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The **TIMBERJAY**



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\$1⁵⁰

CITY OF ELY

Ely PD proposes free canoes as hiring bonus

Police chief outlines plan to tout Ely's outdoor recreation lifestyle as a hiring and retention incentive

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- The Ely City Council careened across a wide variety of topics on Tuesday evening, including the retention of police officers with free canoes, cutting back on short-term rentals, and dealing with nuisance beavers threatening Ely's water supply.

The two-hour meeting time also included Ely's Truth in Taxation meeting on the city's budget.

Police recruitment and retention

Given the loss of three police officers since the beginning of the summer, the city council directed Ely Police Chief Chad Houde at its Nov. 21 meeting to develop a recruitment and

Right: The Ely Police Department unveiled a creative plan to attract and retain police officers by highlighting the advantages of living next to the Boundary Waters, including supplying every full-time employee of the department with a Kevlar canoe, life preservers and paddles. submitted photo

retention plan for patrol officers. The council had asked that Houde present his plan at the first meeting in December.

The proposed plan, suggested by Assistant Police

Chief Mike Lorenz, would include outfitting every full-time employee of the department, including its clerical staff, but excluding

See...**COUNCIL** pg. 9



PLANNING

Open house highlights LaCroix landscape

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- When looking at a gigantic 20-year plan, you have to start somewhere, and the Superior National Forest's LaCroix District will soon be unveiling its first five-year segment of the plan for forest rehabilitation in the roughly 130,000 acres of federal land within the district's boundaries.

Elements of the plan were front and center at an open house Tuesday at the LaCroix District Ranger Station in Cook, and LaCroix District Ranger Sunny Lucas and Silviculture Forester John Bennett were on hand to talk about the LaCroix Landscape Project, an initiative that's been years in the making.

Forest Service monitoring reports

See...**PLANNING** pg. 10

PERMITTING

Black Bay campground sparks lawsuit

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Three individuals seeking a permit for a new Lake Vermilion campground on Black Bay have filed suit alleging their proposal didn't get a proper procedural review from the St. Louis County Planning Commission last spring. Developer Christine Wyrobek, who says she plans to cater to disabled veterans at her proposed campground, along with two fellow plaintiffs, are asking a St. Louis County district court to grant approval of rezoning and the conditional use permit (CUP) for the campground.

See...**LAWSUIT** pg. 9



AFTER-SCHOOL LEARNING

MAKING MATH FUN

A Kindergartener's desire for more challenging math sparked creation of new club

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER— A kindergarten student here has inspired the creation of a new after-school club and it's, surprisingly, focused on math.

Most kids complain about math in school, but Stephanie Ukkola, of Soudan, says her son Edwin says he just doesn't get enough. "Math is my favorite thing," Edwin said. "But we just do a little bit at school." At home, Stephanie said, Edwin wants to do math all day long. "Edwin is crazy about math and enjoys figuring out puzzles. He spends much of his time counting, adding, exploring patterns and finding the math involved in everyday life," she said.

His passion recently led to his suggestion for a new after-school activity, focused on math games and toys. "So, we can do a lot of math here,"



he said, "and so other kids can enjoy math, too."

Three families, with a total of eight children, four parents, plus a high school volunteer, attended the first math club meeting last Tuesday.

"Math is not just learning rules and repeating,"

Stephanie said, "math came about because of curiosity, a desire to describe and measure the world. Math works best when people work together to solve a problem, and children naturally play with math. We want to encourage that. I hope we can help kids and

Above: Mark Rettke and Gus Larson focus intently on a puzzle game during the first meeting of the new math club in Tower.

Left: Edwin Swanson, who proposed the new club, plays a game of checkers with his father Mack.

photo by J. Summit

their families connect over number-fun," she added.

Her son inspired her to freshen up her math skills.

"A lot of my ideas for games and challenges come from mathematician Jo Boaler and her website YouCubed," she said.

Math club meetings start with a math challenge. "We have a scary-monster box filled with math challenges," Stephanie said. "The students work together to solve the

See...**MATH** pg. 10



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Community notices

Orr Fire Hall hosts fry bread Indian taco dinner fundraiser Dec. 9

ORR – Everyone is invited to help support Matthew Goggeye (who is recovering from injuries sustained in a recent automobile accident) and his family by coming to the fry bread Indian taco dinner at the Orr fire hall located at 4540 Lake St. on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 4-7 p.m. Dinner includes fry bread Indian tacos with Spanish rice for a suggested donation of \$10 and take-out orders are welcome. All proceeds go to the Matthew Goggeye family. For more information call Roxanne at 218-410-8827.

History happy hour set for Dec. 20 at 5 p.m.

ELY- If you've never been to a history lesson at a bar, this is a style of programming offered around the country (and beyond?) by a variety of historical groups that is typically held at a brewery or bar. The goal is to educate, inspire and entertain with a pin-tized historical tale in about the time it takes to drink a glass of beer (or root beer if you're so inclined or underage).

History Happy Hour scratches the surface on a different Ely Area history topic each month, the third Wednesday at 5 p.m. The December program is Iconic Holiday Foods (With a Few Samples) on Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 5 p.m.

The inaugural program on Nov. 15 was "From Hardware to Hard Drinks, History of the Boathouse Brewpub and its Rumored Ghost". Resources and source material used include Ely Winton Historical Society, Heritage Preservation Commission walking tour and members, Remember Ely and Winton When Facebook page, area residents with historical knowledge, history books/papers/publications, and online archives of local/regional newspapers - all of which are credited in the presentation. The Boathouse has offered the use of its Lookout Lounge (upstairs) and provides bartenders/servers for the length of the program (upstairs closes at 5:45pm).

Have a jazzy holiday with The Sectionals Dec. 9

EVELETH – The Sectionals present "Have a Jazzy Holiday Concert" Saturday, Dec. 9 in the Eveleth City Auditorium located at 421 Jackson St. at 4 p.m. The concert is free to the public, and donations are welcome.

Mesabi Community Band to present "A 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.

Another chance to get cookies on Dec. 10

ELY – Eight youth from Grace Lutheran church are raising funds to attend the 2024 ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans next July. Fundraising is now underway for this once in a lifetime trip with the holiday cookie bake sale.

Pre-orders are open 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 maryplarson@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.

If you missed out on placing your pre-order, don't let that stop you from stopping by during the Kids Christmas Workshop from 1-3:30 p.m. as additional boxes of cookies will be available for sale while supplies last.

SANTA'S LITTLE HELPERS

Grace Lutheran Church to host annual Kids Christmas workshop Dec. 10

ELY – All kids are welcome to join the fun at the Kids Christmas Workshop Sunday, Dec. 10 from 1-3:30 p.m. This popular annual event is ideal for preschool through sixth-graders to make gifts for 75-cents each for parents, friends, relatives, teachers or someone special. Kids can bring their gift list and make something for everyone on it. Gifts will be wrapped and labeled with a tag. Adults may wait in the living room for older children who want their gift to be a surprise, or they may join in the fun and assist their little ones.

Volunteers are needed (teens or adults), so if you want to assist kids at a table please contact Mary at 218-235-1770 or email maryplarson@gmail.com. Volunteers may bring their own craft idea or use one that is on hand and ready to go.



There's never a shortage of creativity at the annual Kids Christmas Workshop. At last year's workshop from left: Elya Perkins makes a card for family with Zoe McKenzie and Ellie Marshall on hand to help out.

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

Embarrass to hold annual ice candle display and holiday gathering Dec. 16

EMBARRASS – Come and enjoy the holiday spirit in Embarrass and the beauty of ice candles. Everyone is invited to the Embarrass Cemetery Saturday, Dec. 16 for the annual display of candles in memory of loved ones and holiday gathering at the town hall from 4-6 p.m. Christmas goodies will be served along with crafts and movies for the kids.

Donations of Christmas cookies or bars for the ice candle and holiday gathering are being accepted. If you can donate a dozen cookies or a pan of bars to this worthy event it will be greatly appreciated by all who

attend. Volunteers are also needed to help place ice candles at the cemetery that afternoon. This is a fun time for everyone to get involved.

Call the clerk's office at 218-984-2084 with any questions or for more information on how to volunteer.



Above: Santa will be at the gathering again. Last year, Eva Scherer didn't look too sure about this character clad in red.

Left: Last year's volunteers had their work cut out for them as they waded through waist deep snow to place candles. file photos



Lake Country Power members to benefit from \$1.5 million credit return in December

COHASSET – Lake Country Power members will see a special credit printed on their December billing statement after Lake Country Power's board of directors authorized a retirement of just over \$1.5 million in member equity. Capital credits are a core benefit of co-op membership.

Capital credits build over time and represent member ownership in the co-op. Before returning

the margins back to members, electric cooperatives use the capital to help offset the cost of debt for equipment and materials used for the construction and maintenance of the electric distribution system. This helps lower financing needs.

"Capital credits are a membership benefit of being served by a not-for-profit cooperative like Lake Country Power," said Mark Bakk, LCP general manager. "Our goal is to provide members with electricity at a price that is as close to cost as possible."

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, Lake Country Power col-

lects just enough revenue to cover its costs, with a small margin to operate the business. All margins are returned to the membership over the long term.

Active members will see a credit on their December 2023 billing statement. Inactive members (those who have moved off the co-op system) will be mailed a check to their last known mailing address if the payment amount is \$10 or greater.

Detailed information about the 2023 capital credit retirement will be available in LCP's December member newsletter, Newline. Between Lake Country Power and its three predecessor co-

operatives, more than \$72 million in capital credits have been returned to members through the years. For more information about capital credits, or to review a current list of capital credits that remain unclaimed by former members, visit www.lakecountrypower.coop.

Lake Country Power, www.lakecountrypower.coop, is a Touchstone Energy cooperative serving parts of eight counties in northeastern Minnesota. The rural electric cooperative provides services to more than 44,000 members and has offices located in Cohasset, Kettle River and Mt. Iron.



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BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

The cost of camping at McKinley to rise

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA
Staff Writer

SOUDAN- The cost of camping at McKinley Park Campground will be going up in 2024. The Breitung Town Board voted Nov. 30 to raise rates at the township-owned campground in response to the cost of recent building repairs and improved services. Electrical upgrades and new fiber-based wifi are among the improved services, while the replacement of the roof on the campground office and store and repairs to the facility's well and pump are among the maintenance items cited by the board.

Supervisor Matt Tuchel had researched campground rates around the area and said the increases are in line with the other RV parks in the region.

The biggest fee increase approved by the board is for seasonal campers, whose rates went from \$3,200 to \$3,600. Last year, seasonal campers saw an increase of \$200.

Daily rates increased just 50 cents for both electric and non-electric campsites, while the weekly electric sites went

up from \$300 to \$325. Monthly rates for powered sites went from \$1,025 to \$1,100. Non-electric rates changed as well, with the weekly going from \$195 to \$200 and monthly from \$650 to \$700. Rates did not change for winter storage, boat launch and seasonal launch passes.

Other business

In other business, the board:

- Heard that the bid for the Stuntz Bay road project came in at \$280,314, or 31-percent less than the engineer's estimate.

- Approved the lease of gravel pit with Mesabi Bituminous, acknowledged that Mesabi Bituminous owes the township \$31,057.

- Rejected two bids for roofing of the McKinley Park Campground office and store. Bids were \$16,200 from Vermillion Roofing and \$22,000 from Midway Builders. The township will go out for bids again in February.

- Passed a motion to let the Tower-Soudan Historical Society use the township's copier free of charge for their project memorializing the 143 men

who died at the Soudan Underground Mine with a maximum of 1,500 pages. The society's goal is to have the information archived and available at several locations by June of 2024.

- Renewed the campground management contract with Susie Chiabotti for the 2024 season.

- Approved the police contract with the city of Tower.

- Accepted the resignation of Matt Tomsich from the Breitung Fire Department.

- Put \$90,000 in a Certificate of Deposit at 4.4 percent to mature by Sept. 1, 2024.

The next meeting will be Thursday, Dec. 21 at noon.

Breitung October Police Report

- Calls for service:** 53
- Arrests:** 1 felony arrest warrant
- Citations**
- 4 for excessive speed
- 1 driving after cancellation
- 1 driving after revocation
- 1 expired tabs

Meet the newest member of the Breitung Police Department



The Breitung Town Board held a swearing-in ceremony for the new part-time police officer, Isaac Karolczak. Pictured is Isaac Karolczak and his wife Angelica Karolczak. photo by S. Ukkola

PUBLIC SAFETY

Two more fires destroy Cook area properties



Bearville and French Township firefighters work to contain the damage from a fire last Saturday in Morcom Township. Photo courtesy of the Bearville Fire Department

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- An early morning fire on Saturday in Morcom Township and another on Tuesday morning in Willow Valley township caused extensive damage to multiple structures this week.

The Bearville and French Township fire departments were called out at 3 a.m. on Saturday for a fire at a residence in the 9000 block of Airport Road North, just south of Hwy. 22. According to a report by Northland Firewire, the blaze destroyed a sauna and extensively damaged a nearby cabin. No injuries were reported. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Five area departments responded to a pole barn fire Tuesday at 8 a.m. in the 10700 block of the Willow River Road, just west of the Hwy. 53. Fire-

fighters from Orr, Crane Lake, Buyck, Bois Forte, and Cook fire departments were able to contain the fire to the interior of the building, according to the Northland Firewire report. No injuries were reported and the Cook Ambulance Service provided medical standby at the scene. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

These are the third and fourth property fires reported in rural townships west of Cook in the past two weeks. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety reports that historically the risk of residential fires goes up in winter months with the increase in heating, lighting, cooking, and holiday activities. According to the State Fire Marshal's Office there is one structure fire every three minutes in rural Minnesota, causing an annual average of \$138 million in property damage over the past five years.

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Orr-\$69,900 Ash River lots 2,4 and 10 in Bear Ridge on Ash River CIC. Each lot comes with shared community septic, shared water from central pumphouse and electric. These utilities already ran to each site. 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.

