

Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday
Clocks spring forward!



Inside:
Fiddler on the Roof in Ely... See /3
No EIS for NorthShore tailings... See /9
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Moose numbers are stable... See /4B

The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989 VOL. 35, ISSUE 9 March 8, 2024 \$1⁵⁰

EMBARRASS HISTORY

ELECTIONS

Speaking of the weather...

Meteorologist Dave Anderson keynotes Sisu Heritage annual meeting

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

EMBARRASS- The ever-affable meteorologist and local historian Dave Anderson turned his talk on weather and his family's area history into an impromptu news session during the Sisu Heritage annual meeting on Feb. 25. Ahead of his talk, he worked the crowd at the town hall with a small hand-held video camera, and interviewed Sisu Heritage President Marlin Bjornrud,

Right: Rep. Dave Lislegard in his "Freezin in Embarrass" sweatshirt slaps meteorologist Dave Anderson on the shoulder during the Sisu Heritage annual meeting held Feb. 25.

photo by J. Summit

and then Embarrass Region Fair Association Chair Tana Johnson for a feature story that was set to air on the evening news later that week (go to

See...EMBARRASS pg. 10



Biden and Trump top primary day in Minnesota

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— A rematch between President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump appeared all the more likely after both candidates swept most primary contests on Super Tuesday, including the contests in Minnesota.

Statewide and in most of northeastern Minnesota, Biden won a slightly higher percentage of his party's votes than did Trump, who failed to pick up nearly one-in-three GOP voters in the state, with the vast majority going to former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley. Haley announced late Tuesday that she'll be leaving the primary contest, leaving Trump as the sole candidate in the race for the GOP nomination.

Biden has faced a different challenge, of sorts, as he lost nearly one-in-five Democratic primary-goers to "uncommitted" in Minnesota. That was the highest uncommitted vote of any primary state thus far in the country, and likely reflected the organized nature of the state's large Somali population, with many of its leaders urging an uncommitted

See...PRIMARY pg. 9

RESOURCES

Pulsar helium strike may be richest ever

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

BABBITT- An exploratory borehole made history last week with potentially the richest helium discovery on earth. Pulsar Helium Inc. announced Feb. 28, that its Jetstream #1 borehole reached a total depth of 2,200 ft. On the way down, the drill rig encountered helium gas ratios of 12.4 percent, which are thought to be the highest ever encountered from an underground source anywhere in the world. Because of the large amount of air used in drilling the hole, Pulsar said that this ratio was a minimum because of dilution, which means the discovery may be even richer than the preliminary results.

"This is an outstanding result," said Thomas Abraham-James, Pulsar's President and CEO. "I am delighted that helium has been identified in the Jetstream #1 appraisal well. It is a big day for helium exploration, confirming the original discovery in the new jurisdiction of Minnesota. I look forward to keeping the market updated with further results as they are received."

The depths at which the helium

See...HELIUM pg. 9



SOCIAL MEDIA SENSATION

Big guy, big eats, big fun

Randy Santel takes on big food challenges around the world

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Randy Santel travels the country eating, and he makes good money doing it.

It's all thanks to YouTube and the following he's attracted over the years as he eats portions at restaurants that would leave a half dozen normal human beings gasping in pain.

He's not just looking for your average menu item. He's looking for the real challenge, the more gluttonous the better.

Something like the Vermilion Club's Bamboozler, a 24-inch diameter pizza that can cost upwards of \$60 and is advertised to feed between six and nine adults. But if you can eat it yourself in less than an hour, it's on the house.

"That pizza was good!" Santel said. "The crust was thin and there

Above: Randy Santel, still sweaty from his morning exercise regime, signs autographs for fans at the Tower Café.

photo by J. Summit

Right: Santel mugs for the camera before devouring a Bamboozler at the Vermilion Club.

submitted photo

were lots of toppings." It takes two pounds of dough, three pounds of cheese, plus all the other fixings to make a Bamboozler, but it barely slowed Santel down. Vermilion Club staff reported that not only did he finish the pizza himself, he set a Vermilion Club record for the fastest time, devouring the massive pie, with four separate toppings on each quarter in just shy of 19 minutes. He's had plenty of practice over the years, since the Bamboozler was his

See...BIG EATER pg. 9



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SILVER ANNIVERSARY SPEED



The 25th edition of the Crane Lake Challenge staged by the Straight Line Speed Association on Saturday counted more than super-fast snowmobiles among the 37 pro and 56 non-pro racers who registered for the event. The fastest pro run of the day, 153.47 mph, was turned in by Kyle Baynes, while Chris Green topped the non-pro entries with a mark of 129.23 mph. The track was fast, as four new records were set in pro classes. photos by D. Colburn

Community notices

Ladies of Kaleva Soinnuttaren Tupa 32 and the Knights to meet March 14

VIRGINIA - The Ladies of Kaleva Soinnuttaren Tupa 32 and the Knights will be meeting Thursday March 14, 2024, at 6 p.m., at Kaleva Hall. This will be the first meeting of the year to come see friends you haven't seen in awhile. Coffee 'an will be served.

Lake Country Power announces candidates for 2024 director elections

COHASSET - The slate of candidates is set for Lake Country Power's director elections this spring. Director ballots for Districts 1, 5 and 9 will be mailed to co-op members between April 5 and April 10.

Members running as candidates for the LCP Board this year include: District 1: David Cicmil, Cook; and incumbent Jason Long, Cook District 5: incumbent Robert Bruckbauer, Remer District 9: Incumbent Larry Anderson, Esko; and Kevin Maki, Saginaw.

Lake Country Power will use a hybrid election process for members, offering the opportunity to vote online or by mail. Voting instructions will be included with the mailed ballots. Districts 1, 5 and 9 will fill three-year terms.

The LCP annual meeting will be held Thursday, April 25, at the Merritt Elementary School, located at 5529 Emerald Avenue, Mt. Iron. Registration and dinner begin at 5 p.m. The business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. Election results will be announced during the business meeting along with co-op business

Minnesota's townships to hold annual meetings on Township Day, Tuesday, March 12

ST. MICHAEL - Minnesota's 1,777 townships will hold their annual meeting on Tuesday, March 12. Known as "Township Day," these annual meetings are held every year on the second Tuesday in March and set townships apart from other forms of local government. At this meeting, residents of the townships will meet to voice their opinions about local issues with other township residents and also vote directly on their annual tax levy - an example of direct democracy in action. Citizens attending annual meetings also often discuss and vote on other local issues.

In addition, many of the state's townships will hold their township officer elections on Tuesday's Township Day.

"Township Day 2024 will put grassroots democracy on display. We encourage all residents to show up, express themselves, and weigh in on topics like their tax levy and

local elections," said Minnesota Association of Townships Executive Director Jeff Krueger.

"If you live in a township, please participate in your township's annual meeting on Tuesday, March 12. You can find the location and time by checking the published notice in the local newspaper, township website, or by contacting the township clerk," continued Krueger.

"Townships today include over 900,000 Minnesota residents, and we represent an extraordinary form of local government. Township Day annual meetings are your chance to participate in grassroots government," concluded Krueger.

Information on Minnesota's townships: There are approximately 918,256 township residents in 1,777 townships in Minnesota. Townships exist in every area of the state, including the metropolitan area. Some, with populations of more than 1,000, function in much

the same way as a small city. While many townships remain rural agricultural centers, others host a variety of residential, light commercial, and industrial development.

The tradition of a town meeting has roots in colonial America. New England town meetings gave citizens a way to exercise local authority. Those meetings were especially important in the development of democracy because it emphasized problem-solving through group efforts.

Townships were the original form of local government in Minnesota, established in the 1800s when Congress ordered a survey that divided the Minnesota territory into 36 square mile tracts of land. Today, the term "township" generally refers to public corporations governed by a local board of supervisors and created to provide services to residents.

REMAIN VIGILANT

Slam the Scam: How to spot government imposters

STATEWIDE - Do you know how to spot a government imposter scam? We continue to raise public awareness about Social Security-related and other government imposter scams during the fifth annual "Slam the Scam" Day on March 7. Knowing how to identify potential scammers will help safeguard your personal information.

There are common elements to many scams. Scammers often take advantage of fears and threaten you with arrest or legal action. Scammers also pretend to be Social Security or other government employees and claim there's a problem with your Social Security number (SSN) or your benefits. They may even claim your SSN is linked to a crime.

When you suspect you've been contacted by a scammer:

- ▶ Hang up right away or ignore the message.
- ▶ Never provide personal information, money, or gift cards.
- ▶ Report the scam immediately to our Office of the Inspector General (OIG) at oig.ssa.gov/scam-awareness/report-the-scam.
- If you owe money to Social Security, we'll mail you a letter with payment options and appeal information. We only accept payments electronically through Pay.gov, Online Bill Pay, or by check or money order.
- We will never:
 - ▶ Threaten you with arrest or legal action because you don't agree to pay us money immediately.
 - ▶ Promise a benefit increase in exchange for money.
 - ▶ Ask you to send us gift cards,

prepaid debit cards, wire transfers, internet currency, crypto currency, or cash through the U.S. mail.

Scammers continue to evolve and find new ways to steal your money and personal information. Please stay vigilant and help raise awareness about Social Security-related and other government imposter scams. For more information, please visit ssa.gov/scam.

Tell your friends and family about government imposter scams. Let them know they don't have to be embarrassed to report if they shared personal financial information or suffered a financial loss. The important thing is to report the scam right away.

Together, we can "Slam the Scam!"



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VOTE
DROBAC AND LOFQUIST
• SUPERVISORS •

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR CANDIDATE ROSKOSKI HAS SAID WE NEED A LEVY(TAX) INCREASE TO BUILD OUR RESERVES TO AS MUCH AS 200% OF OUR ANNUAL BUDGET, EVEN THOUGH THE MN STATE AUDITOR RECOMMENDS 35-50%. THE ELECTORS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING SET THE LEVY (TAXES), NOT THE BOARD. EVEN WITH HER MANY YEARS AT THE VIRGINIA CITY COUNCIL, ROSKOSKI STILL DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW A TOWNSHIP WORKS. A VOTE FOR ROSKOSKI IS A VOTE FOR A HIGHER TAX REQUEST. YOU PAY ENOUGH IN TAXES TO THE STATE, COUNTY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT SO LET'S SUPPORT A TOWN BOARD THAT WANTS TO KEEP AS MUCH OF YOUR MONEY AS POSSIBLE IN YOUR POCKET, NOT THE TOWNSHIP'S.

VOTE DROBAC, LOFQUIST, AND BASSING
• INFORMED • EXPERIENCED • LOW TAX ADVOCATES

VOTE
JOANN BASSING
• CLERK •

Paid by the candidate on their own behalf.



We, the undersigned, are former devoted Firefighters of Greenwood Township.

Many of us were fired (terminated or forced out). No one Voluntarily Quit! There was no warning or meeting to discuss this action of the board. We support bringing honesty and transparency back to the board of supervisors.

On March 12, 2024 • Please Vote for:
Lois Roskoski • Craig Gilbert • Debby Spicer

• paid for and supported by •
Howard Ankrum, Belinda Fazio, Dave Fazio, Jet Galonski, Hunter Gilbert, Tammy Mortaloni, Tom Mortaloni, Mickey Scipioni, Donovan Strong, and Rick Worringer.

NORTHERN LAKES ARTS ASSOCIATION

Tickets for Fiddler on the Roof selling fast

ELY- The widely acclaimed musical, "Fiddler on the Roof," which has captivated audiences for 60 years, is set to open in Ely beginning Thursday, March 14 at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater on the Vermilion campus of Minnesota North College. The NLAA-sponsored production runs through March 23.

As a cornerstone of the American musical canon, this timeless production promises an engaging experience for theater enthusiasts of all ages. "Fiddler on the Roof" intricately weaves a compelling narrative that resonates deeply, delving into themes of tradition, family, and resilience against the backdrop of a changing world. Its enduring message continues to touch hearts, evoking emotions that are both entertaining and spiritual.

Behind the curtain, an exceptional team of dedicated artists has poured their talent into bringing this production to life. Laurie Kess (Costumes), Karl Kubiak (Orchestral Direction), Karin Schmidt (Music Direction), and Ian Francis Lah (Direction and Design) form a cohesive production team deeply invested in creating a resonant performance. "From crafting costumes to delivering stirring musical performances, each



member has invested months of hard work and creativity to ensure an immersive and unforgettable experience for our patrons," said Lah, NLAA managing director.

The musical features an all-Range cast of 36 performers from Virginia to Ely. Aaron Reini plays the dairyman Tevye with too many daughters to marry off. Wendy Lindsay is Tevye's beleaguered wife, Golde. Lindsay is the leading lady in the NLAA spring musical

for a second year in a row, after her knock-out performance last year as Audrey in "Little Shop of Horrors." Three of Lindsay's daughters are also part of the cast. The pivotal supporting role of Yente the Matchmaker is played by Emily Weise, who recently performed in the NLAA fall production of "God of Carnage."

"We are thrilled to invite the community to join us in the enchanting village of Anatevka for the next two weeks," said

Lah. "This production has been a labor of love, and we cannot wait to share it with you all." Lah highlights the diverse ensemble cast, spanning generations and backgrounds from across the Iron Range, noting how their collective understanding of community enriches the performance. "This show is part story, part fable, reminding us of the importance of honoring tradition while embracing change. It's a poignant reflection of our own communities, where navi-

gating the balance between the two is a constant journey."

Audiences can anticipate an unforgettable journey as they immerse themselves in the rich tapestry of "Fiddler on the Roof."

Get your tickets soon

Tickets are selling fast for this production and the NLAA added an additional matinee performance on Saturday, March 16, to meet demand. Most shows are already more than half sold out and the March 17 matinee only had 17 seats left as of the *Timberjay's* presstime for this week's edition. For ticket information and show-times, please visit <https://www.northernlakesarts.org/tickets/fiddler-on-the-roof>.

The NLAA is dedicated to enriching the cultural landscape of our community through the performing arts. Committed to excellence and innovation, the organization strives to engage, inspire, and entertain audiences of all ages.

NLAA extends its gratitude to local businesses, individual donors, and audience members for their unwavering support in ensuring the vitality of locally produced live, professional arts in northeast Minnesota.

Wahlsten Rd. house destroyed in fire

VERMILION LAKE TWP- A rural home here was destroyed by fire last Thursday afternoon, Feb. 29, as the result of an apparent chimney fire that quickly spread to the building's attic. Paul Koslucher, who owns the property on County Rd. 26, reported the fire around 3:30 p.m.

The house was engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived, and an initial attempt at an interior entry was quickly abandoned when large amounts of ammunition stashed in the house began to explode from the heat. The Vermilion Lake, Embarrass, Pike-Sandy-Britt, Tower, and Breitung fire departments and Minnesota DNR responded to the scene. The St. Louis County Sheriff's deputies handled traffic control as



traffic was blocked for a time to allow fire trucks and heavy equipment, which was used to knock down the remaining house

frame, onto the scene. The Tower Area Ambulance Service provided medical standby during the incident.

No one was injured in the fire. photo courtesy of Northland FireWire

Sunday, March 10 • 5-7 p.m.
at the Vermilion Club

Join Greenwood Candidates:
JoAnn Bassing, Clerk
Sue Drobac, Supervisor
Barb Lofquist, Supervisor

Township Election
Tuesday, March 12
Polls Open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. at the Town Hall

Paid by the candidates on their own behalf

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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

Election interference

The U.S. Supreme Court puts its foot on the scales of justice, to benefit Trump

The U.S. Supreme Court, as has become its pattern in recent years, acted recklessly last week when it announced it would hear former president Donald Trump's claim that he is immune from all criminal acts he may have committed during his presidency.

We already know the decision that the Supreme Court will ultimately issue. The court will decide consistent with the rulings of District Court Judge Tanya Chutkan as well as the three-judge panel of the D.C. Appeals Court, all of whom concluded in no uncertain terms that Donald Trump's claim of immunity for his efforts to overturn a free and fair election to remain in power is preposterous and opposed to every relevant provision of the U.S. Constitution and the very notion that no one is above the law.

Virtually every judge in America (Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito being the only potential exceptions) and, indeed, every person with a reasonable understanding of how the American government functions, would recognize that Trump's argument is not just fallacious, but actively un-American.

The Supreme Court, even with a 6-3 conservative majority, will concur— if and when they finally get around to it. And that's the problem with the high court's decision to not only hear, but to intentionally slow walk, the case. In the wake of an exceptionally strong ruling by the D.C. Court of Appeals on this question, the Supreme Court offers nothing of value to the question, other than delay.

And that, from the beginning, has been Trump's legal strategy. It's a strategy he's used for decades to escape legal accountability for years of grifting disguised as “business.” For Trump, justice delayed is justice avoided. For the American people, it is now likely to be justice denied.

With oral arguments set for the week of April 22, the criminal prosecution for Trump's conspiracy to interfere in the transfer of power to president-elect Joe Biden, may now very well never go forward, despite the voluminous and compelling testimony, documentation, and other evidence assembled by special prosecutor Jack Smith. Indeed, the American people who will decide the next president may now have to make that decision without a full understanding of the attempted coup undertaken by the previous president. Donald Trump was scheduled to stand trial for his crimes and the U.S. Supreme Court handed him a veritable “get-out-of-jail-free” card even as they sit fully aware that his claims

of immunity are meritless.

