers would have a much larger impact on northern Minnesota forests.

DEER...Continued from page 4B

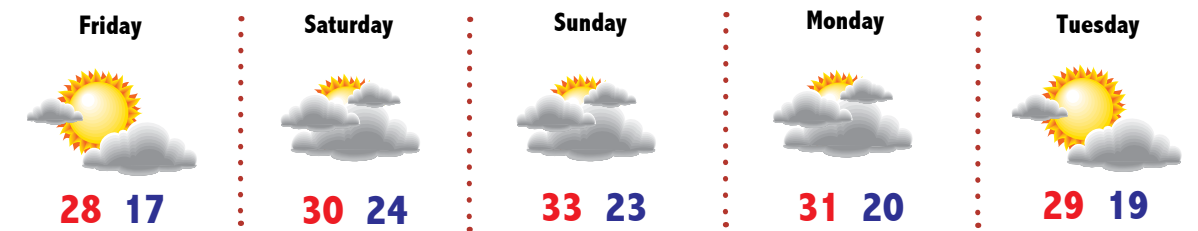
It did, as Jack was walking along the old rail grade. The eight-point buck startled when he first caught sight of Jack and bounded a couple times before stopping to get a better look. It

proved a fatal error for the deer as Jack raised his rifle and fired, dropping the deer in its tracks.

"I think grandpa would have been proud," he said.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather



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.
11/20	46	15	0.00		11/20	47	15	0.00		11/20	43	23	0.00		11/20	45	30	0.00		11/20	47	18	0.00	
11/21	40	31	0.02		11/21	42	31	0.06		11/21	43	31	0.00		11/21	36	21	0.22		11/21	42	33	0.14	
11/22	36	17	0.00		11/22	36	17	0.00		11/22	36	20	0.15		11/22	37	19	0.00		11/22	31	18	0.00	
11/23	36	13	0.00		11/23	36	13	0.00		11/23	36	15	0.00		11/23	25	10	0.00		11/23	36	14	0.00	
11/24	19	10	0.00		11/24	21	7	0.00		11/24	20	7	0.01	0.2"	11/23	25	10	0.00		11/24	22	7	0.00	
11/25	27	7	0.00		11/25	26	7	0.00		11/25	25	7	0.00		11/25	30	12	0.00		11/25	26	7	0.00	
11/26	28	15	0.00		11/26	28	12	0.00		11/26	28	13	0.00		11/26	27	12	0.00		11/26	29	18	0.00	
YTD Total			23.42	8.4"	YTD Total			24.96	4.1"	YTD Total			20.03	6.7"	YTD Total			NA		YTD Total			23.68	4.9"

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Sunday, December 17
2:00 PM

Tower Elementary School Gym
Free Will Donation

Refreshments Following The Performance!

EMPLOYMENT

PUBLIC NOTICE



OPENINGS

Vermilion Country School (VCS) is seeking applicants for the following positions:

- 1 FT Paraprofessional** (full-time, benefits eligible) High school diploma required.
- 1 Van Driver** (part time - 15-19 hours per week) Current Driver's License Required, CDL not required)

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Closes: 12/04/2023

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).

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Contract and Procurement Manager

Closes: 12/04/2023

Position Purpose: The Contract Manager will be responsible for overseeing contracts and agreements made by the Tribal Government with other entities. The successful candidate will manage the Tribal Government's contracting with vendors and contracted employees, ensure that contracts are in place when needed, and develop and implement a comprehensive contract development and tracking system to promote Tribal Government compliance with all relevant laws, regulations, and procurement policies.

Excellent Benefits:
 Single Medical & Dental - Free • Annual Leave • Sick Leave • 401k match • 15 paid holidays • Flex Plan • Life Insurance • LTD • Voluntary Benefits available by payroll deduction