Buyck-\$59,500 14.9 acres with approx. quarter mile of frontage along the Niles Bay Forest Rd. Gated driveway into property with electric at road. Nice rolling elevation with small gravel pit to use for site development. **MLS#144570**

Cook-\$159,000 Very private year-round 3 BR, 2 BA mobile home on 10 acres. Detached 2-car garage/storage shed, playhouse, drilled well, compliant septic round out this property. **MLS#145461**

*As measured by residential transaction sides.

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OPINION

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The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

Editorial

What about the economy?

The actual data shows increased jobs, manufacturing, and slowing inflation

One of the biggest headaches in our current political moment is consistent results of polling giving former President Donald Trump a wide lead over current President Joe Biden on the question of who can better manage the economy.

The disconnect between that perception and reality is stunning and is, to some degree, a sign that the president's critics are doing a remarkable job of obfuscating the real economic data.

We know that everyone takes their own measure of the economy based on the factors that most influence them. Gas and food prices are key factors for many, and interest rates affect those families in the market for things like a new home or a new car.

But by traditional economic measures we are currently experiencing one of the strongest periods of economic expansion in decades. Under Biden we've experienced GDP growth of a full three percent annually and job creation numbers that absolutely blow the former president away. Even after more than a year of high interest rates (which are set by the Fed, not the President), we saw GDP growth of 5.2 percent in the third quarter of 2023.

That has ripple effects locally. Here in St. Louis County, the impact of Donald Trump's economic policies was virtually zero. During his first full month in office, there were 97,132 people employed in the county, according to Federal Reserve data. When Trump left office, there were 93,948 people employed in the county, a net loss of more than 3,000 jobs. Admittedly, the vast majority of that job loss was due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but even in January 2020, the month before the pandemic reached U.S. shores, there were 97,551 employed people in the county, a net gain over three years of a mere 599 jobs.

By contrast, under Biden, employment in the county in just two and a half years went from the 93,948 jobs he inherited from the previous administration, to 98,147— an increase of 4,199 jobs. While many of those jobs can be attributed to the reopening in the wake of COVID, even if you compare it to the month before COVID hit, the county has seen stronger job creation under Biden.

Nationally, job creation under Biden has blown Trump away, even if you ignore the job losses suffered from the pandemic. Trump regularly brags at campaign events that 4.9 million jobs were created during the first 30 months of his administration. That may be true, but Biden has seen 13.4 million jobs created in the U.S. during the first 30 months of his presidency and unemployment has been at record lows for most of the past

year. Wage growth has also been stronger than under Trump.

Such comparisons are useful but admittedly don't tell the whole story. The more important question is whether a president's policies have actually contributed to the economic conditions experienced under their administration. In the case of Trump, the only significant economic policies enacted during his administration were import tariffs (which any economist will tell you are inflationary), and tax cuts that went overwhelmingly to corporations.

Biden, meanwhile, has successfully enacted several major economic initiatives that are clearly contributing to the success of the economy. The administration started with a second COVID relief package, known as the American Rescue Plan, which helped the economy further recover. He followed that up by passing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, accomplishing in nine months what Trump repeatedly promised but couldn't accomplish in four years. But Biden was just getting started and followed up with the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, which made major investments in domestic manufacturing and clean energy. Those investments are already having a major impact as manufacturing employment in the U.S. is booming. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the nation added 367,000 manufacturing jobs in 2022 alone, and those are jobs that can be attributed to Biden's policies, not a COVID rebound since that occurred in 2020 and 2021. More Americans are working in manufacturing than at any time under Trump.

Biden's critics like to blame his policies for the post-COVID inflation but inflation in the U.S. has been tamer than in almost any other advanced economy, which suggests the opposite is true. Boosting manufacturing is helping to curb the supply shortages that caused some of that inflation. While higher interest rates have made major purchases more expensive for many Americans, with the progress on inflation, those are expected to start dropping in 2024.

Oh, and U.S. oil production is higher under Biden than at any time under the Trump administration, so don't blame the President for gas prices.

The bottom line? While many folks are still upset over previous inflation, that situation has undeniably improved. And, by other measures, the economy is doing better than at any time since the 1960s. Biden's critics are increasingly resorting to exaggeration and outright falsehood to claim otherwise.



Letters from Readers

Fewer hunters another factor in deer harvest decline

The intensity of conversation blaming wolves for poor deer hunting success has reached such a pitch that it has reminded me of another moment of social hysteria in the history of America, the Salem Witch Trials. Witches and wolves; both groups have been blamed for effects produced by a very natural phenomenon—the weather.

The spring and summer of 1691 were warm and wet, ideal conditions for the growth of *Claviceps purpurea* ergot fungus in rye fields. Millers did not separate the kernel shaped ergot from the grain before milling, resulting in ergot poisoning in those who ate the bread made from the contaminated flour. *C. purpurea* produces natural LSD and can cause hallucinations and convulsions as well as development of necrotic tissue, all symptoms of witchcraft as determined by the trials of the time. Twenty individuals were hanged and several more died in prison. The year following the trials was dry and ergot did not develop. The hysteria died down.

Research has shown that winter severity is clearly the primary driver of deer population decline. The last two years have been especially difficult for deer in the boreal forest north of Minnesota. This is an area that has a naturally low carrying capacity for animals, including deer, wolves, and humans. The total wolf population of Minnesota is 2,600, which, for comparison, is less than the population of Mt. Iron. There is no evidence that wolves have changed their eating behavior in such a way as to result in the level of decreased hunting success ascribed to them.

Hunting is largely a rural activity, and as the state has become more and more urban, fewer of its residents have retained an interest in hunting. Those urban residents who do hunt tend not spend as much time out in nature as their rural ancestors did, resulting in reduced knowledge of deer behavior. My neighbor Beryl Novak in Greaney always gets a deer, but he lives in the woods and hunts for sustenance, not sport. Anecdotal evidence I've heard is that fewer people are using their hunting camps, and more hunters only come for the first weekend.

While there has been population decline in all of the Northland, what hasn't gotten enough attention is exactly who have left. It is the young and middle age, the prime hunting demographic, who emigrated, leaving the north rapidly aging. What has changed most dramatically is the number of hunting age humans in the region. So, of course, deer harvest will drop. Hard winters, fewer hunters who spend large amounts of time in the woods—wolves could tell us that story. Unfortunately, they can't testify in St. Paul at a legislative hearing to tell us what is going on from their perspective.

Fred Schumacher
Gheen

Climate change is changing the North Country

I greatly appreciate your Nov. 24 article on the USDA climate change map. It is great that you are putting the scientific facts out for us to see. Your article makes clear that the effects of climate change are remaking the face of the North Country. The great retreat of Zone 3a (-40F to -35F), which used to cover most of northern Minnesota is alarming. This warm-

ing brings with it dramatic changes to our plants, trees, animals and fish. My yard near Ely is filled with young maple trees new to our area. I can still hear an occasional moose bellow, but their numbers are declining. Even the loons on our lakes are declining. All of these changes are related to our warming North Country.

These changes scare me. We need to join together to curb the effects of climate change on our lands. We need to join together to lessen the impact of climate on the world. When I first came to the North Country I was amazed by its unique environment. We were then part of the great boreal forest. Are we losing this beauty?

Mike Griffin
Ely



Your letters

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

We ask that letters be limited to 300 words.

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

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

COMMENTARY

A lifelong appreciation for the power of trees

As a young child, I discovered the most peaceful place in the whole world, or so I thought, high among the boughs of a backyard scotch pine. There I found refuge from the chaos inside my parents' home. My family was a wild mixture of intense love and volatility. The atmosphere swirled with currents of worry, discord, and flaring tempers.

Being the smallest person in that house, I often felt invisible. When family strife became overwhelming, I'd retreat to my hiding spot and climb that pine in the backyard.



KATHLEEN
MCQUILLAN

Besides the pine tree, I also had a big red maple. The branch-

es were strong like Johnny Weissmuller's arms. Tarzan was my hero. I loved that he lived in trees and swung effortlessly as he grabbed Jane under his arm in mid-flight. I climbed my trees like ladders, quick and fearlessly. Up I'd go, to sit quietly listening to the sounds of the wind and rustling leaves until the skirmishes indoors subsided. After my father died, Mom became the undisputed boss. But instead of pleasuring

in that role she mostly seemed angry. I learned it was better to be seen and not heard, and better yet not to be seen at all. I was too young to understand that sometimes grief looks like anger.

Trees became my best friends. I visited them often. I could whisper my secret thoughts or cry without ever feeling shamed. Among branches, I felt calm and would wish I could stay there forever. When asked what I want-

ed to be when I grew up, I would answer spritely, "I want to live in the country, with trees."

I attended college after graduating from high school. In 1971, students were required to live in the dorm. If my home-life was chaotic, living in a tiny room with three other people on the eighth floor of a ten-story building was like something from Dante's *Inferno*. Crazy-loud day and night with Led Zeppelin and The Who

blaring from windows out across the commons. And we were supposed to study? After nearly two years of trying, I and three friends dropped out.

We found a run-down farmhouse just outside of town set on the edge of an abandoned peach orchard. The farmer who lived on the adjacent forty agreed to rent it for a mere \$40 a month. We were excited

See TREES...pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Bucks-only will help keep a healthy deer herd

Most of the deer population articles have been written by well-meaning individuals with data from pro-wolf, anti-wolf sources plus snowfall amounts, bears, coyotes, etc. Hunters in Wisconsin had their own unwritten rule as to the best way to have a healthy deer population year after year and it was fairly simple. Do not shoot

does! Bucks only! I was a member of a hunting party that annually hunted in Wisconsin and we followed that unwritten rule along with all of the camps up and down the roads of the areas we hunted. You never saw a doe hanging in front of a deer camp, but you did see many bucks proudly displayed in front of their shack. Eight points and larger were common. It got to a point that the Wisconsin DNR developed and enforced a rule that you could not shoot a buck until you had registered a

doe! I'm sure complaints came from various sources that there were too many deer, especially the insurance companies that had to pay for auto damages each year. If you don't shoot the does (mamas) they will be happy to provide you with many deer in the future- many with eight points or more! Severe winters will have an effect, predators will have an effect, but excellent deer populations will survive them both. We will again be able to put our big buck on our front fender and drive up

and down Main Street with a confident and proud face saying "I got mine"!

**Gene Baland
White Bear Lake**

Medicare Advantage plans can come back to bite

When so many companies are spending so much money to persuade you to do something - doesn't that mean they've figured out how to make a lot more

money off you? "Medicare Advantage" means less coverage, lower caps, and financial ruin from the things you can expect to have happen. Plus, your ability to get back onto standard Medicare will be extremely limited.

**David Porter
Minneapolis**

TREES...Continued from page 4

with the idea of fixing the place up to our liking, eating all the fresh peaches we wanted, and of having a home "in the country" for cheap! The topper was the giant oak in the front yard, perfect for climbing and a rope swing. My wish had come true!

By late December, we'd run out of firewood. Time to move on. With no particular plan, I loaded my few possessions and my dog into my beater and headed west to Tucson, Ariz., where my big sister had settled after her escape from the rust belt. It was my turn now, ready for another adventure. After a harrowing two-week road trip, I knocked on Karen's door. She welcomed me with open arms. The Sonoran Desert and Catalina Mountains introduced me to how varied, and awesome, the American landscape can be. But after a few years of caliche clay and cactus, I missed trees.

As luck would have it, I met Susan who was searching for someone

to house-sit her ten-acre homestead north of Santa Cruz, Calif. After offering some intriguing details she asked if I was interested. I couldn't say no. So it was then I said "Goodbye low-rent apartment." "So long home-care gigs." The hard one was, "Good-bye, sis." I was off to California.

I finally arrived at Davenport, the landmark town along Highway One that told me I was close to my destination. Per Susan's map, in another mile I would turn right onto a one lane cow path, cross the pasture, and then finally meet up with forest. From there, I'd drive on a rugged five-mile gravel road with several sharp switchbacks up the side of a mountain until I found a little "shack" that fit her description. A one-room cabin on stilts, completely surrounded by redwoods, nestled, picturesque, in a small clearing on a steep slope. I swooned at first sight.

This place I called

"Paradise" was filled with surprises. One day while out hunting for mushrooms on a trail behind the cabin, I spied a small treehouse made of 2x4's and plexiglass perched high in a cluster of tall pines. A sign on the door read, "Anyone who wants to stay here is welcome. Just leave it as you found it." I returned the next night prepared to sleep over. Suspended twenty feet up in the trees, I lay snug in my sleeping bag, gazing at stars. I thought I must be dreaming.

While taking another solitary hike up the mountain, I happened upon a massive madrone tree growing straight out of a high cliff. Its thick trunk and blood red sheen mimicked the neck of a handsome sorrel steed. Reaching horizontally for the first ten feet, it then made a radical turn upward over a 200-foot drop. On impulse, I flung my leg over its trunk and slowly inched my way out toward the lush green crown with

my arms wrapped tightly around its neck. Memory drew me back to the days of a brave young girl riding bareback. An experience I cannot forget.

From the forests of California, I moved further north to a farmhouse twenty miles west of Portland, Ore., surrounded by strawberry and beet fields. It was on the west slopes of the Cascade Range that I discovered the beauty of Douglas fir, a species that thrives in Oregon's cool and wet coastal climate. And the Great Northwest's long growing season and perfect conditions allowed these giant fir to gain mass and height at a rapid rate. This renowned logging region was known for its "three tree semi-loads". With a nationwide construction boom at full throttle, I mourned as I watched mountainsides being swiftly denuded. Despite that, it was here that I first felt the urge to "set down roots" but land in Oregon was expensive. I'd read that Minnesota

was a place where a person could afford to settle. So, in the spirit of the "back to the landers", I set my wheels in motion once again and headed East in search of a permanent country home.

Once here, my first impression was disappointing. Northern Minnesota's trees looked small, gnarly, and stunted. The forest was hard to explore with its thick brushy understory. But when I found an affordable forty with, according to the realtor, "a lifetime supply of firewood," I put my money down.

With time, I began to fall in love with the woods around me. I discovered its abundant wildlife. I was intrigued by the old-growth forest that grew in our vast preserves of muskeg swamp with its centuries-old trees that rarely grew more than ten feet tall, and admired tenacity to survive in such harsh conditions. We mustn't overlook our beloved cedar, nor our six million

acres of popple, a less glamorous name for aspen, derived from its genus, Populus. And yes, we have some remaining majestic white pines, reminding us of the historical late nineteenth century logging massacre that took so many. Our northern boreal forests are not only beautiful but also essential. They sequester massive amounts of carbon dioxide which benefits our global environment.