This is worse than *Bush v. Gore*, the last time the Supreme Court opted to intervene in an American presidential election. In the 2000 election, neither of the candidates had plotted criminal acts to overturn the election. Neither was facing criminal prosecution and it's difficult to imagine that prior court actively choosing to interfere in such a prosecution.

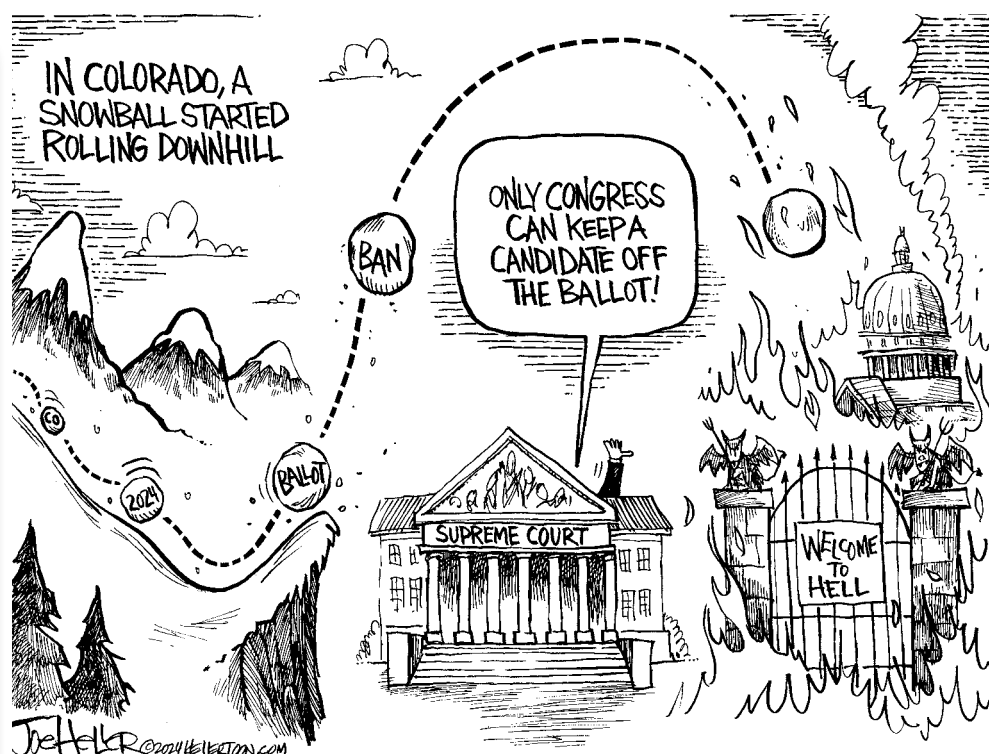
But this is a high court that routinely dismisses precedent, ignores settled law, and actively rejects the tradition of judicial modesty, which holds that courts should only enter the fray when there is no way to avoid it.

The D.C. appellate court had no choice in taking the case. The Supreme Court always has that choice, and the justices are fully aware that their decision to do so here could very well run out the clock on this prosecution. Polls have shown that a felony conviction against Trump, particularly for his efforts to overturn the last presidential election, would almost certainly sink his candidacy, as well it should. The Supreme Court, by agreeing to hear the case, appears intent on sparing Trump that ignominy. It is putting its foot on the political scale to a degree that no prior court has done, at least since 2000.

Keep in mind, the special prosecutor had asked the Supreme Court late last year to rule on Trump's immunity claim on an expedited basis, but the court declined to take up the case, allowing it to go to the D.C. appellate panel instead. That makes the high court's decision to take up the case now appear almost certainly intended to delay Trump's prosecution, for political purposes. For a court, that's the definition of corrupt intent.

In large part because Trump is a corrupt individual, he would likely use his power, should he be elected again, to immediately dismiss the cases against him, both for election interference and for conspiring to retain classified documents and obstruct justice. Most other presidents have avoided interfering in legal cases, but Trump has made abuse of power part of this appeal to the MAGA base. Should Trump take office again, he'll populate his administration with yes men and feel emboldened to engage in even worse criminality.

Sadly, there's one thing the Supreme Court's decision last week almost guarantees. Should Trump be elected again, the high court has no intention of checking the power of a dangerous fool. America could soon be in real trouble.



Letters from Readers

Let's do what we can to help the planet

People around the world use 5 trillion single-use plastic bags in a year. Not many of us can comprehend that massive number or know what to do with all those bags that last forever. It is estimated that it takes a thousand years for a plastic bag to decompose. In the meantime, it spends its long life in a landfill, an ocean, a tree, or a gutter, allowing its toxic chemicals to enter the air we breathe and the food we consume.

On average, plastic bags are used for 12 to 20 minutes, carrying groceries or other items that are already wrapped in plastic and are nearly impossible to open. Yet the plastic industry has found countless ways to impose plastic pollution into our lives. It's in our water, food, clothing, carpeting - even my computer - frankly, it's everywhere.

Earth Day is April 22. It was created in 1970, the brainchild of Gaylord Nelson, a senator from Wisconsin. For years there was little concern for environmental care. Trash and hazardous waste were left unchecked until in 1969, Ohio's Cuyahoga River caught fire because of the chemical waste discarded from manufacturing facilities using the river as a dumpsite. That disastrous event became the symbol for polluted water.

The Southeast Asian country of Bangladesh is today's symbol of plastic pollution because sewers have, for years, been plugged with carelessly discarded plastic bags and packaging. People have drowned in the floods that, on a regular basis, cover the land. Although plastic bags are banned in Bangladesh, the ban is ignored by many shoppers. Sewer divers

are hired at \$10 a day to clear the plastic from at least some of the clogged drains.

One small but vital step that we can take is simply to carry a reusable bag. Most of us have a bag or two tucked away in a closet or car trunk. Please take them with you when you shop. Let's avoid the dreadful consequences of carelessly handled plastic that is doing silent damage to our beautiful world.

Pat Helmberger
Tower

How Greenwood lost many of its firefighters

Just for clarification and consideration, I would like to tell you how Greenwood Township lost several firefighters.

The board voted to dismiss the fire chief, assistant chief, and the safety officer added himself, from their positions. The three individuals were still considered firefighters and EMRs. The three of them then chose to resign.

Thus, the loss of three people.

The board then appointed a new fire chief. The members then decided to form a picket line the night of a board meeting, as they did not want the newly-appointed chief. At another board meeting, an unsigned letter from the disgruntled members to one board member, was read aloud. This letter made demands for change. The board did not comply. The next board meeting the members attended and brought their gear. During the meeting, these members left, leaving their gear in the town hall. (One of the demands - was to not go to calls unless the dismissed fire chief was reinstated.) Leaving their gear and state-

ments in the letter, by law, is called a voluntary quit. Thus, the loss of six firefighters/EMRs. The board then terminated three more members for lack of participation. Thus, the loss of three more members.

All members were given the opportunity to return in six months.

All in all - we lost 13 members (including one retirement).

Through our new fire chief, we have a smoothly running fire department and EMR department. They have more training and are more involved in running the department.

AND -- no calls were missed!!!

Greenwood has a very hard-working board, treasurer, clerk, firefighting and EMR teams.

I hope to keep it ongoing.

I am running for re-election to my board seat. The opponent for my seat has said she doesn't care about the history of the township, just wants to move forward. Moving forward without any knowledge of history seems to be extremely hard. With my experience as clerk, board member, previous election administration, and election judge, I will use my knowledge to move Greenwood Township forward. The township has experienced a lot of significant changes over the past few years. I'd appreciate your support in allowing me to lend my experience to help the current board continue its work.

Please get out and vote on March 12, 2024.

Please support Sue Drobac, Barb Lofquist and JoAnn Bassing

Sue Drobac
Greenwood Township

COMMENTARY

The joys of keeping your life simple

This morning began as would any other. A little stiffness in my knees as my feet touched the floor. Strands of hair criss crossing my cheeks, the sign of a restless night's sleep. I felt a whoosh of wonder at the break of another new day— something I've learned should not be taken for granted.



KATHLEEN
MCQUILLAN

Duffy was anxious. More than ready to go out for his morning walk. I shifted into “patience mode” as his joy

for the morning poured out with raucous barking. A few gentle pats calmed him. He sat quietly watching my every move as I searched for his leash and suited up for the blustery wind that whined beyond the walls.

We stepped out into the bitter cold that had blown in overnight. The path was icy and a near slip reminded me to stay focused on my footing. Overheard stories of

broken wrists, sprained ankles and bell-ringing bumps to heads helped keep me on point. It was early. No birds were singing. I imagined them still clinging to their precarious perches. No noise yet from the nearby highway. Just the wind in the trees and the faint jingle of Duffy's dog tags.

The full moon was faintly visible, low in the west. Through the tangled crowns of aspen, the eastern sky took on a soft violet haze as the sun took its time rising. I stopped to absorb the mystical feeling of the woods around me, where wildlife was

hunkered down in waiting, perhaps as anxious as I was, for the eventual arrival of spring.

Once returned to a warm house, I took up my morning ritual. I lit the gas lamps, drew water for the coffee kettle, and dug through the wood box, in search of the right mix of birch bark, kindling, and starter wood, to dispel the overnight's chill from the room. I ground some coffee beans for that first pour-over. How I love the aroma that comes with that first sip of coffee. One of life's simplest pleasures enjoyed by people all over the world.

The sun rose and it looked like a perfect day out there. Duffy's morning walk had teased the desire to get back outside. The day before, my wood vendor had delivered a new, hefty load of firewood, cut and split, just waiting to be stacked. Having now burned almost all of my previous supply, there was space available in the woodshed. So, dressed right, this would be a good day to start picking away at it. Some people I know tell me I should switch to propane. “Oh,” they groan. “Wood is so much work.” My response is always

this. “It's what keeps me in shape. And I don't have to pay a membership fee. I just step out my front door on my own schedule and enjoy the beautiful scenery and the sense of satisfaction seeing the fruits of my labor. I have no furnace to fix and no fear of a power failure.” Honestly, I love heating with wood. It's hard to explain unless you've experienced the difference for yourself. There's just something special about wood heat. And I know there are many folks out there who would agree.

See SIMPLE...pg. 5

Letters from Readers

I am proud of the current fire department

I have been to many Greenwood Annual and Board meetings and one thing is a constant. Sue Drobac, Barb Lofquist, and JoAnn Bassing are always present contributing to the good of the township. My husband Vic was a member of Greenwood's original fire department and he finally would have been as proud again as I am of the current fire department with Chief Jeff Maus. Let's keep moving forward as we are now.

**Kathy Vogh
Greenwood
Township**

Candidates spreading lies in campaign

As a former supervisor and board chair, I'm dismayed but not surprised, to see the attack ads and letters directed at Lois Roskoski from current board members, written by current board members. The cruel bitter criticism, half-truths, and outright lies in recent letters from supervisors Stoehr, Bassing, and Treasurer Maus, along with an ad from supervisors

Lofquist and Drobac and Clerk JoAnn Bassing, are unwarranted and extremely unprofessional.

Mrs. Roskoski has never stated the reserves should go back to \$1.3 million, as lied about in Supervisor Stoehr's letter. Her proposal to maintain a 1.5 to 2 times the annual budget in reserve is sound public accounting practice. Treasurer Maus, at a recent township meeting, stated there is no recommended reserve amount. Now Stoehr, Lofquist, and Drobac state 35-percent of the total is recommended. By spending the reserves down to the level proposed for 2025, the township could be in a difficult financial position.

The incumbents tout their support of the pickleball group by stating "we donated the land for the new court location." It's my understanding the land is township property that ought to be used by township residents, not land owned by the supervisors. Thankfully, the group is well organized and persistent so the current board majority cannot turn their back on them.

This board majority, led by then Chair Drobac and supported by Lofquist and Stoehr, destroyed the former fire department. Currently there are 10

members, down from over 20. Only four are certified firefighters and four are EMRs only and one is an administrative assistant. This department cannot safely respond to a fire even with 100-percent turnout, 100-percent of the time. Remember these firefighters are still volunteers. This is not their primary job and they cannot be available all the time. They are residents of the area and give of themselves for the safety of the township residents and need additional members to insure a safe and effective response.

Other detrimental actions of the current board majority are: terminating the contract with the township attorney, who represents 90-percent of Minnesota townships. The advice given by this attorney was based on law and fact, not the personal agenda of the board members; quitting participation in the Vermilion Trail (Cook to Tower) planning committee; quitting the Tower Area Ambulance Service (TAAS) committee and refusing to participate with financial support of the service. Yet we all know how important an ambulance service is to our area.

Because Mrs. Roskoski has been actively in-

forming herself of township rules and regulations, actively asking questions, listening to the residents, she has, obviously, intimidated the current board members and they don't want anyone new to their inner circle.

It's time for a change! Continuing to follow the leadership of the current board will destroy all we know of this township. Vote for openness and transparency. Remove the PERSONAL AGENDAS from Greenwood Township governance. Vote for Lois Roskoski and Craig "GEEBS" Gilbert. Move the township forward.

**Mike Ralston
Former Township
Supervisor
and Board Chair**

Let's keep Greenwood moving forward

I was asked to be Greenwood Township Clerk in June of 2022 after the previous clerk just quit leaving the position in disarray. When I started, I had to catch up on the minutes of several meetings, try to balance the books with the help of the State Auditor's office and Greenwood's Treasurer Jeff Maus as well as learning the state's accounting

system (CTAS) requirements. It was challenging but I accepted the challenge because my Township was in a tight spot, and I knew I could help. I have run a business that involved working closely with people for over forty years and volunteered to serve the township on numerous occasions including on the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

I want to continue to serve because broadband is finally coming to the township and I want to help bring it to as many citizens as possible. The large CTC project covers most of the project but not all so we will have to use our ARPA funds and find other grants to complete the coverage. I have worked to bring broadband to our area for over six years now, including being chair of Tower's Blandin Foundation Broadband Committee. I would also like to see the pickleball project go through to completion and help in anyway needed. The pickleball group has worked hard on the project and has had a very productive fundraising effort.

I have been there when the township has had some difficult times and when we had success, but through it all the population of the township is

growing as is the market value and our taxes from the township are the lowest around when you consider our market value. We are turning the corner and I want to do my part in helping our township move forward and not go back to where we were several years ago. Please vote Drobac, Lofquist and JoAnn Bassing to keep your fire department equipment in good repair with well trained, competent, participating staff and taxes low with your expectations high.

**JoAnn Bassing
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.

We ask that letters be limited to 300 words.

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

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

SIMPLE...Cont. from page 4

My experience with wood heat began in the early 1970s when the "Back to the Land" movement first emerged. Thousands of young people began moving to rural areas across the country, a proverbial migration that some have called "the second wave of American homesteaders." I had felt the desire to "move to

the country" for as long as I could remember. So, as a young and idealistic 22-year-old, I joined the ranks and began living on the outskirts of town renting abandoned farmhouses or mountain cabins whenever possible. In the 80s, I read a book entitled "Voluntary Simplicity" by Duane Elgin who laid out a framework for

a simpler lifestyle. With solid reasoning, he provided alternative ways to find happiness that challenged the cultural norms of excessive consumption and "the pursuit of wealth for its own sake." I discovered the writings of Wendell Berry which encouraged the practice of gratitude for "that which we already have," and the

state of peace that comes from contentment. He wrote of his deep reverence for land and "place."

These writings endowed me with a language for my core values. Before Elgin and Berry, I'd had other powerful influences growing up. One was my mother who took pride in, and modeled for her children, the values of being

frugal and resourceful which she acquired having grown up during The Great Depression. The other was my discovery at a very early age the power of nature to calm and comfort me. These sources of wisdom have continued to support and guide me throughout my life.

It took me many years and many moves before I came upon the right place to set down roots. I began my "homestead" in northern Minnesota's wild woods and wetlands—a dream finally fulfilled. Here, a person could live simply, raise a family, and have a good life! Land was affordable. There were no shopping malls

to constantly trigger that "need" for the latest gadgets and fashion trends. Life here rewarded honest work and getting good at "making do with what you had." Two generations of migrants had arrived before me and practiced their own unique versions of "voluntary simplicity." I was amazed at how willing they were to share with me their knowledge and advice. What had started as mere concepts gradually became my life. That was 1979. My joy in living here, 45 years later, is as strong as it ever was. For this, I am forever grateful.

GREENWOOD NEEDS A CHANGE

Board Chair John Bassing, Supervisor Rick Stoehr, Fire Chief/Treasurer Jeff Maus have all written letters with twisted facts and outright lies about me. In my 35 years of working in city government, I have never witnessed current board members attack a newcomer to the table like they have. An ad was also placed by Supervisor Sue Drobac, Supervisor Barb Lofquist and Clerk JoAnn Bassing stating I am "in favor of building up the reserve balance to as much as 200% of our annual budget". These letters and ad were such a disappointment and are being used as an election tactic to scare residents into thinking I'm going to raise their taxes by a ridiculous amount. I will not resort to bashing candidates, like these township officials. I will provide you with the facts and, if elected, work in a positive manner to make Greenwood a great place.

