



**Inside:**

**WELY planning April restart...** See /3

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**Warmest winter ever...** See /4B

**USFS seeking BWCAW volunteers...** See /4B

# The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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\$1<sup>50</sup>

**TRAGEDY**

## One dead in Shagawa Lake house fire

by **CATIE CLARK**  
Ely Editor

**MORSE TWP-** An as-yet unidentified individual died in a house fire here on Sunday afternoon. While the name of the deceased had not yet been released as of press time, the home, located at 1406 Grant McMahan Blvd., is owned by Carol Lindbeck, according to county records.

The blaze was discovered by Steven Brandt and his girlfriend when the two stopped by to visit Lindbeck, an elderly woman who Brandt described as a family friend.

“We arrived close to 1:30 p.m.,” Brandt said at the scene of fire, “and saw the smoke.” Concerned for the elderly Lindbeck, the couple immediately called

911 and the Morse-Fall Lake Fire Department was on the scene within minutes, with Ted Kreuger handling incident command. The Ely and Babbitt fire departments also responded.

A statement from the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office reported that that public safety agencies responded to the fire at 1:18

**Right: Morse-Fall Lake firefighters work to douse the blaze at the home of Carol Lindbeck, of rural Ely.**

photo by C. Clark

p.m. The northern St. Louis County dispatch scanner channel broadcasted reports

See...**FIRE** pg. 9



**EMS**

## Greenwood pressured to contribute to ambulance

by **JODI SUMMIT**  
Tower-Soudan Editor

**TOWER-** Greenwood Town Board Chair John Bassing faced some of the toughest pushback to date at a meeting of the Tower Ambulance Commission here on Monday as members of the commission repeatedly urged him to get his township to restart contributions to the city of Tower’s ambulance replacement account.

Representatives from Breitung, Vermilion Lake, Kugler, and Eagles Nest townships, as well as the city of Tower, all said their boards were in support of increasing the subsidy payment to \$25 per capita, though Vermilion Lake representative Frank Zobitz said his township would formally vote on the issue at their annual

See...**PRESSURE** pg. 9

## Babbitt EMS steers clear of controversy

Provides ALS service and keeps its finances above water

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**  
Managing Editor

**BABBITT**— At a time when many of the region’s small town ambulance services are struggling financially, Babbitt’s city-run service is managing to keep its head above water, while providing advanced life support level care much of the time.

It’s a combination of frugal fiscal management, a bit of good fortune, and “a real culture of volunteerism,” which current ambulance director Matt Littler credits to his predecessor, Mike Rhein, who led the service for more than 20 years and still serves as an EMT.

Babbitt’s performance is impressive, but repeating its model is likely to be a challenge.

See...**BABBITT** pg. 9



**TRADITIONS**

## Learning the powwow way

VCS program highlights the history, styles, and importance of powwow

by **JODI SUMMIT**  
Tower-Soudan Editor

**TOWER-** Curt Moon, a veteran and elder, led the dancers into the makeshift arena in the commons area at Vermilion Country School. The Lake Vermilion Singers drum group was seated at the center. A ring of chairs enclosed the space, with students and staff from the school respectfully standing. The dancers moved clockwise around the circle, like the sun moving from sunrise to sunset. Holding his staff

lined with eagle feathers, he led almost 20 dancers as they moved around the drum circle.

“We stand during the grand entry song to acknowledge all the good things that are going to happen here,” said Jeremy Wilson, a member of the drum group. Wilson explained that coming to Tower was a bit of a homecoming for him, having spent a year or two at Tower-Soudan High School and playing basketball as a Golden Eagle. Wilson, who lives in

See...**POWWOW** pg. 10



**COUNTY SCHOOLS**

## District to cut 11 teacher positions

by **DAVID COLBURN**  
Cook/Orr Editor

**TOWER-** After saying for months that staff reductions were on the table due to budgetary concerns, ISD 2142 Superintendent Reggie Engebretson delivered the bad

news to school board members at Tuesday’s meeting: 11 teaching positions will have to be eliminated to stay within the district’s 2024-25 projected budget.

“We looked at the numbers and what the class sizes were,” Engebretson said. “Right

sizing is the term that we use based on the numbers. We’re making the cuts that (district finance director Kim Johnson) has recommended in order to help with the budget. We’re fortunate to say that we’re not having to lay off any tenured staff.”

The cuts will affect probationary teachers at four of the district’s five schools, excluding Tower-Soudan, where Tuesday’s meeting was held.

“We’ll keep watching the numbers and re-evaluating,”

See...**LAYOFFS** pg. 9



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Community notices

**ERFA to host Health Care Appreciation Pancake Breakfast Saturday, March 2**

EMBARRASS – The Embarrass Region Fair Association invites all to head to Timber Hall located at 4855 Highway 21 on March 2 from 8-11 a.m., for all-you-can-eat pancakes, choice of ham or sausage links, fruit cup, juice, and a bottomless cup of coffee. Cost for breakfast is \$7 for adults, children (6-10 years) \$4, and under 5 years free. In appreciation of health care workers, they eat free at this month's breakfast.

After breakfast, give the gift of life by donating blood at the Memorial Blood Centers bloodmobile. Visit [mbc.org/iDonate](http://mbc.org/iDonate) to pre-register and then wrap up the morning by purchasing Girl Scout cookies from Hoyt Lakes Girl Scout Troop 1807. This is also your last chance to take home donated books and puzzles.

**HOG members mark calendar for March 6**

HIBBING - The early spring supper meet for all Harley Owners Group (HOG) members is scheduled for March 6 at the Pizza Ranch in Hibbing. The meet begins at 5:30 p.m.

**Cook Thrift Shop returns to regular hours**

COOK - Starting Feb. 29, the thrift shop will resume regular hours. It will be open for shopping every Thursday, Friday, and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month. Shop hours are 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., and donations are welcome during these hours, as well as on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Please, do not leave donations outside if there are no workers there to receive them. For more information and updates, visit Cook Area Healthcare Auxiliary Thrift Shop on Facebook.

**Local employers encouraged to sign up for upcoming job fair(s)**

ELY- Employer sign-ups are now open for the Northforce Program job fair in Ely on April 16, which will be at the Vermilion Campus of Minnesota North College. This is one of four job fairs that the Northforce Program is holding at different Minnesota North College campuses in April.

Each job fair will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The other campuses hosting job fairs are Hibbing, Itasca, and Rainy River. Interested employers should contact Northspan Consultants' Northforce Program Manager, Ali Bilden Camps, at 218-481-7737 or [acamps@northspan.org](mailto:acamps@northspan.org). Registration for one job fair is \$50. Registration for all four is \$100.

**Finnish Americans and Friends meeting March 5**

HIBBING - Everyone is invited to the Tuesday, March 5, Finnish Americans and Friends program at Grace Lutheran Church located at 4010 9th Ave W. Ed Eklin of Grand Rapids will tell of his Finnish background, starting with his early life near Grand Rapids, and after a 60-year absence, his return to the area. He has many interesting experiences to share. Attendees can look forward to a social time with beverages and other treats as well. The program begins at 2 p.m.

**Department of Revenue will start reissuing over 128,000 expired one-time tax rebate checks next week**

ST. PAUL – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced today that they will be reissuing over 128,000 one-time tax rebate checks that have gone uncashed and subsequently expired after their November and December issuance dates. The mailing of reissued checks will start next week and should be completed by mid-March.

**What do the checks look like?**

Unlike previously mailed checks, these will be mailed from the state of Minnesota. The checks are still protected by standard banking safeguards that help detect and deter fraud.

**Is the one-time tax rebate taxable?**

This rebate payment is not taxable on your Minnesota income tax return. The Internal Revenue Service determined this rebate to be taxable on the federal return. Due to this decision, all rebate recipients were sent a Form 1099-MISC to use when filing their 2023 individual income tax returns. If you include this payment in your federal adjusted gross income, subtract it from Minnesota taxable income on line 33 of Schedule M1M and on line 10 of Form M1PR on your state returns.

**What if an eligible taxpayer still has not received a rebate?**

We will work with taxpayers who are eligible but did not get their rebate. If a taxpayer thinks they are eligible and didn't receive a rebate by May 1, 2024, they should contact the department at 651-556-3000.

EXPERTS IN SONG

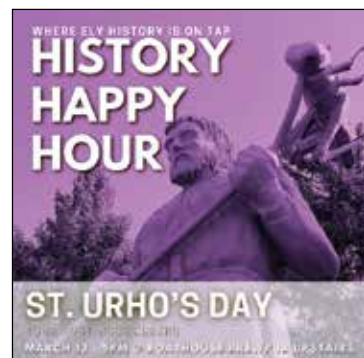
**The story behind St. Urho's Day**

History Happy Hour set for March 13 in Ely

ELY - Who is St. Urho? What is St. Urho's Day, and why is it celebrated in northern Minnesota and not the country of Finland? To find out the answers to these questions and more attend the upcoming History Happy Hour on Wednesday, March 13 beginning between 5-5:30 p.m. in the Lookout Lounge at the Boathouse

Brewpub & Restaurant. This event is free and open to the public.

This program is a collaboration between the Ely Heritage Preservation Commission and the Dorothy Molter Museum with hosting by the Boathouse and support from Boundary Waters Connect.



ARROWHEAD LIBRARY SYSTEM

**New art mini-kit at area libraries**

MT. IRON – “This is so you having fun!” exclaims Minnesota artist Mary Mulari in the instructional video for the upcoming library card record book take-and-create art kit, available throughout March at your local library.

In the video, Mulari has just glued on a quotation from provided clip art onto a vintage-style library book pocket. Six pockets are now fastened together with colorful tape. On the back of the pockets, Mulari has already made colorful lettering of “Read,” a stamp and a cute sticker.

“This is a project that is really a lot of fun, and I hope you find extra uses for it, too,” Mulari explains in her video.

Each month the Arrowhead Library System (ALS), through funding provided by the Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, offers a unique legacy event across the Arrowhead Region. March 1-30 member libraries will be distributing library card record book take-and-create art kits, created by Minnesota artist Mary Mulari, for beginners to explore bookmaking and paper arts through the use of traditional library materials.



“The question I get when someone sees the library card record book is, ‘How did you get the idea for this project?’ The simple answer is that I finally have created an easy and fun way to keep track of the books I've read!” explained Mulari. Using the pockets that were traditionally glued to the inside back covers of library books, along with the classic lined cards that recorded names and due dates for the books, this project makes a unique record of books you have read with one card for each month.

“Of course you can also use it in other ways,” Mulari added, “a monthly list of birthdays and anniversaries to remember, a recipe card collection, a record for bird watchers, and I'm sure the Arrow-

head Library System patrons will dream up even more uses which I hope they'll share.”

Mulari is a sewing artist and teacher from Aurora. She has previously created several successful felt sewing kits for the Arrowhead Library System including: eyewear/phone pouch, three button bowl and treasure bag craft.

Each library card record book take-and-create art kit will include project supplies including: library book pockets and cards, stickers, washi tape, clip art, glue stick and an illustrated instructional booklet. A ruler, pencil and pair of scissors will also be needed. A video tutorial can be found on YouTube by searching “Library Record Book” or through the Hoyt Lakes Public Library

account.

Each kit will have a feedback postcard, with a QR code, for patrons to share what they learned (along with their own unique ideas). This program is geared toward all ages, but children may need assistance. Please note, each location has a limited number of kits. Feel free to contact your local library for more information. Kits will be distributed at the following public libraries and ALS outreach locations in our area: Aurora, Babbitt, Cook, Ely, Eveleth, Gilbert, Hoyt Lakes, International Falls, Mt. Iron, Virginia, Arrowhead Library System Bookmobile Arrowhead Library System Mail-A-Book (\*patrons must qualify for Mail-A-Book services, kit may be modified in order to deliver by mail).

This program, sponsored by Arrowhead Library System, was funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. To learn more about ALS Legacy Events, visit [www.alslib.info](http://www.alslib.info) or like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/alslibinfo](http://www.facebook.com/alslibinfo).

**North Star Promise scholarship program available to students for first time starting in fall 2024**

HIBBING- Minnesota North College announces the launch of the state of Minnesota's North Star Promise Scholarship Program, which provides a “last dollar in” scholarship for students with Adjusted Gross Income of less than \$80,000 with the ultimate goal of expanding access to higher education and reducing the financial burden on students and their families.

The North Star Promise Scholarship Program is designed to make quality higher education more affordable and accessible to a broader range of students. Starting fall 2024 eligible students with an adjusted gross income less than \$80,000 will be eligible for the scholarship, which is a “last dollar in” and will cover remaining tuition and fees after federal Pell Grant and Minnesota State Grant funds are applied and any other scholarship or gift aid, allowing them to pursue their educational dreams without the overwhelming burden of student debt.

**To be eligible students must:**

- Be a Minnesota resident
  - Have a family Adjusted Gross Income\* (AGI) as reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Minnesota Dream Act Application below \$80,000
  - Attend a Minnesota public higher education institution or tribal college
  - Not be in default on a state or federal student loan
  - Be enrolled taking at least one credit
  - Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards
  - Have not already earned a baccalaureate degree
  - Be enrolled in a program or course of study that applies to a degree, diploma, or certificate
- What is the application process?**
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Minnesota Dream Act application
  - There is no additional appli-

cation beyond the FAFSA or Minnesota Dream Act application. The eligible college or university you are attending will assess your eligibility on a term-by-term basis and award North Star Promise Scholarships to all eligible students.

Dr. Michael Raich, President of Minnesota North College, expressed excitement about the launch of the North Star Promise Scholarship program, saying, “Our mission has always been to make quality education accessible to all. The North Star Promise Scholarship program is a significant step in that direction. It will empower students from diverse backgrounds to pursue their dreams, without the burden of financial hardship. We believe that this initiative will help shape the future of our community and open doors to countless opportunities.”

For more information about the North Star Promise Scholarship program please visit:

<https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mpg.cfm?pageid=2590>.

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LOCAL RADIO

# WELY looks at returning to the airwaves in April

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- After a wait of a year and a half, WELY, Ely's radio station, may soon be coming back to life. "We'll be getting back on the air in early to mid-April," said local radio personality "Trader" Craig Loughery, the once and future voice of WELY, and the spokesperson for Zoe Communications Inc., the current owner of the station.

Why the wait? The transmitter. "We were on the air for about two hours one afternoon in November," Loughery told the *Timberjay*. WELY turned on all the equipment and went live on Nov. 17, after a wait of several months for repairs to the station's antenna. Once the antenna was repaired, WELY turned on all the equipment and went on the air to evaluate the

station's performance, simulating the same programming on both the AM and FM frequencies according to FCC filings.

The old transmitter, originally rated between 20-25 kilowatts didn't perform to specs. "It wasn't even putting out six kilowatts," said Loughery. "It was breaking down like crazy."

The solution was a new, more powerful, transmitter—but that meant getting a license from the Federal Communications Commission, which just arrived earlier this month. "We applied in November and received it in February. That's fast for the FCC," remarked Loughery, commenting on the notoriously slow federal agency.

With the FCC license now in hand, the station's owners are looking for the right transmitter. "We're looking for the 50-kilo-



watt set," Loughery said, but noted that the unit eventually purchased could be different. Regardless of the new transmitter's final size, Loughery said it would extend the range for the station.

"The increased size means

we'll be able to reach all the way over to Hibbing."

**Off and on the air**

WELY's hiatus from broadcasting began on Dec. 1, 2022 after the Bois Forte Band, the former owner of the station,

shuttered the operation due to sustained financial losses. Zoe Communications Inc. of Shell Lake, Wis. Zoe committed to the purchase of the station in November 2022, but the transfer of the license and working through technical issues all took time. FCC approval for the transfer of the station's license came through in March 2023, but the new owners needed to repair the station's antenna, which required both good weather and an available repair crew. After a long eight months to complete the antenna repair, WELY fired up the old transmitter only to find it, too, needed repair or replacement.