Our forests are humble in their presentation. I appreciate their untouched wildness and awe-inspiring peace. The trees that surround my cabin have grown older with me over these forty years. They are much taller now. Trees have been generous in their steadfast offerings of shade, warmth, and comfort. And they most certainly have brought me closer to God.

Obituaries and Death Notices

Debra L. Kippola

Debra L. Kippola, 71, of Tower, died on Friday, Dec. 1, 2023, at her home. Arrangements are pending with Cron-Sheehy Funeral Home in Eveleth.

John Eickhoff

John "Jack" Eickhoff, 75, of Babbitt, died on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, surrounded by his wife and children at Mayo Methodist Hospital in Rochester. A funeral and reflection on Jack's life journey will be held on August 2, 2024, at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Babbitt.

He is survived by his wife, Bonnie Arntz Eickhoff of Babbitt; son, Brian (Laura) of Dillion, Colo.; granddaughter, Maggie of Fort Collins, Colo.; daughter, Kristin of Silverthorne, Colo.; sister, Diane (Allen) Stewart of Milbank, S.D.; brother, Bob (Kathy) Eickhoff of Freeport, Ill.; brothers-in-law, Greg (Jean) Arntz of Britt and Jeff (JoLynn) Arntz of Ely; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Marion M. Long

Marion Martha Smith Long, 100, of Orr, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Nov. 30, 2023. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Tuesday, Dec. 5 at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Orr. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

She is survived by her son, Thomas (Judy) Long; daughter-in-law, Diane Long; five grandsons, Tommy, Randy (Wendy), Jon (Caitlin), Jason (Melissa) and Ryan (Michelle) Long; ten great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.



the TIMBERJAY

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THURSDAY JAN. 25, 2024 · DOORS OPEN AT 5 P.M. IRON TRAIL MOTORS EVENT CENTER

Join over 300 women for the 16th annual Power of the Purse event to benefit UWNEMN's Imagination Library.



EMCEE: KRISTEN VAKE
Iron Mining Association of MN

TICKETS - \$50/PERSON: Enjoy dinner, wine sampling, games and raffles, and bid on various auction items like purses, home décor, pampering packages, weekend getaways, and more!

Tickets on sale Dec. 4th · unitedwaynemn.org/pop



United Way of Northeastern Minnesota
218-254-3329 | info@unitedwaynemn.org
608 East Drive, Chisholm MN 55719

Get Informed!
Get the Timberjay!

Week of Dec. 11

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

Tower City Council, 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 11

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.

Greenwood Town Board- 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 12

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 winner
The week 19 winner of the Charlemagne's 52 Club \$100 prize is Ryan Larson of St. Paul, MN.

History Tidbit:
Twelve electric street lights, on wooden poles, were installed on the Tower Main Street in 1890. Thirty-four years later, in 1924, the Tower Women's Civic Improvement Club chose as its first civic project the replacement of those with street light standards. In 1965 the Club again chose this project and replaced them with mercury vapor lights.

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. Due to the lack of snow, our plans are shifting a bit. We will still meet at 10 am. Since there is no snow we will not be burning piles. We will clear some of the brush and trees that are on the corners so that there is a good run-out at the bottom of some of the hills.

Bring saws, loppers, etc and good gloves, warm clothes and boots. I'll have a campfire going in the parking lot to keep warm and if folks want brats we can bring those as well.

Tower-Soudan-Embarrass Bookmobile

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesday, Dec. 13; Jan. 3 & 24.

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

More info online at alslib.info/services/bookmobile.

THE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS

Operation Santa toy drive underway

Donations needed by Dec. 15; gift cards and toys for all ages still needed

TOWER- Donations are still needed for this year's Operation Santa toy drive. We already have over 170 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.

The effort is organized by the *Timberjay* and the Tower-Soudan Civic Club, with help from many area groups, churches, organizations, and individuals.

Lake Country Power 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 acces-

sories, craft sets, art supplies (including crayons and markers), sporting goods (basketballs, 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 list.

EMBARRASS

The Grinch visits Embarrass pancake breakfast

EMBARRASS- Over 400 people attended the Embarrass Region Fair Association's Dec. 2 pancake breakfast event.

"This was a record number," said volunteer Sue Beaton. "We ran out of almost everything and had trouble brewing coffee fast enough."

Timber Hall was filled with folks enjoying a nice breakfast. The Grinch stopped by for some holiday fun, but he didn't get away with any of the gifts or pancakes, and even paid a visit to the bloodmobile parked outdoors.

Over 30 area residents donated blood for the Memorial Blood Center's blood drive. Attendees also filled a van with used clothing for the DAV used clothing drive (sales



Above: Fair Association volunteers. Left and below: The Grinch has fun. submitted photos



benefit area veterans).

There were at least 20 vendors in the hall selling crafts and other gift items.

Attendees, along with members of the Four Corners 4-H Club, also donated a large number of toys for the Operation Santa toy drive, which serves families who use the Tower Area Food Shelf.

The pancake breakfast, a fundraiser for the fair association, is held on the first Saturday of the month, now through May. Each month has a special theme. More information online at www.embarrassfa.org, and is also published in the community calendar section of the *Timberjay*.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Elementary Winter Concert set for Thursday, Dec. 14

TOWER- The Tower-Soudan Elementary School Winter Concert is set for Thursday, Dec. 14 at 1:30 p.m. The public is cordially invited to attend.

Lunch Bunch to hold Christmas Luncheon on Dec. 15 at the VC

GREENWOOD TWP- The Lunch Bunch will meet for Christmas Luncheon at the Vermilion Club on Friday, Dec. 15 at 12:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Kathy 218-753-2530. Please bring unwrapped gifts for all ages for the Operation Santa toy drive and a

non-perishable donation for the Tower Food Shelf. Anyone that would like to join us is welcome to attend.

Little Church meeting on Dec. 9

VERMILION LAKE TWP- The Little Church will hold a business meeting on Saturday, Dec. 9 at 10 a.m. Anyone interested in helping keep the Little Church preserved and maintained in our community is welcome to attend.

The church hosts a men's group that meets every Thursday at 9 a.m. for coffee and conversation. All are welcome.

The Little Church is located in Vermilion Lake Township

on Wahlsten Rd (Hwy. 26). Any questions, contact/leave message with Len Hujanen at 218-749-2014.

Tower Winter Market set for Friday Dec. 15

TOWER- The Tower Farmers Market is once again sponsoring monthly indoor markets, featuring crafters and food vendors. The market will be held on Friday, Dec. 15 from 4 - 6 p.m. at Pike River Products.

Future winter markets are set for Jan. 12 and Feb. 9. If you are interested in setting up a table, contact the Tower Farmers Market on Facebook.

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

TOWER- Don't forget to take in the Tower-Soudan Area Singers concert on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. in the Tower Elementary School gym.

A variety of seasonal favorites and brand new selections will be performed. The 25-voice group includes a younger singer, Harley Banks, who will be singing a beautiful solo with the choir.

Santa's been asked to make a special trip to Tower and there will be home-baked treats for all following the concert.



Meet our students

One in a series of interviews with Vermilion Country School students and staff by VCS sophomore Elspeth O'Brien

How long have you been going to VCS? 3 years. My sister went here before me.

What is your favorite activity you've done at our school? The Lake Superior tall ships trip. I've done it twice, and it's been super fun both times!

What makes you excited to come to school? The staff. They make me feel cared for.

What's a unique class you are able to take at VCS? American Sign Language.



Bailey

Meet our staff

How long have you been an educator? 28 years.

What's the most memorable experience as a teacher? Probably graduations. Because I've seen them go through the years of school and it can be really emotional.

What made you decide to come to VCS? I enjoy teaching in a flexible environment and I have lots of experience in it.

What are your favorite things to do outside of school? Spending time with my family and online solitaire. And taking care of my pets.



Amy Hendrickson

AROUND TOWN



The Ely Police Department had a busy Tuesday. The city swore in a new patrol officer at the Ely Council meeting. Police Chief Chad Houde also unveiled the PD's new badge design, which Sarah Vogel of the Ely Area Tourism Bureau designed.

Left: Mayor Heidi Omerza swearing-in Ely patrol officer Courtney Olson, as her parents and husband Tyler look on. photo by C. Clark

Below: The new badge design for the Ely PD, reflecting Ely's history and Ely's unique outdoor-oriented lifestyle on the edge of the Boundary Waters.



Lower left: Ely Middle School students competed in the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. VFW representative, Michael Pope, visited the middle school students on Dec. 1 to award cash prizes to first place winner Lucy Luthens, 6th grade; second place winner Wyatt Devine, 8th grade; and third place winner Hayden Weidemann, 6th grade. Luthens' essay will go on to compete on the district level, where she may win more awards and potentially move on to regional and state competitions. submitted photo



Lower right: In a long-anticipated event, Max Gray Construction employees Eli Hejda (left), Tony Pogorels (center), and Justin Barrett (right) consulted plans as they began construction on Dec. 4 inside the Ely Area Community Building (the former Dept. of Revenue building on Miners Dr.) for the day care center. photo by C. Clark



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



no flowers, just cold
a slow approach this winter

waiting for christmas

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.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Ely Public Library

ELY- The spice kit for December is allspice, while supplies last.

The library currently has take-and-create art kits to make four handmade toys per kit, while supplies last.

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.

The library will be closed on Dec. 25-26 and Jan. 1-2 during the winter holidays.

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.

The library currently has take-and-create art kits to make four handmade toys per kit, while supplies

last.

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.

Mrs. Claus Party

ELY- The Ely Chamber of Commerce will host a Christmas party for kids with Mrs. Claus and her elves, at the Grand Ely Lodge, on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. until noon.

Cookies!

ELY- The annual amazing cookie sale at the First Lutheran Church will be on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 1-3 p.m., downstairs in the fellowship hall of the church at 915 E. Camp St. Cookies at \$8 per pound, including some gluten-free options. All proceeds go to local charities.

Beach Party

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.

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

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.

Boundary Waters Meeting

ELY- Save the Boundary Waters will hold its annual winter supporter meeting at the Ely Folk School on Sunday, Dec. 10, from 10 a.m. until noon. RSVP at savetheboundarywaters.org/annualMeeting.

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.

Recovery Home Meeting

ELY- Nonprofit Well Being Development will hold a public forum about their plans to develop new substance-use recovery programming for Ely. The event will be at the Ely Senior Center on Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 5:30 p.m.

Public Forum

ELY- The next public forum on Ely area issues will be at the Ely Folk School on Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. City council members Adam Bisbee, Angela Campbell, and Paul Kess have indicated they will attend. This is not a City of Ely sponsored event. This is an "open-mic" no-time-limits opportunity to share concerns with elected city officials. The topics for the evening will include a recap of the previous public forums at the folk school, including discussions on a dog park in Ely, housing, and school redistricting for Fall Lake so their kids can attend in nearby Ely as in-district rather than open-enrolled students.

Band Concert

ELY- The Ely Memorial High School Band will hold a concert on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m., at the Washington Auditorium, 600 E. Harvey St.

Collage Class

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association will host "Piecing Together: a Collage Workshop with Cecilia Rolando" on Wednesday, Dec. 13, from 5-7 p.m. at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, 1900 E. Camp St. Join local artists 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

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

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@elyfolk-school.org for more information.

Skate with Santa

BABBITT- Come skate with Santa on Dec. 16 from 6- 8 p.m. at the ice arena in Babbitt. This free event is open to the public.

Correction

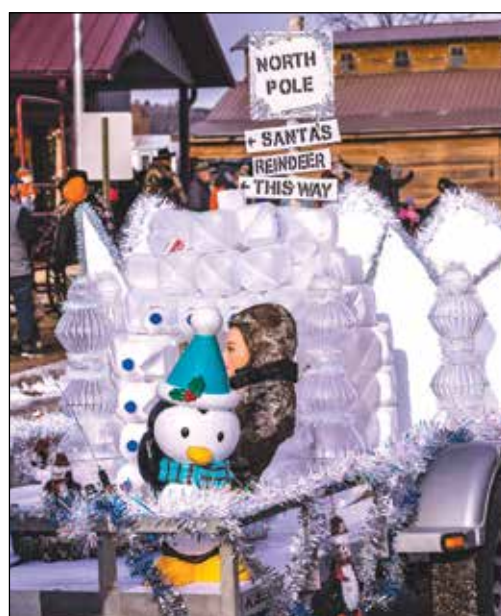
The maker of the two Little Free Libraries in Embarrass and Babbitt covered in the Nov. 24 edition of the *Timberjay* was identified as Mike Radtke, which was in error. The maker of the Little Free Libraries is David Radtke.

A super Saturday with Santa, bikers, and lutefisk

Snow City Christmas, Operation Rudolph and church dinner a full day of cheer



This festive float entered by the Cook Orr Muni took home first place in the Snow City Christmas parade.



Scott and Angela Wright entered the North Pole and placed second.



Orr Center was gaily decorated for its Christmas event.



The Polar Express-themed float from Myrtle Lake Resort placed third.



Haylee Prescott, 10, and Elijah Prescott, 2, tell Santa their Christmas wishes at T. Pattenn Cafe.



Santa had competition from Easter Bunny stand-in Stuart at the Orr Center.



People filled the Cook VFW on Saturday for Operation Rudolph sponsored by Northwoods Riders. The event featured good food, good friends, and most of all good will as patrons raised money to help those less fortunate at Christman.



A full house in the Trinity Lutheran Church fellowship hall Saturday "ignored the risk and tried the lutefisk" for the ninth annual edition of the dinner. The Cook Area Food Shelf and Trinity's National Youth Gathering Krewe were the recipients of funds raised.



This furry creature "bearly" made it through the Snow City Christmas parade.

all photos by D. Colburn

Book club to meet at library on Tuesday

The Cook area book club will meet next on Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 1 p.m. in the Cook Public Library. The club will discuss "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby

Van Pelt, a heartwarming story about family, community, and optimism in the face of darkness. It explores the unlikely relationship between a widow and a giant Pacific octopus.