The Board of Supervisors has used approximately \$100,000 from the reserves on an annual basis for ten years (totaling \$1 million) to balance the budget. In 2024, the board is planning on using \$151,000 from reserves to overlay the town hall parking lot. Over the past ten years, the reserves have gone from \$1.3 million to \$327,000 in 2025 with the proposed levy and budget. I said it was irresponsible to bring the reserve balance to \$327,000, as it does not fund one year of expenditures. The current board has proposed a 2025 levy of \$175,000, which leaves the proposed 2025 budget of \$350,000 short by \$86,500 (to come from reserves). I would prefer to see \$500,000 in reserves. There are no hard rules on what a reserve balance should be, but I tend to save more in case of unforeseen expenses.

Also, the 2025 budget does not include funds to pay Greenwood's contribution to the Tower ambulance service or to maintain Township Road 4136-Birch Point Road Extension. Greenwood has not paid their contribution to the Tower Area Ambulance Service (TAAS) for 2022, 2023 or 2024. Greenwood's 2025 proposed contribution is \$26,025. Chair Bassing stated I used inaccurate figures in a previous letter. Well, I obtained the figures from a document that was distributed at a Greenwood meeting. I am in favor of contributing to the TAAS. The current Town Board continues to remain uncommitted to the fact that they are responsible to maintain Birch Point Road Extension, which has led to frustrated residents. I called St. Louis County and obtained confirmation that it is Township Road 4136 and Greenwood has been receiving Town Road Aid annually since 2015, in a total amount of \$34,497.25. No current board member or staff was aware they were receiving these dedicated funds. Per MN Statute 162.081, these town road funds can only be used for construction, reconstruction and gravel maintenance of town roads. I would be in favor of setting up a dedicated fund for the \$34,497.25 and create a committee, including residents of Township Road 4136, to determine a plan to repair the road. Please remember that the levy is set by the residents at the annual meeting, scheduled for 8:15 PM on March 12 at the Town Hall.

To clarify Jeff Maus's claim that I thought I could run against both incumbents, I asked Clerk Bassing if the township used at "at large" system to elect town supervisors when I filed for office. Obviously, Clerk Bassing didn't understand there are other systems used for elections. I never claimed to know everything about township government and I continue to learn about the differences between cities and townships.

Jeff Maus also claims I am not being transparent because I did not send letters to every resident in the township. I sent approximately 100 letters, a few emails, knocked on some doors and held an informational meeting. To date, I haven't received anything from any other candidate, so I'm not sure why I am being attacked for my campaign approach. A vote for me is a vote for transparency. I do ask myself these questions. Why was Supervisor Drobac appointed Deputy Clerk (then changed to Assistant Clerk) and paid for both positions? Why does Board Chair Bassing volunteer to assist his wife, the Clerk, in her duties? Why hasn't Jeff Maus appointed a Deputy Treasurer, even after I told him I was interested? Why aren't the agenda, documents and finance reports included on the website prior to every board meeting? Why are Supervisors sitting on the election board, with no ads placed to recruit election judges? I have spoken to residents that have signed up at their caucuses and have never been contacted by Greenwood Township to be a judge.

If you want transparency and change, please vote on March 12th for myself and Craig Gilbert for Supervisor and Debby Spicer for Town Clerk. Let's bring back the community picnics, bocce ball and more pickleball courts to Greenwood Township and enjoy life!

Lois Roskoski

Candidate for Greenwood Township Board of Supervisors

Paid for by the candidate on her own behalf



the
TIMBERJAY

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The Timberjay (PN 16025) is published weekly on Fridays, 51 weeks per year, by *The Timberjay Inc.*, PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Business/Editorial Office at 414 Main St., PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Call (218) 753-2950 to subscribe. E-mail address is editor@timberjay.com. Periodicals postage paid at Tower, Minnesota.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Timberjay, PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790.

This award-winning community newspaper published each week serves the communities of Tower/Soudan, Cook/Orr, and Ely.

Publisher	Marshall Helmberger
General Manager	Jodi Summit
Cook/Orr Editor	David Colburn
Ely Editor	Catie Clark
Office Manager	Michelle Toutloff
Staff Writer	Rachel Brophy
Graphics/Ad Sales	Scarlet Lynn Stone
Ad Sales/Sports	Jay Greeney

Official Newspaper:

Townships of Bearville, Eagles Nest, Embarrass, Kugler, Vermilion Lake, Field, Morcom, Leiding, Kabetogama, Crane Lake, Greenwood, ISD 707, city of Tower.

Member: Minnesota Newspaper Association, Lake Vermilion Resort Association, Lake Vermilion Area Chamber of Commerce, Ely Chamber of Commerce.

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

Week of March 11

Monday
Embarrass Al-Anon Family Group- Hope Lutheran Church, 5088 Hwy. 21, 6 p.m.
Tower City Council- 5:30 p.m. on March 11

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

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

Township Annual Meeting and Elections (for townships with March elections) on March 12.

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

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

MARCH 12 ELECTIONS AND ANNUAL MEETINGS

Township elections set for Tuesday, March 12

REGIONAL- The township election season has been quiet except for Greenwood Township, where all three incumbents filed for reelection, but all three will be facing challengers.

Township elections are on Tuesday, March 12 for Greenwood, Breitung, and Vermilion Lake. Kugler, Eagles Nest, and Embarrass all hold their township elections in November.

All area townships hold their annual meetings on March

12 to set their levy and do other business. Those with elections will hold their meetings following the close of polls at 8 p.m. Other townships set their meetings earlier in the evening.

Greenwood Township

Barbara Lofquist and Craig Gilbert have filed for the supervisor seat currently held by Lofquist (seat 3).

Sue Drobac and Lois Roskoski have filed for the

supervisor seat currently held by Drobac (seat 5).

JoAnn Bassing has filed for the clerk seat, which she currently holds. Deb Spicer, who served as clerk previous to JoAnn Bassing has also filed for the clerk seat.

Breitung Township

Erin Pietso filed for the supervisor seat currently held by Chuck Tekautz, who is retiring.

No one filed for the clerk

position, currently held by Diana Sundahl. But Amber Zak is running a write-in campaign for the clerk opening.

Vermilion Lake Township

Jen McDonough filed for the supervisor seat currently held by Frank Zobitz, who decided not to run again for supervisor. Zobitz filed for the clerk position, currently held by Crystal Alaspa.

Tower Easter Egg Hunt set for Sunday, March 24

TOWER- The Tower Firemen's Relief Association will host their annual free Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 24, from 12 noon – 3 p.m. at the Lamppa Civic Center in Tower. There will be an egg hunt, prizes, raffles, and fun for ages infant through sixth grade. Hot dogs and chips will be served.

Over 4,000 eggs will be hidden on the grounds outside the civic center. The hunt is scheduled to begin promptly at 12 noon, so please get there a little early because it doesn't take long for all the eggs to be collected. Be sure to dress for the weather.

The event is being held on a Sunday this year, and a week earlier than normal due to scheduling conflicts.

Embarrass Easter Egg-Stravaganza March 23

Celebrate spring at the Timber Hall Event Center in Embarrass on Saturday, March 23 from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. with an Easter egg hunt, cake walk, games, and more. All area children are invited.



COMMUNITY NOTICES

Correction

The *Timberjay* incorrectly attributed some quotes in the story about the Tower Ambulance Commission in the March 1 paper. A series

of quotes, beginning with "This system is not currently failing," was spoken by Frank Sherman, not by the previous speaker who was quoted, Frank Zobitz. The *Tim-*

berjay apologizes for this error and for mixing up the two Franks who were sitting right next to each other.

Correction

In the story about the powwow at Vermilion Country School, the paper reported that Adrienne Whiteman was a part-time staffer at the school. She has been offered that job, but as of that time, she had yet to sign her contract. Whiteman also wanted to add that her daughter Abbi Zappata, a VCS graduate who is the vice-chair of the student council at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, was the lead organizer of the event at VCS, and is now working on organizing the March powwow at Fond du Lac college.

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.

Lunch Bunch to meet on March 14

TOWER- The Lunch Bunch will meet 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.



TSHS weekly winner

TOWER- The winner of the \$100 cash prize in Week 32 of the Charlemagne's 52 Club is Helen Erchul of Duluth.

History Tidbit: Fire destroyed the two-story Vermilion Opera House on July 31, 1915. The loss was valued at about \$10,000.

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

Write-In

AMBER ZAK
Breitung Town Clerk

Election is
Tuesday, March 12

Please Vote!

Paid by the candidate on her own behalf.

GREENWOOD: It's Time to Wake-Up!

After reading my friend, John Bassing's letter refuting Lois Roskoski's recommendations and ideas, I felt attacked again when he gave his side of the past Fire Department issues regarding the Township Board's unjustified firing of our Chief, and Assistant Chief, which led to the firing of our Safety Officer and the eventual termination of over two thirds of the long term devoted Firefighters and some EMS volunteers. Almost all of the terminated volunteers, or marginal employees, had many more years of service to our beloved Township than most every one of the Supervisors.

We probably had a 100% response rate through all kinds of nasty weather night and day, on water, ice, or land. We had no community or visitor complaints with our service. But we had many compliments, letters written, and even money given because of our outstanding commitment and service. But what happened?

I will tell you. New Supervisors of like mind, got the majority vote of all board motions and their preconceived plans went into effect. You know John, you even told me before you were re-elected to the board that you wanted to get rid of the chief and his assistant. Why?

Back to the letter. You said we quit and left our gear behind. Did you get a letter of resignation from any of us? Not counting the one who retired because he couldn't handle any more BS. Doesn't it say in our Greenwood Township Personnel Policy, that you as Chairman signed on August 8, 2017, that quote, "Employees wishing to leave the Township services in good standing must provide a written resignation notice to their supervisor, at least ten days before leaving." Did anyone give you notice? Of course not. Why would we? We had no intention of quitting! We were just trying for many months to get a meeting with the Board to negotiate the situation. Did you not see the whole Department picketing with signs out on the highway in front of the Townhall before your monthly Board meeting? Come on John. You have a Dr. degree. Couldn't you get the hint. Did not your appointed Chief tell you many times? Did not three of the newest Supervisors in their campaign interviews state they were running for and on Transparency? But yet, these long term dedicated Firefighters, First Responders, could not even get one meeting to discuss these drastic measures that ultimately affect their safety and possible lives?

And where and when was there a written reprimand given to our Officers so they could pursue a remedy through the grievance procedures established in the Township Personnel Policies? And your statement "Can you imagine telling your employer that you will pick your own boss?" In our Standard Operating Guidelines, it states "The Chief is to be approved by the Town Board of Supervisors' with Consideration given to the recommendation by the Membership." Why? Because it is a dangerous job and you have to be able to trust your Chief, your Officers, and all your Brothers and Sisters to have your back. Why do you think not one member would have voted for your Chief Maus? Exactly.

The letter that you were referring to that someone wrote stating the Fire Department requests, which you have used as evidence that we all voluntarily quit, was it signed by anyone or even dated? No. Could that be used as an official document that we were quitting

or not taking 911 calls? You're smarter than that. Of course not. It at most would be considered hearsay. But yet that night of the Board meeting that some of us showed up, two members, one a fully trained firefighter and 1st Responder, went on a 911 call. Later that week or beyond, there was a 911 call to the Fire Dept. for a lift assist. Rick and I responded. Luckily, because of Rick's prior 1st Responder experience, we did not even try to lift the patient because of his injuries and we called for an Ambulance. Another Firefighter 1st Responder went on 2 separate 911 calls for overdoses. What does that tell you? And then you say we quit and left our gear behind. Did we turn our gear into anyone? Was there any note or discussion of why those 6? bags were there? They were 25-30 feet away from our Fire Hall. In a room where we have our Safety Meetings and sometimes training. What again, was the real message? You would not meet and negotiate with us so perhaps whoever wrote that letter, was trying to force your Transparency and have you meet with your Fire Department.

But your Board didn't really care about that did you? You would cherry pick and spin the facts so they would support what you wanted to accomplish. Did you know we went the next morning to our meeting room to pick up our gear and the door was locked, and where the key used to be hidden in our office it was gone? Go figure. And why did three of us on February 21, after we supposedly quit, show up for the mandatory OSHA Blood Borne Pathogen & Right to know Training? Did you know only three others showed up? We 6 were the only EMS that were authorized to respond to any 911 calls. Then when we showed up the next month for training, your Chief called the Sheriffs and Police on us. Now, anyone, Please tell me, does that sound like we were quitting?

Then the stalling of the #1 Fire Engine at Fortune Bay. I was driving the engine that night. When we got back to the Firehouse I said I was going to Red tag the truck. That was a Sunday night. I was told it would be reported to our officers because recently the fuel filter was replaced. We thought the problem was fixed. But two nights later, there was a Monthly Board meeting. Our Safety Officer was informed of the truck issues and Fire Boat #1. In his report he was going to bring up the issues to the Board for their recommendation and approval to get further maintenance done. But guess what? He got fired with the Chief and Asst. Chief before he could give his report! We had a licensed mechanic and engineer on the Fire Dept. that did many many hours of maintenance on both Fire Boats and our Fire Engines that I don't believe they charged the department for any of their work. They Volunteered for the good of the community. Every time there was an issue with our equipment we had someone looking into it even though it was not in the scope of firefighter duties. But those two issues were beyond their expertise and turned into the Safety Officer and would have been taken care of probably sooner than what they were. And those numbers you gave, I'm sure, are not for Firefighter calls. The total responses in 2022 for the group that you say quit was 115 and the 4 Firefighters that stayed was 271? That's foolish. Would you like to bet on those numbers? For truthfulness and transparency,

PLEASE VOTE FOR: Lois Roskoski • Craig Gilbert • Debby Spicer
Signed: *Jet Galonski*, Greenwood Township

This is a paid ad.

PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY



The Presidential Primary and every other election depends on citizens stepping forward to help local officials run them. Here Ely's Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski swears in a new shift of election judges on Tuesday. From left-to-right: Harold Langowski, Zeke Smith, Bill Tefft, Janet Dunnom, Jeanette Palcher, and Ginger Morgan. photo by C. Clark

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



sunrise in the east
painting the sky lavender

waning moon watches

Frandsen scholarship now available to Elyites

ELY- Frandsen Bank & Trust and the Frandsen Foundation are excited to announce the addition of five new communities to its college scholarship program. To more positively impact more students, the foundation has added Waterville, Clinton, Ada, Warren/Oslo, and Ely to its existing locations, which already includes Braham, Rush City, Pine City, Frederic Wis., and Luck, Wis.

All graduates of the 2024 senior class in the Ely Public School District are eligible for the Frandsen Foundation Scholarship. Eligible students will have an opportunity to have two years of their college career paid for, including a \$1,000 stipend for fees, books, and supplies. Students must attend a technical-ready program at an approved Minnesota state two-year college. Applicants must have

a high school diploma and have completed the FAFSA application with their parents, regardless of financial status.

High school seniors who are interested in the scholarship can complete the application process by visiting their school counselor. Please note that the Associate of Arts degree is not eligible for the scholarship. Applications are currently open for the Frandsen Foundation Scholarship.

dation Scholarship.

Since its inception, the Frandsen Foundation has awarded scholarships to 491 students. Frandsen Bank & Trust has assets in excess of \$3.0 billion and offers a complete array of business, agricultural, real estate, and consumer loans, savings, and financial services, serving communities in Minnesota, eastern North Dakota, and western Wisconsin.

College teacher honored

ELY- A Minnesota North College faculty member at the Vermilion Campus, Ryan Miller, will receive one of this year's Minnesota State Board of Trustees awards. The Board of Trustees Awards for Excellence acknowledge a consistent and superior commitment to student learning and to encourage the ongoing pursuit of excellence at the colleges and universities of Minnesota State.

Ryan Miller began teaching at Minnesota North in 2020. In the face of the challenges posed by the pandemic, Miller not only adapted but flourished in the online teaching environment, sharing his wealth of knowledge in forestry, wildlife, and the wildland firefighter courses.

Miller teaches general forestry and wildland firefighting courses. Before teaching, he was on the forefront of fighting fires across the western United States. Miller's leadership landed him a variety of roles across the country, including

Crew Boss for the Minnesota Interagency Fire Center. He was in the field for about 15 years, until he decided to change courses.

"I was actually a lab assistant for former professor Lori Schmidt. That position opened a door for me, I was pretty excited to be able to teach about the things I love."

His teaching philosophy, grounded in hard work, self-discipline, continuous learning, and respect, has not only shaped his students' academic journeys but has also fostered a genuine connection.

In the words of Marshall, a freshman in Miller's class, "He is an amazing teacher and connects with students as well as interacts with us during class. He is always there for us when we need help. I am thankful for Ryan Miller and the hard work that he does both in and out of the classroom."

Miller will be honored in St. Paul later this spring.

Elyite gets state award

ROCHESTER— Minnesota honored an Elyite last week when the state's tourism agency awarded Cindy Smyka its Emerging Leader Award at the 2024 Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference, held at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester. The conference is where Explore Minnesota, the tourism promotion agency for Minnesota, presents its awards every year for "extraordinary contributions to the state's tourism and hospitality industry."

Smyka was one of seven people nominated for the Emerging Leader Award. She is currently the Executive Director at Ely Area Tourism Bureau. "Cindy has facilitated the conversion of our tourism bureau from an average organization to a state-of-the-art one...Cindy is an excellent marketer in her own right but also has unparalleled leadership skills," said Kerry Davis, Owner of White Iron Beach Resort in a statement on the award.