In addition to the WELY AM and FM stations, Zoe owns three AM and six FM stations in northwestern Wisconsin.

PUBLIC HEALTH

# CDC to loosen COVID isolation rules

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The Centers for Disease Control is reportedly considering changing its COVID isolation guidelines so that infected people would no longer need to stay home if they've been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication, and their symptoms are mild and improving.

The *Washington Post* broke the news about two weeks ago that CDC officials were having internal discussions about modifying the COVID isolation guideline that's been in place since 2021, based on an understanding that the majority of people have developed some level of COVID resistance due to vaccination or prior infection.

The *Post* quoted noted Minnesota infectious-disease expert Michael Osterholm. "Public health has to be realistic," Osterholm said. "We have to try to get the most out of what people are willing to do. You can be abso-

lutely right in the science and yet accomplish nothing because no one will listen to you."

The CDC has not yet formally announced new guidelines, but in anticipation of the change Osterholm used his regular Feb. 22 Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy podcast to discuss the change in greater detail.

"This is a very nuanced issue, and I want to be clear that these guidelines are not about giving up, but are instead about adapting our policies and recommendations so they can be as impactful as possible, preventing as many potential serious illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths as possible," he said.

Osterholm said the science surrounding COVID transmission hasn't changed significantly since the first recommendation of ten days of isolation after being diagnosed or exhibiting symptoms. Yet he acknowledged that there is still much left to under-

stand about when and how much COVID viral shedding occurs to propagate the spread of the virus. Constant mutations of the virus have contributed to keeping the picture uncertain.

"We don't really understand fully what the science is today," he said. "This virus has changed and the data we have is two years old or older. We need to find an approach to isolation guidelines that will meet the public where they're at and in terms of both willingness and their ability to comply."

Putting the decision for isolation in the hands of those who may be suffering from COVID has been met with opposition from some health providers, but while Osterholm notes their reservations, he appears to believe the change is warranted to gain greater acceptance for some level of isolation from the general public.

"This is not bending to the will of the public at their convenience," he said. "This is about reality, to meet people where

they are. That's what public health is all about, and that's what prevention research is all about. You can have 100-percent effective intervention, but if

nobody uses it, you have zero impact. You can have a 15-percent effective intervention, but if more than half the people are using it, you may really

reduce and prevent some serious illness."

Osterholm also described the change as an *See COVID, pg. 5*

## VOTE DROBAC AND LOFQUIST • SUPERVISORS •

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# OPINION

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“CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW...ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS;”

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

## Editorial

### The big lies

How do we hold politicians accountable when they spread misinformation?

How do we achieve accountability for politicians who tell big lies? We're not talking about the little white lies that people tell every day without much thought. We're talking about the big ones, the intentional ones, the kind that impact the lives of real people and can alter public opinion through constant repetition, often told to the benefit of the teller.

We ask in connection with the story we reported on last week about the role of Roger Skraba in bringing the propaganda film “2000 Mules” to Ely’s Historic State Theater in 2022.

As we reported last week, the group, True the Vote, whose “investigation” into the 2020 presidential election formed the basis for “2000 Mules,” recently had to acknowledge in court that they had no evidence to back up any of their claims that ballot drop boxes had been stuffed in an organized effort by groups in Georgia and several other swing states backing then-candidate Joe Biden. Their denial was complete. In a seven-page court filing, the group’s attorney ticked through item after item, including recordings, witness and expert testimony, documents, notes, and a laundry list of other evidence that the group had claimed to have in their possession. But when faced with the obligation to produce all that evidence in court, the group finally acknowledged the truth. They had made it all up. Every last bit of it.

Some folks in Ely had told Mr. Skraba and his supporters at the time that this was the case. The film itself was full of gaping holes (as we reported at the time), not that many of the more than 100 area residents who turned out for the propaganda fest appeared to notice or care. In 2022, as is true today, claims that the 2020 election were stolen remain an article of faith in many Republican circles. Skraba undoubtedly recognized that and saw the airing of a flat-out lie as a good way to launch his campaign for the Legislature. It was a chance for Skraba and his rogues’ gallery of also-rans like Chad Walsh and Doug Wardlow to prove their allegiance to the cause and hand out dozens of lawn signs at the same time.

While Walsh and Wardlow were, thankfully, defeated, Skraba narrowly beat Rep. Rob Ecklund, as solid a lawmaker as we could hope to have, from District 3A.

As a sitting member of the state House, we wanted to know if Skraba had any second thoughts

over the tremendous disservice he committed against the people of his district for bringing obvious misinformation to area voters. As we always do with stories such as this, we offered Mr. Skraba an opportunity to talk about his decision. We also asked whether he still believes that the 2020 election was stolen. We asked how the showing of propaganda benefitted the people of the district he now represents. We asked, finally, if he had any regrets about bringing the film to Ely. We sent questions to his legislative email and left a phone message with his legislative aide, indicating we wished to speak to him about the matter.

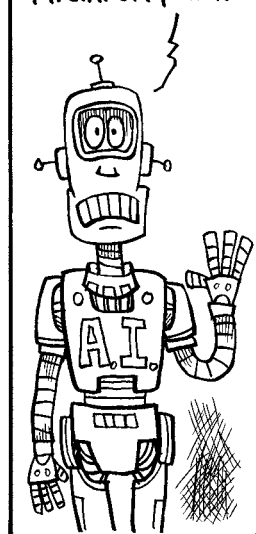
As of last week, we had received no response, and that was still the case as of this week. Skraba’s lack of response speaks volumes about his views on accountability. He doesn’t believe he should be subject to it, regardless of his actions.

Mr. Skraba may tell himself that spreading propaganda to voters is a victimless act, but that’s far from the case. If elections were rigged, exposing that would be critical and something that newspapers would happily investigate and report on. But telling the public that elections are rigged, when in fact they are not, undermines the public’s already slipping support for democracy. Telling the public that “fake news” won’t report on election fraud, and that they need to turn to propagandists like the producers of “2000 Mules,” undermines the public’s already slipping support for its professional new sources. That further isolates many voters from sources of information that are reliable and which try to present varying viewpoints.

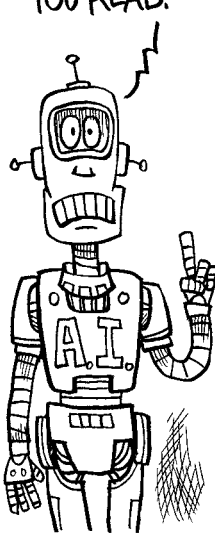
As journalists here at the *Timberjay*, we recognize that giving Mr. Skraba an opportunity to address his actions and our concerns about them is important, not only because it improves our reporting but because we have an ethical obligation to present his views.

As an elected official, Mr. Skraba has an obligation as well, and that is to explain himself. If he has an explanation, or an apology, for his actions, he should make it publicly—that’s accountability. We have far too many politicians these days relying on falsehoods to make their political case and refusing to accept responsibility for their actions. Today, we’re calling out Roger Skraba as one of them.

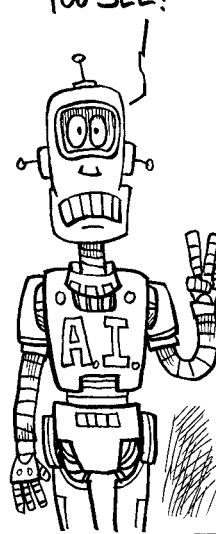
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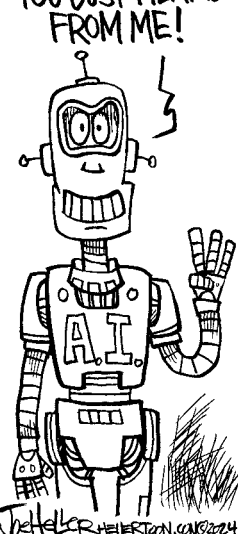
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YOU READ!



#2. DON'T  
BELIEVE  
EVERYTHING  
YOU SEE!



AND #3.  
DON'T BELIEVE  
EVERYTHING  
YOU JUST HEARD  
FROM ME!



## Letters from Readers

### Critical thinking is critical to our democracy

Our nation is in serious trouble. Even the tumultuous 60’s do not compare with what’s happening around us today. We are a divided people, and I’m exceedingly worried about our survival as a democracy.

How did we arrive at this crisis? I believe there are several factors. First, the past several decades spawned broadcasts on both TV and radio that people regard as news when they are anything but news. They are commentary, hosted by people who have their opinions and want to convince others to believe them. They give one-sided versions of issues. And both sides of our national divide have them.

Second, social media platforms thrive on sensationalism. By nature, people are more attracted to emotional content that may arouse anger, hostility, or disgust than to rational content. So, posts that are inflammatory tend to be spread most widely. Wide readership is what makes the social media platforms more money. Spreading outrageous misinformation is great for the bottom line. The platforms have no economic incentive to prevent, debunk or remove shocking, but unfounded, “news.” In fact, there is disincentive to do so.

Third, most Americans might believe themselves to be independent, free thinkers. I doubt that. To be free independent thinkers, we must question everything we hear or read. And, we have to consider opinions that differ from our own. How

many of us purposefully listen to views that are different from the ones we already hold? Human nature drives us to seek validation. We are steered to “news” accounts that support our existing beliefs.

A democracy cannot thrive without a citizenry that is well-informed and thinks *critically* before reacting. According to a Pew Research Service study, almost 90 percent of U.S. adults get their news from a smartphone. I suspect that a substantial portion of that information comes from social media, not the websites of reputable news outlets. That’s scary given that social media platforms thrive on fast, widespread dissemination of information, whether it’s accurate or downright false. The need for speed precludes getting the same scrutiny as traditional, reliable news outlets get. Misinformation abounds.

How do we see past the misinformation and get the facts? We cannot know with complete certainty what is fact and what is not. Sometimes it’s tough to sort out. But we can approach the truth more closely by being more mindful of the nature of the message. Ask yourself if the source addresses only one side of an issue, or if the source targets your emotions rather than your intellect, or constantly espouses the same message. Unscrupulous people know the more often people hear a narrative, the more they will tend to believe it, so it’s repeated often.

By using our God-given brains, we can avoid an impending catastrophe. Sort out the news from the hype. Don’t blindly follow the oth-

er sheep in the herd. Consider points of view other than your own. Use social media exclusively to communicate with your friends—actual friends you know personally, not strangers who might have “friended” you. Be aware that someone who provokes divisiveness does not have our own or our nation’s best interest in mind. Talk to the other side, while allowing that they just might have some valid points. If we can do more of this, our democracy has a chance to survive and even thrive. If not, well, I guess we’ll reap what we have sown.

**Rich Floyd Ely**

### Vote for the incumbents

After a number of years of being embarrassed to admit I was from Greenwood Township due to all the bad press, it is wonderful to be proud to once again say this is where I live. Let’s keep the same people in office and keep it that way!

**Marilyn Mueller Greenwood Township**

### We welcome your letters

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

## COMMENTARY

# The death of major college sports as we’ve known it

Well over a hundred years ago, alarms were being sounded about the deleterious effects of sports on the world of higher education. Football, played without pads or helmets in the early days, was deemed so brutal that the Harvard faculty voted to end its football program in 1884 for two years. Of note there, it was the faculty, professors and instructors, who made the decision, not college administrators. That practice continued into the early



**DAVID COLBURN**

part of the 20th century, when in 1905 faculty organizations eliminated football at Columbia, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of California,

Nevada, Stanford, and a few other institutions.

A 1929 Carnegie Foundation report, “American College Athletics,” somewhat ironically authored by a gentleman with the last name of Savage, summed up the objections to foot-

ball and the incursion of athletics into higher education in the late 1800s and early 1900s thusly: “They included charges of ‘over-exaggeration,’ demoralization of the college and of academic work, dishonesty, betting and gambling, professionalism, recruiting and subsidizing, the employment and payment of the wrong kind of men as coaches, the evil effects of college athletics upon (high) school athletics, the roughness and brutality of football, extravagant expenditures of money, and the general corruption of youth by the monster of athleticism.”

If ever there were a

case to be made for history repeating itself, this would be it.

The road to today’s oblivion began innocently enough on Sept. 30, 1939 with the first televised broadcast of a football game between Fordham University and Waynesburg College, a pair of afterthoughts in today’s world of big-time college athletics. Ten years earlier the Carnegie report concluded that, “There was a general lack of comprehension respecting the implications of college sport and a complete failure to foresee the development that it was destined to undergo,” and certainly no one watching that

first broadcast could have imagined how billions of dollars would eventually be funneled into college athletics via television broadcast rights.

Where money flows, litigation is sure to follow, and in 1984 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the National Collegiate Athletic Association’s broadcast plan was a violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act. This opened the door for individual conferences like the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and schools such as Notre Dame to negotiate their own broadcast deals. This year we’ve seen the wholesale implosion of traditional athletic con-

ferences, with the PAC-12 losing all but two of its teams to the Big 10, SEC, and Big 12. The Big 10 and Big 12 obviously don’t care about basic academics, either, as neither conference has had those numbers of members for years. What those names have is recognizable marketing power, something more important that mathematical accuracy these days. But traditional rivalries are falling by the wayside as institutions clamor for more and more almighty dollars to feed their ravenous sports beasts.

See **SPORTS...**pg. 5

## More context needed in candidate's claims

In 2014, Greenwood had \$1.34 million in reserves due to some needlessly high levies. With the exception of a \$100,000 levy in 2016 and a one-dollar levy in 2017, Greenwood residents have approved a \$150,000 levy or less over the last ten years. For nearly a decade, the township has responsibly used funds the residents have approved at the annual meeting. So much so that we currently have nearly \$500,000 invested in CDs with ample operating funds available.

This year the budget process has proposed a slight increase in the levy from that original 2015 levy to \$175,000 due to the long overdue repaving of the parking lot. Another important issue and an even longer overdue project is the repair of Township Road 4136, more commonly known as the Birch Point Extension. By the nature of the road itself, there is no easy fix for the road's condition. The current board has been researching the next steps to move those repairs forward. As more in-

formation is gained it'll be brought forward in future board meetings.

The township election is on March 12 with two supervisor seats expiring. I would hope you've noticed that one of the challengers shows intent to bring that \$1.34 million in reserves back into play for reasons known only to the candidate. No explanation has been given as to why the additional surplus funds are even necessary. The state auditor recommends that the township should have 35-50 percent of its annual expenditures in surplus non-dedicated funds. Clearly Greenwood exceeds that recommendation. Please keep in mind that the major assets of Greenwood Township are covered by insurance and there are processes available to the township to cover any expenditures above and beyond what we currently have in reserve.

I see a lack of understanding by the candidate of the reasons that led to the reorganization of the fire department, as the candidate has only recently been attending board meetings. The same can be said for how the ambulance replacement fund works and what seems to be the lack of how an in-

dennification agreement in the contract with the Tower Area Ambulance Service creates risks to Greenwood Township.

The candidate is correct in the statement Greenwood can't "seek a better" ambulance service provider on its own. That process has been well publicized over the past two years and has been a major component of the dialogue in the township's pursuit in obtaining paramedic ambulance service for our growing and aging community from its inception.

I'm hopeful the voters of Greenwood Township will take the time to exercise their right to vote. What's even more beneficial to the voters is attending the annual meeting on election night. This is your opportunity to bring your ideas and concerns forward by voicing and voting your intentions for the coming year. It is without doubt that there are township issues at hand that will affect all the residents going forward. I feel that your votes for the current and experienced board will allow it to continue to work in is in the best interests of the township.

**Rick Stoehr  
Greenwood**

## Roskoski has made many inaccurate claims

Lois Roskoski has made many claims in the letters she has written. She commonly refers to being "open, honest and transparent." If that were true, why was an email/letter that was circulated by Lois not openly and transparently distributed to everyone?

I am also confused by Lois's statement, "handle the township issues in a professional manner." An example of professional behavior would be to resolve the issues at hand and not hide from things that are politically difficult. Tough decisions can be unpopular but are often necessary.