The January book will be "Demon Copperhead" by Barbara Kingsolver.

Wild West Christmas raises \$1,201 for Cook Food Shelf

COOK- The over 100 patrons who attended the Cook Covenant Church's Dinner Theatre "A Wild West Christmas" on Friday, Dec. 1 brought along \$1,201 and enough food

to fill a big box of food items as donations to the Cook Food Shelf.

Members and friends of the church donated their time, talents, decorations and food to make it a fun night for everyone. Cook Mayor Harold Johnston was the surprise cameo as he played "Doc

Holiday". Children who attended with their parents were each presented with a wooden stick pony at the end of the evening.

The church extends a thanks to everyone who worked to put on this year's event. Pastor Burton is already percolating ideas for next year, in-

cluding the possibility of multiple performances so more folks can come together to enjoy the Christmas season with their friends and families.



NWFA to host quilt exhibit reception on Saturday

COOK- A reception celebrating the December exhibit "Quilts: Art in Fabric Form" will be on Saturday, Dec. 9 from noon-2 p.m. at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook. Enjoy light refreshments as you browse the gallery's three rooms of arts and crafts while sipping tea and viewing the wide array of original pieced quilts, appliqué quilts, scraps quilts, intricate 'paper pieced' quilts, twisted template quilts, row quilts and round robin 'friendship' quilts. Quilt artists whose

works are on display, including JoAnn Anderson, Dede Doi, Lois Garbisch, Cheryl Harelstad, Vickie Lange, Kathy Lovgren, Kris Musto, Lyn Reed, Kathy Sacchetti, Barb Schmidt, Barb Schroeder and Alberta Whitenack.

The December exhibit runs until Saturday, Dec. 23, and is open during regular gallery hours of 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturdays. The gallery is located at 210 S River St. More information is available online at www.nwffam.org.



SANTA'S WORKSHOP

The annual Santa's Workshop event hosted by Cook Friends of the Parks had its two most favorite celebrities on hand on Sunday == Santa Claus and Mike Hanson and his Haflinger horse drawn wagon rides. ABOVE: At times the line waiting for wagon rides exceeded the line of those waiting to see the Jolly Old Elf. RIGHT: Four-year-old Charlie Dudley, left, and sister Cammi are excited to tell Santa their Christmas wishes and have their pictures taken with him.



LAWSUIT...Continued from page 1

The lawsuit was filed four months after the Planning Commission denied Wyrobek's rezoning request, on behalf of Wyrobek and Lance and Kari Kuhn, owners of one of the parcels in question. The suit contends that the Planning Commission failed to act on Wyrobek's applications within the 60-day time frame required by state law, specifically Minnesota Statute 15.99. The lawsuit faults the commission's rationale for rejecting the project and addresses other procedures that were allegedly not executed correctly.

The campground, Rough-N-It, a nonprofit organization, was proposed as a 47-site tent campground located on approximately 45 acres of undeveloped, water-access only property, with two small mainland parcels totaling approximately .64 acres to be used for parking and staging. The properties in question are currently zoned as Residential-5 and Residential-7, which does not allow for commercial planned developments like the campground. Wyrobek was requesting reclassification of the properties to Shoreland Multiple Use-5 and 7. Wyrobek submitted the original rezoning and CUP requests on or about Feb. 2, and a hearing was scheduled for March 9.

However, after receiving a copy of the commission staff report compiled for the project, Wyrobek asserted that the report contained incorrect information about the properties and proposed uses and withdrew both applications from consideration at the March 3 meeting of the planning commission. Wyrobek filed new updated

applications for rezoning and the CUP, which are also dated March 3.

On March 20, St. Louis County Planning Manager Jenny Bourbonais received an email from the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) informing her that a petition had been received that day requesting that an Environmental Assessment Worksheet be prepared for the project. The email notes that "a project may not be started, and a final governmental decision may not be made to grant a permit, approve a project, or begin a project until a decision has been made for this petition. Project construction includes any activities which directly affect the environment, including preparation of land."

The petition, signed by about 170 people, claimed that the campground project had potential negative consequences for water quality and wildlife habitat, as well as generating noise and light pollution, garbage and ecological "vandalism."

The EQB communication indicated that the Planning Commission had 15 days to determine the need for an EAW. Bourbonais responded requesting an additional 15 days as the commission was not scheduled to meet again until April 13.

In a March 21 email to Planning Department staff Wyrobek submitted supplemental information for her applications and volunteered to do the EAW. At that point, the commission had not discussed the EAW petition or decided an EAW was necessary. Wyrobek also indicated her desire that both the rezoning and CUP applications be heard

together. According to correspondence included in Wyrobek's court filing, Bourbonais informed Wyrobek that the commission could not hear the CUP campground proposal at the April meeting due to the pending EAW request, and that if she wanted both the rezoning request and CUP heard on the same day it could not be until after the EAW was acted upon. The rezoning request was scheduled for the April 13 commission meeting.

However, the meeting minutes for April 13 indicate that Wyrobek was not in attendance and the rezoning application was not heard at her request (a point the lawsuit contests). Bourbonais stated that due to a typographical error in the meeting notice sent to Wyrobek stating that the hearing time would be at 10:15 p.m. instead of 10:15 a.m., Wyrobek requested that the hearing be tabled until she was able to appear before the Planning Commission. The commission rescheduled the hearing for May 11.

The April 13 minutes also do not contain any reference to the EAW petition being discussed or acted upon, although the meeting agenda included "EAW Petition Discussion" under other business.

The Planning Commission reviewed Wyrobek's rezoning request at its May 11 meeting and voted 7-1 to deny it, noting the plan was inconsistent with the county's land use plan and would constitute spot zoning, without any public benefit.

As the rezoning request was denied, the county took no further action on the CUP.

Irregularities alleged

On Oct. 4, County Attorney Kimberly Maki and Assistant County Attorney Nathan LaCoursiere filed a point-by-point answer to the lawsuit filed by Wyrobek and the Kuhns.

Of primary importance is the allegation that the Planning Commission did not act on Wyrobek's applications in the required 60-day time frame. In fact, the time from the March 3 date of Wyrobek's revised applications to the May 11 denial of the zoning is 70 days, including May 11. The lawsuit contends that exceeding the 60 days for acting on the rezoning and CUP applications means that they "are approved as a matter of state law" under state statutes. With such approval, Wyrobek would be able to proceed with development of the campground.

The county attorney acknowledges that it was more than 60 days before the commission acted but claims that fact "is of no legal significance" because the timeline was "tolled," meaning paused or delayed, according to other relevant state law. The March 20 filing for an EAW should also be considered as something modifying the timeline. The county also contends that action at the April 13 was delayed at the request of Wyrobek's attorney, and therefore the subsequent delay cannot be claimed as a basis for automatic approval.

The county's response emphasizes the uncompleted environmental worksheet. Beside resetting the timeline for "60 days after completion of the last process required" under the statute cited by Wyrobek's

attorney, the county is specifically prohibited from acting on the applications until the EAW process is completed. The county also argues that exceeding the 60-day period does not automatically approve the applications because another court decision found that statute cannot exceed the scope of the county's authority under state law, which in this case is restricted by the EAW requirements.

The county's answer to the lawsuit denies any right of injunctive relief for Wyrobek or the Kuhns, stating that the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

The county further asserts that the Planning Commission can't be sued, and that the district court lacks jurisdiction in the matter.

Hitting reset

In its court filing and in the minutes of the Nov. 9 Planning Commission meeting, it's evident that the county considers the rezoning and CUP applications as matters that are still open.

Nick Campanario, St. Louis County Attorney's Office Civil Division Head, reminded the commission that it is not the final say on rezoning applications. The commission can only make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, which can choose to accept or reject the recommendation.

Campanario said that the county attorney's office decided to restart the process and go through it as it is intended to be done. That means having the Planning Commission first consider the EAW petition, which it did at the Nov. 9

meeting.

Wyrobek was on hand, asking the commission to deny the petition until litigation is complete and they have an actual plan for the completion of the campground, which would affect the completion of an EAW.

She also gave numerous reasons why tent sites that have been developed and used on the proposed campground don't violate the EQB's prohibition against any development until the EAW petition is acted upon. The four parcels Wyrobek owns have been developed as individual dwelling sites, with a campsite being a dwelling site. Using definitions for residential use-class I and primitive campgrounds, Wyrobek explained her position that this type of development did not defy the Planning Commission. She also described seven exceptions to the EAW requirement and noted that the current petition contains an inaccurate description of the property, inflating the area by over 100 percent. She estimated the EAW would cost \$10,000 and said she would do it herself, although she has already spent more than \$30,000 trying to correct the problems with the process.

Numerous attendees offered comments both pro and con for the EAW, and discussion of numerous angles by commissioners was lengthy. In the end the Planning Commission voted 7-0, to request that an EAW be performed, setting the stage for possible future actions on the rezoning and CUP issues.

COUNCIL...Continued from page 1

the Police Chief, with a Kevlar canoe along with paddles and life preservers, at a cost of \$3,800 per person.

As further steps to sell the Ely lifestyle to patrol officers, Houde worked with the Ely Area Tourism Bureau to develop a new police badge that reflects the region's outdoor experience. He is also working with videographers in the city to create a marketing video to attract public safety personnel to the city.

Houde asked for \$30,000 for the program, suggesting that the money be taken from the \$140,427 that Ely received as its portion of the \$300 million in public safety funding which the Minnesota Legislature passed in 2023. These dedicated funds can only be used for narrowly defined public safety initiatives, including for retention and pay.

"How can we stand out and retain our employees? We wanted something that would emphasize and sell Ely's outdoor lifestyle," Houde told the council. He described the problems of recruiting and retaining officers in rural Minnesota, especially when larger communities can lure away the dwindling number of qualified applicants with higher pay and better benefits.

Council member Adam Bisbee questioned if the plan was enough and whether it should be developed further. The council voted to approve the department's plan 5-1, with Bisbee as the dissenting vote. Council member Angela Campbell was absent.

Those pesky beavers

The city council approved a recommendation of the Ely Utilities Commission to pay Shane

Stevens, "The Beaver Guy," \$1,910 for nuisance beaver control.

"This used to not be a problem back when people were still trapping beavers for their fur," said Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski. "Beavers have been busy building dams... and we have 25,000 feet of water line from Burntside Lake that supplies Ely with our water." Langowski explained that those dams are endangering the city's water supply, especially where the water line crosses open water. Beaver nuisance services are necessary to protect the water supply. "Hopefully this will buy us some time," Langowski said. The city is seeking funding to update and bury its water supply line, which will make it safe from beavers in the future.

Short-term rentals

City council member Adam Bisbee opened a discussion on reducing the number of short-term rental licenses. The current limit is 35 for residential and shoreline mixed-use zoning categories. There is not limit on short-term rentals in commercially zoned areas.

"Should we reduce the number of short-term rentals because of the need for long-term housing?" Bisbee asked his fellow council members, noting that the city currently has issued 21 licenses.

City council member Paul Kess was amenable to the proposal, noting, "The marketplace has taken care of this in favor of lowering the number of licenses."

Langowski added, "There were as many as 31 at one time. I suggest we give the public notice (about reducing the number of licenses) to give those with rentals time to react." Mayor Heidi Omerza

agreed. "We need to hear from the public," she said.

Kess made a motion, which the council approved, to direct the clerk-treasurer to publish the council's intentions to reduce the number of short-term rental licenses to 25 at a council meeting in January.

A future recovery house

The city council heard a presentation by Well Being Development on their community-based recovery program project. They also announced that they will hold a public forum on the project, which involves providing housing in the form of a dedicated residence specifically for Elyites coming out of treatment for substance use disorders, to help them transition back into the community. The event will be at the Ely Senior Center on Tuesday, Dec. 12, starting at 5:30 p.m.

Well Being Development is actively seeking community input on the project, and the planned forum is only one of many such meetings that the nonprofit will be holding in the future.

Well Being Development's Deanna Swenson explained that the organization had identified transitional housing for people coming out of treatment as a critical need for the Ely community. "This will be for people who live here or have connections to Ely ... It will only be for those who have completed treatment," and need a supportive environment while transitioning back into the community.

Truth in Taxation

The city council put its regular meeting into temporary recess at 6 p.m. in order to hold its Truth in Taxation meeting-within-a-meeting,

which lasted until 6:20 p.m. The presentation was given by Langowski.

The city is planning to levy \$2,158,100 in 2024, an increase of \$61,600, or 2.94 percent, from 2023. Operational expenditures are budgeted to increase to \$5,737,500, which is an increase of \$290,900, or 5.34 percent from 2023.

The city will receive \$288,310 in fiscal disparities for 2024, which is a modest increase of \$20,044, or 7.47 percent, from this year. The increase will help offset some of the rising property assessments for 2024. "This is a significant improvement compared to 2023," Langowski explained.

Concerning property assessments for taxes, the taxable market value for Ely increased by \$35,382,941, for a total of \$233,110,704, which is a 17.89 percent increase compared to 2023. "This is a big number," said Langowski, remarking that in all the years he has worked for the city, "It's never been that much of an increase (before)."

The complete package of taxation, revenue and expenditure increases and cuts is available on the city's website at ely.mn.us/2023-meetings.

In other action, the city council:

► Witnessed the swearing in of Courtney Olson as an Ely Police Department Officer. The swearing-in ceremony was originally the first item on the meeting agenda, but Officer Olson made her first arrest before the meeting and was delivering the arrestee to jail, so the ceremony was delayed until she returned.

► Approved the EUC recommendation to direct City Attorney Kelly Klun to review the contract with Boss Agricultural Inc. for

hauling liquid biosolids that would allow a 90-day notice to cancel the contract.

► Approved the EUC recommendation to pay both invoices to AMPTEK: \$1,370 for the sludge press connection at the wastewater treatment facility and \$5,585 for the flow meter wiring at the water treatment plant.

► Approved the EUC recommendation to pay AE2S \$10,819 for the wastewater plant improvements project.

► Approved the EUC recommendation to pay Rice Lake Construction Group \$275,550 for the wastewater plant improvements project.