Smyka began her Bachelor

of Science degree in Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management in 2009 at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. As an undergraduate student she served as student representative on the Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association Board of Directors, and at the time, was the youngest intern ever hired by the Biltmore Estates. Her extracurricular engagement with the tourism and hospitality industry earned her the Samuel E. Wood Award for Outstanding Leadership, as well as the American Hotel & Lodging Association Student of the Year Award.

After completing a Master's degree in Sustainable Tourism Development, she returned to the Ely area to assist her parents in modernizing the hospitality businesses where she grew up at. She runs the Ely Area Tourism Board while pursuing her husband's and her entrepreneurial dream of growing their business, the Canadian Border Outpost.

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 Friends of the Library Book Club will meet on Monday, March 11 from 3-4 p.m. The book for discussion is "Elle 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 participants.

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.

The library will hold a Kahoot online trivia game on the first three books of the Inspector Gamache series of books by Louise Penny. Registration in advance with an email address is required so the library can send the link for the trivia game. The Kahoot will start at 3 p.m. on Friday, March 22, and end at 8 a.m. on Monday, March 25.

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- 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.

Howling Good Auction

ELY- The online auction to support the International Wolf Center's Wolf Care department runs until 12 p.m. on Sunday, March 10. The auction link is at wolf.org/support/wolf-care-auction/.

Zero Waste Event

ELY- The next Ely Climate Group will be at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, at the Ely Field Naturalist Resource Center. Go up the stairs to the left of the entrance to the NAPA store. This month, the group conversation will dig into how the growing zero waste movement is tackling the waste crisis in Minnesota. The presentation can also be viewed via Zoom. More information is available at elyminnesota.com/elyclimate/.

St. Pat's Day Dance

ELY- The Ely Folk School will hold its annual St. Patrick's Day Dance for all ages at the Ely Senior Center on Friday, March 15, from 7-10 p.m. 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. This event is not just for seniors. All bonnets must be homemade. The best bonnets will win prizes. Coffee and dessert will be served.

NLAA Art Show

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association art show for March, "Weav-

ing Color in Comfort" by Grace Klein, will be held March 18-31 at Ely's Historic State Theater. This novel and colorful show will display works of handmade papers woven into intricate patterns. The papers are made from abaca, flax, and cotton fibers, and are colored using aqueous dispersed pigments and other natural dyes.

CPR-AED Class

WINTON- The Winton Community Center, 102 Main St., will be the site of an American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR-AED first-aid classes on Saturday, March 23 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Heartsaver training includes basic first aid, CPR, automated external defibrillator use, and choking response for adults, children, and infants. Cost is \$75. Call 218-235-4016 to sign up.

List your event

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

Tuesday Group

ELY - The Tuesday Group community educational lunch gathering meets every Tuesday at noon at the Grand Ely Lodge. Participants have an opportunity to order lunch. For those interested in being a host, or who have a speaker suggestion, contact Lacey Squier by email at ElyTuesdayGroup@gmail.com or call her at 218-216-9141.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

►March 12: SAGE Foundation with Kes Ebbs.

►March 19: Poet Michael Kleber-Diggs.

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

Ledgerock Church, 1515

E. Camp St., Ely.

BABBITT AA - 7 p.m.

Thursdays, Woodland

Presbyterian Church.

AL-ANON - Sundays

8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's

Catholic Church in Ely.

BABBITT AL-ANON -

Thursdays, 7 p.m., at

Woodland Presbyterian.

CO-DEPENDENTS'

12-step support group,

4:00 p.m. Tuesdays,

Wellbeing Development,

St. Mary's Episcopal

Church, 712 S. Central

Ave., Ely.

ADULT BASIC

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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.

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NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

Bear Bots compete in robotics regional meet

by KRISTI SOPOCI
Guest contributor

FIELD TWP- The Bear Bots, the North Woods robotics team, competed in the FIRST Robotics Duluth Regional event this past weekend. The Double DECCer hosts two robotics events in one venue with 110 teams from across the Midwest. The Bear Bot's robot was tested and ranked 29th out of 55 teams participating in the Lake Superior side of the competition. Students encountered mechanical and coding issues but persevered, becoming a valuable defensive bot in team alliances on the field.

Every year the FIRST Robotics competition has a different theme. This year's game, called Crescendo, was conceived as a musical stage presentation where remotely operated robots collected foam ring "notes" and projected them into an "amp" or "speaker" to score. Each team was placed in an alliance with two other teams to face off against another three-team alliance, for a total of six robots zipping around the field during a match.

North Woods students spent three months honing their engineering, computer programming, graphic design, and community outreach skills in preparation for this big event. Robotics competition builds technical expertise, builds community, and builds leadership skills.

Team captain Alex Burckhardt, a North Woods junior, was nominated by his team for the FIRST Robotics Dean's List Award in recognition of his leadership, and was a semifinalist for the honor. "We didn't even know if we'd have a team this year," said team member Amber Sopoci, a junior at North Woods. "Alex worked hard to recruit new members, fundraise, and teach us wiring and construction. We couldn't have done it without him." Burckhardt helped to pull the team together under a new North Woods robotics coach, sixth-grade teacher Nicole Roy.

As fun and educational as it is, having a robotics team is not cheap. The cost to participate in one regional event is \$6,000, which includes a kit of parts to build a basic robot. The top competitive teams spend much more than that on specialized parts and tools.

"We'd love to add a swerve drive to our robot next year," said robot driver Lincoln Antikainen, a North Woods sophomore. "It would make driving easier and give us the speed we need on the field."

A swerve drive costs around \$2,000, and is an expensive part for small teams like the Bear Bots.

Sopoci is looking to improve the Bear Bots' pit.

"Quick repairs in between rounds are inevitable, and we'd like more shelves to hold our tools and keep us safe and organized," she said.

The school provides transportation to the events and a stipend for the coach. The rest of the program is completely funded by sponsors. Without their support the team could not cover the cost of event registration plus meals and lodging while at the competition.

The Bear Bots are thankful for their team sponsor Medtronic, and local sponsors the Cook Lions Club, Cook Building Center, North Star Credit Union, B.I.C. Realty, Sisknits, Spring Bay Resort, Dreamweavers, and Rose Cottage Baking Co., as well as personal donors and North Woods School. The team expresses its thanks for contributing to the development of future STEM leaders.

The team hopes to secure additional corporate and individual sponsors to allow them to purchase additional equipment, tools and parts, ensuring their competitiveness against larger schools and teams with more substantial budgets. Interested sponsors can contact Alex Burckhardt at alexburckhardt10@gmail.com or Stephanie Burckhardt at sburckhardt@northstarcreditunion.org.

More information on FIRST Robotics can be found at <https://www.firstinspires.org/robotics/frc>.



Above: The 2024 Bear Bots pose with their robot. Team members include, from left, Alice Sopoci, Addison Burckhardt, Team Captain Alex Burckhardt, Amber Sopoci, Josh Long, Lincoln Antikainen, and Tysen Lenzen.



Middle: The No. 7864 robot of the Bear Bots is successful in climbing and hanging from a chain at the end of a match.



Bottom: Bear Bots member Addison Burckhardt describes the technical aspects of the robot to scouters from Rock Solid Robotics of Two Harbors.

submitted photos

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Cook arts org lists upcoming events

COOK- As Northwoods Friends of the Arts presents its competitive photo exhibit "A Closer Look" at its River St. gallery this month, area creatives should be looking ahead to April when the first of two big upcoming art classes sponsored by NWFA will take place.

Well-known local artist and popular NWFA instructor Jim DeVries will offer Ballpoint Pen Drawing for Beginners on Thursday, April 18 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the gallery. DeVries will lead students through the process of choosing a subject, developing composition and choosing the right tool, in this case a ball point pen. All supplies provided. Registration is required for this class. Call Alberta at 218-666-2153.

Duluth-based water-

color artist Mary Beth Downs will return to Cook in May for the NWFA-sponsored workshop "Keeping it Simple." This two-day extensive workshop will focus on learning to work with a simple design and limited color to create a successful watercolor painting. There will be demonstrations to guide students, and the class is suited for all levels. The class will meet from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on Thursday, May 9 and Friday, May 10 at the Cook Community Center. Call Alberta at 218-666-2153 or stop by the gallery to register.

Stop by the gallery during open hours in March to view and vote on the photo contest entries. Winners of the popular vote in the 14th annual edition of the contest will be revealed at a reception at the gallery on Friday,

March 29. The exhibit may be viewed on Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Winter reading program continues at Cook library

COOK- While its increasingly looking and feeling like spring, don't forget that the Cook Public Library winter reading program continues through March 28.

Program activities for adults and teens include:

►Around the World Reading Challenge – finish the reading and turn in your challenge sheet by March 28 for a prize.

►One Book One Community Read Book Discussion – Join us on Monday, March 18 at 5 p.m. to discuss "The Saboteur" by Andrew Gross. All are welcome.

Activities for preschool and elementary children include:

►A Reading Wonderland Activity Booklet Bingo Card – bring your BINGO card on the inside of the booklet cover to the library by March 28 to receive a prize.

►Preschool – Sixth Grade Snowflake Check-out Challenge – Check out a book at the library and we'll hang a snowflake in the window. Hitting the goal of 300 snowflakes will be celebrated with an ice cream party!

►Story Time – Join us for fun stories and crafts on Thursday, March 21 at 10:30 a.m. for Little Chef.

►Spring Break Activities – Stop by the library March 25-28 to help decorate our Peeps display and make a Peeps card to take home.

The Cook Public Li-

brary Winter Reading Program is sponsored by the Friends of the Cook Public Library with support from the Arrowhead Library System.

Lions Club to host Sunday 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 do-

nations 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.

Easter drive-thru planned for Orr on March 23

ORR- Mark your calendars to celebrate Easter with the Orr Fire Department as they host the Orr Easter Drive-Thru on Saturday, March 23 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Orr Tourist Information Center.

Designed for kids ages 0-10, the drive-thru will feature the Easter Bunny and Orr firefighters offering eggs that could win a bicycle or an Easter basket.

CRANE LAKE CHALLENGE



As the flags in the picture on the left reveal, snowmobiles are bucking a steady wind on Saturday. The track got softer in the afternoon through repeated use and rising temperatures, but these racers didn't seem to mind at all. photos by D. Colburn

BOSHEY HONORED



At the final North Woods boys regular season game against Deer River last Friday, the Grizzlies once again honored fallen senior teammate Tra'ven Boshey by having his mother, Amber Boshey, present the game ball to team members Trajen Barto and TaySean Boshey-Wilkerson. The game ball sponsor for Grizzlies' home games this season has been Steve Kajala of Prudential Financial in Cook.

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MINING

DNR won't require EIS for Northshore tailings basin project

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

LAKE COUNTY — The Department of Natural Resources has announced that it won't require Northshore Mining to conduct an environmental impact statement, or EIS, for its proposal to extend two tailings basin dams and relocate a rail line at its Milepost 7 tailings facility near Silver Bay. The tailings basin is utilized to dispose of waste tailings from the processing of taconite mined at the Peter Mitchell pit near Babbitt and processed at the company's Silver Bay facility. The project also includes some mitigation efforts at several adjacent trout streams. The tailings basin was built in the 1970s and has been in operation ever since. The company's proposal generated considerable public interest one year ago during

public comment on the DNR's environmental assessment worksheet, a preliminary review designed to determine whether a fuller EIS is needed.

"More than 1,300 individuals provided comments on the EAW, according to the DNR. Comments were submitted on many aspects of the project, including whether the project would be an expansion of the Mile Post 7 tailings basin and the safety of the tailings basin dams.

The DNR, however, concluded that the project does not entail an expansion. "Because the project proposes to use the remaining capacity of the tailings basin studied in the original (1970s-era) EIS for the facility, and subsequently authorized by applicable permits, the DNR does not consider the project to be an expansion of the Mile Post 7

tailings basin, wrote the agency in a press statement accompanying the record of decision.

As to dam safety, the DNR stated that "dams are subject to extensive regulatory oversight pursuant to the DNR's Master Permit, issued by the agency pursuant to a decision by the Minnesota Supreme Court in 1977."

DNR officials say they have enough information to make a sound decision. "We appreciate the public's comments on the proposed project and their perspectives on the history and regulation of the Mile Post 7 tailings basin," said DNR Assistant Commissioner Jess Richards. "Our review confirms that potential environmental impacts from the proposed project match those studied in prior environmental review or are subject to robust

ongoing regulatory oversight. Importantly, the Mile Post 7 tailings dams are some of the most closely regulated dams in the state, meeting all applicable factors of safety and state dam safety laws."

Critics expressed displeasure at the decision. "I am disappointed but not surprised," said Paula Maccabee, chief legal counsel for Water Legacy, which filed extensive comments during the EAW process. "It seems they don't want to do environmental review, which is a way of avoiding accountability," Maccabee added, noting that the dams in question were not subject to permitting at the time of their construction.

Next steps

The completion of environmental review means that state and local authorities can now

make final permitting decisions regarding the proposed project. The EAW and Record of Decision document the numerous permits that would be required prior to any construction, or are already in place, that regulate the facility and ensure environmental protection and public safety going forward.

The DNR released the EAW on the proposed project in April 2023. The Record of Decision documents the DNR's thorough consideration of all information generated through the EAW process and includes responses to the comments from the public.

The EAW and Record of Decision are available online at mndnr.gov/input/environmentalreview/mile-post-7-tailings-basin-project.html.

PRIMARY...Continued from page 1

vote as a protest against President Biden's support for Israel in its current war on Gaza. About 40 percent of the statewide uncommitted vote came from the state's Fifth Congressional District, currently represented in Congress by Ilhan Omar, a critic of Israeli policies. Third District DFL Congressman Dean Phillips tallied just under eight percent of the statewide vote on Tuesday.

Donald Trump received the most votes statewide in Tuesday's contest, tallying 232,919 to Biden's 171,299, although that likely reflects the higher interest in the GOP contest, which still faced a

viable contest heading into Tuesday's vote.

Statewide trends mostly held true in northeastern Minnesota, although Biden won a larger percentage of the Democratic vote in the region than he did statewide, mostly as fewer voters cast their ballots for uncommitted. Trump won a slightly higher percentage of the vote as well, as support for Haley proved somewhat lower than statewide.

Unlike the statewide totals, Biden received slightly more votes than Trump (8,858 to 8,215) in St. Louis County and twice as many in Cook County. Trump received 70 more

votes in Lake County than Biden.

Locally, results varied considerably, but both Trump and Biden easily won in almost every precinct in northern St. Louis and Lake counties, although the number of votes favoring Trump typically outpaced votes for Biden in their respective primaries, contrary to the county-wide results.

The most unusual results of the night came from Field Township, whose vote totals posted on the Secretary of State's website Wednesday morning defied every voting pattern of the evening.

"When I saw them, I thought I was having a stroke," said Leah Rogne, a local DFL activist.

The unusual results appear to be due to a mix-up in the computer disks provided to county officials. That's according to Phil Chapman with the St. Louis County Auditor's office. "That's why the votes posted are labeled unofficial," said Chapman. He said the county would have certainly caught the results as part of their normal auditing process.

He said the disk provided to the county as the results disk was almost certainly the disk that the township's election offi-

cials used for testing purposes ahead of the voting.

Field Town Clerk Pat Chapman said the numbers that initially appeared on the state results webpage were not consistent with the actual results from the township's election. The webpage was updated shortly after noon on Wednesday with the correct results.

The voting in other area communities was more typical. Respective vote totals in Ely were close, with Trump picking up support from 179 voters, while Biden picked up 172 votes. Places like Orr and Tower were more lopsided in favor of Trump, who

picked up 21 votes in Orr to just four for Biden. In Tower, Trump garnered 32 votes to nine for Biden. Biden did somewhat better in Cook, picking up 21 votes to 35 for Trump.

Primary results, of course, don't necessarily reflect vote totals in a general election. Unofficial totals show that 585,312 Minnesotans cast ballots on Tuesday, or just under 17 percent of registered voters. If Minnesota's voter participation matches previous general elections, as much as 90 percent of the electorate could turn out in November.

BIG EATER...Continued from page 1

1,235th eating challenge.

Vermilion Club owner Greg "Arch" Archibald had no clue about the celebrity following of people who try to complete these types of food challenges.

"We had a lot of people show up," he said. "People were here early. I came in and the place was full and I barely knew anybody." Santel had contacted the restaurant a few days earlier to let them know he was coming, and did all the publicity through his social media pages.

Archibald said Santel was a great guest. "He put on quite a show. It was a lot of fun."

"He ate it fast but didn't shovel it in," Archibald said. "He would stop for a drink of water and even talk to people while he was eating."

After finishing up the Bamboozler, Santel relaxed, had a couple of beers, and even ate a few more pieces of other guests' pizza, trying out different flavors. He also spent time visiting with his fans. A video of the challenge will be up on Santel's YouTube and Facebook pages sometime in a week or two. He wasn't able to livestream the event, which he normally does, because of the poor internet coverage in the area.

Archibald estimated that fewer than one in a hundred people who have attempted the Bamboozler challenge complete the task. Archibald himself has never tackled the 24-inch pizza. He said perhaps he

could finish the 12-inch pie by himself.