I do not understand her comment of "issues stemming from personalities and infighting" when speaking of the fire department.

That is not how I define the lack of equipment maintenance and the lack of response to emergencies. I agree that it is important to have trained employees, but I believe it is equally important that they respond to 911 pages.

With eleven employees responding to less than five 911 pages in a year, three had not recorded any activity in over a year and several had returned their fire gear. Does she realize that the current fire department members read the paper. I question why Lois does not contact them and ask them what they think. Maybe it is easier to listen to just one side?

Lois lists as her qualifications "experience in administering elections". While filling out her election candidacy forms, she asked if she would be able to run for both open supervisor seats for the March 12 election. For anyone wondering, that is not allowed.

The office of the clerk and treasurer have been more than open with Lois, showing her how the processing of receipts is done and explaining how the claims and disbursement forms are read. She is the only resident that insisted she not pick up public information at the board meeting like the rest of us. As a favor to Lois, the Clerk has fulfilled her special request for information that she insists on having before the board meeting.

It is one thing to say that you are excited to participate and learn how township government works and another to say you already know it all. In her letters she repeatedly makes statements that are not supported by facts. Her viewpoints on issues seem to come more from the coffee shop than from actual research and experience. Over and over, her statements on page 12 of the Feb. 23 *Timberjay* are factually incorrect. Her lack of attending board meetings is evident as only recently has she occasionally attended. The board has made progress on many of her "complaints", she just was not there often enough to hear about it. When she argues to raise taxes, it is clear she does not understand the difference in reserves, operating funds, and revenue. The current board has a well thought out fiscal plan and has the township finances well in hand. I support the reelection of JoAnn Bassing, Sue Drobac, and Barb Lofquist.

**Jeff Maus  
Greenwood resident**

## COVID...Continued from page 3

equity issue by providing a recommendation that more people can realistically choose.

"Some of us have the ability to stay home for ten days or more after showing symptoms or testing positive for COVID because we have the paid time off, ability to work from home, flexibility or a lack of caregiving responsibilities and frankly, financial flexibility to be able to do so," he said. "But a lot of people in this country don't have those things. In fact, 23 percent of Americans have zero paid sick leave. Among those who do, half of them have less than ten days of sick leave. Over half of Americans have caregiving responsibilities, whether they be for children, elderly adults or other adults that have high support needs due to medical conditions or disabilities. Many of these individuals simply cannot isolate for five days.

They just can't. And so, they don't get tested, and therefore they don't have access to Paxlovid, and they end up at higher risk of experiencing serious illness, dying, or having long COVID. The current isolation guidelines may work for those with the interest and privilege to be able to follow the five-day isolation, but it leaves many people behind."

California already has modified its isolation guidelines, and Osterholm pointed out two recommended practices that he concurs with that go beyond the change in isolation.

"They say mask when you are around other people indoors for ten days after you become sick or test positive," Osterholm said. "Right now, we have a standard recommendation for that, but no one's following it and they haven't followed it for several years. They say avoid contact with at-risk peo-

ple for severe COVID-19 for ten days. I think that's really important, particularly for those who are in those age groups where they're more likely to develop serious illness. The California recommendations say if you have symptoms, particularly if you're at higher risk for severe COVID-19, speak to a health care provider immediately. You are likely eligible for antiviral medications or other treatments for COVID."

### Situation update

Hospitalizations, deaths, and COVID viral load in wastewater, the three remaining indicators of community COVID levels, continued to decrease in Minnesota last week, with only six counties on the southern and western borders having an elevated level of COVID activity according to the CDC.

Minnesota Department of Health data reports eight COVID deaths

in St. Louis County over the past month, with six of those coming in the first week of the four-week reporting period. MDH notes that there is typically a lag period between the time a death from COVID occurs and when it is reported to MDH.

Only 16 new hospital admissions were reported last week by the CDC in the St. Louis County health service area, including most of the Arrowhead region. The rate of 4.2 admissions per 100,000 is well below the rate of 10 that triggers an elevated COVID activity warning.

Viral levels in wastewater plunged by 27 percent last week, another indicator that the winter peak is likely subsiding.

### Vaccine mandates

For future pandemics, state and health officials may need to reconsider how they promote vaccinations in light of a recent study showing that

COVID vaccination mandates were ineffective.

Researchers Stephen Rains of the University of Arizona and Adam Richards of Furman University analyzed state-level vaccination data from the CDC to compare rates in states that imposed vaccination mandates and those that prohibited government mandates.

The pair discovered that requiring COVID vaccinations through mandates did not affect the overall uptake of vaccines.

An additional unintended consequence of state mandates was that smaller proportions of eligible people received either COVID booster shots or seasonal flu vaccines compared to states that left it up to citizens to

make their own decisions about vaccinations. These effects were magnified when initial COVID vaccination was low.

"The data from this project indicate that people responded to the limitation to their freedom that stems from vaccination mandates by being less likely to adopt COVID-19 boosters and influenza vaccines relative to states banning vaccination requirements," the pair concluded. "These findings provide evidence to support the concerns of scholars and practitioners that selective vaccination mandates can have harmful—or at least unintended—consequences for public health, which need consideration when creating such policies."

## SPORTS...Cont. from page 4

These days, major college athletics functions more as minor league professional franchises than as extensions of a university's educational mission. It's been estimated that the University of Texas, one of college sport's biggest operations, spends over \$300,000 per athlete annually for coaching, uniforms, stadiums and training facilities, travel, etc. Not a penny of that money comes from institutional state dollars, either – Texas funds its entire athletic budget from external sources, including media and athletic equipment vendor contracts, ticket sales, and alumni donations.

The most significant recent changes have come in how that huge athletic money pie is divided up. Players, who in the past were restricted to receiving college scholarships and some limited equipment perks, saw how a multibillion industry was profiting from their cheap labor, and they went to court seeking more. Their first huge win was securing the right to be compensated for their names, images, and likenesses,

and NIL deals, as they're called, have already shaken up the playing field. Players want to go where the money is, and both recruiting and the NCAA scurried to put together rules to govern NILs and the affiliate university groups created together to fund them.

Shadeur Sanders is a relatively good quarterback for what's been a very average University of Colorado football team. But Sanders tops college athletes in NIL deals worth over \$4 million because he's incredibly marketable as the son of flamboyant ex-NFL Hall of Famer and current Colorado coach Deion Sanders. That's a little better than a college scholarship and meals at the team training table.

The NCAA prohibited NIL deals from being used as recruitment incentives, although now business-savvy athletes know what schools have the best NIL offers. But this week, a federal judge in Tennessee blew the lid off any pretense of old-style college recruitment by ruling that the NCAA cannot enforce its NIL restrictions.

It's now open season for those colleges with the biggest NIL wallets to pursue high school recruits and transfer athletes with financial offers for their services. Only the naive would believe that some of that wasn't happening before the ruling, but now it's been legitimized. The schools with the deepest pockets can buy the best players. Last fall, Minnesota head football coach P.J. Fleck warned that the Gophers would lose players if more NIL money didn't flow to the school.

"We had players that were here that are now gone, playing at another school that should be playing here right now, because of NIL. We didn't pay them enough," Fleck said. "The good players won't be here. We'll be a Triple-A ballclub for someone else." Indeed, why would a top Minnesota football recruit play for the Gophers if Ohio State dangles an NIL deal in his face worth four-or-five-times what Minnesota has to offer?

The ruling will remain in effect until the federal case in question is fully decided, but there's

a chance it could become permanent. At least it would remove a layer of deception prevalent in supposedly amateur college sports for decades, legitimizing a titanic shift in the role money plays in collegiate athletics. That, coupled with another player-focused ruling giving athletes the right to unionize, will sadly bring the curtain down on an era of college sports as we've known them. The rich will get even richer, and the poor even poorer.

Alas, it was all foreshadowed nearly 100 years ago in the Carnegie Foundation report: "The fundamental purpose of intercollegiate contests ought to be the diversion or development of undergraduates, alumni, other members of the college family and their guests. As matters now stand, their fundamental purpose is financial and commercial. The monetary and material returns from intercollegiate athletics are valued far more highly than their returns in play, sport, and bodily and moral well-being." We have no one to blame but ourselves.



*the*  
**TIMBERJAY**

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## Week of March 4

**Monday**

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

**Tuesday**

Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is March 19.

Greenwood Fire Dept.- Training meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

**Thursday**

AA Meeting- Lake Vermilion 12x12 (Open) 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower. Use the rear side door entrance.

Vermilion Country School Board- Meetings posted online at [vermilioncountry.org](http://vermilioncountry.org).

**TSHS weekly winner**

TOWER- The winner of the Charlemagne's 52 Club Week 31 \$100 cash prize is Terry Swanson of Angora. Dave Mesojedec, who was a Double \$100 Winner, has generously donated \$250 back to the Tower Soudan Historical Society for the historic fire hall restoration.

**History Tidbit:** The city moved the James Tippet steam-powered, horse drawn fire engine to the city storage building in 2013. Check out the Tower-Soudan Historical Society Facebook page for photos of the more.

# Two on the ballot for Greenwood Clerk seat

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP— JoAnn Bassing and Debby Spicer are facing off on the March 12 ballot for clerk in Greenwood Township, a position both women have held before.

Spicer ran for clerk in 2020, but lost to incumbent Sue Drobac by a wide margin. When Drobac quit the clerk's job in early fall 2020 after a dispute over a sizable reduction in hours and pay, the town board appointed Spicer to serve as interim clerk. She then ran in 2021, edging out JoAnn Bassing by two votes to fill the remainder of that two-year term. In 2022, Spicer ran unopposed, though a write-in campaign was mounted by Bassing. Spicer won that election 145-94, but then quit the job shortly afterwards, when the board refused to raise the pay for the position.

Bassing was then appointed as interim clerk. Bassing ran unopposed to fill the remainder of that two-year term in 2023.

In 2023, the board did eventually vote to raise the pay for the clerk's position back to its 2020 level of \$2,316 per month, though they kept the required office hours at 12 hours per week. Bassing told the *Timberjay* that she, sometimes with help from her husband, current Greenwood Town Board Chair John Bassing, worked as many as 50 hours a week to get the necessary statutory and non-statutory work completed.

JoAnn Bassing noted that the clerk's duties go way beyond statutory requirements, including spending a lot of time answering questions about zoning, road issues, finding services like plowing, helping investigate if a property has a lien, and information on utilities. She also maintains the township website, orders supplies for the town hall and clerk's office, and has served on committees such as the township's Broadband Committee as well as participating in Blandin's



Debby Spicer

broadband feasibility study.

"I am responsible for reservations and deposits on the hall and pavilion usage along with opening, closing, checking for cleanliness of the hall and pavilion, and making sure deposits are returned. The initial requests for address assignments or fire signs are explained and received by me along with the forms and fee," she said. She also oversees the township's cleaning person and sends letters of appreciation or thank you's to those who make donations to the township.

"The clerk's office door is most often open which creates a friendly, inviting, positive atmosphere for the town board members, treasurer, and myself to conduct the business of serving the public," she said.

Spicer explained that the title "Clerk" in government is not the same as in a grocery store or corporate office. The clerk's duties are clearly stated as per 367.11 of the Minnesota statutes.

"It is not up to me to dictate the duties to be any other than that," Spicer said. "Most townships, and even cities, request the clerk also perform as office administrator, as Greenwood Township has in the past. This is taken into consideration when setting the clerk's salary," Spicer said. "However, that salary consideration was removed while



JoAnn Bassing

Sue Drobac was clerk, with the expectation that she still complete clerk, office administration duties and hours set by the board of supervisors. This move was unreasonable and unfair. Clerk Drobac quit."

Spicer told the *Timberjay* that despite several promises before the 2022 election to restore the clerk salary, it was denied. "In May 2022, current Supervisors Drobac, Lofquist and Stoehr all voted to never restore the clerk compensation. I resigned at that time."

"I feel confident the intention was to restore fair pay for the clerk to include office administration duties with clerk duties," said Spicer. "I will be happy to perform office administration duties as well as clerk duties for the community and board of supervisors."

JoAnn Bassing said the allotted hours and salary still do not cover the amount of work needed to keep the township running smoothly.

"I don't manage the workload in the allotted hours. I work the required hours and then remain at work, put many extra days in, and do research from home until all of my tasks are completed to my satisfaction," Bassing said.

Spicer said the clerk, an elected officer, does not have

specifically allotted hours.

"The same goes for the treasurer and the supervisors," Spicer said. "Since the current clerk salary has again included administration compensation, I will gladly work defined office hours that include office administration duties."

Bassing said she sees the clerk's role as being an adjunct to the board.

"Firstly, supporting them by, according to state statute, informing the citizens about township government business such as posting meetings and placing official notices in the paper. Secondly, by being the chief elections administrator. Next, in records administration, the township clerk's office is the repository for most township records. Also, along with the treasurer, as a financial accountant allowing the board to assess and approve the township's monthly spending," Bassing said.

As clerk, Bassing said she must stay on top of township correspondence, helps write grants, and assists supervisors as needed. She is also a notary, so has been providing that service, free-of-charge, for township residents. She also fields questions on a wide variety of topics for township property owners, including broadband, the pickleball project, fire numbers, and general questions about service and utility companies that work in the township.

"The treasurer and I assist one another in correcting bookkeeping and records from a few years ago, achieving accurate, descriptive bookkeeping and records presently, and in interpreting new requirements in state and county reports," Bassing said. "Also, I try to be frugal with my spending authority and use our resources wisely."

Spicer said the clerk's role in assisting township property owners/residents would be determined by the assistance they request.

# Greenwood Fire Department rebuilding and growing

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- It's been about a year since over half the members of the Greenwood Fire Department resigned or were removed from the department, but Greenwood Fire Chief Jeff Maus reports that the department is on its way to rebuilding a healthy membership, as well as improving the leadership structure, training programs, and overall effectiveness.

"We currently have two new applicants completing the hiring process," said Maus. "Bringing our total staff to 13 personnel. This will bolster our ability to respond to fire and medical calls promptly, especially in situations where simultaneous responses are required."

The department is re-establishing a more typical leadership structure.

"We will now include captains and lieutenants," Maus said. "Additionally, a new position of EMS Captain will be established." The positions will facilitate better delegation of duties, enhance coordination of activities, and establish a clear succession plan for advance-

ment within the officer core. Maus said they are working to update the officer job descriptions, which will require approval from the Greenwood Town Board.

Training has also been a focus for the department over the last year, Maus said. They eliminated the monthly business meeting, and instead turned that into a second monthly training opportunity. This means 24 scheduled training meetings each year.

"These sessions will take place at township properties and other relevant locations, enabling specialized training in various disciplines and fostering joint training with mutual aid partners," Maus said. "Moving forward, we aim to increase collaborative training efforts with other departments, as demonstrated by recent joint exercises such as the training session with Tower Fire Department on Super Bowl Sunday that involved exercises in a burn trailer with actual fire."

With automatic mutual aid between Greenwood, Tower, and Breitung, joint trainings give members the opportunity to work alongside the same area firefighters they often



Members of the Greenwood and Tower fire departments held a joint training last year. submitted photo

work with on actual fire scenes, and give them confidence about each other's skills.

An important part of the Greenwood Fire Department is their township-trained Emergency Medical Responders (EMRs). While some department members are both trained firefighters and EMRs, some are just EMRs. These EMRs have completed the official EMR training classes, and then receive bi-annual 16-hour refresher classes. The department now holds additional monthly in-house EMR training events, one hour before fire training, to keep and im-

prove skills for the department members who respond in the event of a 911-medical call.

The department responded to 145 medical calls and 66 fire calls last year.

"Our training efforts are now more aligned with the specific needs of the communities we serve," said Maus. "Emphasis is placed on Enhanced EMS services, wildland fire response, and the swift deployment of firefighting resources. We have developed a "two-season" approach to equipment setup and deployment, ensuring readiness for both hard water and soft water seasons."