► Approved the recommendation from Telecommunications Advisory Board (TAB) to approve the purchase of a new video board for a cost not to exceed \$7,000. Langowski explained that the equipment selected "exceeds our expectations." The new equipment will facilitate the city's transition from analog to high-definition video, which should occur in early 2024. He also remarked that funding for TAB and its video equipment is "no burden to the taxpayers," because it is through the franchise fee that Midco charges its customers for TV channels.

► Accepted Pam Ranson's resignation from the Gardner Trust Board.

► Approved the following claims for payment: Dec. 5 City and EUC claims for \$236,069, and Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails 2024 Membership dues for \$165.

► Approved sending a letter of support from the city for St. Louis County Commissioner Mike Jugovich to be on

the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources Board (LCCMR). This board is a potential source of funding from the state, but Ely has historically only received money for one project many years ago. "We need someone from here on this board," Mayor Omerza stated. Jugovich is from the Ely area."

► Approved Resolution 2023-032, designating the polling precinct location for the city. This location is traditionally the Ely Senior Center, Langowski explained, noting that a presidential primary is coming up soon.

► Approved advertising for open city committee seats with term limits which will be expiring or coming due by Jan. 31, 2024.

► Approved 2024 tobacco license renewal applications, pending the receipt of all required documentation and payment for 2024.

► Approved the League of Minnesota Cities liability coverage waiver form on a "does not waive" basis. Langowski explained that, "The city does not waive the tort liability limits set by state statute."

► Approved a request by Anthony Bermel to cut some small dead cedar trees along Fifth Ave. W., which are currently in danger of falling into the right of way. The council added a stipulation the Bermel waive any liability claims against the city for this activity.

► The meeting ended with a closed session so the City Council could discuss employment matters, specifically "strategy for Ely supervisors of other than essential employees."

PLANNING...Continued from page 1

have shown that traditional planning approaches have not been able to keep up with the needs to improve forest conditions. According to the Forest Service, this new plan will use a multifaceted "flexible toolbox" to help put the right treatment on the right spot at the right time.

The patchwork nature of lands owned and managed by the state, tribal nations, private landowners and other entities and agencies in the LaCroix region provide a challenge when it comes to forest management. Forests don't know manmade boundaries, and a stand of trees that overlaps state and federal boundaries might well benefit from a comprehensive treatment approach. Bennett said there's a group of stakeholders, the Arrowhead Landscape Collaborative Group, that's been working together since the project's inception in 2019 to address these issues.

"We're going to try to put blocks together that make sense for management and we're going to try to treat the best that we can," he said. "We need to fit what we're trying to do with what other groups are trying to do and work together to put the best land

management into place."

The toolbox contains a list of 21 different treatment options, each linked to a particular condition with specific objectives to attain. For example, thinning trees is a natural option for a condition in which red and white pine and spruce are spaced too tightly together, with the objectives of maintaining or improving stand health, increasing structural diversity, providing sustainable products, and adapting to climate change.

Conditions are also linked to acreage limits during a specified period of years. For example, to accomplish timber stand improvement would utilize treatments over no more than 15,000 acres over a 15-year time span.

"It's driven by what's needed on the ground," Bennett said. "A lot of our fuels treatments are also kind of restoration focused on protecting people, property, and then also reducing the balsam fir. Another treatment we've looked at is for our grass areas that are suitable for riparian burns to really increase their health because migratory birds use that groundcover for both nesting and habitat. We're going to be manag-

ing for both forest health and productivity— that's central to what we do."

"We're proposing to use condition-based management," Lucas said. "If we get out there in five years and we're not seeing what we thought we were going to see, we can pivot to a more appropriate treatment. So, we're not locked in to exactly what we're proposing. We can pick from a suite of options for the flexibility to deal with climate change or spruce budworm or address issues the [tribal] bands come to us with. I think that's an exciting aspect of this."

Another challenge to the desired collaboration is securing funding for treatments on parcels of land that aren't part of Superior National Forest. But that's also where collaborating partners come in handy, for example, in looking for grant funding options that may be viable.

"Maybe there are opportunities where private landowners can work with Cooperative Wildfire Defense Grants to get some funds to treat on private lands adjacent to federal land and we can get more bang for our buck," Lucas said.

The Arrowhead col-

laborative lost a bit of steam during the COVID pandemic, as well as from the retirements of the Superior National Forest supervisor and the DNR state forester, but it's about to get a jump start in the near future with the hiring of a full-time coordinator.

"The Forest Service has put money aside from the bipartisan infrastructure funds to hire a coordinator, because that's what's really lacking now," Lucas said. "There's interest from all the parties, but we need someone to convene and coordinate that group. That coordinator position is going to be filled in the spring, and it's going to be a two-year position to start, hoping then that more funding can be generated through other grant opportunities."

A component of the landscape plan that Lucas believes will be readily appreciated by the public is a focus on fuels reduction.

"That's definitely something people can understand, especially with some of the catastrophic wildfires that have occurred in this area over the years," she said. "In order to protect people's property you can't have too dense of a forest. Healthier trees that are left

behind are going to grow, and you're going to be protecting adjacent private land with a person's cabin or home."

Fuel reduction also will benefit habitat for animals and birds, including moose.

"If you have a completely dense, socked in forest where you're not doing forest management, you're losing moose habitat. Moose need open spaces," Lucas said. "Humans have managed the forests long before the Forest Service existed, living together with wildlife. Forest management is not new, it's just formalized."

Responsible forest management also benefits the local economy by creating conditions in campgrounds and trails that are more appealing to recreational users, Lucas noted.

The proposed plan got its first formal batch of feedback last summer during a comment period, and that information has been incorporated into the plan that will be released for another round of public comment in a few weeks, Lucas said. And prospective commenters will find plenty of helpful information online about the

proposal.

"A draft environmental assessment will be there along with links to a map you can zoom in on to see the treatments, and what we call a story map with some text and a lot of visuals in terms of what all the different treatments we're proposing are," Lucas said. "We're thinking now it's going to be available for 45 days instead of the usual 30 days because of Christmas and New Years we want to give people enough opportunity to comment."

Those in the Crane Lake and Vermilion Falls areas may have a greater interest than others, as a large swath of tracts in that area are proposed to receive treatments in the first five-year cycle of the plan. Future plan cycles will have their own public comment plans for their proposed treatment options.

If all goes well with the comment period, revisions, and formal adoption of the proposal, Lucas said she expects plan activities to begin in 2025.

MATH...Continued from page 1

puzzle. The monster is meant to be ironic, because it's not really scary!"

Tuesday's challenge was the infinity hotel. What if you had a hotel with infinity rooms and infinity people? What if one person came? What room number would you give them? What if a second infinity of people came?

"It's a fun, open-ended thought experiment," she said.

After the challenge, the participants break into activity stations or choose their own games.

The group is meeting at the Tower Gathering Gallery, a furnished space that offers hourly rentals right off Main Street, and the tables in the room were filled with math-related games, open-ended activities with a focus on

measuring and fractions, playing cards and dominoes, tactile play for preschoolers, a play store with a cash register to practice counting play money and making change, and books with math themes.

Sarah Flores said her fifth-grader also loves math. "It just makes sense to him," she said. But she admitted that math often doesn't make sense to her. Her first grader doesn't share her older brother's love of math but was having fun operating the toy cash register and "selling" snacks.

Desirae Larson, who does online homeschool with her five younger children, said her kids do fine with "little kids" math, but that she often has to use google to help her high school age children when

they have questions about their math homework.

She does love watching them gain skills and confidence as they learn more math. One son just overcame his fear of fractions, she said, after several weeks of struggling to understand the concepts.

Jacey Raj is volunteering with the club, as part of her volunteer commitment as a member of the National Honor Society at Mesabi East High School. While she said Spanish III is her favorite class, she does enjoy math, and this year is taking probability and statistics, though her favorite math subject has been algebra.

The next two math clubs will meet Dec. 12 and 19, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the Tower Gathering Gallery, 515 Main St., Suite 104 (side entrance

How to make math more fun for kids

Tips from Prof. Jo Boaler from www.youcubed.org.

- ☞ Encourage children to play math puzzles and games.
- ☞ Always be encouraging and never tell kids they are wrong when they are working on math problems. Instead, find the logic in their thinking, and direct them from there.
- ☞ Never associate math with speed. It is not important to work quickly. Forcing kids to work quickly on math is the best way to start math anxiety for children, especially girls. Don't use flashcards or other speed drills.
- ☞ Never share with your children the idea that you were bad at math at school or that you dislike math, especially if you are a mother.
- ☞ Encourage number sense. What separates high and low achievers in math is number sense- having an idea of the size of numbers and being able to separate and combine numbers in a flexible ways. Current math teaching is now focusing on this skill, which can be confusing for parents who learned strict algorithms (math rules) for solving problems.
- ☞ Encourage a growth mindset, let your child know they have unlimited math potential and that being good at math is all about working hard.

of Pike River Products). The club is aimed at preschoolers through grade six, though older children are welcome to come to

help the younger children. There is a one-time suggested membership fee of \$10/ family to pay for venue, math supplies and snacks. If

popular, organizers plan to keep it going in 2024. Call Stephanie Ukkola for more information, 218-410-6001.



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Join us at Ely's Historic State Theater for a night of music, culinary delights, and New Year's celebrations that promise to be nothing short of spectacular. Reserve your spot now and make memories that will last a lifetime.

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Admission includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, and a champagne toast

Reserve Your Spot

Tickets are \$50 and only available at www.mesabisymphonyorchestra.org

This activity is made possible in part by a grant from Ely's Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust

READ THE TIMBERJAY!

CITY OF ELY

Complaint over noisy Zup's compressor resolved

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- City officials and representatives of the Zup's grocery store here have resolved noise complaints stemming from a minor violation of the state's sound ordinance.

In July, an Ely resident with a home in the 1500 block of Harvey St. contacted the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency alleging that the compressors behind the new Zup's store were too loud. The city received a complaint as well, on Sept. 12, again from a resident in the same area of Harvey Street.

The complaints prompted the city to purchase a sound measuring meter and its associated calibration equipment which was good enough to satisfy Minnesota's sound nuisance regulations (Minn. Rule 7030).

"The reason Ely doesn't have its own sound ordinance is because we follow Minnesota's



Left: City of Ely employee David Huberty with Ely's new sound measurement meter. The city bought the meter and the equipment to calibrate it in July to respond to public complaints that the compressors at Zup's grocery store were too loud.

the Gain Express [brand] sound measuring equipment and measured the sound levels across [15th Ave.] from Zup's," said Ely Building Inspector Dave Huberty. The city followed the measurement protocol dictated by the MPCA, measuring both day and night noise levels.

Minnesota regulations state that during the one-hour sound test, daytime noise levels cannot exceed 65 decibels (dB) for more than 10 percent of the time (L10 test) or 60 dB more than 50 percent of the time (L50 test) for residential properties. The test must be repeated at night, where noise levels cannot exceed 55

dB for more than 10 percent of the time or 50 dB more than 50 percent of the time.

According to the MPCA, most vacuum cleaners produce between 65 to 70 dB at a distance of three yards. Someone talking in a normal voice produces around 60 dB at one yard.

"We tested on July 25 for daytime levels, and measured 52.3 dB for the L50 and 53.6 dB for the L10," Huberty told the *Timberjay*. "We tested the nighttime values on July 27, and measured 51.9 dB for the L10 and 50.5 dB for the L50. That was over because the nighttime L50 limit is 50."

The failed L50 test put Zup's on notice to quiet their compressors. Ely Zup's manager Jim Zupancich told the *Timberjay* that the store attempted two times to find noise suppression that worked. The second attempt got the sound generated below the legal limits.

"Nordic Mechanical built

buffer boxes around the compressors and that worked," Zupancich said.

City officials agree. "We came back and measured on Nov. 20," said Huberty, who did most of the testing work. "The daytime L10 was 37.8 dB and the L50 was 35.5 Db. The nighttime L10 was 42.9 dB and the L50 was 41.3." All those readings were well below the noise limits set by the state.

It's not the first time that Zup's has added sound suppressing fencing around its compressors. Zup's installed similar protection at its Tower store many years ago to address sound complaints there as well. The installation lowered the sound levels and resolved the complaint.

The MPCA has a guide to the state's noise rules, including for residential, roads, ATVs, snowmobiles, and watercraft, at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-gen6-01.pdf>.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ely RV park will require environmental assessment

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY— The proposed RV park expansion near Miner's Lake will require the completion of an environmental assessment worksheet, or EAW, after all and that determination led the board of adjustment to postpone action on a conditional use permit application for the park last month.

It was the third time that a hearing on the permit application from AOK Outdoors was set and then postponed without a reso-

lution. The proposed RV park and campground expansion is being proposed by Dean and Lee Ann Peterson, owners of AOK Outdoors. The property along Miners Lake has been zoned as shoreline mixed use (MSU) since 1994 and was zoned as commercial prior to that. The property is the site of the former Sibley Mine.

Ely's SMU zoning currently requires that campgrounds and RV parks must obtain a CUP in order to operate. AOK withdrew an initial proposal filed in late summer and submitted a more detailed version on Oct. 19, but it lacked an

EAW. It was initially unclear whether an EAW was required, since state law mandates an EAW for most RV park proposals only require an EAW if they include the construction of 50 sites or more. The AOK proposal calls for the creation of 23 new RV sites along with five new cabins, and nine tent sites, stating that the layout of the RV park will use less than 50 percent of the property. That's in addition to the eight RV sites already on the site.

While the proposal initially seemed to be under the limit for a mandatory

EAW, after further review, city officials realized that the proposal fell under the rules for a sensitive shoreline, which have tighter restrictions.

In an email communication with the *Timberjay*, Ely's Planning and Zoning Administrator, Scott Kochendorfer, stated, "It was determined that an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) was necessary based on the scope of the project. Therefore, without that, the application in its current (form), is incomplete."

After further inquiries, Kochendorfer told the *Timberjay* that the

city received "conflicting information" from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, which is responsible for shoreline regulations. Despite the contradictory information, the city determined an EAW was necessary because Miners Lake is actually a "sensitive shoreline area."