The Bamboozlers are quite popular, although usually intended to feed a group. The pizza shop record was selling 91 of the giant pizzas on one Saturday in the summer.

Big money in eating

Santel isn't just looking for the free meal when he takes on a food challenge. He is doing it to satiate the demand on his social media, including YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and more, often alongside his partner Katina (Katina eats Kilos) DeJarnett. His most watched video has over 11 million views and counting, and some months the advertising revenue from his online presence can generate over \$100,000.

"If we have a good month it goes to paying off the mortgage on our house," he told a group of students from Vermilion Country School who got the meet the YouTube celebrity in Tower last Monday when he was staying upstairs at the Tower Café.

Tower Café owner Jen McDonough is not a follower of online eating videos, but her husband Bob and sons are all big fans, often watching these types of videos for hours on end, she said. When they saw that Santel was going to be at the Vermilion Club, at first Jen thought that meant she would get a quiet Sunday afternoon at home to get some work done. But soon she realized how important this seemed to her boys, and she decided

to tag along. By the time the afternoon was over, the family had made a new friend, Santel was offered a spot to spend the night, and he also agreed to meet with some students to talk about his life and goals on Monday morning before he headed down to Duluth for his next eating challenge.

Santel sat, pedaling at a high intensity, on a spin bike, while speaking to the students. The bike fits in the van he travels in, and he puts in about two hours a day of intense exercise to work off the calories he is consuming, as well as keeping his body as fit as possible while undertaking food challenges, which can involve eating between 4,000 and 10,000 calories in one sitting. Santel is a big guy, at 6'5" tall, and he said he only chooses challenges that look like a lot to eat. His partner Katina, also a competitive food eater, often travels with him is a 5'2" competitive body builder, who started eating challenges as a way to bulk up. While they often travel together, for this swing through northern Minnesota, Santel was on his own.

Ironically, Santel said, many who view their videos are doing it to help them eat more. Folks who have trouble eating for medical reasons, like undergoing cancer treatments, can get more enthused about eating after watching them joyfully consume a humongous meal, he said.

Santel said he doesn't have any trouble eating

normal size portions, but that his exercise regimen means he often does need more calories per day than a normal person.

"When I ride a lot, I get hungry," he said. Weather-permitting, he does like to do his riding out on the road, but said he really hates getting flat tires.

Santel has traveled to all 50 states and to 40 countries completing eating challenges, and he has five more planned for this summer in Scandinavia and Poland. His goal is to complete food challenges in a total of 50 countries, so he is getting close.

Several of the VCS students were very familiar with Santel's videos, as well as other food eating YouTube celebrities. While it's been a great gig for Santel, he said it's become much more difficult to become established on the existing platforms. "It's really hard to be a YouTuber now," he said, at least one that makes money. "Back in 2010 it was entirely different."

Santel talked about how he trains for these events, and he actually has a bunch of videos on his website, FoodChallenges.com, explaining how to get one's stomach in shape for eating competitions.

"You need to win before you begin," he said.

Santel's journey as a competitive eater led him to what will soon be his new career, as a registered dietician. His first college degree was in construction management, but in 2016

he went back to school and now has just finished the final piece of his master's degree, a 1,200-hour internship. His next social media calling will be as a nutritionist on YouTube, he said.

Santel talked about his life on the road, where he mostly sleeps in his cargo van to save money. "I am an Eagle Scout," he said. "I have a lot of camping experience."

He said being a YouTube personality isn't just about how much money you make, because you can't control the number of views or payment from ads, which can change due to changes in YouTube's algorithms.

"You can control how much money you spend," he said.

For all he likes to eat, Santel admitted he wasn't much of a cook, and eating at home often consists of healthy sandwiches and vegetable omelets.

"Eat what other people cook for me," he said.

His food tastes are pretty wide ranging. The only thing he steers clear of is exceptionally spicy food, such as the hot pepper challenges. One time he took a challenge to eat 12 wings with Trinidadian Scorpion Sauce, and he ended up spending the evening in the bathroom.

"Those pepper challenge people can be idiots," he said.

When asked if he ever got food poisoning, Santel related a food challenge he did in Spain, where he was

eating a single burger that weighed in at seven pounds.

"The cook staff hadn't ever made a burger that big," he said. "The outside was charred and the inside was totally raw." He said he ate the outside layer, and then sent the inside back to get cooked again.

"I was sick for a few days after that," he said.

The students were impressed to learn how much work went into creating the YouTube videos, as well as how much training Santel did for each event. After his talk, the Tower Café bought each student one of Santel's t-shirts, and then Santel signed autographs.

From Tower, Santel was headed to Big Daddy's in Duluth to consume a meal consisting of 11 half pound burgers, bacon, cheese, and two pounds of fries in less than an hour.

The food challenges Santel does are different from the Major League Eating events, like the Nathan's Hot Dog Challenge. Fortune Bay Resort Casino has hosted two of these events with top ranked eaters Joey Chestnut, Geoffrey Esper, and Miki Sudo attending. These events focus on seeing who can eat the most of a specific item in the short time period. Santel said those professional eaters sign a contract with the organization and commit to only competing in those sanctioned events.

HELIUM...Continued from page 1

gas was first encountered won't be known for certain until the contractor Baker Hughes completes analysis of drilling logs it created during the drilling operations. The drilling was halted 50 feet short of the company's planned depth of 2,250 feet because of

the imminent start of spring load restrictions due to the extraordinarily mild winter conditions this year.

Once the logging program is completed, the company will install a well-testing rig, including flow-testing and pressure build-up testing. In addition,

the company will collect pressurized gas samples for laboratory analysis when road conditions allow heavy traffic to return.

The gas compositions were measured by the independent surface logging team using their on-site

quadrupole mass spectrometer. Isotope gas samples have been taken from the mass spectrometer at the various intervals where gas appeared, and those samples will be shipped to a specialist gas laboratory for full molecular composition, removal of atmospheric (air) contamination, and

isotopic characterization.

The geology was consistent throughout the borehole, interchanging troctolite/anorthosite, both of which are mafic igneous rocks with intermittent fractures.



EMBARRASS...Continued from page 1

northernnewsnow.com and search for Sisu Heritage to see the segment).

Anderson has spent the last 31 years as a weatherman on local Duluth television stations, at KBJR/KDLH, although he began his career there as a janitor. Anderson grew up in Ely and attended Vermilion Community College before continuing his education at the University of Minnesota- Duluth, where he got a degree in communications. While in college, he began working as a janitor at Channel 3 News and caught the journalism bug.

"I saw all the behind-the-scenes work," he said. With his interest piqued, he applied to become part of the floor crew, even though the pay for that job was lower than what he was making as a janitor. He didn't get that job at Channel 3, but shortly afterwards, was hired on for second janitorial job at Channel 6, where he did get the opportunity to learn the trade and became a full-time employee in 1989.

He got his start as a weather forecaster when the Channel 6 weatherman was having trouble transitioning from the traditional white board and markers that meteorologists used to use to portray their forecasts to a new computerized system.

Fresh out of college, Anderson was ready to step in.

"I became his graphic artist," he said. "We were a good team."

Back then, Anderson explained, the television weathermen weren't actually meteorologists. "I just read the weather from the wire," he said. "I didn't know what I was saying."

In the early 90s, local news stations started hiring actual meteorologists, and Anderson went back to school for his degree.

"I was signing up for low pay for the rest of my life," he said. "And I'll take that."

Anderson joked that when he learned about the weather in middle school he didn't understand it.



Dave Anderson interviews Sisu Heritage President Marlin Bjornrud for a feature story he was filming for airing on KBJR. photo by J. Summit

But now he does, and actually teaches meteorology at the Lake Superior College flight school, and he also teaches a broadcast practicum (hands-on) class for Northland College in Ashland.

"One of my students is now a chief meteorologist in Duluth," he said.

Of course, any visit by a weather person to Embarrass is going to talk about the record winter of 1996, when on Feb. 2, which also happened to be Groundhog's Day, temperatures were predicted to possibly hit record lows.

"That's the day the groundhog froze," said Anderson.

Anderson said they had spotted an arctic cold wave about five days prior that was likely to produce record, or near-record, lows. The question, he said, was who would get the coldest temperature, official temperature recorders Roland "Charlie" Fowler in Embarrass or Kathy Hoppa in rural Tower.

"We went to Kathy's place," Anderson said, of the Channel 6 crew, while the weather crews from Channel 3 and 10 went to Embarrass. Anderson traveled up to the area the day before, when the morning low hit -48F, but then headed back to Duluth that evening.

"It's really hard to do live interviews in that cold," he said.

As anyone who has followed area weather history knows, the official thermometer in Embarrass hit

-52F and then the mercury separated. The official thermometer in Tower hit -59.5F at 9 a.m., which was round down to -60F.

Other thermometers mounted in the weather box in Embarrass showed a low of -64F, and these unofficial thermometers were sent out to be calibrated and were found to be accurate. But the weather service does not recognize those unofficial temperatures.

"It was just the luck of the draw," said Anderson, who said he enjoyed bringing out this story for his viewers every year on Groundhog Day.

In keeping with the Sisu Heritage's Finnish roots, Anderson talked about his own family's Finnish history. His mother was from the Martilla family in Tower, who ran the confectionary and then the drugstore.

Anderson talked about many other television personalities he had worked with over the years, and also talked about the changes in video technology, going from film to tape to SD cards, along with the subsequent changes in

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Sisu Heritage continues planning on Seitaniemi housebarn project

EMBARRASS— At their Feb. 25 annual meeting, the board of Sisu Heritage discussed their \$150,000 state grant for Seitaniemi housebarn project. A third of the funds will go to hire LHB Architects to develop architectural drawings and a plan for the final work needed to restore the historic building. Work still to be completed includes painting the lap siding, replacing plywood on the north and south sides of the hayloft, replacing windows, restoring the privy/manure room and milking room, restoring the root cellar, repairing the brick chimney, and landscaping around the structure. Sisu estimates they will need to raise another \$300,000 to complete the project. LHB will also be helping Sisu with writing grant applications, and will apply again for funding from the Minnesota Historical Society.

Sisu is still looking for information, photographs, and artifacts relating

to the housebarn and the Seitaniemi family and their political beliefs. They are especially looking for photographs from the 1930s.

Highlights of this year's work included getting the Apostolic Lutheran Church placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building is now available for rental, and the first wedding has been booked for this year.

Other projects in 2023 included replacing the roof on the Hanka home-stead barn.

Sisu also hosted a bus tour from Finnfest in Duluth and will host another bus tour in July.

Sisu's mission statement is "to enhance the Embarrass Region by preserving and sharing its unique culture, climate, and history." The group currently has 145 members. Memberships are \$10 per year, or \$250 for a lifetime membership. Memberships can be mailed to Mickey White, Sisu Membership, PO Box 71, Embarrass, MN 55732. For further information on Sisu and its projects, call Marlin Bjornrud, president, at 218-984-3012 or marlinb@efreechurch.com.

camera and battery sizes and weights to the small handheld camera he used today.

Questions from the audience included the obligatory question about this year's record mild winter, and possible outlook for the summer. Anderson explained as a meteorologist, he was trained to forecast weather up to a week in advance. Climatologists, on the other hand, were the people who looked at longer range forecasts and studied climate change.

Anderson said they

were predicting this winter's Super El Niño would be fading sometime in April, and they were predicting a La Niña pattern for this summer, which could bring cooler and wetter weather.

Whether or not this area will ever see a -60F temperature again is doubtful, he said, due to human-caused warming. But Anderson was not willing to talk about climate change and its impact on our region. "That's for people above my pay grade," he said.

"I don't flip out about climate change," he said.

"Weather is a yin and a yang. There are crests and troughs." Anderson said he felt that human-caused pollution was aggravating natural changes in the climate.

Anderson said some weather-related problems have been solved, such as acid rain and he noted that the hole in the ozone layer is slowly rebuilding.

Right now, Anderson said, the biggest weather concern is the lack of moisture, and he said the upcoming forecasts were not showing much chance of significant rain or snow.

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STATE FINANCE

State projects \$3.7 billion budget surplus

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

Advisers urge caution amid projections of future budget shortfall

REGIONAL – Minnesota legislators have an even larger budget surplus than anticipated to work with this session. The Minnesota Department of Management and Budget (MMB) released its February projections last Thursday showing a \$1.3 billion increase, to \$3.7 billion.

It's a significant uptick from previous estimates, indicating that the state's vigorous economic rebound from the COVID pandemic recession continues. MMB reported that the boost came from higher-than-expected consumer spending and corporate profit growth.

"The numbers speak for themselves of a humming economy," Gov. Tim Walz said. "It is morning in Minnesota. We're coming out of the pandemic, a global recession. Minnesota is well positioned for the future economy."

However, the optimistic short-term outlook for the current biennium ending in 2025 was tempered by projections of a

budget shortfall of \$1.5 billion in the next biennium. MMB Commissioner Erin Campbell and State Economist Laura Kalambokidis emphasized the importance of fiscal restraint by legislators in the face of numerous factors that could depress the state's revenue.

"This is welcome but a cautious, optimistic scenario that we're in," Kalambokidis said.

The DFL majority Legislature, having passed a \$72 billion two-year budget in the 2023 session, will prioritize supplemental budget bills and construction projects this session, according to House Speaker Melissa Hortman. Hortman expressed concern that legislators should avoid overcommitting surplus funds and ensure that expenditures align with sustainable revenue streams.

Nonetheless, the surplus does give legislators some room to consider issues such as additional funding for emergency medical services. And the Minnesota

Hospital Association was quick to ask for a piece of the pie, claiming that the surplus exists in part because Minnesota has underfunded reimbursement to health care systems, noting that hospitals lost \$800 million last year providing care to beneficiaries of state-sponsored Medicaid programs. It's a political reality that when extra money is available, special interest groups will clamor to get in on the surplus, and the Legislature will have to deal with those competing demands again this session.

As in the last legislative session, with its huge \$17.5 billion surplus, conversations are swirling around the state's tax policies and spending priorities. Republican lawmakers, critical of the DFL's fiscal management, are again advocating for tax rebates and spending reductions to hedge against future deficits. Some counter that the extra revenue generated from corporate taxes undercuts arguments that the corporate tax system acts to poten-

tially stifle economic growth.

"Democrats continue to entertain more spending this session, while state officials, as we heard today, are urging caution on our state spending," Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson said, claiming Republicans will take a more responsible approach. "This session we will hold the line on new spending and support a modest, common-sense bonding bill, given that it doesn't max out the state's credit card."

"Today's forecast shows that we are still on the verge of a deficit," said House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth. "Despite a continually growing economy, there still isn't enough tax revenue to meet the DFL spending demands."

Beyond the budget surplus, Minnesota's economic forecasts suggest a period of gradual but decelerating growth. The state's economy, characterized by strong labor market indicators and corporate profitability, seems poised for a period of adjustment aimed

at stabilizing growth and curbing inflationary pressures.

Such economic adjustment is essential for maintaining a balance between job creation and wage pressures, according to MMB. Minnesota's unemployment and labor force participation rates, both indicators of the state's economic health, reflect a labor market that is adjusting to post-pandemic realities, according to the report.

"As policymakers grapple with these budgetary and economic intricacies, legislators must strike a balance in charting a course that leverages the current surplus for long-term stability. Decisions made this term on spending, taxation, and investments will shape Minnesota's financial landscape, determining the state's ability to navigate future economic challenges and opportunities."

MinnPost contributed to this report.

SPRING OUTLOOK

With nearly bare ground, spring flood risk is historically low

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL – It's likely that no one in the North Country was caught off guard by last week's spring flood forecast issued by the National Weather Service office in Duluth, which concluded that the risk is just about as minimal as it can be after a record warm winter with little precipitation.

"Snowpack and the water contained within it are at historically low levels," said meteorologist Ketzler Levens. "The chance for spring flooding is much lower than normal. Precipitation through early spring will be one of the most important flood risk factors. There is currently no strong signal for above or below normal precipitation in the long-range outlooks."

"Much lower than normal" translates to less than a five percent chance of minor flooding in the Rainy River basin, and for the majority of the Upper Mississippi basin and West Lake Superior basin as well. Only Atikin, Ft. Ripley, and the Tyler Forks River near Mellen have elevated risk of minor flooding, calculated to be around 17 percent.

Nearly all of the winter factors that contribute to spring flooding – higher river levels, high soil moisture, winter precipitation, snowpack liquid equivalent, and rate of snowmelt

– are all normal to below normal in the NWS assessment. Only frost depth is currently rated as having higher potential impact.

It takes only a glance at the mostly brown landscape in the North Country to know that current snow depth is at record low levels for this time of year. Snow depth is up to two-and-a-half feet below normal, with many areas having the lowest snow depth on record for late February. The snow water equivalent is in the range of under ten percent of values in the historical record dating back to 1948. Fifty percent would be near normal.

Snow conditions are an indicator that the region is suffering conditions from abnormally dry to severe drought, which is keeping stream flows at or below normal levels.

Soil frost conditions could be a complicating factor if the area receives early heavy rains, something not predicted by the NWS long-range forecast models. The frost measurement at the NWS office in Duluth last week was 21 inches, meaning the ground is deeply frozen and would not allow sufficient absorption of heavy rain.

March temperatures have a 50-60 percent chance of being above normal, making it more likely that any falling precipitation will come as rain, not snow.