These changes to the department are the result of collaborative efforts among both the firefighters and EMRs.

"Their dedication to providing the best possible service to our community is commendable, and I am proud of their initiative and commitment to prioritizing the community's needs," Maus said.

Anyone with questions about the Greenwood Fire Department can email Maus at [firedept@greenwoodtownshipmn.com](mailto:firedept@greenwoodtownshipmn.com). Maus also serves as the township's treasurer.

## COMMUNITY NOTICES

**Little Church to hold annual meeting March 9**

VERMILION LAKE TWP- The Little Church will hold their annual meeting on Saturday, March 9 at 10 a.m. This will include election of officers and discussion of work projects for 2024. The group always welcomes anyone and are looking for people interested in keeping The Little Church preserved and maintained in our community. The Little Church has 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 Co. Rd. 26/Wahlsten Rd. Any questions, contact/leave message with Len Hujanen at 218-749-2014.

**St. Paul's Lutheran Lenten Soup and Movie**

SOUDAN- Please join us on Thursdays for a Lenten Soup and Movie/Bible Study at 11:00 a.m. at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Soudan. All are welcome. Any questions, call Susan

at 218-780-1560.

**St. Martin's Mass schedule for Lent**

TOWER- St. Martin's Lent schedule:

**Lent services:** Stations of the Cross at St. Martin's on Fridays at 5 p.m. with a fish fry following except on March 22 since they will be working on the social hall floor that day; and on Wednesday's at 5 p.m. at St. Mary's with a soup supper following. Please sign up if you can make a soup, there is a sign-

up sheet in the entrance of the church.

"Into the Deep, Finding Peace Through Prayer" is a five-week video and discussion retreat that will be held every Thursday after the 9 a.m. Mass at St. Mary's in the social hall beginning the first Thursday of Lent, Feb. 22. All are welcome.

**Lunch Bunch to meet on March 14**

TOWER- The Lunch Bunch will not be meeting in February. They plan to meet next on

Thursday, March 14, at 12:30 p.m., at Benchwarmer's in Tower. RSVP to Kathy at 218-753-2530. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Indoor walking at the Timber Hall**

EMBARRASS- This winter the Timber Hall will be open for indoor walking on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

## NORTHERN LAKES ARTS ASSOCIATION

# Fiddler on the Roof to open March 14



The cast of the Northern Lakes Arts Association's "Fiddler on the Roof" singing the opening song, "Tradition," at rehearsal on Sunday night. The musical opens on Thursday, March 14. 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 Ely Tuesday-Group@gmail.com or call her at 218-216-9141.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

► March 5: Challenging Behavior Communicates: A Lighthearted Trip with Learning Theory into the land of Positive Behavior Supports with John Kopp

## Elyites earn collegiate honors

Minnesota State University- Mankato announced that Lillian Tedrick of Ely qualified for the honor list for the 2023 fall semester. Students on the honor list earned a 3.5 to 3.99 average to qualify for the honor list while enrolled for at least 12 credit hours for the semester.

Bemidji State University announced that Alexander Barker of Ely earned president's list honors for the Fall 2023 semester. To be eligible for Bemidji State's president's list, students must earn a grade-point average of 4.0 for the semester and be enrolled in at least 12 credits of coursework.

Cedar Ohlhauser, a Bemidji State University student from Ely, earned Dean's List honors for the Fall 2023 semester. To be eligible for Bemidji State's dean's list, students must earn a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher for the semester and be enrolled in at least 12 credits of coursework.

## EMPOWER sponsors event to show women options for nontraditional, good-paying careers

ELY- On Feb. 13, girls in grades 10-12 from local area high schools traveled to Ely for EMPOWER's Women in the Workforce Event at Minnesota North College- Vermilion. The event aimed to inspire young women who are interested in nontraditional career paths that are traditionally male-dominated fields with brief presentations of programs offered at the community college, which would qualify graduates to work in these types of fields.

Minnesota North- Vermilion offers many nontraditional career path programs such as Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resource Tech, Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy, and Wilderness and Park Management Programs. There were booths and panelist speakers from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, infamous welding instructor Anna Wald, the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, and the Minneapolis Police Department, among others.

Ely EMPOWER seeks to support the education of women



entering high-wage, high-demand nontraditional fields and roles. Assistance may be available for tuition, childcare, transportation, and study assistance.

For more information, contact [angela.heikkila@minnesotanorth.edu](mailto:angela.heikkila@minnesotanorth.edu) or phone 218-293-6873

To become a member of EMPOWER, mail a \$25 check for annual dues, payable to EMPOWER to PO Box 14, Ely, MN 55731 or contact Janine at [pattenj82@gmail.com](mailto:pattenj82@gmail.com).



## Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



a raven swoops down navigating the sidewalk  
sheer fluidity

## 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-2 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 Ledgerrock 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, 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays, Wellbeing Development, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 712 S. Central Ave., 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.

## Gardner Trust announces 2024 spring grant round

ELY-The Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust is happy to announce the opening of the 2024 spring grant round on March 6 with applications due by midnight Wednesday, March 27, 2024. Applications must be submitted through the online application process available at [www.gardnertrust.org](http://www.gardnertrust.org).

To create a more predictable budget, the Trust has, for the first time, established an upper limit on the amount of money organizations may request for a project grant. Organizations are now limited to \$2,000 with a total budget

of \$6,000 allocated to organizations.

Artists and groups can apply for grants in the following categories:

► Individual Artist Grants encourage developing and established artists with funding of up to \$1,000 to take advantage of an impending, concrete opportunity.

► Organization Project Grants with funding up to \$2,000 support activities in the fine arts and for the Ely Public Library. Grant support is intended to make it possible for organizations to present or produce a fine arts ac-

tivity.

► Youth Grants are awarded to Ely school students in grades 6-12 who have an interest in and demonstrate high motivation in the fine arts. Youth grants of up to \$750 can be used for workshops, classes, lessons or mentorships.

► Scholarships are available for graduates of Ely Memorial High School who are in their third or fourth year of college studies or in graduate school. Trust scholarships are awarded to students majoring in one of the disciplines of fine arts or library science. Ely Public Library staff pursuing li-

brary science are also eligible for scholarships.

Individuals and organizations that would like to have a draft application reviewed should contact Peter Chamber, executive director, by March 20. Office hours for the grant period are Thursdays and Fridays from 3:30 – 5 p.m. in the Trust office at Ely City Hall or applicants can arrange an appointment for another time by emailing Peter at [info@gardnertrust.org](mailto:info@gardnertrust.org) (preferred) or calling 218-365-2639.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

### Ely Public Library

ELY- The spice for March is poppyseed. Pick up a free spice kit with a poppyseed sample and recipes to try at home from the front desk at the library.

The library board will meet on Wednesday, March 6, from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

The Get Crafty Group will make DIY eucalyptus shower melts on Thursday, March 7, from 1-2 p.m. This is an activity for adults. Please register in advance so the library can order enough supplies for participants.

The library will hold an evening breakout box event for students in grades 5-8 on Friday, March 8 from 7-9:30 p.m. Aimed at middle school students with the "winter blahs," this program is designed to give them the excitement of solving puzzles and riddles to open the mystery box to what is inside. The giant "ball o prizes" may also make

an appearance. Please register for this program in advance.

The Friends of the Library Book Club will meet on Monday, March 11 from 3-4 p.m. The book for discussion is "Ellie and the Harp Maker," by Hazel Prior.

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

The library will hold a Luck of the Irish gingerbread house decorating event on Wednesday, March 13, from 2-3 p.m., for all ages, for all those who didn't get enough gingerbread at Christmas or who just want to decorate something. Please register in advance for this program so the library can order enough supplies in advance. The Library Scientists Group for grades 4-8 will meet on Thursday, March 14 at 3 p.m. to delve into the wonders and mysteries of the number Pi. Please register in advance for this event. Space is limited to 24 par-

ticipants.

The Curiosity Cohort Program for adults will meet on Wednesday, March 20 at 1 p.m. to learn about and have a hand at interpreting tarot cards. Please register in advance for this program so the library can order enough materials for participants.

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- Local photographer and author Ken Hupila will discuss his books and work at the library on Thursday, March 7 from 3-6 p.m. Copies of his books "Singing Waters" and "Shore Lunch" will be available for purchase and signing.

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.

### Babbitt Skating

BABBITT- The Ron Castellano Ice Arena is open for skating on Saturdays from 6-8 p.m. through April 27.

### 50th Anniversary skating show

BABBITT- The 50th Anniversary Figure Skating Show of the Babbitt Figure Skating Club will present two performances on Friday, March 1, at 6 p.m., and Saturday, March 2, at 1 p.m., at the Ron Castellano Ice Arena, 30 South Dr.

### Call of the Wild

ELY- The next Northern Lake Arts Association Call of the Wild poetry reading will be at 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 7, at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan St. Come with your own or any other poem to read, or just come

and listen. All are welcome.

### North Country Trail

ELY- The Ely chapter of the North Country Trail Association will meet online on Thursday, March 7, from 5:30-6:45 p.m. The link for the virtual meeting will be listed on the chapter's Facebook page, "NCTA Ely Northwoods Chapter."

### St. Pat's Day Dance

ELY- The Ely Folk School will hold its annual St. Patrick's Day Dance at the Ely Senior Center on Friday, March 15, from 7-10 p.m. for all ages. No experience necessary. All dances will be taught. Cost is \$10. Children free with parent.

### Easter Bonnet Parade

ELY- The annual Easter Bonnet Parade at the Ely Senior Center will be on Saturday, March 16, from 1-3 p.m.

THE ICE IS RIGHT

# Crane Lake is the place for speed on Saturday

## Snowmobile speed race has been chills and thrills for fans for 25 years

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

CRANE LAKE- The North Country's fastest show on ice will be at Crane Lake on Saturday as the Straight Line Speed Association celebrates its silver anniversary of racing there, hoping to get in their first complete day of racing of the year.

It's been a miserable winter for recreational snow and ice, and the SLSA schedule took its first hit in mid-December when race director Kurt Mohawk made the call to cancel January's Battle at the Bay on Lake Vermilion.

"Safety is always our No. 1 priority and I know we all love to race, but we also need to put safety first," Mohawk wrote on the SLSA Facebook page. "The sheriff and DNR require 18" of ice and that would be impossible to accomplish. We will see you all at St. Germain."

But Mohawk's sign-off proved to be overly optimistic, as the Feb. 3 speed run at St. Germain, Wis. was canceled due to thin ice in mid-January. Mohawk scheduled an alternative race for the same date at McGregor, but that event had to be canceled, too.

Then it was another week and another cancellation, this time the regularly scheduled race at

McGregor.

"Mother Nature wins again. Hopefully we can get some cold temps and possibly hold an event there later in the year," Mohawk said when announcing the cancellation.

That "later in the year" came last weekend when SLSA tried to stage a race billed as "Finally Effin' Snowmobile Races" at McGregor. Apparently Mother Nature took offense to the event name, as they had only gotten in a half day of racing on Saturday when the ice buckled and a pressure ridge popped up on the track. As Mohawk debated the possibility of shaving the ridge away, water flooded the track in about five minutes. The long awaited race day was over.

"I've been doing this for 40 years, and I've never seen this," Mohawk told the *Timberjay* on Monday.

Mohawk is confident his luck will turn for the good this week at Crane Lake.

"We've got below zero weather until Wednesday, according to the weather guy," he said. "Wednesday's not that hot, Thursday is not terrible. Friday gets to 50 for a high but back below freezing at night, so we'll be good."

And while meager snowfall has hampered snowmobiling in general this season, that's not an

issue for SLSA racers who run on a shaved-ice track.

"We're going to be just fine," Mohawk said. "The lack of snow doesn't really bother us as much as trail guys."

And while Mohawk had to consider restricting access on the ice for fans and competitors for earlier planned races, he said there doesn't appear to be a need for that at Crane Lake.

"A friend of mine was up there this weekend racing with the kids' division up there. The landing was still fine, everything was fine. It still looks great, and we should be good to go."

Track preparation gets underway mid-week, Mohawk said.

"I'll shave Wednesday and Thursday and get that as smooth as we possibly can," he said. "We've had very great success in the past up there. Not a lot of rollers in the ice to start with. Friday we're probably just going to leave it alone because of the warm weather."

Racers will often make test runs on Fridays, and while Mohawk didn't rule out the possibility of some runs, that will be a Friday decision based on weather and track conditions.

"I don't want to tear up the track too bad for testing and jeopardize our ice for Saturday's race,"



A stock sled jump away from the starting line at last year's SLSA race at Crane Lake. Organizers anticipate around 120 riders for Saturday's event.

he said. "It's a possibility we'll test for awhile until things get too soft, and then we'll definitely call it off."

Mohawk said he hopes to see about 125 racers show up on Saturday. Crane Lake has always pulled in a good crowd of racers and spectators, he said.

"It's been standing the test of time, that race has," he said. "It will start at 9 a.m. and go to 5 p.m. as a whole. We might push it back to 10 a.m. That just depends if everything's prepped and ready with the warm day ahead of time prior to that. Safety of the riders is our top concern."

Those at the race could be in for some extraordinary excitement, Mohawk noted.

"We'll have a sled out there that ran 198 mph at one of our events last year, which is the fastest snowmobile 1,000-foot run ever," he said. "He's going to be there this weekend and he's shootin' for over 200. It's going to be a spectacle if it's accomplished here."

Mohawk's hoping not only for a good race day, but also to turn out support for Crane Lake business owners.

"Everybody come on out and enjoy your day, it's gonna be beautiful out on the ice," he said. "I'm

assuming there's going to be food out on the ice again, there usually is every year. Come out and support your local businesses. They've been suffering all winter so let's get them some business so they can keep their doors open."

Mohawk has added another race to the schedule as well, one that's almost as easily accessible to North Country riders and fans. It's scheduled for Saturday, March 9 at Thunderbird Lodge on Rainy Lake.

"They have 21-22 inches of ice up there right now and their forecast is actually looking pretty favorable," Mohawk said.

### JUNIOR SPEEDSTERS



Like other winter sports organizations, the KCPRO-EAST youth ice racing group has had to juggle dates and venues to get in a revamped schedule of races this season.

Racers were at Crane Lake last weekend for two days of oval-track racing, and while warm temperatures made navigating the icy pit areas on foot an adventure, the competition on the track showed off the skills of these young racers to adapt to anything nature throws their way.

Above: Brecken Cornelius, back, looks for a passing lane.



Below: While Brex McCormick stalled out in this race, he came home from the weekend with two first-place trophies.

photos by D. Colburn

### CHILI CHAMPS



Orr Community Center was packed last Saturday for the battle of the beans at the 3rd Annual Tony Cornelius Scholarship Chili Cook Off. Plaques were awarded to winners in four categories, including Violet (and Lars) Gabrielson, Fire in the Hole; Leann Hardy, A Round of Applause; Shawntel Kraabel, Not Your Mother's Chili; and Sandy Wardas, People's Choice. submitted photo

## Paul Bunyan staff receive national excellence awards

REGIONAL- Paul Bunyan Communications has been awarded two national Excellence Awards from NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association that represents over 850 independent, community-based telecommunications companies serving rural communities across America.

Bunyan CEO Gary Johnson was given the James L. Bass Manager Life Achievement Award for his 35 years with the company, working his way up from computer programmer to top executive. Johnson led the company's development of its all-fiber network and numerous other initiatives. He has also served on several NTCA committees, the NISC Board, Calix Leadership Advisory Board as well as many local boards focused on health care and economic development.

Chief Technology Officer Leo Anderson, and Marketing Supervisor Brian Bissonette received the organization's Innovation Award for teaming up to create and lead the GigaZone Gaming Championship and TechXpo. The GigaZone event not only highlights Paul Bunyan's all-fiber network, but it also brings innovation to the forefront in how it connects the cooperative to school-aged gamers by showing them that the potential for successful careers in tech exist at home. Last year, Steve Wozniak, the co-founder of Apple, was the keynote speaker, thanks in large part to Anderson and Bissonette's outreach efforts.