The relevant state rule states an EAW is required if a campground or RV park builds or adds "25 or more units or sites in a sensitive shoreland area. The city's determination hinges on what is considered sensitive shoreline. On its website, "DNR does not include Miners Lakes on its list of

sensitive shoreline areas," Kochendorfer explained, "however, Miners Lake is designated as a trout lake, and trout lakes in Minnesota are considered sensitive shoreline areas."



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GIRLS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies dump Bigfork for first win

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The North Woods girls fended off a pesky Bigfork Huskies squad at home on Monday for their first win of the young basketball season, 65-54.

The Huskies took an early lead and held it until North Woods' River Cheney scored a bucket that put the Grizzlies in front 14-13 at the midway point of the first half. Bigfork went back in front again 21-18, but North Woods shut them down

in the final three minutes of the half while Corra Brodeen got hot and canned three mid-range jumpers to go with a trey from Helen Koch and another Cheney basket to take a 28-21 lead at the half.

North Woods maintained its lead during the first seven minutes of the second stanza, but the Huskies chipped away at the lead and took it back on a trey at the 10:38 mark, 39-38. North Woods was back on top 43-42 with 8:27 remaining, but less than a minute later Bigfork held a 46-45 margin.

Right: North Woods' Tatum Barto looks on from the lane as Helen Koch applies pressure to a Bigfork ballhandler.

photo by D. Colburn

Koch immediately struck back with a trey, and a pair of Talise Goodsky free throws gave the Grizzlies a 50-46 edge with six minutes to play. Koch slammed the door shut on any Bigfork hopes for a final comeback by hitting three big triples down the stretch, and got some help

See **GRIZZLIES...**pg. 2B



HOCKEY

Fast start for T-Wolves

Team that struggled for a win last season off to 3-1 start

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

E L Y — The Timberwolves, who struggled mightily on the ice last season, are off to their best start in memory this year, notching a 3-1 record through their first four games of the season. After sweeping a weekend series at Kittson County to open the season, the Wolves went 1-1 at this past weekend's home debut, taking on Mora on Friday and Saturday.

The visiting Mustangs took the opening match Friday night 4-1 but the Wolves rebounded on Saturday, edging Mora 2-1 in an afternoon matchup.

The Mustangs took advantage of power play opportunities in the second



period to score two goals in the Friday contest. They notched their other two goals in the first, both at even strength. Ely notched their lone goal in the final period as senior forward Ty Walker tripped the buzzer at the 11:41 mark with assists from junior

Brecken Sandberg and senior Tommy Homer to make it a 4-1 final.

Officials tagged Ely with six penalties for a total of 12 minutes in the box. Mora led with 24 shots on goal to 17 for

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

Top: Ely junior Alex Merriman advances the puck down the ice under pressure from a Mora defenseman.

Above: Ely junior Jace Huntbatch prepares to clear the puck away from heavy traffic near the Ely net.

photos by C. Clark



Ely sophomore Jack Davies brings the ball down court. photo by J. Greeney

BOYS BASKETBALL

OUCH!

Ely routs Floodwood 87-13 in home opener

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

E L Y — Absolute blowout. Those are the only words to describe Ely's home opener here on Monday as the Timberwolves destroyed Floodwood 87-13, having led 65-0 at one point in the contest.

"They were missing a couple of starters," noted Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald in an attempt to explain the extraordinary mismatch. "They really struggled on both ends of the floor."

For Ely, it was a chance to rack up some impressive stats. "Everyone saw a lot of action for us," said McDonald.

Junior Caid Chittum was on fire in the first half as he poured in 21 points and notched six rebounds before sitting out much of the rest of the game as Ely gave younger players some time on the court.

Ely sophomore Drew Johnson added 14 points for Ely while junior Trenton Bishop and sophomore Jack Davies added ten points apiece. Freshman Leo McKrahl led the way on the boards, with 11 rebounds while freshman Wyatt Tedrick led in steals with eight.

Monday's rout came on the heels of a much closer contest in Ely's season opener

See **ELY BOYS...**pg. 2B

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BOYS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies top South Ridge, Bigfork in season debut

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

SOUTH RIDGE- The North Woods boys opened the 2023-24 basketball season with a pair of road wins this week, taking down South Ridge on Monday and Bigfork on Tuesday.

The Grizzlies had decided height and quickness advantages against Bigfork on Tuesday but had trouble capitalizing on them on the offensive end of the floor in the first half. Despite an overwhelming defense that kept the Huskies from notching a basket from the field for the first ten minutes of the game, the Grizzlies were up only 17-5 at the eight-minute mark, with seven of those points from the charity stripe. The Grizzlies had mixed success trying to push the tempo, connecting on some fast break opportunities while squandering others with missed shots and turnovers. Jonah Burnett was the Grizzlies big gun on offense, scoring 25 first-half points as North Woods led 37-15 at the break.

Bigfork came out more aggressively to start the second half by going on a 10-3 run to narrow the gap to 40-25. But a

Louie Panichi drive for two was the spark the Grizzlies needed to shake out of their doldrums, and North Woods got points from Burnett, Evan Kajala, Luke Will, Talen Jarshaw, and a triple by Panichi in a scorching 18-2 run to lead 58-27. The Grizzlies kept the score doubled from there until Head Coach Andrew Jugovich emptied his bench with the clock running and the score 74-36 with about four minutes to play. The Grizzlies left the floor with their second win of the season 76-42.

Burnett led the Grizzlies in scoring with 35 points, followed by Will with 17 points.

“Our defense was very good,” Jugovich said. “The first half we held them to 15, and we played with intensity very well. It could have been better, but I’ll take that. Last year we let Bigfork drop 65 on us.”

Jugovich knew coming into the season that opponents would be keying in on stopping Burnett, and he was pleased with how he adapted in a high post set. “Nobody can stop Jonah,” Jugovich said. “When he caught it and went straight up it was like bread and butter, easy every time. When he was dancing around and got his pivots was when the

defense would collapse on him and it was a much more difficult shot.”

Commenting on the subpar performance from three-point range, Jugovich said the team would keep plugging away at threes.

“I’m not going to let that discourage the boys because when they’re open and everybody’s collapsing inside that is going to be a better shot for us,” he said. “In all reality, from all of our shots we’ve taken there haven’t been many that have been truly bad ones.”

No coach is happy with turnovers, including Jugovich.

“For how fast we’re playing, we’ll get ten to 15 going full speed and sprinting all the time,” he said. “It’s just the unforced ones where we have a guy open and we’re forcing the ball to them and it comes up short or goes long. I think just fixing those small little judgment calls we’ll be able to work better.”

South Ridge

A big first half spurred by tenacious defense catapulted the North Woods boys to a win in their season opener on Monday, a 93-64 blitz over South Ridge.

Will put the Grizzlies up 2-0 on a fast break, but both teams had problems finding any rhythm early with 14 turnovers combined in their first 18 possessions. North Woods got on track first with scores by Burnett and Panichi, and when the Grizzlies went up 14-4 on another Will bucket they had a double digit lead that they wouldn’t relinquish the rest of the night.

With the Grizzlies playing stifling man-to-man defense that kept the Panthers rattled, the lead quickly grew to 30-11 on a pair of Burnett fast break buckets. North Woods kept the pedal to the metal on both ends of the floor, with Panichi putting the end cap on a 29-5 run with a three-ball and a deuce. North Woods went into halftime leading by 30, 54-24.

There were no big runs to be had for the Grizzlies in the second half, as South Ridge made some halftime adjustments that made for a closer matchup the rest of the way. The Panthers closed the margin to 80-60 with just under five minutes left to play, but a Grizzlies’ closing run of 13-4 accounted for the 93-64 win.

Indicative of the Grizzlies’ defensive prowess are the number of steals they had, 33, and South

Ridge’s 43 turnovers, which the Grizzlies turned into 46 points. Jarshaw picked the Panthers’ pockets a team high ten times, an effort Jugovich singled out as setting the tone for the North Woods defense.

North Woods shot an impressive 47.5 percent from the field, but they didn’t have the touch from three-point land, hitting just four out of 26 attempts.

Panichi led the team in scoring with 24 points, followed closely by Burnett. The other two Grizzlies in double figures were Will with 19 and Jarshaw with 16.

Jugovich acknowledged the team’s early struggles. “It was bad,” he said. “We were spreading the ball and being unselfish, and I think that’s where some of our turnovers came – we were being too unselfish.”

But overall, Jugovich was satisfied with the victory.

“Beside the turnovers, we can live with this first one,” he said. “We moved the ball well, and we played 60 percent of the game with the defensive intensity we want.”

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Wolves now at 2-1 after loss to Mesabi East

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

AURORA— Turnovers and lackluster shooting proved Ely’s undoing here on Monday as the Timberwolves girls basketball squad dropped their first game of the young season to Mesabi East.

“We just turned it over too much considering we were playing a good team,” said Ely Head Coach Max Gantt. “I think those turnovers will clean themselves up as we play more.”

Senior Grace LaTourell, who had a big night in Ely’s opener against Nashwauk-Keewatin,

had another strong outing for Ely, with 14 points. Sophomore Zoe Mackenzie and senior Hannah Penke notched nine points apiece as the Wolves slipped to 2-1 on the season.

The Wolves had their way with Two Harbors during a Saturday visit to the shore,

winning in a rout, 78-14. “We played great on ball defense and really swallowed them up,” said Gantt. “Offense took a little bit to find a rhythm, but overall we played a really good game.”

Aggressive defense played a key in the win as the team racked up almost 30 steals on the

night. Three Ely players posted double digits on the scoreboard, led by junior Clare Thomas with 15, while Penke added 14 and Mackenzie posted 12.

The Wolves are set to host International Falls on Friday, with a 7:15 p.m. start. They’ll be on the road next Tuesday at Silver Bay.

ELY BOYS..Continued from page 1B

at Hill City. Chittum, again, led the way for the Wolves with 16 points, eight boards and four assists as Ely edged the Hornets 61-57. “For the first game of the season I thought we played pretty well against a decent team,”

said McDonald. “They had most everyone back from last year’s team and they have an aggressive inside player that gave us some problems as we don’t have much size.”

The game was tight

throughout and Hill City led for a time in the second half before Ely rallied for the win. “We didn’t shoot the ball well all night but we did enough offensively to get the game won,” said McDonald, who said Ely’s

defense was inconsistent as well at times.

While Chittum led the way, Johnson had a solid night for Ely, notching 14 points and six boards along with four assists. Davies added 12 points and four

assists to the effort.

“I thought Wyatt Mattson did an excellent job on their big kid all night but he fouled out in the second half,” said McDonald.

The Wolves, now

2-0, were set to travel to International Falls on Thursday.

HOCKEY..Continued from page 1B

Ely. Timberwolves goalie Ben Leeson notched 20 saves on the night.

Ely evened the series on Saturday, drawing blood at the 12:34 mark of the first period when senior Drew Marolt scored on a

power play with an assist from fellow senior Kadein Zupancich.

Mora evened the score in the second period, but Marolt hit the net once more at the 12:17 mark of the third period to give Ely

the win, 2-1. Senior Deegan Richards and Sandberg both notched assists.

Mora was tagged for six penalties to Ely’s two, but Ely senior defenseman Wes Sandy spent five minutes in the box for a

check from behind early in the first period.

Leeson notched a command performance at the net for Ely, turning aside 29 of the 30 shots on goal for a .967 save percentage. The Wolves managed 22

shots on the net.

Ely traveled to Silver Bay on Tuesday (results were pending at presstime) and were scheduled to be in Ashland on Thursday. They’ll be back on home ice on Saturday to host

Moose Lake, with a 1 p.m. start, and will remain at home next week to take on International Falls on Tuesday, with a 7 p.m. face-off.

GRIZZLIES..Continued from page 1B

with a pair of Brielle Lindgren baskets to give the Grizzlies the 65-54 win.

Koch and Cheney tied for scoring honors with 18 points each and were the only two Grizzlies in double figures. Tatum Barto led the team in assists with eight, while Cheney and Lindgren provided the muscle on the boards with seven rebounds apiece.

North Woods shot a respectable 40.6 percent from the field and 30 percent from three-point range. The Grizzlies struggle at the charity stripe, going seven-for-18.

Grizzlies Head Coach Liz Cheney gave Lindgren praise for “being a spark plug when we need it” with her two late baskets.

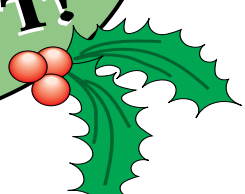
“She scored a couple of key buckets, and of course Helen stepped up big with those three balls,” Cheney said.

The Grizzlies added a new wrinkle in the second half by applying some half-court and full-court pressure.

“That was the girls’ idea,” Cheney said. They wanted to try that.”

Coach Cheney also gave kudos to player Cheney for her performance.

“I was impressed with her tonight,” Cheney said. “She did a really good job reading the defense and capitalizing on that going up for baskets, especially in the second half.”



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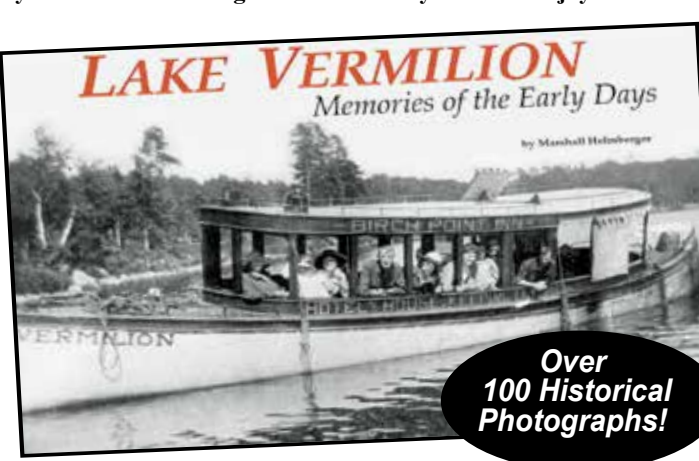
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USFS OUTREACH

Forest Service brings sled dogs to North Woods

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

Kids learn about dog safety and Boundary Waters, too

FIELD TWP- When Kaysee Miller asked a classroom of North Woods kindergarteners how many of them had been bitten by a dog on Tuesday, nearly every eager young hand shot up, as is often the case with youngsters wanting to be a part of something. While most of those hands likely signaled pretend bites from a beloved stuffed animal, one thing was certain – Miller had their attention.