There are equal chances in the forecast models of precipitation being above, below, or at normal. The extended seasonal forecast through May is for more of the same, having a neutral impact on spring flooding.

The NWS will issue a final spring flood outlook on March 15.

In a related item, the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board Water Levels Committee met Tuesday in International Falls to take public comment about the rule curve to be implemented this year to control lake levels in the Rainy basin. The committee was scheduled to announce its decision on Friday. No information about what was reported or said at the meeting was available as of the Timberjay's press deadline.

Briefly

ATVs drivers involved in two area incidents

REGIONAL – Two ATV incidents, including one with serious injuries, kept emergency responders on the run last week.

On Friday evening, March 1, the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office responded to an ATV crash with injuries, located just southeast of the Greenwood Town Hall on Co. Rd. 77. A Faribault resident was visiting a family cabin for the weekend and had gone on an ATV ride. While navigating a steep ditch along the road, the ATV slid downhill on ice and then flipped over, landing on the driver.

Family members dialed 911 immediately and monitored the driver until responders arrived. Greenwood first responders and Bois Forte police were quickly on scene and rendered aid. The driver was subsequently

taken by North Memorial Air medical helicopter to a Duluth area hospital with serious injuries. According to the sheriff's office report, the unidentified driver of the ATV was not wearing a helmet.

Bois Forte law enforcement, Greenwood Fire Department and first responders, Tower Fire, and Virginia Ambulance assisted with the response.

Early Saturday morning, witnesses reported another ATV incident at the North Bay area of Birch Lake, outside Babbitt, where a person and their vehicle had fallen through the ice.

The driver and lone occupant was a 64-year-old man from the Babbitt area. He encountered a pressure ridge while driving on the lake and attempted to stop but slid into the open water created by the buckled ice. The ATV sank in the water and the driver was partially submerged.

The driver was pulled

from the water with assistance from the Babbitt Fire Department and the reporting party. The man was wet and cold but not injured, the sheriff's office report said. Rescuers eventually recovered his ATV as well. Babbitt Police Department, Babbitt Fire, and the St. Louis County Volunteer Rescue Squad assisted at the scene.

The Sheriff's Office reminds citizens that with the mild winter and unseasonably warm weather, no lake ice should be considered safe.

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What are all these acronyms?

Q: EMTALA?
A: EMTALA stands for **Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act**. Congress passed this act in 1986, ensuring access to emergency care for all individuals regardless of their ability to pay. This act states that any individual presenting to any emergency department will receive a medical screening and stabilizing treatment before deciding to transport the patient to another level of care.

Q: HIPPA?
A: HIPPA stands for **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act**. A federal law was created in 1996, establishing national standards to protect sensitive patient health information. HIPPA ensures that a patient's health information is kept private and secure and that patients are notified if there are any breaches to their health information.

Q: HCAHPS?
A: HCAHPS stands for **Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems**. In 2006, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) implemented the system to create the first standardized and publicly reported system for surveying patients on their hospital care. The surveys focus on 29 standard questions that address various aspects of a hospital stay. Hospitals utilize data for quality assurance and process improvement.

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. Like our Facebook page to keep up with current events and announcements.

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GIRLS SECTION 7A BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

Ely advances to semi-finals

Were set to face Cromwell-Wright after topping Cherry, Chisholm

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ESKO—The Timberwolves were set to face top-seeded Cromwell-Wright in the Section 7A semi-finals here on Wednesday night, after the *Timberjay's* weekly presstime. The Wolves advanced to the semi-final round for the third straight season after a convincing 65-49 win over Chisholm on Saturday.

Ely jumped out early in the contest even as the Bluestreaks managed to keep the game tight at times. "We built a 15-point lead in the first half by getting out in transition, getting some steals, and hitting a couple layups and threes," said Ely Head Coach Max Gantt. As she has most of the season, senior Grace LaTourell led the way offensively with 23 points, including five three-balls. Freshman Audrey Kallberg

Right: Ely senior Hannah Penke shoots under pressure, while senior Sarah Visser looks on.

photo by J. Greeney

added two treys of her own as she racked up 15 points and five steals, while senior Hannah Penke added 13 points. Junior Clare Thomas added nine points to the cause and played solid defense.

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



BOYS BASKETBALL

Warriors edge Grizzlies

Putback shot at the buzzer gives Deer River a 78-77 win at North Woods

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- A questionable no-call on a potential foul against North Wood's Louie Panichi as he scored on a putback shot at the buzzer gave Deer River a big 78-77 upset road win over the Grizzlies on Friday.

The Grizzlies had come back from nine points down in the second half to take the lead with 29 seconds left on a Luke Will steal and score with 45 seconds remaining, but the Warriors' Cale Jackson nailed four free throws to put Deer River up 78-75 with

Above: The Grizzlies' Louie Panichi grimaces as he puts up a driving shot in the lane.

Left: The Grizzlies' Jonah Burnett drives the lane for a shot against Deer River.

photos by D. Colburn

nine seconds left. Talen Jarshaw shook loose from his defender and got a step-back three-point shot that would've tied the game, but the shot bounced off the front of the rim and off the backboard. Panichi got the rebound and hit the follow, but didn't get the foul call from a nearby official, much to the disbelief of the Grizzlies' fans.

The wild finish topped off a heated battle that was the latest edition in what's become an intense rivalry between Deer River and North Woods. The Grizzlies held the upper hand at the outset, with three-balls by Panichi and Jarshaw giving North Woods a 13-9 advantage. But Deer River put together a 7-0 run to tie it at 16-16. North Woods went back up by seven at 27-20 on a deep corner trey by Jonah Burnett, and a buzzer-beating three by Deer

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



BOYS BASKETBALL

Wolves drop season finale at home

Set to face Mt. Iron-Buhl in opening playoff round

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

MT. IRON— The seventh-seeded Timberwolves were facing the lion's den on Thursday as they were set to face the Rangers on their home hardwood in the opening round of the Section 7A boys high school basketball tournament.

The second-seeded Rangers have dominated Ely this season, besting the Wolves 78-58 in Mt. Iron in January, followed by an 81-41 rout just two weeks ago in Ely.

"Our hands will be full again," said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald ahead of the game.

The Wolves wrapped up their regular season at 11-15 after dropping their season finale at home 61-54 to Fond du Lac. "For the most part I thought we played well against the athletic Fond du Lac team," said

See **WOLVES...**pg. 2B

ARCHERY

North Woods performs well at Mt. Iron

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

MT. IRON- The North Woods archery team traveled to Mt. Iron-Buhl on Saturday for a bullseye and 3D target competition and came back with a fistful of medals.

The Grizzlies won the middle school division of the bullseye competition, with Laurin Glass for the girls and Cooper Long for the boys collecting first-place finishes.

Individual medal honors in the high school division were earned

See **ARCHERY...**pg. 2B

GIRLS SECTION 7A BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

Grizzlies fall to Huskies in heartbreaker

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

North Woods senior River Cheney notches 1,000th

FIELD TWP- The North Woods girls had a disappointing early exit from the Section 7A tournament last Wednesday, with No. 5 seed Bigfork pulling a minor upset over the No. 4 seeded Grizzlies 55-52. But the team and fans still had something to celebrate, as senior River Cheney eclipsed the 1,000-

point career scoring mark in her final game as a Grizzly.

Cheney needed just four points to reach a thousand, and she scored the magic goal at the 11:12 mark of the first half. Play was halted momentarily as Cheney delivered the game ball to her father in the stands and celebrated on court with her teammates and coaches.

Cheney's bucket pulled the Grizzlies to within two of Bigfork at 12-10, but the Huskies continued to control the pace until North Woods pulled even on another Cheney bucket with 2:40 remaining in the half. North Woods scored on six consecutive possessions, getting scores from Talise Goodsky, Helen Koch, Tatum Barto,

Right: North Woods senior River Cheney is all smiles as she hugs a teammate after scoring her 1,000th career point against Bigfork.

photo by D. Colburn

and Cheney to vault into the lead at 31-23 going into the break.

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



NW GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

North Woods extended its lead to a dozen, 35-23, to open the second period, but scored only once over the next three minutes as the Huskies whittled the deficit to 37-33. The Grizzlies did their best to hold off the surging Huskies, but surrendered the lead at the 4:40 mark, 49-46. It was a barnburner the rest of the way, with North Woods trailing 53-52 when Head Coach Liz Cheney called time out with 56 seconds to play. The Grizzlies got off a pair of errant shots before turning the ball over and were forced to foul with 20 seconds left. Bigfork made both free throws, but North Woods could still tie with a three. The Grizzlies got off two long ball attempts, and on the second miss Goodsky was fouled on the rebound with 1.2 seconds left. A make followed by a miss and a quick putback would give North Woods the tie to send it to overtime, but Goodsky's first charity missed the mark, and Bigfork walked away with the win.



North Woods senior River Cheney puts up a shot against Bigfork. photo by D. Colburn

Senior Helen Koch, who broke the 1,000-point career mark earlier this season, led the Grizzlies in scoring with 18 points. Cheney scored 14 and Goodsky had 11. The Grizzlies were in it to the end despite having an off night from the field. Their overall shooting percentage was just 23 percent compared to Bigfork's 37 percent, and North Woods

shot just 14 percent from behind the arc, both marks well below their season averages. The Grizzlies were without the services of one of their best three-point shooters, Brynn Chosa, something Cheney noted in her postgame comments. "That last minute and a half going into half-time, that's the energy we

needed," Cheney said. "We really missed Brynn tonight." Cheney said that Bigfork showed good discipline on offense and didn't get rattled when North Woods pushed them up against the 35-second limit. Cheney was happy that her daughter reached her career goal at home. "She wanted to do it at home in front of her home fans, and I'm super proud of her," she said. "She had something like 438 points that she had to get this season to make it, and that's a large amount of points for a post like her to put up. At first, I thought it wasn't going to happen, and then she started putting up 20 points, 24 points, and we're like yes, this is doable." With the Grizzlies having lost fellow big Hannah Kinsey to graduation last year, Cheney became the focal point down low this season, which made achieving the scoring goal more of a challenge. "She developed as a really strong post player,

and almost every team that we came up against double-teamed her and tried to slow her down. That wasn't something she was used to at all." But to combat the pressure, River Cheney said she added some new wrinkles to her game. "All summer long I was looking up post moves because I knew I would end up being more of a primary post this season," she said. "Once I got under the basket and in the games, it just came to me. It just happened to come naturally, which is amazing to me." River said it's been special having her mom as her coach. "I love her as a coach because she pushes me to my fullest potential," she said. "I would say she pushes me more than everyone else sometimes. It's a special bond we have with all of these memories. It's been amazing to have her as my coach." What's also been amazing for Cheney as a senior leader this season is how the team has come together.

"They've been supporting all of our seniors so much," she said. "We have a lot of fun together and we always like to do stuff together - it's just awesome. We were looking forward to this and we were hoping we would pull through but in the end it just wasn't our luck." Coach Cheney took a moment to reflect on the Grizzlies' season. "It was a good year," she said. "At 16-10 we had a better winning record than last year, so if every season I can get the girls to win a little bit more we're on the right road. And we had 90 K-12 girls playing basketball at North Woods this year - that's incredible. It's a testament to my older girls, the varsity, those kids want to be like them. Our fourth grade team made it to the Pacesetters state tournament. There are some really cool girls basketball things happening here."

GRIZZLIES...Continued from page 1B

River's Caiden Schjenken sent the teams into halftime with the Grizzlies up 41-35. The Grizzlies had been relatively effective in the first half stopping Schjenken, the Warriors' leading scorer, who had nine points in the period. But the Deer River junior guard began the second half the way he ended the first, with a triple, and he followed with another on the next possession to pull the Warriors into a 49-49 tie with 13 minutes remaining. Those shots were part of a 15-0 Deer River run that

put the Warriors up 58-49. North Woods was within six with three minutes to go when they turned to threes to narrow the gap. Luke Will hit a triple and Jonah Burnett hit threes on consecutive possessions as the Warriors countered with a pair of twos, shaving the Deer River lead to 74-73 and setting up the madcap last minute finish that started with Will's steal. Turnovers were a game-changer in this one, as the Grizzlies gave the

ball up five more times than the Warriors, and Deer River capitalized on those miscues for four more points than the Grizzlies got from turnovers. Burnett led all scorers with 31 points for the game, and remains high on the MN Boys Basketball Hub list of the state's top scorers, sitting sixth. Will scored 16 and Panichi had 12. For Deer River, Schjenken upped his game in the second stanza to finish with 28, one of three Warriors in double figures. The loss was a costly one for North Woods when

looking at postseason play. With the win Deer River edged past the Grizzlies for the No. 3 seed in the Section 7A tourney, dropping the Grizzlies to No. 4 and a more difficult path to navigate. If the Grizzlies get past fifth-seeded Chisholm in their first game, they'll have to take on Class A No. 1 Cherry in the second one. "They played physical and they didn't want to call the physicality," said Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich. "But that was both ways, so give Deer River props. It was pretty

even both ways, and I'm not going to complain about that. That last no call I will be upset about." "We knew it was going to be their No. 3 and No. 4 (players), and Aidan (Hartway) did a great job on No. 4 and Jonah played great on Caiden, but he made the shots that counted in the second half, lights out from deep. We had a couple of lapses on fast breaks where they were just not accounted for, but that's the name of the game. The boys played their hearts out - every one of them

gave it everything they had. It just didn't fall our way tonight, which hurts the boys seeding wise, but we'll make it work." North Woods finished the regular season with a record of 21-5. Their first sectional tournament game was scheduled for Thursday at home against Chisholm. A victory would send the Grizzlies to Hibbing on Saturday to take on No. 1 seed Cherry.

ARCHERY...Continued from page 1B

by Riley Las, fourth, and Cadense Nelson and John Danielson each placing fifth.

Bailey Brunner captured second place in the elementary girls division, and first among fourth

grade girls. The middle schoolers were on target in the 3D competition as well, capturing the team title. Long and Glass won their second first place medals of the day, while Brady Swanson

placed second for the boys and Katie Nelson placed fifth for the girls. Nelson took fourth in

the high school girls division, Brunner nabbed her second top finish of the day among fourth-grade girls.

get the win. We only had 12 turnovers which was a good thing for us," said McDonald.

GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

"We played solid defense even though a lot of calls went against us, but sometimes that happens when you're trying to be physical," said Gantt. A physical approach, combined with an effective zone defense while giving up few turnovers, allowed Ely to control the ball much of the game, said Gantt. "It felt good to beat that Chisholm team for a third time. That's not easy to do." Playing at home last Thursday, the Wolves had little trouble pitting Cherry 80-44. "It was a solid home playoff win," said Gantt. "We took care of the ball well, shot the ball well and played decent defense." It was the final home game for the team's three seniors and they put on a show as

LaTourell and Penke connected on five three-balls each on route to 26 point performances. Senior Sarah Visser notched eight points and grabbed 13 rebounds. Kallberg added 14 points and four steals. The Wolves were at 22 wins on the season heading into Wednesday's contest with Cromwell-Wright, the second most wins in the team's history. Cromwell-Wright has proven to be a tough rival for Ely. "We are excited to get another crack at that team in this game," said Gantt earlier this week. "Cromwell is solid, but why not us? Why not beat them this time you know? The last two years they got us, but maybe this time it's our turn."

Junior guard Cade Chittum led the Wolves in one of his best outings of the season, pouring in 24 points and

grabbing ten rebounds for a double-double. Sophomore guard Jack Davies scored 19 and sophomore Drew

Johnson notched 12 assists. "As always our guys worked really hard but just didn't have enough to

get the win. We only had 12 turnovers which was a good thing for us," said McDonald.

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STATE LEGISLATURE

House passes school resource officer fix

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The Minnesota House took the first step toward returning school resource officers, or SROs, to schools on Monday by passing legislation to exempt them from a law prohibiting school workers from using certain types of physical holds, including prone holds, on students.

The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office was one of about 40 law enforcement agencies around the state who pulled their SROs from schools at the start of the school year over concerns that officers could be exposed to legal liability after legislators approved new rules last year for applying forceful restraint. While Attorney Gen-

Law enforcement concerns addressed by exempting SROs

eral Keith Ellison claimed that interpretation was in error, most law enforcement organizations demanded changes in the law before they would consider returning officers to schools.

District 3A Rep. Roger Skrabala, R-Ely, voted for the measure, which passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 124-8.

"I am pleased that we were able to come to a bipartisan solution to this issue so that schools across Minnesota and in our region can bring school resource officers back," said Skrabala in a written statement.

The issue traces back to an omnibus education bill enacted by the Legislature last year, that instituted prohibitions on the use of force in schools, prohib-

iting certain physical holds by school staff, including SROs. Language in the new measure would exclude SROs from the prohibitions on prone restraints and physical holds. It also revises the reasonable force standard and mandates that school districts use only trained SROs and establishes new training and model policy requirements for law enforcement.

While legislators gave the bill wholehearted support, it faced strong opposition in committee hearings from education and mental health advocacy groups who were in favor of the all-inclusive approach for anyone who works with students. Exempting SROs from the requirements school administra-

tors and staff are held to creates an unreasonable and dangerous double standard, they say.