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

Published in the Timberjay, Nov. 10, 17, 24 & Dec. 1, 2023

Certificate of Assumed Name
 State of Minnesota, Pursuant to the Chapter 333 Minnesota Statutes: the undersigned, who is or will be conducting business in the State of Minnesota under an assumed name, hereby certifies:
 1. State the exact assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted: Durable Coatings of the Iron Range and Duluth
 2. State the address of the principal place of business: 8463 Nylund Rd, Cook, MN 55723
 3. List the name and complete street address of all persons conducting business under the above Assumed Name. Jason Burdine 8463 Nylund Rd, Cook, MN 55723, Burdine's Best Home Services 8463 Nylund Rd, Cook, MN 55723
 4. I certify that I am authorized to sign this certificate and I further certify that I understand that by signing this certificate, I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Minnesota Statutes section 609.48 as if I had signed this certificate under oath.
 Dated: November 14, 2023
 Signed: Jason Burdine

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 1 & 8, 2023



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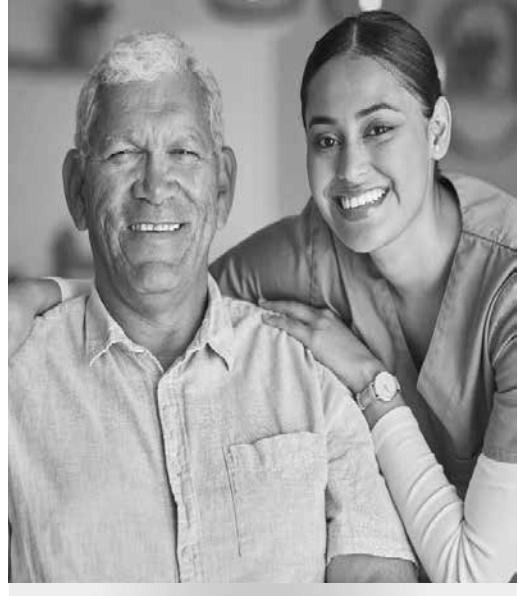
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Legal notices are online each week at timberjay.com
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Certificate of Assumed Name
 State of Minnesota, Pursuant to the Chapter 333 Minnesota Statutes: the undersigned, who is or will be conducting business in the State of Minnesota under an assumed name, hereby certifies:
 1. State the exact assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted: Bready or Not.
 2. State the address of the principal place of business. 7167 Bodas Rd., Eveleth, MN 55734
 3. List the name and complete street address of all persons conducting business under the above Assumed Name. Marcella A. Eddy, 7167 Bodas Rd., Eveleth, MN 55734.
 4. I certify that I am authorized to sign this certificate and I further certify that I understand that by signing this certificate, I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Minnesota Statutes section 609.48 as if I had signed this certificate under oath.
 Dated: November 26, 2023
 Signed: Marcella Eddy.

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 1 & 8, 2023



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MDVA is a Veteran-friendly, equal opportunity and affirmative action employer and service provider. This document can be made available in alternate formats. Contact MDVA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Line at 612-548-5961 or your preferred telecommunications relay service.

King Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13						14		
15			16							17		
		18			19		20					
21	22			23	24							
25			26		27	28		29	30	31		
32			33		34	35		36				
37				38		39		40		41		
			42		43	44		45				
46	47	48			49		50					
51					52	53				54	55	
56					57					58		
59					60					61		

ACROSS
 1 Microwave
 4 Jubilation
 8 Scruff
 12 " - Believer"
 13 Give temporarily
 14 Big-screen format
 15 Layered deserts
 17 Refer to
 18 Irate
 19 Breaks away
 21 Stockholm's land
 24 JFK's veep
 25 Fleur-de-
 26 Cutting tool
 28 Parlor pieces
 32 Now, on a memo
 34 Luau bowlful
 36 Karate level
 37 Prison-related
 39 Atty.'s title
 41 Mauna -
 42 Soda
 44 Steering device on a ship
 46 Leaping antelopes
 50 Hosp. hook-ups
 51 Donald Duck's nephew
 52 Like a good golf score

DOWN
 1 Energy
 2 Docs' bloc
 3 Italian cheese
 4 Forest clearings
 5 Tiki bar necklace
 6 Tolkien creatures
 7 '50s Ford
 8 "Great work!"
 9 During
 10 Top of the head
 11 Former mates
 16 Passing craze
 20 "Survivor" ailer
 21 High-five sound
 22 Sagacious
 23 Snooze
 27 Misery
 29 Crystalline mineral
 30 Skin soother
 31 Twinkler in the sky

33 Tropical fruits
 35 Leb. neighbor
 38 Texter's chuckle
 40 Calms
 43 "Straight Up" singer Abdul
 45 TiVo, for example
 46 Denny's rival
 47 Inspiration
 48 Nuisance
 49 Break suddenly
 53 Chips go-with
 54 Santa - winds
 55 Crater part

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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.