The NTCA Excellence Awards recognize broadband providers who have exceeded expectations to support their customers and community members.

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### Cook-Orr Calendar

#### Lions Club to host March 10 breakfast for food shelf aid

COOK- The Cook Lions Club will host a fundraising breakfast event on Sunday, March 10 from 9 a.m. to noon at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 124 5th St. SE in Cook.

Volunteers will be serving up a hearty breakfast menu including pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, coffee and orange juice. Take out meals will be available.

A free will offering will be collected to support the Cook Food Shelf.

Homestead Mills, McDonalds, and Cook Zup's have provided donations for the event.

For more information, including how to become a Lions Club member, call Steve Kajala, 218-750-0310 or Colette Huisenga, 612-213-7603.

#### NWFA readies for photo contest exhibit debut

COOK- You may not get to vote on best picture for the Academy Awards, but your vote counts in Cook when choosing the best pictures in the Northwoods Friends of the Arts photo contest, "A Closer Look."

The contest exhibit opens on Thursday, March 7 at 10 a.m. Be among the first to drop by the gallery and register your votes for the top photos. Voting will continue through March 29 during gallery open hours of Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The two most popular photos will be revealed at a reception on March 29, with the photographers to receive \$100 and \$50 prizes.

#### Classical concerts coming up March 7

COOK- The Piatigorsky Foundation's classical musicians return to Cook to perform on Thursday, March 7 at 1 p.m. at North Woods School, 10248 Olson Rd. E., and for the public that evening at Trinity Lutheran Church, 231 2nd St. E., at 7 p.m.

Pianist Wan-Chi Su and cellist Evan Drachman, founder and artistic director of the foundation, will be the featured artists for the concerts.

The evening concert at Trinity Lutheran will be a free will offering concert organized by Northwoods Friends of the Arts. The school concert will be presented to children thanks to the financial aid of the Cook Lions Club.





## THE LEGISLATURE

# Hauschild seeks \$180 million to rural ambulance crisis

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Calling the lack of funding and personnel for rural Minnesota ambulance services a crisis, Sen. Grant Hauschild joined other legislators and emergency responders last week in a press conference to call for immediate action to address the issue.

Speaking in St. Paul on Thursday, Hauschild drove his point home to the assembled media representatives.

"We're not just facing a problem or a challenge like we talk about often in policy," he said. "We are facing a crisis I cannot emphasize enough that this is a crisis we are facing in Minnesota. After calling for the task force, you know, we visited all of these different commu-



Grant Hauschild

our communities and on our citizens."

Hauschild said that inadequate reimbursement rates for services fall harder on rural services than urban ones, which are often privately owned.

"When you reach the more rural areas, it often falls on our local communities as a last resort to take on those licenses to manage those services," he said. "Not only are these rural communities not getting the private support that many of the

other areas of Minnesota have, but they're also expected to pay for the service through their property taxes, with an area that already has some of the lowest property tax value in the entire state."

Hauschild highlighted the Aurora and Hoyt Lakes area, represented by House Rep. Dave Lislegard, who was also at the press conference.

"Representative Lislegard, behind me, represents Aurora and Hoyt Lakes, a twin community on the Iron Range which was named the poorest community per capita in Minnesota. They run the EMS, the poorest community per capita runs the EMS for that community and surrounding region. That is why this is such an acute issue for greater Minnesota. If you expect people to live in rural communities, they need to know that their zip code won't determine whether

or not an ambulance shows up for themselves or a loved one."

Hauschild has written a Senate bill, with Lislegard sponsoring a companion bill in the House, that would allocate \$180 million in one-time funding for grants to support ailing ambulance services.

Rep. John Huot, DFL-Rosemount, is co-chair of a joint House-Senate task force addressing the ambulance issue, said that while a one-time infusion of cash will help, the crisis is in need of a longer-term fix.

"It's scary out there," he said. "What they're asking for, it was really a drop in the bucket. That scares me. How did we get here? Is it the feds? Yes. Is it the state? Yes, it's a little bit of everybody, and it's time to buck up and figure out how we're going to fix this. It's not going to be fixed by one

silver bullet. We're all going to have to dig in and work together. For years volunteers in our state have subsidized EMS, and that's not the model that's going to be sustained. We've got to look for a different model that works for all."

Virginia Mayor Larry Cuffe Jr. used his ambulance service as an example of the extreme shortfall in funding.

"In 2023 the city of Virginia had 2,664 EMS runs, and that does not include transfers and that does not include intercepts. 1,253 additional ones were transfers, whether intercepts or regular transfer calls. 1,667 of those were Medicare runs with gross charges of \$3.7 million, and we only collected \$1.03 million," Cuffe said. "We've been covering the

See...HAUSCHILD pg.11

## POWWOW...Continued from page 1

Duluth and is an instructor at Fond du Lac Community College in Cloquet, helped lead this educational cultural event, which was organized by VCS staffer Adrienne Whiteman. These powwows have become almost an annual event, and often feature visits from former VCS students.

Students learned about the history of powwows, which first became popular in the 20th century, though the ceremonial aspects of powwows trace back far longer. Such gatherings were banned, both in the United States and Canada, in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

"It is an honor to be here and pass these traditions forward," said Wilson. "We are bringing our culture into the future."

Wilson said the powwow tradition ignited his own passion for his culture, as well as for many others. He was taught to drum and sing by Carmen Two Crow, from Traverse City, Mich.

"Being a singer kept us out of trouble. It was a good way to socialize," he said. "You learned to take care of your drum. And that your drum will take care of you."

As a member of the Lake Vermilion Singers, who all have ties to Bois Forte, he has traveled all across the country. The songs they sing were here before this school was built, and even before this town was built, he said.

"Each drum has a spirit," Wilson said. "I sing for my drum and my group. I do not sing for myself. We are there for each other."

Several of the dancers spoke about their regalia, their outfits, how they were chosen, and what they represented.

Moon, who is Oneida and Iroquois, ended up in northern Minnesota after marrying his wife, who hailed from the area north of International Falls.

"I've danced the Men's Traditional style for over 40 years," he told the students. He explained how he would receive new pieces



Upper left: Skyler Stillday whispers to his younger brother during last Friday's powwow at Vermilion Country School.

Above: Chaz Wagner, who grew up at Nett Lake performs a dance at the event. A member of the Eagle Clan, he's been participating in powwows since he was a toddler.

Left: A beaded barrette decorated the head of one of the dancers.

of regalia as gifts when he attended powwows.

"I kept updating outfits," he said. "Men's Traditional dancers tell stories when we are dancing. Our outfits tell stories about ourselves." His outfit is in the Woodland Style.

Moon's outfit includes a representation of a large white pine, a "tree of peace," where his ancestors buried their weapons being used for fighting other tribes. His eagle feathers all represent prayers, and other designs represent the circles of life.

"There are about 50,000 dancers in this country," he said, "and no two outfits are the same."

The bells on his outfit have two purposes, he said. Realistically, he said, they help a dancer keep time with the drum. But spiritually, their ringing sound keeps bad things away

from the dance grounds. Moon talked about the significance of his head piece, with porcupine quills standing tall. When a porcupine senses danger they puff up their quills, they are on alert, Moon said. The head piece is making sure everyone is safe in this circle.

Beadwork came to the Americas from France, Moon said, but "we perfected it."

Chaz Wagner, who grew up in Nett Lake, said his mother gave him his outfit when he was a toddler and attended his first powwow.

"I grew up in a family of dancers," he said. "I dance to honor my people." A member of the Eagle Clan, Wagner dances with a staff decorated with eagle claws. His native name means Golden Eagle. His dancing outfit features

Ojibwe floral patterns.

"My outfit chose me," he said.

Jordan Gawboy dances mostly in the Woodland Style, but enjoys dancing other styles as well. The Woodland Style has been "coming back," he said. He dances with a bandolier

bag decorated with floral beadwork and is known for his detailed beading.

Several elementary-aged dancers attended the powwow. Skyler Stillday explained he danced to honor his grandparents, who couldn't dance anymore.

Wilson explained that families do not force their children to dance, but that children need to choose this.

"It takes a lot of practice," he said.

Aleeziah Stillday talked about her jingle dress. She is a Princess from the Cloquet High School.

"This is a healing dress," she said. "It chose me. It always felt right to me." As royalty, part of her responsibility is to travel to other powwows. "It's an honor," she said.

Another dancer, Molly Hunter is a senior princess representing Fond Du Lac. She said she especially likes side step songs which are fun to sing and fun to dance to.

Wilson explained each style of dance, and those dancers took turns showing off their steps.

At the end of the presentations, school students and staff joined and danced during an Intertribal song.

The powwow ended with a traditional traveling song. Afterwards the drummers and dancers joined the students for lunch at the school.



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NATURAL RESOURCES

# Conditions prompt Pulsar Helium to change drilling method

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

**BABBITT-** Pulsar Helium Inc. announced an update on their Topaz helium exploration project southeast of Babbitt. The firm is in the process of changing the drilling method on the Jetstream #1 exploratory boring off of Dunka River Road from mud rotary to air rotary. Pulsar began drilling at the beginning of February.

Drilling the borehole has taken longer than expected. The mud rotary rig experienced drilling fluid losses, which happens when large voids are encountered underground.

When the drilling fluids are lost, the gases trapped in the fluids and the drill cutting are also lost, preventing the geologists on the rig from creating an accurate log of downhole condition. Mud rotary drilling circulates “drilling mud,” which is a water-based slurry of bentonite clay and natural thickeners like corn starch and xanthum gum.

Because of the problem with the lost drilling fluids, Pulsar has decided to change over to air rotary drilling. Air rotary drilling instead uses pressurized air to recover the gasses and drill cuttings from the borehole. The current drill rig will stay on the site but

will be reconfigured to circulate pressurized air.

Tom Abraham-James, with Pulsar, explained the switch to air rotary. “The void spaces were not unexpected, as we spoke to other drilling companies in the area about drilling conditions. Additionally, voids

were encountered during the drilling of the [boring that originally discovered the helium in 2011]. With this knowledge in mind, switching to air drilling was always a contingency ... if the voids could not be mitigated with the water-based mud system.”

Since the spud date, local residents, local media and a film crew from Reuters have been given tours of the borehole. The Reuters crew collected footage and conducted interviews that will become part of their upcoming Global Health 2024 doc-

umentary series. Helium is a critical component for cooling the superconducting magnets used in magnetic resonance imaging, or MRIs. It has no substitute and the demand for helium is greater than the supply.

COLD CASH

## Ely’s “Frozen” ticket sales topped \$11,500

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

**ELY-** The final curtain may have dropped over a month ago on Ely high school’s production of “Disney’s Frozen, The Broadway Musical,” but the final business of the musical wasn’t over until this past week, when the last ticket payment cleared the bank account for the Mesabi Symphony Orchestra.

“Today, I will be mailing the Ely School District a check for \$10,775 for the sale of 2,155 tickets,” said Karen McManus, who manages the finances for the orchestra. The orchestra provided the payment gateway for the musical so

the public could buy tickets online in advance.

McManus’s check didn’t include cash sales of an additional 156 tickets, which brings the total ticket sales for the production to \$11,555— not bad for a small high school selling \$5 tickets.

Most ticket purchases came from northern St. Louis County, although others came from as far away as Duluth and even the Twin Cities.

Including complimentary tickets, a total of 2,447 people attended one of the four performances of “Frozen” in Ely this last January.

## HAUSCHILD...Continued from page 10

costs for the ALS service with our reserves. It’s not sustainable. In three years, we’re not going to have any money in our accounts to pay for that. We need immediate short-term help, intermediate help and long-term help to make this a sustainable model.”

Republican Rep. Jeff Backer- Browns Valley, volunteered for 29 years as an EMT and discussed the extremes to which local services go to remain operational.

“Our service, the Browns Valley ambulance, every year we have to do a pancake feed and a fundraiser letter to raise over \$30,000 just so we can get the rigs out of the garage,” he said. “Last week when I was down at the Capitol, we had five 12-hour shifts that if somebody dialed 911 we had to work with the neighboring ambulance (service).”

Huot talked about the problems with the current model of reimbursement versus an alternative model that would pay ambulance services for responding to a call and providing medical services.

“This is so ridiculous. The only way you can bill a patient is that the patient has to be in your ambulance and the wheels have to roll,” he said. “Our medics are well-trained. They know their skills and they can

easily discharge at a scene. ‘We don’t have to take you to the ER today, but you know what? I’ll come back in four hours and see how you’re doing. Anything happens in there, I’ll come back sooner.’ Why don’t we have those kinds of systems? They have them in Alaska, they have them in Europe. We have some really talented people and definitely good medical direction. We should do that here in Minnesota.”

Hauschild stepped back to the microphone to amplify the fact that funding across the entire state is not as concerning as is funding in greater Minnesota.

“The actual revenues to costs are in the green if you look across the entire state,” Hauschild said. “Now where do you suspect based on what you’ve heard the red is? It’s in mostly greater Minnesota. I just want to be clear that, overall, there are some folks making money on EMS services. It’s inequitable, it’s unfair, and it’s a rural issue. That is what I’m trying to elevate.”

Hauschild’s bill has been referred to the Senate Taxes Committee and is awaiting a hearing.

Lislegard’s bill was referred to the House Taxes Committee and a hearing has not yet been scheduled.

Briefly

### Driver life-flighted in ATV rollover

**PIKE TWP—** The driver of an ATV had to be airlifted to St. Mary’s in Duluth after the vehicle he was operating overturned in the ditch, leaving him pinned.

The incident was reported to the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office shortly after 11 a.m. on Feb. 22, along the 7400 block of Lax Rd., located northeast of Virginia in Pike Township. The ATV driver, whose identity was not released as of press time, was treated at the scene by medical personnel before being

airlifted.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.

The St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office was assisted by the Embarrass and Pike-Sandy-Britt fire departments, the Virginia Ambulance Service and Air Memorial helicopter service.

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**EBCH**  
Ely-Bloomenson  
Community Hospital



**Hospital Connection**  
Critical Access Hospital Basics

**Q: What is a Critical Access Hospital?**  
**A:** In 1997, the federal government created the unique Critical Access Hospital (CAH) designation for rural facilities with fewer than 25 beds and typically located at least 35 miles from a higher level of healthcare. Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital is one of 78 CAHs in Minnesota.

**Q: Is EBCH a not-for-profit hospital?**  
**A:** Yes, EBCH, like most hospitals in MN, is a not-for-profit 501©3. This means that we provide care to all residents regardless of their ability to pay. It also means we must survey our community every three years with a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and identify community needs gaps. We must develop an implementation plan to identify partnerships and strategies to help meet those needs. Some of the past projects that EBCH has worked to address include access to specialty providers (such as orthopaedics and podiatry), daycare, and transportation.

**Q: How is EBCH reimbursed as a Critical Access Hospital?**  
**A:** EBCH receives “cost-based” reimbursements as a Critical Access Hospital. CMS (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services) establishes payment based on hospital volumes and proximity to other healthcare facilities. In 2023, nearly 64% of individuals were covered by government insurance programs, with reimbursement rates currently around 20% less than the cost of the care provided.

Hospital Connection is a new feature from Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital (EBCH) this winter. We are excited to share our most recent updates and information in a question-and-answer format featuring a new topic each week. Throughout the next several weeks, we will share exciting information about EBCH, our newest services, and how we are a partner in the communities we serve. You can also find more information about EBCH by visiting our website at [www.ebch.org](http://www.ebch.org). Like our Facebook page to keep up with current events and announcements.

[ebch.org](http://ebch.org)

Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital is committed to caring for and enhancing the health and well being of the community it serves.

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ENVIRONMENT

# Prove It First legislation seeks to protect BWCAW

by MOHAMED IBRAHIM  
MinnPost Staff Writer

REGIONAL- Mike Maleska, a lifelong Hibbing resident and an iron ore miner for 42 years, called mining the most polluting industry.