"This is especially concerning to us for children with disabilities whom history has shown are most likely to be restrained and may be more susceptible to injury as a result of their disability or less able to communicate distress due to complex communication needs," said a letter from the Coalition for Children with Disabilities.

Dallas, a high school junior who wrote a letter on behalf of the LRC Youth Network, wanted committee members to listen to what students had to say.

"Undoing and removing the ban is simply not the answer,"

he wrote. "I can't express the amount of harm that could come out of this for black, brown and disabled students who will be disproportionately affected by House File 3489. Prone restraints are not an effective way to go about our children's education."

The measure had the full support of the executive directors of the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, and Minnesota Sheriffs Association, who offered suggestions to clarify portions of the bill.

A joint bill in the Senate has yet to be scheduled for a committee hearing, although it is also expected to have bipartisan support.

Obituaries and Death Notices



Michael D. Swor

With gratefulness for a life well-lived, we announce the peaceful passing of Michael David Swor, 74, of St. Paul, Minn., and Naples, Fla., on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024. In the spirit of Mike's zest for life, plan a trip, play the back nine, invest in education, and make a difference. Memorial donations in Mike's honor are welcome to Virginia Community Foundation for post-secondary school scholarships, 303 Chestnut St., Virginia, MN 55792. Please include Mike's name in the memo line.

Mike was born in Duluth on March 3, 1949. He graduated from Virginia High School on the Iron Range, received his BA from Hamline University and JD from William Mitchell College of Law. Mike enjoyed a rewarding career practicing law in the state of Minnesota alongside his business partner for over 40 years. A magnificent traveler and adventurer, Mike lived his life with "let's do it" enthusiasm and relished in the storytelling of his experiences. He was funny with a sense of humor that kept you on your toes.

Mike was a man of humility who never forgot where he came from. He was equally authentic and personable with attendants and his industry peers.

Mike was always the best dressed, donning color and style as an extension of his gregarious personality. He was extremely generous and kind. He loved ice cream.

Mike is survived by his wife of 50 years, Gail Swor; daughters, Stephanie Swor of Amsterdam, Netherlands, and Meghan

(Waheed Oyelakin) Swor of Maputo, Mozambique; beloved granddaughters, Fadilah and Ife Oyelakin; sisters, Cynthia Mariel and Carole Swor; as well as many treasured friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Mitchell and Vida Swor.

Jay A. Sweet

Jay Alan Sweet, 61, of Babbitt, died on Friday, March 1, 2024, at his home. A celebration of life will be held in the summer.

Jay was born on Dec. 18, 1962, at the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital, to his parents, Eugene (Pete) and Margaret Sweet. After completing high school, he attended Hibbing Vo-Tech and then moved to the Twin Cities. There he worked at The Grist Mill. Later he worked house construction and then went to work as a plasma welder for his uncle, Joseph Sweet, who owned Sweet Chemical located in Burnsville.

Jay was very outgoing with an infectious sense of humor and a way of teasing those he truly liked. He made friends wherever he went but in the past years with his MS increasing, he found his most enduring friendships to be those with Robin Robins, Mike Waldo and Robby Stangland. The four of them could be found in Jay's living room watching football on Sunday afternoons and Monday night.

Jay is survived by his son, Tanner Sweet; granddaughter, Sienna Sweet; and mother, Margaret Sweet, all of Babbitt; sister, Wendy (Les) Savola of Bergland, Mich.; and brother, Anthony (Nina) Sweet of Hill City.

Patricia K. DeRusha

Patricia "Patty" Kay Loomis DeRusha, 80, of Cook, died peacefully at home with family by her side on Saturday, March 2, 2024. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, March 8 at First Baptist Church in Cook. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at

the church. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

She is survived her daughter, Bridget (William) Timmers of Hermantown; son, Leonard (Amy) of Huntertown, Ind.; sisters, Peggy Gentile of Cook and KenMarie Hedquist of Duluth; 11 grandchildren; and two great-granddaughters.

Carolyn Blossom

Carolyn Blossom, 89, formerly of Cook, died on Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024, at New Journey Residence in Eveleth. Per her request, there will not be a public memorial service but a private inurnment in the spring at the Littlefork Lutheran Cemetery in Field Township. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

She is survived by her nephew, Tom Blossom and his son, Jack, of Alameda, Calif., who loved her and will miss her very much; cousin, Leslie Blossom of Belchertown, Mass.; and dear friends, Julie Smith of Burnsville, Peggy Jones of Forsyth, Mo., Norma Thomas of Cook and Arliss Olson of Andover.

Carol A. Seppala

Carol A. Seppala, 77, of Angora, passed away on Friday, Feb. 23, 2024, at her home. Funeral arrangements are pending with the Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

Linda A. Dosch

Linda A. Jonas Dosch, 74, of Marshfield, Wis., formerly of Babbitt and Mt. Iron, died on Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024, at The House of the Dove Hospice in Marshfield. She was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in June 2022. The family asks that any donations on Linda's behalf go to The House of the Dove staff. Arrangements are with Rembs Funeral Home of Marshfield.

She is survived by her sons, Dr. Kyle (Lisa) Dosch of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Dr. Adam Dosch of Leon, Iowa; sisters, Janis (John) Cole of Park Falls, Wis., and Mary

(Todd) Esala of Babbitt; sister-in-law, Marilyn Tervola of Superior, Wis., and nieces and nephews.



Vic Gustafson

Victor "Vic" Gustafson, 85, passed away on Monday, Feb. 26, 2024, in his beloved Ely after a brief battle with pneumonia. He was surrounded with love from those near and far. At his request, no service will be held. Instead, he asked that you remember him as he was, raise a toast to his life, and know that he left in peace and feeling his life was complete.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his partner of 33 years, Rosemary Hutar; children, Gwen, Kris and Dawn; nephew, Thomas Gustafson Jr.; five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Douglas W. Kess

Douglas William Kess, 75, originally of Ely, died on Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024, at home in Naselle, Wash., having suffered from pulmonary fibrosis. He had only recently returned home after several months of trying to find a hospital for a lung transplant. A celebration of life was held at his home on Saturday, Feb. 24. Condolences may be sent to 162 Government Road, Naselle, WA 986738. Memorials may be directed to Amnesty International.

He is survived by his wife, Karen Elaine Spack-

man; daughter, Elizabeth Senja Spackman; brothers, David (Sally), Donald (Becky deceased), Paul (Laurie) and Peter (Nina), all of Ely; two nephews; three nieces; and beloved dog, Django.

Kurt L. Meyer

Kurt Lee Meyer, 65, of Pike Township, passed away with his children by his side on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, at Essentia-Duluth. His children would like to make a special thank you to the staff at Essentia for the care and comfort provided. A celebration of life will be held at The Shack on Hwy 169, with the date and time to be determined. Condolences may be sent to PO Box 444, Walker, MN 56484 or a donation can be made to a charity of donor's preference in memory of Kurt.

He is survived by his three children, Kyle Meyer, Jessica Stahl and Jennie Meyer; several grandchildren; and sisters, Denise Bischoff and Linda Fitch.

Rita L. Brabec

Rita Louise Brabec, 75, of Cook, passed away on Friday, Feb. 16, 2024, at Solvay Hospice House in Duluth. Her children would like to recognize and sincerely thank Gina Pishler for the exceptional support, care and comfort she provided. A celebration of life will be held on Sunday, March 10 from 1 to 4 p.m. at The Elks Club in Virginia. Memorial gifts may be directed to the Vince Shute Wildlife Sanctuary in Orr.

She is survived by her longtime partner and companion, Glen Seopa of Cook; children, Loddie Krepps of Kirksville, Mo., Larry (Susan) Schechinger of Eveleth and Joe (Dusty) Schechinger of Mt. Iron; six grandchildren; two

great-grandsons; brothers, Ted (Chris) Brabec, Todd (Karen) Brabec and Trent Brabec; sisters-in-law, Darlene Brabec and Gail Brabec; and many nephews, nieces, great-nieces and great-nephews.

James L. Gardner Sr.

James Lynn Gardner Sr., 71, of Ely, died on Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2024, with his family by his side. Per his request, there will be no formal service; a BBQ and bonfire will be held at a later date.

He is survived by his children, Tina (Matt) Allison, Ele (Chris) Lassi, Meghan (Ryan) Martin and Jim (Anna) Gardner; sister, Dawn (Roy) Seekel; 11 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; numerous nieces and nephews; and too many cousins to count.

Eugene F. Korpi

Eugene Francis Korpi, 70, of Embarrass died on Sunday, March 3, 2024 at his home. Arrangements are pending with Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home of Aurora.

Darren E. Snidarich

Darren Edward Snidarich, 53, of Angora, passed away on Sunday, March 3, 2024. A memorial gathering will be held on Saturday, March 17 from 12 to 3 p.m. at the VFW in Cook.

Susan Frederick

Susan Frederick, 77, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2024, at Essentia Health Northern Pines Hospital in Aurora. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

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THE CHANGING CLIMATE

Cold comes with less frequency and intensity

Climate change is bringing many impacts, some that will likely bring profound effects in the future

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The North Country is getting much warmer, and that was apparent even before the region experienced its warmest “winter” on record this year. Yet, trying to explain the changing climate in a place that still experiences cold weather can be a challenge, even for those trained in talking about climate.

“This is the thing we’re

wrestling with,” said state climatologist Dr. Kenny Blumenfeld. “We’ve been trying to figure out how to describe the situation we’re in. Is it that the cold doesn’t come as frequently or that it comes with the same frequency but isn’t as cold?”

The real answer, said Blumenfeld, is both: The region has seen a decline in both the frequency and the intensity of cold outbreaks.

That can be seen in the climatic benchmarks that climatologists look at during

winter. Here in Minnesota, a minus-20-degree reading is considered a benchmark in southern Minnesota. A minus-30-degree reading is a benchmark in central Minnesota, and that increases to minus-40 in northern Minnesota. These benchmarks were never reached with frequency, but they were reached in most winters, sometimes on several occasions.

That’s no longer the case. “When we look at cold weather benchmarks

Right: Most of the region has little to no snow cover at a time of year when snow depths of 20”-28” are more common.

photo by M. HelMBERGER

being hit, the frequencies have dropped anywhere from 60-90 percent,” said Blumenfeld. “The cold weather stats for Minnesota this winter are embarrassing,” he added. “No station even hit minus-30.”

See **WARMING...**pg. 5B



LIVING IN FIRE COUNTRY

Fire risk unusually high

Warm temperatures and little snowcover bring an early fire season

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — Fire officials in northeastern Minnesota are ramping up their messaging ahead of what could be one the worst spring fire seasons in years. With little snow cover remaining in the area and continued warmer-than-normal temperatures in the forecast for the first half of March, the spring wildfire season could well start earlier and be more intense than usual here in the North Country.

The potential has already caught the attention of the National Interagency Fire Center, which now highlights all of Minnesota and the northern third of Wisconsin as facing an above normal risk for significant wildfire potential from March through May. It’s reminiscent of the conditions in Canada last year, when an early end to typical winter conditions led to the worst wildfire season in Canadian history.

Fire officials here are hoping to avoid a similar outbreak of fire here. “We are gearing up earlier on fire prevention messaging and wildland firefighter crew preparedness,” said Nick Petrack, fire management officer on the Superior and Chippewa national forests.

While snow cover typically limits wildfire danger in northern Minnesota in March and often well into April, the record

warmth and lack of snow this season has left the area facing wildfire conditions that are well outside what’s normal.

What’s more, fine fuels, like grasses and sedges, are typically laid down flat during heavy snows early in the winter, which can significantly slow their ability to dry. But the lack of heavy snow this winter has left many of those fuels still standing and that is likely to allow them to dry enough to sustain fire with just a few hours of sunny conditions. Such fine fuels, once dry, can allow for rapid fire growth, especially during windy conditions and low humidity, both of which are common in the North Country well into May.

Dry conditions

While the public may be less aware of drought conditions during the winter months, precipitation deficits do add up even in the winter, and that’s been the

case this year in many locations in northern Minnesota. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, all of St. Louis County is currently listed as abnormally dry, at least, while far northeastern St. Louis and all of northern Lake counties are listed in moderate drought.

A large swath of north-central Minnesota is currently listed in severe drought. Across the border in northwestern Ontario, the Canadian Drought Monitor shows moderate drought extending across virtually the entire Minnesota-Ontario border from Grand Portage to International

Above: Smoke rises over Bezhik Lake during a wildfire in the spring of 2021. Wildfires have become increasingly intense in the North Country in recent decades as a result of a warming climate.

file photo courtesy USFS

Falls.

While spring snowmelt frequently adds to soil moisture levels, this year’s lack of snowpack will increase drought conditions unless significant rain or snow falls in the region in the near future.

Meanwhile, the 6-10-day and 8-14-day outlooks from the U.S. Climate Prediction Center, call for continued above normal temperatures, with only slightly higher than normal chances for precipitation.

Focus on prevention

Smokey Bear, who turns 80 this year, is well-known for his message that “only you can prevent forest fires.” Since most forest fires are caused by lightning, Smokey’s message can be misleading, but it does point to the fact that humans can take steps to reduce the likelihood of wildfires and reduce the risks of property damage and health effects from smoke when fires do occur.

That’s why the Forest Service and other agencies are pushing a fire prevention message. According to Petrack, the Forest Service is focused on working with communities and landowners “to reduce vegetation across more fire prone landscapes” as a way to protect homes and cabins and slow the spread and intensity of wildfires.

“Staying vigilant in fire prevention

See **FIRE DANGER...**pg. 5B

WILDLIFE



A lone bull moose stands in a remote forest in northeastern Minnesota. photo courtesy MNDNR

Moose survey shows stable population

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The latest aerial moose survey, released this week by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, shows continued stability in the northeastern Minnesota moose population, albeit at an overall lower population than 15-20 years ago.

The population estimate of 3,470 animals within the state’s primary moose range represents a five percent increase over last year’s estimate of 3,290, although biologists note that the estimates are valuable mostly to show long-term trends rather than year-to-year changes. The survey determined that the population ranged from 2,570-4,950 with a 90 percent level of confidence.

The latest survey also pointed to evidence of improved reproductive success. The calf-to-cow ratio in the latest survey was a healthy 0.51 calves per cow, the highest ratio since 2005, when the moose population appeared to be growing. Calves made up 17 percent of the moose sighted during the survey, somewhat above the 20-year average of 14.63 percent. And six percent of the cows had twins still surviving, which tied for the highest percentage in the past 18 years.

The DNR conducts its annual survey in January, when snow cover typically makes moose highly visible against the white background. The survey included overflights by helicopter of 53 plots, most of which are randomly selected. Ten “habitat” plots, which include recovering burns or areas with other types of forest disturbance, are flown every year to gauge how moose utilize varying habitats in the region.

Back in 2013, DNR officials had raised alarms over survey results that appeared to show a crash in the region’s moose population, which declined over a period of five years from estimates in the 8,000 range to

See **MOOSE...**pg. 5B

WARMING...Continued from page 4B

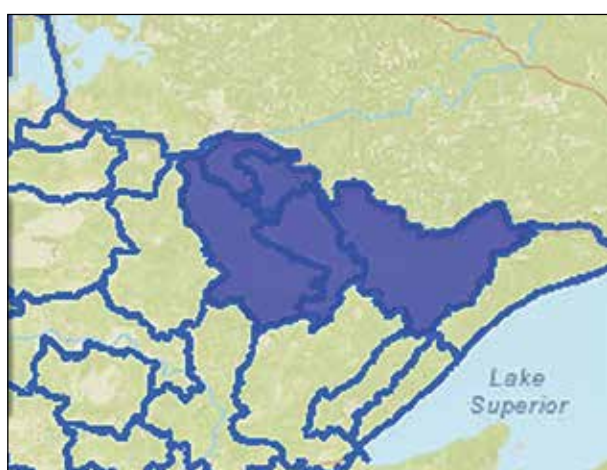
And the change isn't just at the extremes. The warming has been across the board and it has been steady, notes Blumenfeld. "Since about 1950, the average January low in International Falls has warmed by 11 degrees," he said.

The "icebox of the nation" appears to be on the fritz.

Data tells the story

Climate is undoubtedly a numbers game and as the weather data has come in over the past half century from recording stations throughout the state, and from around the world, they create a discernible portrait of a warming climate. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's climatology office has created several interactive tools that allow the public to examine that weather data in a variety of forms, right down to individual counties or even watersheds. These tools help the public distinguish the "noise" of day-to-day weather from the longer-term trends that make up climate.

One of those tools, found at <https://arcgis.dnr.state.mn.us/ewr/climate-trends/>, allows users to graph climate trends for every watershed in the state going back to 1895. The trend line is universally warmer, both for average



The weather data included in this story is from the highlighted area watersheds.

annual temperature and average seasonal temperatures. While average high temperatures have increased, it is minimum temperatures that have increased the most, which Blumenfeld said is a signal of the impact of the rise of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere.

A combined analysis of the climate data from four area watersheds, including the Little Fork and Vermilion rivers, the Rainy River headwaters, and Rainy Lake, shows that since 1970, the average annual temperature in these local watersheds has increased from 36.37 degrees to 38.87 degrees, an increase of 2.5 degrees F, or 0.47 degrees per decade. Minimum temperatures have increased slightly faster, going from 25.24

winter.