Miller, a silviculturist from the LaCroix Ranger District Office in Cook, was at the school with a number of her colleagues to teach students about the Forest Service sled dogs, dog safety, and a bit about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area as well.

“The Forest Service has been focusing on our commitment to developing relationships with all our partners and communities,” Miller said. “We have been partnering with the school and trying to develop a schedule when the Forest Service and DNR enter the school and work with the kids. In September we took the kids out into the school woods and did nature walks and taught the kids how to measure trees. In October we did bat week and big truck night. December will be our busier program when we discuss different job opportunities with the kids and opportunities on our Youth Conservation Crew.”

But Tuesday was for the dogs, including Miller’s canine companion for the day, a nine-year-old former sled dog named Chainsaw.

Step one with the kindergarteners was introducing them to the concept of body language. Miller modeled body language for several emotions and then moved on to pictures of a dog in various postures to illustrate what canine body language says about when and when not to touch them. The kids had great fun trying to make dog poses themselves, then listened attentively as Miller described various do’s and don’ts of how to behave with dogs. And Miller demonstrated how to approach a dog by offering the back of a hand first for them to sniff, and then when the dog is comfortable petting it from head to butt.

Miller had a PowerPoint presentation prepared, but when it wouldn’t run on the classroom computer she smoothly transitioned to improvising with a marker and whiteboard as she drew and described a typical Boundary Waters landscape and described



Above: Forester Service Forester Kaysee Miller and kindergarteners get retired sled dog Chainsaw to howl with them.



Left: Norah Anderson makes friends with one of the dogs on Tom Roach’s team.

Below: Zoey Kinler gives Chainsaw a pat, while Harry Krecklau waits for his turn..

photos by D. Colburn



the work the sled dog team does to take various things in and out, including campground accoutrements such as campfire grates and latrines and garbage. She described the life of dogs on the trail, how much they could pull, and what dogs in different positions on the team did, and practiced directional commands used by the musher with the kids.

She then turned to Chainsaw to show the children the difference between his outer and inner coats, all the while entertaining questions and comments about him.

Then came the moment of utmost child delight when Miller asked the children to line up for a turn petting Chainsaw. She reinforced what she had taught them about approaching a dog, and Chainsaw happily and calmly accepted all the attention.

Forest Service staff adapted their presenta-

tions as they moved across different grade levels, engaging at age-appropriate levels.

Jasmine Baerg and Amina Kovacevic drew the seventh graders in the classroom of Andrew Jurgovich, and as one might expect they weren’t as eager to jump at answering questions as kindergartners, although a majority raised their hands when the dog bite question was posed. Baerg walked the class through a detailed PowerPoint presentation enhanced by photos and videos of the sled dog team in action, and Kovacevic jumped in from time to time with additional reflections and conversation starters.

When the bell rang at 1:27, classroom presentations were done and it was on to the day’s biggest highlight behind the school, sled dog team leader Tom Roach and his sled dogs. Roach brought along two sleds and vari-

ous pieces of equipment and tools the team takes with them for work and safety. Roach’s lively presentation was engaging enough to keep the students focused on him rather than on the sled dogs, no small accomplishment particularly with the younger ones. When it came time to go see the dogs, Roach had a host of volunteers to help keep order and reinforce the appropriate behaviors that had been taught in the classrooms.

Roach talked about the dogs on the team.

“I have seven different generations of dogs here,” he said. “They’re all uncles, cousins, aunts, brothers, sisters, and grandparents of each other. About half of these dogs are either nine or ten,

and the other half are between two and four.”

Roach said he enjoys taking the dogs to schools and other venues.

“I like to take the dogs out and tell people what they do,” he said. “They

like people, they’re very sociable, and it’s good for them to be around people. It makes them more well-rounded and more calm.”

Roach could see that the classroom presentations had made an impression.

“(The kids) are using some of their talking points they’d gotten in the classroom about how to handle and approach a dog,” he said. “We keep it pretty controlled by trying to keep three kids at a time at the dogs. We make sure we’re watching. The only thing is you’re likely to just get licked in the face.”

Additional activity

Miller said the Forest Service is doing additional work with North Woods assisting with development of the school forest. She said the DNR’s Victoria Jari has been taking the lead on developing the school forest and “doing an amazing job.”

Also in the works is creating places in the larger forest where schools can go for field trips.

“We are currently improving our Echo Campground (map below) area for the public and to be able to bring schools out there,” Miller said. “We will be making the area more resilient to fires, insects and disease and promoting longer lived species in the area. These areas will be a place we can bring any group of kids or adults to interact in nature. The trails will be well developed for ease of walking, with interpretive signs that identify trees, plants and management activities to showcase the work and our beautiful area we are lucky to work in. For the rest of the year our school activities will be planting trees in the school forest in spring time, possibly coordinating with the school to bring the kids onto the National Forest to see tree climbing and assist with planting trees and exploring the wood in the Echo Campground area, along with community education programs of walking in the woods with a forester to ask any management or nature questions.”

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Low-interest commercial loans available in Tower

TOWER— A low-interest loan fund, overseen by the Tower Economic Development Authority, is once again helping businesses here make needed building improvements or purchase new equipment for expansion.

The TEDA board approved three loans, totaling \$75,000 in October and those funds are slated to be released to businesses in the next few days. The new funds will help a former restaurant re-open, will help fund renovations that will create three new Main Street apartments, and will allow a third busi-

ness to expand its services. Another \$36,000 remains available for immediate lending to businesses in the community on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligible improvements include improvements to the exterior of buildings, energy efficiency upgrades, roof or structural improvements or handicapped accessibility. Projects that can demonstrate economic improvements that provide a clear community benefit are a high priority for funding under the program.

The vast majority of the city’s longstanding

fund for commercial lending had vanished several years ago when the majority of earmarked city accounts were drained to cover cost overruns on city construction projects.

TEDA, which now controls the commercial lending program for the city, was able to replenish the lost funds through a development partnership matching grant through Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation. TEDA generated approximately \$204,000 in net revenue last year through the sale of 160 acres on Mud Creek Road. TEDA allocated

\$50,000 of that revenue to match a \$50,000 grant from IRRR to replenish the lending account.

Applying for a loan through the program is easy and TEDA will provide technical assistance if needed. Anyone interested in applying for a loan should act quickly since the first round of lending is nearly three-quarters completed. For an application, contact TEDA Executive Director Marshall Helmburger at teda@cityoftower.com or at 218-750-2510.

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Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

2023-24 FINCH FORECAST

Plenty of uncertainty about feeder birds this winter

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— With the winter bird-feeding season now underway with most folks—even as winter seems to be taking a break— there is considerable uncertainty about just what birds might be showing up at North Country feeders this year.

The annual finch forecast put out by the Canada-based

Finch Research Network, or FRN, seems somewhat less definitive than in years past, and that could be because the longtime forecast compiler, Ron Pittaway, died earlier this year.

The network's data, which relies primarily on cone and fruit crops across the boreal forest as a way to predict winter movements of northern finches, is now being compiled by Tyler Hoar, a biologist and ecologist who

lives in Oshawa, Ontario, who worked closely with Pittaway for a number of years. The forecasts aren't always a perfect fit for northeastern Minnesota, since they're designed to predict finch movements into southern Ontario and the northeastern U.S., areas which are well south of northern Minnesota.

This year, the forecast notes that cone crops across the interior boreal forest were generally poor and that sug-

Right: The 2023-24 finch forecast cited large numbers of purple finches moving through NE Minnesota this fall. Will any show up at feeders in the North Country this winter or will they stay to our south?

photo by M. Helmberger

gests that there will be potentially significant movement of

See FORECAST...pg. 5B



THE DEER POPULATION

It's winter, not wolves

The data is clear: winter severity is the main driver of deer numbers in NE Minnesota

Everyone likes a simple answer to complex issues, and we are seeing that in full force this year with the widespread finger-pointing at wolves to explain yet another decline in deer registrations.

There is no doubt that wolves kill deer—they need to in order to survive. And northern Minnesota has, for decades now, sustained close to the highest density of wolves in North America, in large part because they have a sufficient prey base (deer and, seasonally, beaver) that can sustain them.

Deer registrations in our region were down again this year, and that has prompted a fair bit of teeth-gnashing in some quarters suggesting that wolves have pushed the deer population to the verge of a collapse that will rob future generations of the tradition of deer hunting. I touched on some of this concern in a news story last week but opted to follow up with more information this week.

First of all, hunters can rest easy. The white-tailed deer is not vanishing from the North Country anytime soon. But in order to recognize that, you need to look at data, which is generally lacking from most conversations on the subject. There is a lot of science that has been generated over the years about white-tailed deer and about wolves and how these two species interact. We also

know from harvest numbers how hunter success correlates with several factors, but most closely with the severity of winters in our region.

The data can tell us a lot. For example, if the wolf population was really a primary determinant of deer numbers, we would expect to see many more deer during periods when the wolf population was low and fewer deer when the wolf population was high. But that's not the reality. Indeed, it's worth noting that some of the lowest deer harvests we've seen in the past half century were in the 1970s. The DNR canceled the deer season in 1971 in hopes of rebuilding the population and, throughout the decade, the statewide annual deer harvest averaged just 50,000 deer, or about a third the number registered so far this year.

The wolf population at that time was estimated at about 700 animals statewide and due to relentless hunting and trapping (Minnesota had a bounty on wolves as recently as 1965), was limited to the most remote parts of northeastern Minnesota, like the Boundary Waters, where few hunters ever traveled.

We know why deer numbers were so low in the 1970s. It was a series of harsh winters that decimated the herd, although wolves were blamed by some back then as well.

The state's wolf population began to recover once it was federally listed in 1974. If

Above: A young deer struggles through deep snow in this photo captured by this reporter's trail camera in March of 2014. Deep snow is the biggest challenge for deer survival in the North Country and many areas of the North Country saw even deeper and denser snowpack this past winter than in 2014, further impacting the deer population.

Below: A wolf, captured on a trail camera, near Tower. Like most predators, the wolf population is largely dependent on its prey base to survive. photos by M. Helmberger



wolves were a primary limiting factor on deer numbers, we would have expected that federal listing would have kept the deer from recovering. But two things happened starting in the 1980s. The DNR began an intensive period of timber harvesting that lasted for about 25 years and the winters grew generally milder. Deer populations boomed in response to these changes and hunter success increased dramatically. The average annual harvest in the 1980s was 125,000 deer, which was the highest ever recorded up to that point.

That trend continued for the next 20 years, however, and by the 2000s, the average annual deer harvest had hit another record, at 240,000, with a peak

harvest of 290,500 in 2003.

Keep in mind, by the 2000s, the wolf population in northeastern Minnesota was fully recovered with densities at least as high as today, if not higher. Indeed, the highest wolf population estimate the DNR has ever issued was in the winter of 2003-04, at just under 3,000, or about ten percent higher than the current estimate.

That's right—in the 2000s, record high wolf numbers co-existed happily with a record deer population. Many hunters likely remember those days, with our bonus deer tags and bag limits in some local permit areas of up to five antlerless deer. DNR

See WOLF/DEER...pg. 5B

Outdoors briefly

DNR faces critical shortage of black spruce cones

REGIONAL—If you're looking to make some extra cash this winter, consider gathering black spruce cones for the Department of Natural Resources.

The DNR's state forest nursery is critically short of black spruce cones and are paying \$100 per bushel for people to go out and gather them, mostly from recent black spruce timber sales. The cones contain seeds that can allow the DNR to create the next generation of seedlings for reforestation efforts. The DNR reforests about 3,000 acres of black spruce forest annually.

"Over the last few years, the number of collectors has decreased and we are in critical need of black spruce cones," said Sarah Ebert, state forest nursery manager. "Collecting black spruce now is a great way to earn some cash before the holidays."

People interested in collecting black spruce cones should first contact one of the DNR's seed drop-off stations to get information and instructions on collecting, handling and labeling the cones. The DNR Forestry seed drop-off stations that are buying black spruce cones include Hibbing, Littlefork, Orr, and Tower.

Only high-quality, ripe, closed black spruce cones free of stems and debris are eligible for purchase. The window to collect and sell viable black spruce cones is open now through February 2024.

Fishing reports

Ely area

Early ice reports varied greatly from angler to angler, last weekend, from not enough to walk on to seven inches of good clear ice. Thickest ice was commonly found in sheltered bays and close to shorelines. Further out from shore people ventured, the thinner the ice became.

Tip up fishing for pike was a popular choice last weekend as anglers were able to find good ice on popular pike bays. Medium to large suckers and frozen smelt proved to be very effective. Anglers focused their efforts in shallow, weedy bays, in 5-10 feet of water.

While thick enough ice to safely reach walleye spots was somewhat limited, anglers managed to find some walleyes at the mouth of shallow bays and weedlines. Anglers fishing here caught walleyes with buckshot spoons, tipped with a minnow head and a minnow fished under a tip-up, in 15-18 feet of water. Best fishing was right at sundown.

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

WOLF/DEER...Continued from page 4B

wildlife managers at the time bemoaned the possibility of an out-of-control deer population, as seen in many parts of Wisconsin, where deer start to do real damage to forests and agriculture.

Harsher winters returned in the late 2000s and reduced deer numbers somewhat, which seemed to calm the fears of wildlife managers. And then we had the winters of 2012-13 and 2013-14, both of which featured very deep snow that persisted through virtually all of April. Deer numbers, not surprisingly, crashed as did deer registrations in our region the following season.

In 2012, before those back-to-back severe winters, hunters registered a total of 8,896 deer combined in PAs 176, 177, and 178, which comprise the bulk of St. Louis County. Just two years later, that combined figure fell to just 2,800 deer. Winters, not wolves, were responsible for that decline.

Since then, we've had a series of moderately severe to severe winters, with winter severity indices regularly at or above 120, due mostly to deep, dense snowcover. Last winter was mild for temperatures but we had a record snowpack in many parts of the Arrowhead, and that undoubtedly impacted deer populations. As wildlife managers will tell you, snow depth and the length of time with deep snow are the most important factors for deer winter survival.