During a public informational hearing on Thursday he asked lawmakers to act on a proposed copper mine near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and prevent pollution of the area's waterways.

"How much do our lakes and streams, our communities, have to accommodate in order to survive this type of mining?" he said. "I don't want to answer that question."

Maleska was one of several testifiers in support of Senate File 1416, known as the "Prove It First" bill. It prohibits the state from issuing permits for a copper-sulfide mine before receiving independent scientific proof that a copper-sulfide mine has operated elsewhere in the United States for at least 10 years, and that a mine has been closed for at least 10 years without polluting the surrounding environment.

Mining advocates argue the bill would hurt the state's ability

to use the mineral resources in its transition to clean energy, but its supporters say the risks to the environment are too great.

## Prove It First

Presided over by retired state Reps. Connie Bernardy and Steve Sandell, testifiers at the hearing included advocates, former miners, retired regulators and members of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and Fond du Lac Lake Superior Band of Chippewa.

DFL Sen. Jen McEwen of Duluth, a co-author on the bill, said copper-nickel mining differs from the iron and taconite mining that is familiar to the Iron Range. This type of mining has never not polluted the waterways surrounding a mine, she said, making the proposed projects near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness particularly worrisome.

"To open one of these types of mines in those areas is particularly, acutely dangerous; not just to the water and not just to the environment of the area where the mine would be operating and where the deposits would be processed or stored, but also to the all of the communities that are around that

area who depend every day on that water and the health of the environment for our economies, and for pride in our way of life and who we are," McEwen said at the hearing.

Julie Lucas, executive director of MiningMinnesota, argued in a statement that legislation like the "Prove It First" bill will hurt the state's ability to use its resources to facilitate the transition to clean energy usage through the production of solar panels, batteries and wind turbines.

"To fully harness the potential of Minnesota's mineral resources, it is essential that policymakers, industry stakeholders and communities work together to support a framework that balances environmental protection with critical development," Lucas said. "'Prove It First' unnecessarily puts an end to healthy and vital conversations about the clean energy supply chain and Minnesota's role within it."

## Split support

The informational hearing last week was the first by the Legislature on copper-nickel mining in more than a decade, despite a handful of proposals from corporations seeking

permits from the state for such mines.

That includes the proposed NorthMet copper-nickel mine in northeastern Minnesota, which was dealt a blow by the Minnesota Supreme Court this past summer. The court sent a water quality permit back to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency after ruling the agency attempted to hide concerns from the federal Environmental Protection Agency from the public.

The setback followed the revocation of another water quality permit by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over concerns it could pollute the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, which is downstream from the proposed project.

In an interview, McEwen said the Legislature has let its constituents down due to the lack of hearings and involvement in the troubled permitting process, and points to the power of corporate interests and mining trade groups.

"It really is a betrayal of public trust. People count on their public officials to protect their health, to protect their water, to protect the state in general, our economy and our well-being," she said. "When we have

an issue that is this crucial, that has been facing our state for this many years, and the Legislature hasn't even taken it up? I think that tells you a lot."

McEwen said she has received pushback from some members in her caucus on the proposed legislation, though it is a minority. The bill currently doesn't have the votes to pass due to the slim one-seat majority by the DFL.

DFL Senate Majority Leader Erin Murphy of St. Paul said in a statement that the bill needs work before it can pass, but that her caucus will continue to support bills that prioritize clean water and the environment.

"In the Senate, we have made more progress on environmental and clean water protections with one year of DFL leadership than in the past decade, if not longer," Murphy said. "With a little over three weeks remaining before our first deadlines for bills to advance, my colleagues are working in committees to advance the work of the people of Minnesota."

*This article is used courtesy of MinnPost.com*

## BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

# Breitung FD applying for FEMA grant for new gear

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA  
Staff Writer

SOUDAN- Breitung Township Fire and Rescue is hoping to improve their personal protective gear with a grant from FEMA. The application will ask for 12 sets of turnout gear, which Fire Chief Trevor Banks estimated will cost about \$80,000. Banks said he was still waiting for an official cost estimate and may consider adding assistive technology to the grant request as well. The department had purchased a small set of MSA Lunar devices last year. The Lunar device can help firefighters communicate with and locate each other. It offers thermal imaging, air safety monitoring and can help firefighters find safe paths.

The town board had previously approved the fire department's application at their Feb. 15 meeting and then passed a motion to make another application to the IRRR at their Feb. 22 meeting to help pay for grant writing assistance, since the FEMA grant process is complex. The department plans to hire Nancy Larson as grantwriter. Larson has successfully obtained grants from FEMA several times before for many local departments and municipalities.

The Breitung Fire Department serves residences and wildlands within Breitung Township and includes the Lake Vermilion Soudan Underground Mine State Park and Bois Forte Reservation as well as providing mutual aid for Tower and several surrounding townships.

Cost for new turnout gear estimated to be \$80,000

The department's January report noted that Steve Burgess had resigned as training officer as of Dec. 31. Burgess had shared the duties with Detton Koski throughout 2023 and had served as chief of the department for 30 years. Burgess is still a member of the department and has served on it for over 40 years.

## Budget/levy

The annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12 shortly after 8:00 p.m. when the polls close.

The town board plans to hold off on a levy recommendation for the annual meeting. The board is waiting for more information on ambulance costs and the Echo Point Road project.

The board has discussed that they are in favor of increasing the ambulance subsidy from \$15 per capita to \$25 per capita, a total increased cost of about \$5,000.

JPJ Engineering gave a preliminary opinion of the probable construction cost for the Echo Point Rd. project of \$921,500, or \$325,000 per year for five years. Before making a levy recommendation to citizens, the board is waiting to hear how much grant funding will be available for this project.

## Other business

In other news, the board:

- Passed a new policy for sick and safe time.
- Agreed to send out a housing survey to Breitung residents.
- Heard that the Bob-

cat Toolcat utility work machine the township had ordered will arrive this week.

➤ Approved investing half of a matured \$25,000 CD in another 9-month CD at 4.44 percent.

➤ Purchased a new workers' compensation policy with a \$250 deductible, down from the

previous policy which had a \$10,000 deductible. The annual premium is \$1,351 more than last year, at \$22,584. The township was interested in lowering their potential liability from a claim from the previously set \$10,000. The policy is from the Minnesota Association of Township's Insurance

Trust, which is seen as the most affordable policy for townships, if they qualify.

➤ Discussed opening a Breitung Recreation Facebook Page, to be overseen by the next clerk and updated by a small group of community members.

➤ Heard that the skating rink was only open for 13 days due to unseasonably warm weather. The rink averaged nine kids a

day.

➤ Heard that the county board is in favor of completing the bike trail to connect Hoodoo Point and McKinley Park campgrounds. The trail committee will now look into possible funding sources.

➤ Accepted the resignation from police officer Keith Nyman and thanked him for his service.

## Write-In

**AMBER ZAK**  
Breitung Town Clerk

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## GIRLS BASKETBALL

# Ely second seed as playoffs get underway

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The Ely Timberwolves and North Woods Grizzlies were set to open the Section 7A girls basketball tournament at home on Wednesday, as the *Timberjay* went to press.

While both teams had successful regular seasons and are highly seeded in the tournament, a major roadblock stands in the way of either team's hopes of

## North Woods seeded fourth

reaching the state tournament. Mt. Iron-Buhl, the defending state champion is heavily favored to repeat as Section 7A champion this year.

### Timberwolves

The Wolves come into the tourney as the second seed on their side of the bracket, riding a four-game win streak with a 20-6 overall record. Their opponent

at 6 p.m. on Wednesday will be seventh-seeded Cherry, sporting an 11-15 record. Ely should enter this game with confidence, having dealt the Tigers a pair of losses this season, 52-36 in January and 87-44 on Feb. 20.

Should the Wolves advance, they would have another home game on Saturday at 12:30 p.m. against the winner of No. 3 Chisholm and No. 6 Deer River.

Ely beat Chisholm 64-36 in December and did not play Deer River in the regular season. At 17-9 and ranked 22 in Class A, just two spots lower than Ely, the Bluestreaks would be the tougher opponent to face.

With an Ely win and barring a major upset in the top half of the bracket, the Wolves would match up against the No. 1 Rangers in a semifinal game at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6 at UM-Duluth. MIB, 23-3 going

into the tourney, had a 13-game win streak snapped in a regular-season finale loss to Class A fifth-ranked Mayer Lutheran. The Rangers easily defeated the Wolves in the regular season 83-38.

### North Woods

As the No. 4 seed on their side of the bracket, North Woods, 16-9, draws No. 5 Bigfork at 6

See **GIRLS...**pg. 2B



## BOYS BASKETBALL

# Grizzlies outlast Wolves

Wolves battle hard, run out of gas late; North Woods win streak now at 11

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

ELY- Anyone expecting a cakewalk for North Woods as they took on Ely on Monday must have forgotten how tenaciously the Wolves defend their home court when the Grizzlies come to town.

A stout defensive effort by the Wolves took away the Grizzlies' potent transition game and kept Ely within striking distance until a late North Woods run put the game away for a 71-53 win.

Ely was down just five at the half, 30-25, and a Jack Davies three-ball with 5:39 left in the game electrified the home fans and had the Wolves primed for a comeback, down 49-42.

But the Grizzlies' Louie Panichi answered with a triple, Jonah Burnett scored a pair of buckets down low, and Talen Jarshaw drained a three-ball in a lightning-fast 10-0 run that suddenly had North Woods up by 17, 59-42. Burnett and Panichi, with two more threes, held the Wolves at bay down the stretch for the win.

Caid Chittum put the Wolves on the board first with a deuce, and the only point the Grizzlies could muster in the game's first five minutes was a Panichi free throw. Ely wasn't much better, adding only a hoop by Drew Johnson before Burnett finally broke the ice for North Woods with



Top: The Grizzlies' Evan Kajala skies high to protect the basket as teammate Luke Will wraps up Ely's Jack Davies as he attempts a jumper.

Below: The Grizzlies' Jonah Burnett remained the state's sixth-highest scorer with a 26-point effort against the Wolves.

Left: Ely's Drew Johnson puts up a jumper in the lane.  
photos by D. Colburn



McKrahl in the final minute of the half to stay close.

The Wolves closed the gap to just three on a Tedrick jumper to open the second half,

and Chittum helped Ely keep pace with a pair of buckets down low. But Panichi canned

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

## HOCKEY

# Ely named Two Rivers champions

Marolt named MVP,  
Myers Coach of the Year

REGIONAL— Ely's playoff run in boys high school hockey may have come to a quick end this season, but not before the team notched some significant milestones in the regular season, including notching 14 wins, the most since 2001.

This year's successes were recognized this past week when the Wolves were honored as the Two Rivers Conference champions, with a 9-8-1 record in conference play. They ended the season 14-12 overall.

Ely senior standout forward Drew Marolt was named conference MVP on the strength of his conference-leading 27 goals and 41 total points this season, while Ely Head Coach Jake Myers was named Coach of the Year.

Six Ely players were tapped for All-Conference honors, including Drew Marolt, senior forward Deegan Richards, junior goalie Ben Leeson, senior defenseman Wes Sandy, junior forward Jace Huntbatch, and freshman forward Owen Marolt. Junior forward Garrett Rohr and sophomore

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

## BOYS BASKETBALL

# Davies notches 41 points in win at South Ridge

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

SOUTH RIDGE— Ely sophomore guard Jack Davies poured in a career-high 41 points here on Friday night to carry the Timberwolves to an 83-73 win over the Panthers. "It was nice to get a win after going about three weeks without one," said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. "We had played okay in some games in that stretch but just not well enough to pull out a win."

Davies, who has led Ely scorers all season, seemed determined to notch a win against the Panthers and he stepped it up a notch with a 31-point performance in the second half alone. Ely's other top scorer, junior Caid Chittum, got in foul trouble early and sat out much of the second half. "Without him, Jack just took control of the game for us," said McDonald.

Chittum ended up with 13 points and five rebounds, while sophomore Drew Johnson added 13 points, five assists, and five steals.

The Wolves host Fond du Lac on Friday in their regular season finale. The Section 7A playoffs get underway on Monday.

"I thought we competed well against a really good team."

Ely Head Coach  
Tom McDonald

a bucket at the 12:55 mark. A minute later the Grizzlies took a 6-4 lead when Aidan Hartway took an inbounds pass from Luke Will and hit a three from the top of the key. North Woods built the lead to nine, but Davies halted the Grizzlies' roll with a basket and three free throws, making the score 17-13. When an old-fashioned three-point play by Will threatened to spark a Grizzlies run at 27-19, the Wolves hung tough, getting a three-ball from Wyatt Tedrick and a bucket from Leo

## BOYS BASKETBALL

# North Woods notches another pair of wins

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP – The North Woods Grizzlies added a pair of victories to their growing win streak last week, a blowout 84-39 victory at home over Littlefork-Big Falls on Thursday and a thrilling come-from-behind win at Chisholm, 80-78, on Friday.

## Chisholm

With the crowd looking down from above in the classic old-style gym at Chisholm, the Bluestreaks gave the home fans plenty to cheer about in the first half Friday, knocking down their first two trey attempts to take an early 8-4 lead. North Woods came back to tie it at 10-10 on a bucket by Luke Will and a pair of backcourt steals and scores by Louie Panichi. Chisholm continued to have good ball movement on the offensive end and went up 24-17 on another trey with just under 10 minutes to play in the half. Another three-ball gave the Bluestreaks their largest lead at 29-21, but the Grizzlies buckled down and got back to within three at the half, 40-37.

After Chisholm opened with

## Top Chisholm 80-78 in come-from-behind thriller

a charity toss, Jonah Burnett knocked down a pair of free throws and scored an old-fashioned bucket and one three-point play to give the Grizzlies their first lead since the opening moments of the game, 42-41. After going up 50-45, the Grizzlies went for about four minutes without a score, and Chisholm retook the lead 53-50. Panichi got the Grizzlies back on track with a triple at the 9:21 mark, sparking five minutes of three-ball madness. Evan Kajala hit a long ball from the top of the key for North Woods, and Chisholm drained a pair of threes before Panichi answered in kind with two more, Chisholm popped in another for a 68-66 lead, and Panichi took the lead right back with a rainbow from five feet behind the arc to make the score 69-68. The Grizzlies wouldn't trail again, as two baskets by Will and a free throw by Burnett put North Woods up 74-68. Chisholm hit again from three with a minute to play, shaving the Grizzlies' lead to one, 76-75. Aidan Hartway hit a pair of free throws for North

Woods for a 78-75 advantage, and Chisholm fired a couple of long-range blanks on its next possession. Burnett was fouled and stepped to the line to make a pair of charities with nine seconds left, giving the Grizzlies the cushion they needed to withstand a last second trey by Chisholm and come away with the 80-78 win.

The Bluestreaks hoisted up as many three-balls as they did two-pointers in the game, and the strategy nearly paid off, as they hit 12-of-31. But working the inside, the Grizzlies drew 15 fouls and went 17-of-22 from the free throw line, offsetting Chisholm's edge from three-point range.

Burnett led all scorers with 26 points, followed by Panichi with 23 and Will with 16. Chisholm had four players in double figures, topped by Lawrence Oberg with 22.

"They came out shooting well," Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich said. "The crowd was a big factor – that was the loudest I've ever heard it and I grew up there. But when you live or die by the three,

you come down to who wanted to work harder and who was going to finish towards the end. Being down by eight a few times throughout the game, our boys kept fighting. We got to the line a lot by going to the rim and getting their guys out of position in their zone. I'm glad we came up with the win."

## Littlefork-Big Falls

Having been pushed by Littlefork-Big Falls in a 101-89 road win on Feb. 9, the Grizzlies were ready for another tough game on Thursday, but it never materialized, as North Woods rolled to an easy 84-39 win.