AK TGS UREPPT VEMF FG BG
 JGORFNAMX, TGS'PP KAMB E
 VET. AK TGS BGM'F, TGS'PP
 KAMB EM RYQSJR. - IAO UGNM

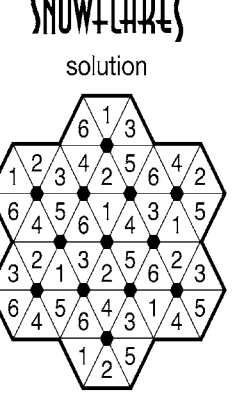
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Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

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

1. Juicy citrus	O _ _ _ _ _	Farm cooperative	G _ _ _ _ _
2. July or February	_ _ N _ _ _	Cave opening	_ _ U _ _ _
3. Decanter	_ O _ _ _ _	Bulge or Gettysburg	_ A _ _ _ _
4. Rock 'n' roll king	_ _ V _ _ _	New York island	_ _ L _ _ _
5. Not as speedy	S _ _ _ _ _	Rose or tulip	F _ _ _ _ _
6. Ration	_ _ _ _ T _	Give permission	_ _ _ _ W _
7. Sudden light burst	_ _ A _ _ _	Poker hand	_ _ U _ _ _
8. Loose coins	_ _ _ _ G _	Monopoly game card	_ _ _ _ C _
9. Happy, like St. Nick	J _ _ _ _ _	Pet parrot's name	P _ _ _ _ _
10. Brutal one	_ E _ _ _ _	Be vainglorious	_ O _ _ _ _

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SNOWFLAKES
 solution

Call **753-2950** to subscribe to the **Timberjay!**



Super Crossword

Answers

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

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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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.

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.

King Crossword

Answers
Solution time: 25 mins.
ZAP GLEE NAPE
IMA LEND TMAX
PARFAITS CITE
MAD SECEDES
SWEDEN LBJ
LIS SAW SOFAS
ASAP POI BELT
PENAL ESG LOA
POP RUDDER
IMPALAS TVS
HUEY UNDERPAR
OSSA LAIT ANI
PETS APPS RAM

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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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FUNERAL SERVICES

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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