It's worth noting that the worst of the deer decline has been seen in northeastern Minnesota, even though wolf range now easily covers half the state. But northeastern Minnesota tends to have the toughest winters, so the population has been slower to recover here than elsewhere.

Carrying capacity

Another factor that has gotten less attention in this debate is the issue of habitat. A land base can accommodate a certain

number of any species of wildlife and that's determined primarily by food supply, and winter shelter in cold climates like ours. While the 1980s-2000s timber boom in our region boosted the food supply for deer, as that boom continued, winter cover became the limiting factor in some parts of our region. What's more, while timber harvest provides deer food as the new forest regenerates, that window of opportunity is limited to the first four or five years. After that, the fresh growth is out of reach of deer. Unfortunately, we currently have an over-supply of 20-30-year-old aspen forest in our region, which offers poor deer habitat. There's little to eat in those stands and the understory, such as balsam fir, which tends to grow in over time under aspen, has yet to develop to the point where it can provide good winter cover. In other words, a lot of our current forest is largely worthless as deer (or moose) habitat

and that is going to limit the number of deer area forests can support.

Fewer hunters

One other factor that is clearly impacting the state's deer harvest is the decline in the number of deer hunters. Ten years ago, the DNR sold 391,000 deer licenses, compared to 342,000 in 2022. Since non-existent hunters don't shoot deer, we would expect registrations to drop by 12.5 percent for this reason alone, regardless of the actual deer population.

Not surprisingly, that decline in deer hunters has been even more pronounced in most permit areas in our region. Back in 2012, when deer were plentiful up here, we had 31,919 hunters out in the field in PAs 118, 119, 176, 177, and 178 combined. By 2022, that number had fallen to 22,460, a 30-percent decline. Yes, that is because some hunters are choosing to hunt elsewhere in the state where winters are milder and antlerless

permits are more plentiful. But even if the deer population had remained unchanged during that ten-year period, we would still expect to see registrations fall by about 30 percent, simply because there were fewer hunters out there.

Finally, let's combine some of these data points. We know that the number of hunters is down. We also know that the number of antlerless permits is way down from the last peak in 2012. So, let's compare apples to apples and look at the buck registrations. Regardless of how many doe tags are issued, virtually every hunter I know up here (myself included) will always take a buck first.

Back in 2012, hunters in our five comparison permit areas registered 5,684 bucks. Divided by the number of hunters, that means 17.8 percent of hunters tagged a buck. In 2022, 30 percent fewer hunters in those same permit areas registered 2,637 bucks, for an 11.7

percent success rate. That's a reduction in the hunter success rate for bucks of one-third. And that's compared to a year when deer were unquestionably plentiful.

Yes, the deer population is down, but it is nowhere near a crash, as the data makes clear. And while wolves, like car crashes, disease, and hunting mortality all play a role, the data points to winter severity as the primary driver of deer numbers in our region. The sky isn't falling and the deer population remains below goal but hardly in a state of imminent demise. A few mild winters, like we seem to be experiencing this year, and the deer population is certain to rebound. As the data proves, the reproductive potential of the white-tailed deer can far outpace the impact of predation.

FORECAST...Continued from page 4B

northern finches this winter. It's hard to know what that means for our region, since most northern finches are summer residents here as well, so a southerly irruption could take them out of our region.

Perhaps the most coveted northern finch in our area is the pine grosbeak and it's one of the only ones (other than redpolls) that don't spend summers here as well, so we always rely on some southerly migration to fill our feeders with these favorites. Since we are part of their normal winter range, it's a rare year that we don't have pine grosbeaks. The forecast suggests there should be a typical, perhaps robust movement of these beauties into the area, although from what I'm hearing to date, there are few pine grosbeaks at area feeders. I know there are some in the woods, since I've been hearing their sweet songs since late October but, so far, they seem to be finding natural foods. Pine grosbeaks love wild fruits,

especially mountain ash berries and we had a pretty decent crop this year so they may be just sticking to the woods for now and will show up at area feeders later in the season.

The forecast also suggests relatively little movement of evening grosbeaks, except in northwestern Ontario, where they expect an exodus due to the generally poor cone crop. That could mean an exodus from our region as well, since our area is contiguous with northwestern Ontario. While there are some evening grosbeaks around, it appears their numbers are down significantly from last winter—at least at this point.

The forecast does portend a strong movement of pine siskins and that could keep area feeders busy this winter with these small but aggressive finches. We've had a few showing up at our feeders, but not in great numbers to date. Siskins, like redpolls, often show up at feeders in greater numbers as the winter drags on and their

natural food sources are diminished.

While the forecast doesn't generally address goldfinches, we have had a few of them still at our feeders in recent days.

They generally head south this time of year, but the mild conditions and lack of snowcover may keep more of them in the area this winter.

Of course, one thing

that has been apparent with the finch forecast from the beginning is that it is mostly speculation based on a relatively limited amount of data. Without a doubt, forecasting the movements

of birds, at least with our current level of knowledge, is a lot harder than forecasting the weather.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
39 23					29 15					24 12					24 20					21 14				

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.
11/27	25	4	0.11	2.5"	11/27	26	7	0.03	0.8"	11/27	25	7	0.08	1.5"	11/27	12	1	0.00		11/27	25	7	0.08	.02"
11/28	11	3	0.00		11/28	13	-6	0.00		11/28	11	-2	0.00		11/28	28	-8	0.00		11/28	10	-3	0.00	
11/29	27	6	0.00		11/29	25	22	0.00		11/29	27	-3	0.00		11/29	39	21	0.00		11/29	28	-3	0.00	
11/30	38	12	0.00		11/30	40	28	0.00		11/30	39	20	0.00		11/30	32	16	0.00		11/30	41	23	0.00	
12/01	31	12	0.00		12/01	32	6	0.00		12/01	29	18	0.00		12/01	34	16	0.00		12/01	32	10	0.00	
12/02	33	na	0.00		12/02	34	5	0.00		12/02	33	7	0.00		12/02	34	10	0.00		12/02	34	7	0.00	
12/03	32	na	0.00		12/03	33	6	0.00		12/03	30	7	0.00		12/03	34	28	0.00		12/03	34	9	0.00	
YTD Total	23.53 10.9"				YTD Total	24.99 4.9"				YTD Total	20.11 8.2"				YTD Total	NA				YTD Total	23.76 5.1"			

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For inquiries, contact info@vermilioncountry.org and/or 218-248-2485

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Breitung Township St. Louis County, Minnesota Notice of Filing for Town Offices to be Elected

Notice is hereby given that a town election will be held in the Township of Breitung, St. Louis County, Minnesota, on Tuesday, the 12th day of March, 2024.

The first day for filing affidavits of candidacy will be Tuesday, January 2nd, 2024. The last day will be Tuesday, the 16th of January, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Filings may be made with the Township Clerk, Dianna Sundahl. You can make an appointment by calling 218-753-6020, or visit our website for forms and mail them along with the filing fee to: Breitung Township, PO Box 56, Soudan, MN 55782

The following terms will be expiring: Supervisor Seat #2 for the term of 3 years Clerk for the term of 2 years

Filing fee is \$2.00

Dianna Sundahl, Township Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 8 & 15, 2023

KABETOGAMA TOWNSHIP Notice of Filing for Town Offices to be Elected

Notice is hereby given that a town election will be held in the Kabetogama Township, St. Louis County, Minnesota, on Tuesday, the 12th day of March, 2024.

The first day for filing affidavits of candidacy will be Tuesday, January 2, 2024. The last day will be Tuesday, the 16th day of January, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Filings may be made with Clerk Mary Manninen. You can either make an appointment by calling 240-9325 or the Town Hall at 875-2082 or emailing kabtown@frontier.com. You may file without appointment by coming into the Town Hall on Tuesday, January 16th, 2024, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The following terms will be expiring: Supervisor for the term of three years Clerk for the term of two years

Filing fee is \$2.00.

Mary Manninen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 8 & 15, 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

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

King Crossword

- ACROSS 1 "Kapow!" 4 British ref. work 7 Holler 12 Director Spike 13 Chemical suffix 14 Fall sign 15 Nest egg acronym 16 Large, luxurious car 18 Brooch 19 Range 20 Collections 22 - tear (ragging) 23 First lady of scat 27 Earth Day mo. 29 Transparent 31 Dolphins' home 34 Traces of smoke 35 Agile 37 Obtained 38 Bygone Peruvian 39 Flamenco cheer 41 Vacillate 45 Quick trip 47 Shoe width 48 Pungent cheese 52 Aachen article

11x11 crossword grid with numbers 1-58 indicating starting points for words.

- 53 Sports figures? 54 Zsa Zsa's sister 55 Speck 56 Dunkable treat 57 River blocker 58 Actor Brynner 7 Pivot 8 That guy's 9 Kimono sash 10 Samovar 11 - kwon do 17 Ellipse 21 Ballroom dance 23 Radiates 24 Vinyl records 25 Back talk 26 Billboards 28 Picnic dessert 30 - Jima 31 Roman 1051 32 "There's no - team!" 33 "Better Call Saul" network 36 Bellow 37 Swiss metropolis 40 Sledded in the Winter Olympics 42 Like a neglected garden 43 Vowel group 44 Streisand title role 45 Equitable 46 Streetcar 48 Leary's drug 49 Jurist Lance 50 Fortify 51 A/C meas.

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: Z equals H

IZC RN QZT EYZDAEQDYQF NL D GTKQDEY FNWQZTDFQ DFEDY EFM DYR DMIDCF FTTS FN LTDKLMW? ATGDWFT QZTC'KT QESNK-NWF.

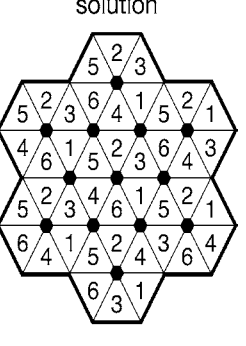
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Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

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. Uncover ___ V ___ ___ Revoke ___ P ___ ___ 2. Georgia fruit ___ E ___ ___ Steam cook an egg ___ O ___ ___ 3. Join together ___ ___ ___ N More rapidly ___ ___ ___ R 4. Dedicate ___ V ___ ___ Designate ___ N ___ ___ 5. Really speedy ___ ___ C ___ Idiosyncrasy ___ ___ R ___ 6. Correct R ___ ___ No longer dark L ___ ___ 7. Twisted cord ___ ___ N ___ More than once ___ ___ C ___ 8. Fissure ___ ___ C ___ Gulp of air ___ ___ T ___ 9. Calvary sword ___ A ___ Clear-headed ___ O ___ ___ 10. Energetic and perky ___ I ___ ___ Beautiful ___ O ___ ___

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SELL It HERE

Super Crossword

Answers grid for Super Crossword: ROADGAMES BOWSTO UGGS INNERSOLE UNITED SIRI LICEINWONDERLAND INON ETERNENAINAIR INAWEEARNEDSOMETHINGNEW CRUSTOOO PROOFS DRE OER FENCES UNIP TSD MAGECONSULTANT TORO ADENOID IAGOVICUNAS FOE HEATERDISTRICT EPEE DOC MAP ICKY RAVELINGABROAD NOT ALABAMA REEK GORILLA CLOP ADDEROF SUCCESS CRUE USB FAMOUS NAH RIA AGOUTI ALIORATE ASTERNSTANDARDTIME SOILS TRAIT NAVAHO STOW ALITTLE OFFTHE TOP ETNA RENAIL RELEASEME ROSY CAGNEY REALSTEEL

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

Considerations of personal privacy, time and resources prevent the newspaper from investigating ads placed in the classified section.

Try out the Timberjay classifieds. Line classifieds cost 30¢/word, \$6.00 minimum. Classified ads can be run a second time at half price (private parties only).

MARINE. Centrally Located On Lake Vermilion. Covered Wet & Dry Boat Storage. Lease or Purchase Options.

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ARONSON BOAT WORKS. LAKE VERMILION, TOWER. Located two miles southwest of Tower on Hwy. 169. NEW Fall Hours: Mon-Sat: 8:30 AM-5 PM Sun: 9 AM-4 PM

HELP WANTED. Help Wanted: McCarthy Beach State Park Year-Round General Maintenance Lead Worker for more details and to apply visit mn.gov/mmb/careers. 12/1v

Don't Miss a Single Issue. SUBSCRIBE TODAY. (218) 753-2950. timberjay.com

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.

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.

Super Crossword TRIMMING UP

ACROSS 1 Sports events played by visiting teams. 10 Obeys reluctantly. 16 Boho-chic Aussie boots. 20 Arched shoe part. 21 Part of U.K. 22 She talks on iPhones. 23 Parasites plaguing the Cheshire cat? 25 A party to. 26 Everlasting, poetically. 27 Above ground. 28 Bedazzled. 29 Worked to get a different reward? 35 Pizza base. 38 Tic-tac-toe win. 39 Geometry assignments. 40 "Dr." who raps. 41 Above, poetically. 42 Yard separators. 45 Prefix with cyclist. 46 Combat vet's affliction, for short.

Even Exchange answers. 1. Reveal, Repeal. 2. Peach, Poach. 3. Fasten, Faster. 4. Devote, Denote. 5. Quick, Quirk. 6. Right, Light. 7. Twine, Twice. 8. Breach, Breath. 9. Saber, Sober. 10. Lively, Lovely.

SELL It HERE. CryptoQuip answer. Why do the inhabitants of a certain Southeast Asian island always seem so fearful? Because they're Timor-ous.

Weekly SUDOKU Answer. A 9x9 grid with numbers 1-9 in a pattern.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-116 in various positions across and down.

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.

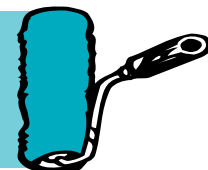
AA FRIDAYS- 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 262 E Harvey St., Ely. Meets in the basement.

King Crossword Answers. Solution time: 26 mins. BAM OED SHOUT, LEE IDE LIBRA, IRA LIMOUSINE, PIN STOVE, SETS ONA ELLA, APR LIMPID, MIAMI WISPS, LIMBER GOT, INCA OLE SWAY, JAUNT EEE, LIMBURGER ETN, STATS EVA DOT, DONUT DAM YUL.

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