The sustained ferocity of the Grizzlies' defense quickly put to rest any notion that the Vikings could hang tough this time around. When LBF wasn't turning the ball over, which they did 27 times in the game, North Woods was forcing them to take bad or contested shots, shots that weren't dropping as the Vikings hit a woeful 29.4 percent from the field. Feasting on layups and a strong inside game, North

Woods hit a phenomenal 66.7 percent of its two-pointers, going 28-for-42. The outcome of this one was decided well before North Woods went into the halftime locker room with an overwhelming 48-17 lead, and the Grizzlies didn't relax their iron grip in the second half until late in the game when the reserves were on the floor.

Burnett continued piling up the points, dropping in 27 on the night. Panichi scored 23, and Kajala hit for 10.

Adding Monday night's 71-53 win over Ely to the mix, the Grizzlies haven't lost since their Jan. 22 defeat by Class A No. 1 Cherry, a winning streak now at 11 games. The Grizzlies hope to extend the streak to 12 and move their overall record to 22-4 when they host Deer River for the regular season finale on Friday. The Warriors are riding a ten-game winning streak, have a 19-5 record, and trail North Woods in the battle for a No. 3 seed in next week's Section 7A tournament.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

# Wolves notch huge win in regular season finale

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

SOUTH RIDGE – The Timberwolves notched their 20th regular season win for only the third time in school history here last Friday as they slayed the Panthers 60-50. South Ridge came into the game riding high on

a 21-4 record, but they ran into an aggressive Ely defense that kept them off balance all night.

"We played zone defense all night and took away their bigs," said Ely Head Coach Max Gantt. "We didn't allow them to play the inside-out game that they really like. We only won by 10 but we really did control the game with

our defense, especially in the second half when we had our lead pushed to about 16 at times. It was a great team defensive effort."

But it wasn't all defense as the Wolves racked up 60 points, only the third time this season that the Panthers had allowed that many points. They proved particularly dangerous from

beyond the arc as they racked up eight three-balls by five different shooters. "That is tough to guard when that many people are stepping out and spacing the floor for us," noted Gantt.

Senior Grace LaTourell led the way for the Wolves, with 26 points although she had help from several sources. Freshman

Audrey Kallberg added ten points, while junior Clare Thomas tallied eight. Senior Hannah Penke and sophomore Zoe Mackenzie posted six points apiece. Senior Sarah Visser added 15 rebounds.

"It was a total team win," said Gantt.

## ARCHERY

# North Woods girls medal in archery meet

NASHWAUK- The girls stepped to the fore this past weekend for the North Woods archery team as they competed

in a 3D target meet at Nashwauk-Keewatin.

Team members to medal included Cadence Nelson, fifth

place in high school girls, Lauin Glass, second in middle school girls, Michaela Brunner, fifth in middle school girls, and Bailey

Brunner, first among fourth-grade girls and third among all elementary girls.

The Grizzlies' middle school

team took first place and the high school team placed second.

## BOYS...Continued from page 1B

a pull-up trey, and after a Fredrick charity the Wolves went stone cold for the next six-and-a-half minutes, allowing the Grizzlies to build a 43-32 cushion. Johnson ended the Ely drought with a three-ball at the 9:07 mark, but the Grizzlies had enough of an edge to keep the Wolves at arm's length until the decisive run that put the game away.

Burnett led the charge for the Grizzlies with 26 points, and Panichi scored 20 points while connecting on five trifectas. Davies topped the charts for

Ely with 19, and Chittum dropped in 15.

"It's hard to come up here and play," said Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich. "They outworked us the first half, and being up five was a blessing. But the boys persevered and kept working through all the foul trouble – I give credit to them. It was fun."

Jugovich said contributions from his bench were key in pulling this one out.

"Guys off the bench came up big," he said. "Keenan's (Whitney)

defense, he really picked it up. And Evan (Kajala) on the boards, he was out-jumping all of them tonight. He proved that he wants the minutes, and he did a great job today on the boards and finishing at the rim."

Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald was proud of his team's effort in the loss.

"I thought we battled really well with them," he said. "They kind of pulled away and we didn't shoot the ball well late and we had some untimely turnovers, but I thought we competed well against a really good team."

McDonald said the key to slowing down the Grizzlies was his team's ball-handling. The Wolves limited their turnovers and hustled down the court on defense to thwart the North Woods transition game.

"Our kids work really hard on defense," McDonald said. "Sometimes they're not very talented on the offensive end – we have our limitations there. But we always worked hard out there and that kept us in the game."

With the win, the Grizzlies moved to 21-4 on the season and carry an

11-game winning streak into a big Friday home finale against Deer River. Ely closes out the regular season on Friday as well with a home contest against Fond du Lac. Seedings and

opening round schedules for the 7A Sectional tournament will be posted this weekend on the *Timberjay's* website and Facebook page.

## GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

p.m. on Wednesday. With the Grizzlies ranked 61st in Class A and the Huskies at 63rd, this could be a close contest. North Woods won the regular season matchup 65-54 at home, but Bigfork has a better record against common opponents, 11-4 to 9-5. North Woods averages 10 points more per game on offense, while Bigfork

holds opponents to seven points fewer on defense than the Grizzlies. Should the game go down to the wire, North Woods can draw on its regular-season experience of having won five of six games decided by three points or less.

Should the Grizzlies prevail, their tournament trail will most likely end on

Saturday, March 2 with a 4 p.m. game at Mr. Iron-Buhl. The top-seeded Rangers should crush the winner of the play-in game between 2-23 Nashwauk-Keewatin and 1-23 Littlefork-Big Falls, and MIB beat North Woods 100-35 in the regular season. While North Woods was playing well at the end of the season, closing with a

7-2 run, the Grizzlies don't have the personnel to match up against the defending state champs.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$10 for adults, and no passes are allowed. Wednesday's and Saturday's games will not be streamed online.

city to 3-68.

Ely also notched its first win in school history against Mora, marking another milestone for the team.

## HOCKEY...Continued from page 1B

defenseman Jayden Zemke both received honorable mentions.

Ely slew a few dragons this year as well, as they notched their first ever win

over International Falls on the Broncos' home ice. The rivalry, which dates back to the 1940s, has been a lopsided one from the beginning, as Ely had won just

once in 69 games against their nemesis coming into the season. But Ely swept the Broncos in both games this season, improving their record against the border

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Obituaries and Death Notices



**Christina Premo**

Christina Premo, 56, lost her strong fight on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024. She took her last breaths in her sleep while surrounded by the ones she loved most. She was blessed to be able to stay home with her friends and family while she was in hospice. Christina and her family were very thankful for the Mayo Clinic in Rochester; she always recommended them to anyone needing cancer treatments. A special thanks to Linda Schmidt, Janice Jacka, Michelle Lyons and all who have sent their thoughts and prayers. Funeral services for close friends and family were held at Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia on Thursday, Feb. 29. A celebration of life followed at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center in Virginia.

Christina was born in Bemidji to Sandra Puttonen, but was raised by her grandparents, Joseph and Patricia Premo. While in grade school Christina played basketball. She graduated from Tower-Soudan High School and later went to Bemidji State University.

Christina met Todd Grothberg in Bemidji and together they had two sons, Justin and Mark. They moved to California where she worked for Ford Motor Company. After a few years, she moved back to Minnesota to be closer to family. Minnesota was her home. It was where she was meant to be. Christina met Bobby Hujanen and moved to Tower. Together they had two boys, Ryan and Logan. Her children were her pride and joy. The boys

always had a great relationship with their mom. Christina was the definition of the cool mom.

Throughout the years, she sold houses and cars, but Christina found her love and passion in helping others, making sure everyone around her lived their best life. She helped organize trips to Valley Fair and sporting events. She established a rock concert that featured bands like Hairball and Skid Row. She kept the older generations on their toes by having monthly polkas and bingos at the Civic Center in Tower. When she wasn't helping the community, she reached further and volunteered for the Red Cross, United Way, and Soroptimists, where she held a chair on the United Nations. She had a part and played a role in many lives.

Christina was a fighter. She was diagnosed with multiple Stage 4 cancers including stomach, throat, liver, pancreatic and intestinal. With Stage 4 cancer she floated the river, went to WILD games with her boys, and even took a trip to Hawaii. There wasn't much that could stop her.

Christina leaves behind her sons, Justin Grothberg, Mark (Stephanie) Grothberg, Ryan Hujanen and Logan Hujanen; brothers, Cory Puttonen and Chad Puttonen; and the kids she took in over the years, Brit, Skylar, Rome, Tyler, Iaisa and many more.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents, Joseph and Patricia Premo; mother, Sandra Puttonen; and aunt, Patty Premo.

**Jeanne E. Adams**

Jeanne Elizabeth Wildman Adams, 98, of Zimmerman and Snowbank Lake-Ely, died at her home on Friday, Feb. 9, 2024. Her mind was clear and her spirit was strong to the end. Memorial donations may be made to The Hearst Center for the Arts in Cedar Falls, Iowa, or the Ely Public Library.

She is survived by her children, Audrey, Julie, Fred IV and Sara; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and other extended family and friends.

**Rodney L. Scherle**

Rodney Lynn Scherle, 64, originally of Embarrass, passed on to his heavenly home on Monday, Feb. 19, 2024. A memorial service was held on Saturday, Feb. 24 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Aurora with Pastor Zachary Klumpp officiating. Private family burial was at Greenwood Cemetery in Virginia. His brother Ron would especially like to thank Scott Toratti and his staff at ESI Heritage Trail for the time, care and kindness they showed to Rodney.

He is survived by his sister, Linda (Bill) Saari; brothers, Roger Scherle and Ronald (Wendy) Scherle; niece, Miranda (Dan) Vogtman; nephew, Preston Saari; step-niece, Stacey (Richard) Hicks; step-nephew, Anthony Petric; several great- and step-great-nieces and nephews; and many cousins.

**Yvonne M. Kush**

Yvonne Marie Delage Kush, 86, of Aurora, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024, at Edgewood Vista in Virginia. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, March 1 at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Aurora with Father Kristoffer McKusky celebrating. Visitation will be held on Thursday, Feb. 29 from 4-6 p.m. at Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home in Aurora. Visitation will continue for one hour prior to Mass at the church. Interment will be Forest Hill Cemetery in Aurora.

She is survived by her children, Debra Ehrich of Aurora, Glen Kush of Duluth, Tracy (Paul) McDonald of Ely and Tim (Susan) Kush of Duluth; grandchildren, Sarah (Rusty) Fitzgerald, Emily (Tony) House, Megan (Eli) Dotts,

Natalie McDonald, Cannon and Kendra Kush; nine great-grandchildren; brothers, Duane and Richard (Karen) Delage; sisters, Madonna (Bob) Polta, Mary (Gene) Christianson, Lucille (Bob) Weiss, Paulette (Larry) Johnson and Diane Westlake; sisters-in-law, Shirley Delage, Joanne Bradley and Rose Delage; and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Charles R. Walker**

Charles "Buck" Robert Walker, 64, of Chisholm, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2024. A 65th Birthday Celebration of Life will be held from 1-5 p.m. on Saturday, April 6 at the Old Muni in Cook with food and entertainment.

He is survived by his wife, Dawn Danyluk Walker; daughters, Angel

Walker, Carole Walker, Melissa Rice and Kristina (Jason) Harding; sons, Charlie (Ashley) Walker and Jonathan (Lexi) Musakka; brothers, Robert "Joe" Walker and Irving Dutton; sister, Gloria Dutton; 21 grandchildren with Cindy, Charles and Ciara holding a special place in his heart; two great-grandchildren; very special friends, Scott Larson, Mike Vittori, Chester Nelson and Shane O'Neil; and many others.

**Paul M. Gustafson**

Paul Maurice Gustafson, 73, of White Iron Lake-Ely, passed away at his home on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024, after a courageous seven-year battle with pancreatic cancer. A celebration of life is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Friday, March 1

at Ledgerock Community Church in Ely. A graveside service will be held at a later date in Maynard. Memorial donations be made to the Ledgerock Community Church music fund or Kathy's House near Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee, Wis. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Beth Mitleyng Gustafson; sons, Jeremy (Meg) Gustafson of Corcoran and Bryan (April) Gustafson of Hermantown; daughter, Sarah Gustafson of Duluth; seven grandchildren; siblings, Jean (Don) Hougner of Colorado Springs, Colo., Bobby (Lesli) Gustafson and Kevin (Donna) Gustafson, both of Ely, and Karen (Wayne) Erickson of Montevideo.



# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
Northwoods

## THE BOUNDARY WATERS

### USFS is seeking wilderness volunteers for summer work

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

Applications are still open for positions

REGIONAL— Looking for a meaningful way to spend time in the Boundary Waters this summer? The U.S. Forest Service's volunteer wilderness ranger program just might be the opportunity you're looking for. The Superior National Forest is looking for about a dozen interested individuals to spend the summer working on a variety of maintenance projects in the wilderness.

While the Forest Service has wilderness rangers on staff, it lacks the funding to deploy the numbers of

rangers needed to keep up with the never-ending need to clear portages and maintain the thousands of remote campsites located in the 1.1-million-acre wilderness area.

You don't need to have prior experience although those with prior canoeing, camping, or other outdoor skills might have an advantage.

But Chris Maher, who oversees the program on the Kawishiwi District, said "soft skills" like an agreeable personality and willingness to work as part of a team can often give even the novice an advantage.

**Right: If you'd like to make a difference by helping the U.S. Forest Service maintain the BWCAW, consider volunteering as a wilderness ranger this summer.**

photo courtesy USFS

Applications for the volunteer positions are open for the foreseeable future, with hiring decisions expected in late April for positions that could start as early as mid-May and typically

See VOLUNTEER...pg. 5B



## THE CHANGING CLIMATE

### Warmest winter ever

Minnesota has beat out the "Year Without a Winter," setting new record

REGIONAL— Residents of Minnesota have just experienced the warmest winter ever recorded in the state, and it wasn't even close. While this story was written three days before the official end of meteorological winter, there was no doubt as of early this week that a record that dates back nearly 150 years, to the winter of 1877-78, was going to fall.

"It's amazing," said state climatologist Pete Boulay. "There are a few records that I thought would never be broken and that was one of them." As of early this week, the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport had recorded an average winter temperature (Dec. 1-Feb. 29 is considered meteorological winter) of 29.5 degrees F. That's 9.9 degrees above the average winter temperature of 19.6 degrees F and was 1.8 degrees F above the 1877-88 record, which meteorologists had long dubbed "The Year Without a Winter."

The departure from normal was even more pronounced in northern Minnesota, where many stations will end the winter season with average temperatures ranging from 11-13 degrees F above average.

"This winter isn't just breaking records- it's insulting them," said Kenny Blumenthal,

another of the state's climatologists, in a recent personal newsletter he writes about Minnesota weather. "Even if we include the extraordinary 1877-78 winter, nobody alive today, and no grandparents or great-grandparents of anyone alive today, ever witnessed a Minnesota winter like this one," he said.

#### Astonishing departures from average

While every winter is different in terms of the intensity and timing of cold temperatures, when averaged over three months, they normally don't vary more than a few degrees above or below. Not this year. A weather station 25 miles east of Ely, for example, recorded an average winter temperature this season of 21.2 degrees F, a whopping 13.2 degrees above the typical winter average of 7.7 degrees F. A station outside of Orr is set to finish the year about 13.4 degrees above its long-term average, while Tower appears likely to best its typical winter average by more than 12 degrees, with an average temperature this winter of 20.2 degrees F.

In International Falls, which has the longest period of record in far northern Minnesota, this winter was set to finish about two degrees above the previous warmest

**Above: Scattered crusted snow was all that remained in much of the area this past week at a time of year when the region is typically blanketed in about two feet of snow.**

**Below: The mild temperatures this past weekend had the sap flowing on area maple trees, several weeks earlier than usual.** photos by M. Helmberger



winter on record— the winter of 1997-98, when the season average reached 19.6 degrees F. The border city, so far, has averaged 21.8 degrees this winter, or 13 degrees above the normal winter average of 8.8 degrees F. The Falls also set a new record for the first 50-degree temperature ever recorded there in the month of January.