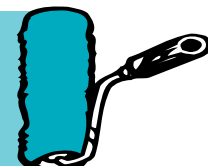
Super Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Dubya or JFK
 - 5 Horse riders
 - 12 Bandleader Lawrence
 - 16 NBA's Erving, familiarly
 - 19 Totally alter
 - 20 Visibly sulky
 - 21 Pack of yaks
 - 22 Coastal inlet
 - 23 Monumental
 - 24 Of very hilly regions
 - 25 Liveliness
 - 27 Betray by snitching
 - 29 Possible answer to "Who is?"
 - 30 Scottish refusals
 - 32 Lupe of "Mexican Spitfire"
 - 33 With 73- and 117-Across, notable fact about this puzzle's solution
 - 37 Antigen-attacking lymphocyte
 - 39 Abbr. ending a math proof
 - 40 Suffix with form
 - 41 Deer relative
 - 42 Surgical tool
 - 44 Put a levy on
 - 47 Smidge
 - 49 Des Moines native
 - 51 Cry to a lifesaver
 - 53 Move in spasms
 - 56 "American Pie" actor — William Scott
 - 58 Visibly awed
 - 60 Tailless cat
 - 61 Pop's Grande
 - 63 The Beatles' "Eleanor —"
 - 65 Gibson liquor
 - 66 1847 Herman Melville novel
 - 67 Big name in utility knives
 - 68 Atty.'s title
 - 69 18-wheeler
 - 71 Div. of a hoops game
 - 73 See 33-Across
 - 80 Mine, in Italy
 - 81 ROY G. —
 - 82 Albuquerque-to-Denver dir.
 - 83 Chef's hat
 - 85 Travel by foot
 - 89 Cable inits. for old films
 - 91 Reverend Jackson
 - 93 Tweak
 - 94 Ending for buck
 - 95 "EI —" (nickname of a drug lord)
 - 97 Drink heartily
 - 99 Acorn trees
 - 100 "Incredible!"
 - 102 D-Max pickup maker
 - 104 Tips, as a hat
 - 106 Wd. often ending in "-ly"
 - 107 Rho-tau link
 - 109 Western treaty inits.
 - 111 U.S. spy gp.
 - 112 Former Pan Am rival
 - 115 Decide you will
 - 117 See 33-Across
 - 121 Part of a ship's hull
 - 123 Cartoon hits
 - 125 Cool, man
 - 126 Some Native Americans
 - 127 Getting a laugh of out
 - 129 Cool guy on "Happy Days"
 - 133 Years, in Italy
 - 134 Traffic snarl
 - 135 Lawn digger
 - 136 Popular place for a piercing
 - 137 Give a test to
 - 138 Log splitter
 - 139 "— Out of My League"
 - 140 Basic nature
 - 141 "That's clear"
- DOWN**
- 1 Trig, for calc, e.g.
 - 2 Put new concrete on
 - 3 Revised copy
 - 4 Cholesterol-lowering drug
 - 5 Funny Carrey
 - 6 Artist Yoko
 - 7 "Be quiet!"
 - 8 Univ. about 50 miles west of Topeka
 - 9 Coating with glossy varnish
 - 10 Yang partner
 - 11 Office scribe
 - 12 Interlaced
 - 13 Is
 - 14 Third bk. of the Bible
 - 15 Roguish behavior
 - 16 Group of precision marchers
 - 17 Ceremony
 - 18 "Run This Town" rapper
 - 26 Toon frame
 - 28 Laugh syllable from a Stooze
 - 31 Plant — (claim some territory, maybe)
 - 34 Writer Mario Vargas —
 - 35 Mitigate
 - 36 "King Kong" studio
 - 38 Solidifies
 - 43 "Seminar," for "Marines," e.g.; Abbr.
 - 45 River in Italy
 - 46 "Kisses and hugs" symbol
 - 47 Glide in a rink
 - 48 Glaring
 - 50 "That's the — goes"
 - 52 Med. insurer
 - 53 NFL's Jaguars, on scoreboards
 - 54 The "E" of 39-Across
 - 55 Well-off
 - 57 Muslim face veil
 - 59 Arouse
 - 62 Linguist Chomsky
 - 64 Mark over a short vowel
 - 68 Pliocene, e.g.
 - 70 Big name in infomercial knives
 - 72 Eligible for Soc. Sec.
 - 74 Class for an Eng. major
 - 75 Little jewel
 - 76 Sam of golf
 - 77 Judo halls
 - 78 Blue hue
 - 79 Walrus tooth
 - 84 Aliens, briefly
 - 85 Tot's glassful
 - 86 Yank who wore #13
 - 87 Small amount, as of sales
 - 88 Jazz saxophonist Dave
 - 90 Injure greatly
 - 92 People crushing things
 - 93 Stick on
 - 96 Biblical song
 - 98 Points of convergence
 - 101 Prizes highly
 - 103 Animals: Suffix
 - 105 Kismet
 - 108 Wolf down
 - 110 Suppress
 - 112 Pre-liftoff expression
 - 113 Hot dog
 - 114 Judicial inquest
 - 116 Book divs.
 - 118 Lauder of cosmetics
 - 119 Cereal utensil
 - 120 Basra citizen
 - 121 Mexico's — California
 - 122 Huge-screen film format
 - 124 In-favor votes
 - 128 "Stupid me!"
 - 130 Partakes of
 - 131 "Grimm" aier
 - 132 Wye follower

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19				20							21					22	
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61				62		63			64		65			66			
67					68				69		70		71	72			
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127					128				129	130			131	132		133	
134					135					136						137	
138					139					140						141	



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Even Exchange answers

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Orange, Grange | 6. Allot, Allow |
| 2. Month, Mouth | 7. Flash, Flush |
| 3. Bottle, Battle | 8. Change, Chance |
| 4. Elvis, Ellis | 9. Jolly, Polly |
| 5. Slower, Flower | 10. Beast, Boast |

CryptoQuote answer

If you really want to do something, you'll find a way. If you don't, you'll find an excuse. — Jim Rohn

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