"A normal winter is 8.8 degrees, and they're at 21.8," said Boulay, with an air of incredulosity. "That's crazy!"

In fact, the weather experienced across northeastern Minnesota this winter is more typical of winter in a place like Fort Dodge, in central

Iowa, where the typical winter average temperature checks in at 22.1 degrees.

#### Little snow

Tuesday's snowfall across the region came after weeks of little precipitation of any kind and it was an exception for a winter that has been notable for the lack of snow. According to the state climatology office, most weather stations in the state are reporting less than half of their usual snowfall, in part because so much of this winter's precipitation fell as rain.

Indeed, Boulay noted that total precipitation at most stations is actually running

See WARMTH...pg. 5B

## FIGHTING AIS

### County board OKs funds in fight against AIS

REGIONAL— The St. Louis County Board has given preliminary approval to distribute \$709,393 in state funds designated toward the fight against aquatic invasive species. Seven organizations based in the county will be among the recipients of the funding, although the vast majority, a total of \$505,000, will be awarded to the North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District to manage watercraft inspections, decontaminations, and public education on more than two dozen lakes.

Those lakes include Vermilion, Burntside, Pelican, Crane, Shagawa, Eagles Nest 2 and 3, White Iron, Bear Island, Johnson, Kabetogama, Big Bear, Birch, Ely, Little Sturgeon, One Pine, Salo, Side Lake, Sturgeon, Whiteface Reservoir, and Whitewater.

Commissioners unanimously approved the list of projects during their Committee of the Whole meeting last week in Duluth.

In addition to the funding the awarded to the NSLSWCD, the board gave preliminary approval to funding for the following:

- \$135,585 to Wildlife Forever for marketing efforts for their Clean Drain Dry Initiative campaign, aimed at public awareness and education, and behavioral change.

- \$26,000 to Vermilion Lake Association for continued watercraft inspections and cleaning, public awareness and education, habitat evaluation and threat assessment, early detection, response efforts and population management, as well as partnership development.

- \$18,100 to Burntside Lake Association to promote the use of decontamination stations, improve public awareness and education about AIS, build early detection capabilities, and partnership development.

- \$50,000 to Community Action Duluth for continued eradication, control, mapping, and monitoring of non-native phragmites in the St. Louis River Estuary.

- \$30,000 to Canosia Township for watercraft inspections and public education on Pike Lake and Caribou Lake.

- \$27,565 to Grand Lake Township for watercraft inspections on Caribou Lake.

The board was expected to give final approval to the funding at its Feb. 27 meeting, in Clinton Township.

Each year, through the AIS Prevention Aid Program, the state Legislature allocates funding to counties to be used to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of AIS.

The amount of funding received from the state is based on a formula that factors each county's share of watercraft trailer launches and watercraft trailer parking spaces. Of Minnesota's 87 counties, St. Louis County has the second highest number of watercraft trailer launches and the highest number of watercraft trailer parking spaces.

More information about the county's AIS prevention plan and work that's been done to date is available online at [stlouiscountymn.gov/AIS/](http://stlouiscountymn.gov/AIS/).



HUNTING

DNR: State's 2023 deer harvest down 14 percent over five-year average

REGIONAL — Hunters harvested 158,678 deer during the 2023 hunting season, a lower total harvest than in recent years.

time and space, and can be exacerbated in response to other changing conditions, like poor quality wintering habitat.

Northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, also hit hard by severe winters, saw similar declines in deer harvests in 2023.

"This year's extremely mild conditions do bode well for deer in northern Minnesota, but deer populations in the far north will need several mild winters to start to recover," Froberg said.

Analysis of the 2023 deer harvest is available in a final deer harvest report. This report and past season harvest reports are available on the Minnesota DNR website(mndnr.gov/mammals/deer/management/statistics.html).

The Minnesota DNR sets hunting seasons with projected harvest levels designed to move deer populations closer to established goals for each deer permit area throughout the state.

Deer numbers can suffer during prolonged severe winters, especially in areas with deep snow or insufficient winter habitat. In these conditions, deer must expend more energy to acquire food, making them more vulnerable to predators.

Hunters in northern Minnesota saw the biggest drop in success, with registrations off 21 percent from 2022 in northeastern Minnesota and off eight percent in the northwest.

"In recent years, deer populations have been lower in northern Minnesota, particularly following the severe winters of 2021-2022 and 2022-2023," said Todd Froberg, big game program coordinator with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Wolves play a large role as a predator of deer, especially in winter, but there is little evidence to suggest that northern Minnesota's low deer numbers are directly due to wolf predation. The influence that wolves play in influencing deer populations likely change over

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Forecast for Friday through Tuesday with temperature ranges and weather icons. Includes a detailed table for Ely, Embury, Cook, Orr, and Tower with historical data from 2019 to 2025.

Fishing reports

Ely area

Panfishing has been like the weather. One day hot, next day ice cold. Finding panfish doesn't seem to be the issue anglers are having.

moving has been key for a successful outing. Panfish suspended off the bottom have been hitting small white or red colored soft plastics.

The recent full moon has eelpout activity high and a lot of anglers taking full advantage. Bright glowing tubes or heavy pout spoons, loaded with chunks of minnows and pounded on the bottom, has been

very effective. 25-45 feet of water, around sunken islands or sharp drop offs close to flats have been the areas to look for eelpout.

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

WARMTH...Continued from page 4B

slightly above average for the winter season even as snow totals are running exceptionally low. The departure from average in northeastern Minnesota is particularly noticeable, at least to date.

The 45-year average snowfall in Ely is 71.2 inches according to records from Vermilion Community College. The minimal snowfall, combined with the warmest temperatures ever recorded during a Minnesota winter, have left little snow on the ground as of the end of the February.

Part of a trend

This year's extraordinary winter comes at a time when winters across the globe, including in northern Minnesota, have been warming as a result of the rising levels of CO2 and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

beginning of record keeping in 1896.

What's more, the frequency of exceptionally warm winters has also increased dramatically in the North Country while the frequency of cold winters has declined markedly.

During the past forty years, by contrast, only five winters have been colder than 5.1 degrees F, which was the average winter temperature from 1896-1915.

More records to come?

The record mild air temperatures could well set new records for early ice-out. Some lakes, particularly in southern Minnesota, already set records for the latest ice-in dates.

less than a foot of ice, at a time of year when 28-36 inches is more typical.

Boulay said he's going to be setting up his ice-out web page earlier than usual this winter, anticipating more records are going to fall.

The weather in March will likely determine whether ice-out dates set records in northeastern Minnesota. While ice-out for most area lakes comes in late April or early May, this year could prove an exception.

This week's weather rollercoaster, which featured the first below zero temperatures in some places in weeks along with the first significant snowfall in several weeks, extraordinary warmth is expected to return again by this weekend.

VOLUNTEER...Continued from page 4B

run well into September, although start and finish dates are flexible, notes Maher.

Volunteers who are able to work the full summer are preferred, but that's not always a deal-breaker, particularly for a volunteer with significant and relevant prior experience.

Maher said the volunteers tend to be college students looking ahead to careers in outdoor fields, although retirees looking for challenging volunteer opportunities are also typically among the applicants.

A willingness to engage in sometimes hard physical labor is more or less required. Volunteers will need to be able to portage gear and could be involved in clearing portage or hiking trails of brush and deadfalls.

Volunteers will receive training as needed to ensure they have the knowledge, the tools, and the protective gear to complete their wilderness tasks.

are responsible for packing their own food, clothes, and toiletries, the Forest Service provides all needed equipment, canoes, and camping gear. If volunteers need a place to stay during off-times, the Forest Service does provide free housing in a bunkhouse.

But Maher said most volunteers find the real value in the experience. "It's a great way to see a lot of country and do a lot of things in the wilderness," said Maher.

Does it sound like it might be for you? Then go to volunteer.gov to fill out an application. Applications will remain open at least through the month of March.



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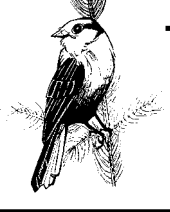
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Advertisement for Cabin Quilting, a 5-Star Rated Shop for quilting fabric and supplies, located at 227 1st St SW & Hwy 53, Cook MN 55723.





# TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

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

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## SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AA MEN'S PRIMARY PURPOSE meeting, Tuesdays at 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 226 E Harvey St., Ely, 218-235-3819f

## HAIR CARE

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## SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

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

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

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## Super Crossword

<b>ACROSS</b>	1 Friendly and cheerful	7 Custard apple relative	12 Peevish state	16 Air gun ammo	19 With no secrecy	20 Caribbean resort island	21 Physiques, for short	22 Suffix with east	23 Door-bashing device	25 Working hard	26 Grazing field	27 Politician Alexandria — -Cortez	28 Bud Light mascot	31 A verb often follows it	34 Vex	36 Winning tic-tac-toe	37 "Hoarders" channel	38 "Full House" acting pair	41 Sideways-moving arachnid	43 Judo teacher	44 Test taker	46 Sailors, informally	47 "The Villain" actor Jack	50 Gain's offset	51 Ignited	53 "If I Only Had the Nerve" singer	59 "Ka-POW!"	60 Me, in Lyon	63 On — with (equal to)	64 One of the Kennedys	65 Org. with merit badges	67 Leaning	69 Mother of Jesus	71 Things to step on in washrooms	73 Moon that's home to the Ewoks	74 Top-secret U.S. org.	75 Dialect of Aramaic	76 Ad biz award	77 French article	78 CEO's deg.	80 Flashy, diving soccer move	82 Put a flaw in	83 Dog in "The Thin Man"	85 Hockey's Phil, to fans	86 Manufacture	89 Leaned back	93 Negev's land	98 "Fatal Attraction" Oscar nominee	100 Feta, for one	103 Official order	104 Verarication	105 Spiral-shelled mollusk	106 Rep on the street	107 Luxury writing implement	110 Eye ring	113 Rhinoplasty doc	114 Nastase of tennis fame	115 Halibut, sole and flounder	120 Beatified Mlle.	121 Madams' counterparts	122 Eldest of the Musketeers	123 1998 Masters champ Mark	124 One of the Kennedys	125 Hug's partner	126 Century's 100	127 All 12 of its symbols are featured in this puzzle	3 Court divider	4 Chants	5 Actor Baldwin	6 Vega's constellation	7 Grill-marked sandwiches	8 French forest region	9 Brand of faucet filters	10 Cry like —	11 Bank bought by Chase, for short	12 Govt. advances for mom-and-pops	13 Opposite of destined	14 "And When —" (1969 hit)	15 Certain high-heel feature	16 Go-Go's singer Carlisle	17 Offspring producer	18 Ones entrapping	24 "Vidi," in English	29 "Slow" primate	30 Bonnie of blues rock	31 Antis' votes	32 Corrida cry	33 Sailor's org.	35 It runs on a 52-Down	39 — -do-well	40 Bill of tennis	41 "Hurry it up!" rodents, jocularly	42 Actress Ward	45 Balm additive	48 Female grad	49 Chatty birds	52 Apple buy	53 Went spelunking	54 Think aloud	55 Prison units	56 2012 Ben Affleck thriller	57 Turkish money unit	58 Bitterly cold	59 Adherents of an Iranian religion	60 Thousand: Prefix	61 — acid (fat product)	62 "There, there"	65 Georgia politician Bob	66 Michael of the band R.E.M.	68 Small nail	70 "— la Douce"	71 Drink-related party abbr.	72 Suffix with micro- or kaleido-	75 Read quickly	79 "I'm c-c-cold!"	80 Start to wake	81 Light snack	82 Small rodents, jocularly	83 Sore feeling	84 Slumber	86 Star of "I'm No Angel"	87 Slower than allegretto	88 Like bootees	90 Cream-filled pastries	91 Big head	92 Contributor	94 Covered anew, as a book	95 — Lingus	96 Suffix with Senegal	97 Guided	99 In harm's way	101 Transversely	102 Those people	105 100-buck bill	108 Roman 1,052	109 Auction website	111 "The Wizard —"	112 Celeb's ride	116 Radio host Charlamagne — God	117 "Bali —"	118 Epoch	119 Small pouch
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## PUBLIC NOTICE

**NOTICE OF PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION PRIMARY ELECTION**  
**Town of Embarrass**  
State of Minnesota, County of St. Louis

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Presidential Nomination Primary Election will be held in all election precincts in the Town of Embarrass, 7503 Levander Road, Embarrass, MN 55732.

**Tuesday, March 5, 2024.** Polling places will be open from 7:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M., with the exception of townships having less than 500 inhabitants that have opted to establish a later poll opening, but in all cases no later than 10:00 A.M. (M.S. 204C.05).

Jennifer Boese, Town Clerk  
Published in the Timberjay, March 1, 2024

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753-2950

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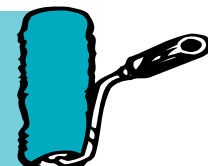
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6	7	1	2	4	9	5	3	8
5	1	3	9	8	4	2	6	7
4	9	8	6	2	7	3	1	5
2	6	7	3	1	5	8	4	9
1	8	2	4	9	6	7	5	3
7	5	6	1	3	2	9	8	4
3	4	9	5	7	8	1	2	6

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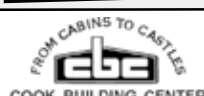
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## EMPLOYMENT

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Deadline Friday, March 8

Published in the Timberjay, March 1 & 8, 2024



DEPARTMENT OF IRON RANGE RESOURCES & REHABILITATION

### AGENCY ENERGY AND CLIMATE POLICY ADVISOR

Agency Policy Specialist  
Permanent, Full-Time

The Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation is seeking to fill the permanent, full-time (1.0 FTE) position of Agency Energy and Climate Policy Advisor (Agency Policy Specialist).

The Agency Energy and Climate Policy Advisor will build productive networks to develop and provide internal expertise and vision to the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR) on energy, climate, and integrated industrial decarbonization-related issues; it will provide informed advice and recommendations to the IRRR Commissioner and IRRR business development and community development teams regarding energy and climate policy and industry challenges and opportunities; it will collaborate with state experts and leaders to develop and lead execution of the agency's strategic plan and goals as it relates to opportunities and challenges in economic development in the energy, climate, and integrated industrial decarbonization sectors, with a focus on opportunities involving integration across the regional natural resource-based economy (mining, timber, manufacturing). This position will also contribute to the creation of IRRR policies and strategies for programs and projects that serve the needs of the Taconite Assistance Area (TAA) communities; represent the IRRR at various industry, community and/or business meetings, committees and task forces; and work to communicate and enhance the IRRR's economic development mission and goals.

This position is located in Eveleth, MN with the eligibility for a mixture of in office and telework. Occasional travel to events is required.

Learn more and apply online at [mn.gov/careers](http://mn.gov/careers)  
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Application deadline: March 4, 2024

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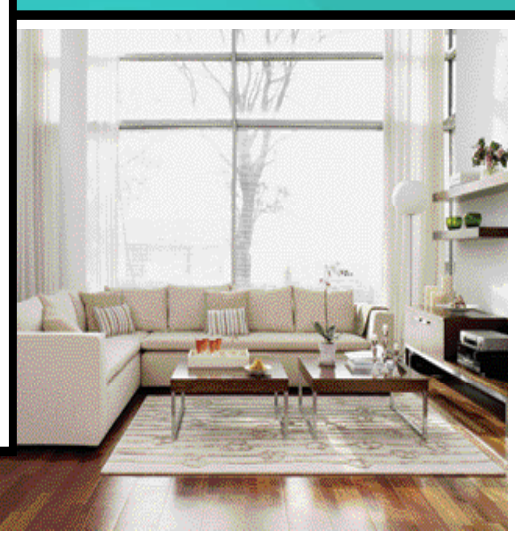


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## Super Crossword

### Answers

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