As most climate models have projected, warming temperatures, particularly in winter, have led to more precipitation. Warmer air can carry more water vapor and that's led to more precipitation in the North Country, even during the winter months, which are historically dry. Since 1970, the average winter precipitation (liquid equivalent) in the North Country has increased 50 percent, from 2.46 inches to 3.7 inches. That hasn't always translated into more snow, however, as an increasing amount of winter precipitation in the region is now falling as rain.

That trend of increased precipitation does not appear in weather records for the summer months. In fact, the trend line has been toward drier summers than in the past. In 1970, summer (June-Aug.) precipitation averaged 12.3 inches, but that average has dropped to 10.39 inches since, a fact that may well be contributing to the higher frequency of summer drought and related wildfires.

Climate change signal intensifies

While there have long been variations in our weather, the early years of weather record-keeping in Minnesota failed to show any prominent warming

trend. The biggest changes began right around 1970, according to Blumenfeld. "That's widely seen as the year when things really started to happen globally," he said. At that time, the atmospheric data showed the concentration of heat-trapping carbon dioxide at about 325 parts per million (ppm), a 16-percent increase over the pre-industrial concentration of approximately 280 ppm. Since then, the concentration of CO2 has increased to 422 ppm, or more than 50 percent, based on data recorded on Mauna Loa in Hawaii. That concentration has been increasing by about ten ppm every four to five years.

The impact of that additional CO2 plus other heat-trapping gases, like methane, is seen in places like International Falls on those cold clear January nights when the temperature used to fall a lot more than it does today. "That's tied directly to greenhouse gases," said Blumenfeld. "Heat escapes most in winter and at night, so the impact [of greenhouse gases] are the most pronounced then. That physically prevents it from getting as cold."

While this winter's record-setting warmth was attributable in part to a strong el Niño pattern in the Pacific Ocean, the

impact of climate change was unmistakable and Blumenfeld said he won't be surprised to see another winter that tops this one during his career.

"These are pretty solid trends that we've seen for multiple decades so it would be foolish to think we're not going continue to see this trend," he said. "It's not like every winter is going to be like this. There will still be winters that still feel like winter but we may see winters even warmer than the one we just observed."

That could have profound changes to the North Country environment. A recent study published in the journal *Nature* found that areas that reach an average winter temperature of 17 degrees F reach a tipping point in which long-term snowpack disappears. That was clearly seen in the region this year, when the average winter temperature topped 20 degrees at virtually every reporting station in Minnesota. With temperatures that warm, we saw snow cover only lasted a few weeks at most, as opposed to several months as has long been the case in northern Minnesota.

At the current pace of warming, the winter we just experienced could become the norm in the region by the end of the century. If the trend line continues to steepen, that day could come much sooner.

FIRE DANGER...Continued from page 4B

year around is key, and especially during dry and warm conditions," said Petrack.

According to Petrack, wildfire activity is occurring earlier in the spring, is lasting longer into the fall, and involves larger, more intense fires that are increasingly difficult to control.

That means North Country residents, particularly those who live in the woods rather than town, are facing increasing risk from wildfire as climate change continues to advance — and that is certainly the case this spring.

Fortunately, note fire officials like Petrack, there are steps you can take today to reduce the risk of wildfire around your home or cabin. The DNR's Firewise program offers a number

of excellent strategies for home or cabin owners in fire prone areas and you can find that information on the DNR's website by googling DNR Firewise. In general, these tips focus on ways to improve access to your property for firefighters, how to reduce fuel loads on your property to create defensible spaces, how building practices and maintenance can harden your structures, and how your own burning practices can be made safer.

Keep informed

For information and daily updates on Minnesota wildfire danger, current burning restrictions or to obtain a variance burn permit, visit the Minnesota DNR website at: mndnr.gov/burnrestrictions.

MOOSE...Continued from page 4B

just 2,760 in the 2013 survey. The dramatic decline prompted an end to the state's moose season and led to more intensive study of the iconic North Country species as researchers hoped to better understand the reasons behind the decline.

Results continue to suggest that after a steep decline from a population estimate of approximately 8,000 in 2009, Minnesota's moose population appears to have stabilized and

has fluctuated around 3,700 animals in recent years.

While estimates suggest continued stability in the population and reproductive success, Minnesota DNR researchers point out that Minnesota moose remain at risk given the long-term trends. Presently, the long-term survey trends indicate the moose population has declined approximately 60 percent since the mid-2000s. Climate change,

parasites, and predator impacts on calf survival all play a part in the long-term survival of the moose population, according to the DNR.

Both the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the 1854 Treaty Authority contributed funding and personnel for the 2024 annual survey. The survey is available on the Minnesota DNR's moose management webpage (mndnr.gov/moose).

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
34 16					35 15					43 24					53 32					56 34				
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
02/26	36	15	0.00		02/26	36	10	0.00		02/26	37	21	0.00		02/26	52	12			02/26	36	11	0.00	
02/27	50	27	0.00		02/27	52	24	0.00		02/27	51	21	0.02	0.2"	02/27	34	0	No		02/27	51	24	0.00	
02/28	31	-10	0.02	0.2"	02/28	32	-8	0.00		02/28	31	-10	0.09	1.8"	02/28	7	-11	precip		02/28	26	-8	tr	0.2"
02/29	8	-8	0.00		02/29	8	-10	0.00		02/29	9	-9	0.00		02/29	25	-17	data		02/29	9	-11	0.00	
03/01	23	1	0.00		03/01	28	-8	0.00		03/01	24	-10	0.00		03/01	54	16	at press-		03/01	29	-5	0.00	
03/02	51	23	0.00		03/02	52	22	0.00		03/02	50	24	0.00		03/02	39	28	time		03/02	52	23	0.00	
03/03	44	31	0.00		03/03	48	28	0.00		03/03	39	28	0.00		03/03	41	34			03/03	45	23	0.00	
YTD Total			0.92	26.2"	YTD Total			1.27"	19.2"	YTD Total			1.83	36.7"	YTD Total			NA		YTD Total			1.80	24.5"

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Brad: 218-966-0603

Questions or Donations: Rhonda 612-229-6063

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PUBLIC NOTICE

EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Eagles Nest Township Annual Meeting will take place at 7 pm on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at Eagles Nest Town Hall located at 1552 Bear Head State Park Road Ely, MN. If the meeting is canceled due to inclement weather the alternate meeting date will be March 19 at 7 pm.

Published in the Timberjay, March 1 & 8, 2024

KUGLER TOWNSHIP OPENING OF ANNUAL MEETING REGULAR MEETING NOTICE

Kugler Township will open their Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 5:30 p.m., with the regular board meeting to follow at the Kugler Town Hall.

In case of inclement weather, both meetings will be postponed to one week later, Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at the same time and place.

Christopher Suihkonen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, March 1 & 8, 2024.

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF ELECTION

THE GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP ANNUAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024

POLLS OPEN 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP HALL 3000 County Rd 77, Tower MN 55790

Supervisor Position 3---3-year term Supervisor Position 5---3-year term Clerk Position -2 year term

THE GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON Tuesday, March 12, 2024 GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP HALL 8:15-8:30 PM

THE GREENWOOD TOWN BOARD WILL MEET IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING ADJOURNMENT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING TO PAY BILLS AND CANVASS ELECTION RESULTS

JoAnn Bassing, Greenwood Township Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, March 8, 2024

EMPLOYMENT

Public Health Educator I (Community) \$28.17 - \$34.22 Hourly Apply by 03/13/2024 Procurement Specialist- Duluth \$27.25 - \$36.87 Hourly Apply by 03/13/2024 GIS Principal \$31.31 - \$38.28 Hourly Apply by 03/13/2024 www.stlouiscountymn.gov or call 218-726-2422

POSITION OPENING City of Tower Assistant Ambulance Director For position description and to apply, visit www.cityoftower.com/positions-available Deadline Friday, March 8

International Wolf Center Now hiring! Education Specialist The Education Specialist will collaborate with the Education Manager to develop and implement an online training program for educators around the world!

piragis NORTHWOODS COMPANY Now Hiring: Full and Part-Time Hours with Flexible Scheduling: Summer Season is Almost Here! Positions Available April - October Apply in Person or at Piragis.com

Word search grid with words like TAXES, NIREO, HANOI, CHAST, EPIRETATE, BUILDING, OTRO, MASK, HTS, CTRL, GARTER, FLO, YEAH, DANL, HASIDISM, TIELA, PEPHOTO, RAPHY, RANCH, MAL, OUTOFIT, ARTHAWAHINTON, NEARS, TAHINI, AHL, OPEDE, NEE, CEL, LAMARR, TREV, ONE, PRELIINARY, INVETIATION, LOD, AETNA, LESSEN, ENT, EFG, PRES, JLO, COSTAS, ATEUP, HUANGPAC, EFLIHT, PREMIUM, APU, RANON, ANATOYANDPHYIOLOY, GES, GENOVESE, BOER, TIER, HANDEL, SAWN, BUS, ESSO, AGUA, ANYPLENDOR, EDTHIN, SLAT, SEOUL, EDNA, IRATE, TELE, HOURS, DEAL, NOMSG

EMPLOYMENT

OPENINGS



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

Vermilion Country is a project based learning school seeking to expand our staffing. We are adding new positions! Also interviewing for positions for the 2024/25 school year for other licensed teaching positions. Currently open for interview on a rolling basis - call 218-248-2485 or email info@vermilioncountry.org for more information:

Licensed Teaching positions grades 7-12 (B.A. or teaching license required):

Special Education Teacher

Student Support and Community positions (no education license required) Benefits Eligible

- Special Education Assistant (para(Special Education) (Hourly \$17.50 - 24.50/HR +) School Social Worker (LSW, LGSW, LICSW, Licensed School Social Worker all acceptable - alternative certifications considered LADC etc.) Student Success Program Specialist, Indigenous Focus

Part Time:

- American Indian Programs Liaison & Community Organizer (Hourly \$24-30/hr+ DOE) Part time 4-8 hours per week Transportation Driver (Van) 5-20 hours per week. Hourly rate DOE Transportation Driver (Class C School Bus) 5-20 hours per week. Hourly rate DOE

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

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Manhandle 5 Annex 8 Trig function 12 Within (Pref.) 13 "Ben- -" 14 Toledo's lake 15 "Sure, of course" 17 Bakery buy 18 "Yippee!" 19 Apple music service 21 Pride parade initials 24 "Let me think ..." 25 Valley in California 28 Indy event 30 Wall climber 33 Rocker Rose 34 Plains grazers 35 Formerly known as 36 Earth (Pref.) 37 Stink 38 "It's - real!" 39 Texter's "Enough!" 41 Bring up 43 Tell 46 Pink hue 50 Lena of "The Reader" 51 Sake, e.g. 54 Curse 55 Greek mountain

11x11 crossword grid with numbers 1-59 indicating starting positions for across and down words.

- 8 Blood part 9 Ore source 10 Aswan's river 11 Congers 16 Sailing hazard 20 Subsequently 22 Party cheese 23 Stunning gun 25 Pester 26 Chopper 27 Story thread 29 Pepsi rival 31 Victory sign 32 Longing 34 Telly watcher 38 Cleveland squad 40 Like lions 42 Expert 43 Filches 44 Israeli carrier 45 Guitarist Clapton 47 Funny person 48 Visitor to Siam 49 Ogler's look 52 Altar affirmative 53 Jazz lover

DOWN

- 1 Calico's call 2 "My Way" writer 3 Beehive State 4 Jesuit university 5 Sushi fish 6 Press for payment 7 Zwei follower squad

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EMPLOYMENT

POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Assistant Girls' Track Coach

Ely Public Schools is looking for an Assistant Girls' Track Coach for the 2024 spring season. Background check required.

Qualifications include: Bachelor's Degree preferred; Previous coaching experience preferred; Must be available for several practices/meets per week from March through June, including some weekends and during school break periods.

Desired skills include: Demonstrate knowledge in all aspects of the sport and convey knowledge at an appropriate level to the athletes involved, supporting head coach in running well organized and effective practices. Work effectively with other programs and personnel, including effective communication with players, parents, administrators, faculty and school staff and the media. Work in support of the department's and school's mission. Represent the school in a positive manner among alumni, supporters and external agencies. Maintain compliance with MSHSL requirements. Enforce and model proper standards of sportsmanship. Work with and support head coach as directed.

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

A complete application must include the following: District Application Resume

Mail materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email lwestrack@ely.k12.mn.us Stipend: \$2,996 Review of applications begins: March 11, 2024; open until filled.

Published in the Timberjay, March 1 & 8, 2024



SNOWFLAKES solution: A 6-pointed snowflake shape with numbers 1-6 placed in the boxes to solve the puzzle.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

9x9 Sudoku grid with some numbers pre-filled: Row 1: 4, 7, 5; Row 2: 5, 9, 6, 4; Row 3: 6, 8, 2; Row 4: 8, 3, 9; Row 5: 5, 2, 3; Row 6: 7, 4, 6, 1; Row 7: 1, 8, 6; Row 8: 6, 1, 2; Row 9: 2, 5, 3

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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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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WANTED

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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 Embarras 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, 218-235-3819

MAUL	ADD	SINE
ENTO	HUR	ERIE
OKAY	FINE	ROLL
WAHOO	ITUNES	
	LGBT	HMM
NAPA	RACE	IVY
AXL	BISON	NEE
GEO	REEK	BEEN
	TMI	REAR
RELATE		CORAL
OLIN	RICE	WINE
BANE	IDA	NONE
SLED	COT	STAR

Even Exchange answers

- 1. Belief, Relief 6. Slower, Shower
- 2. Plank, Prank 7. Apple, Ample
- 3. Truck, Track 8. Latent, Lament
- 4. Hobbie, Hubbie 9. Blake, Blade
- 5. Water, Waver 10. Scoop, Snoop

Get Results!

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

HOSPICE

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

PET CREMATION

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

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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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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

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Super Crossword

ACROSS

1 Not suitable
6 "Sorry to intrude..."
10 Capricious ideas
15 Cartoonist
19 Addams, informally
21 Payments to the IRS
20 Oscar winner
21 Robert De —
21 Capital of Vietnam
22 Sword handle
23 Fifth Avenue skyscraper
26 Other, in Acapulco
27 Identity hider
28 Altitudes: Abbr.
29 — -C (PC copy command)
30 What a groom may toss
32 "Uh-huh"
34 Pioneer
34 Boone, informally
35 Orthodox Jewish movement
37 Rapper — Rida

40 Technique for viewing a slow process quickly
43 Cattle farm
45 Prefix with nourished
46 In a daze
47 First first lady of the U.S.
51 Gets close to
55 Sesame seed paste
56 Pucksters' org. with the Calder Cup
57 Newspaper think piece
60 Born as
61 Toon sheet
62 Hedy of "Ecstasy"
66 Rome's — Fountain
67 Dollar bill
68 Advance inquiry into a crime, e.g.
72 Israeli city close to Ben Gurion Airport
73 Big name in life insurance
74 Decrease
75 Doc for the neck up
76 D-H linkup
77 FDR or HST

78 Former "Idol" judge
79 Bob of play-by-play
82 Wolfed down
84 Launching of people into orbit
88 Insurance payment
92 "The Simpsons" shopkeeper
93 Was overlong
94 Dual-focus course about bodily structures
100 Some kitchen appliances, for short
101 From a northwest Italian port
102 Certain South African
103 Arena level
105 "Hallelujah Chorus" composer
106 Rough — wood
107 City vehicle
108 Gas brand
112 Water, in Acapulco
113 What love is, per a Four Aces #1 tune, with "a"
118 Crate piece

DOWN

1 Bit of news
2 Wine valley
3 Allies' rival
4 Sprightly
5 Mao — -tung
6 Object of hate
7 Thwacks
8 Before
9 Woman's quaint headpiece
10 Jacuzzi, e.g.
11 Recital venue
12 Not Rep. or Dem.
13 Mimi's "me"
14 Celebrates with a tune
15 Animal with a backbone
16 Relative of a shout-out
17 Anew

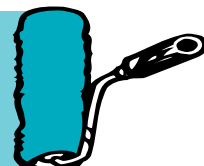
18 Tempestuous
24 Spicy cuisine
25 — Reader (magazine)
31 Carrier based in New Delhi
33 Hawke of film
34 Salvador of surreal art
35 Spicy
36 From — Z
37 Sig Nu, e.g.
38 Video game tomb raider
39 Teetering
41 — -di-dah
42 Attila follower
44 Refrigerate
48 More artful
49 — a soul
50 "— in Manila" (Ali-Frazier fight)
52 Consecrating
53 Nevada airport
54 In view
57 Mining finds
58 Sampras of the court
59 Show plainly
63 Poker cost
64 Supplies with personnel
65 Coach
66 LG or RCA products
68 Petition
69 "Thumbs-up!"

70 Gas in signs
71 Gasless car
78 Tipoffs in hoops, e.g.
80 Christie's "A Pocket Full —"
81 Depots: Abbr.
83 Not old-fashioned
84 Cabinet dept. since 1965
85 Twosome
86 Abbr. on military mail
87 Societal
89 It might have mascara on it
90 Pas' mates
91 Opal ending
94 Horror-struck
95 All-Star pitcher Denny
96 Yearly
97 Gordie of hockey
98 Itched (for)
99 Seine feeder
104 Trendy again
106 Stimulate
107 — fide
109 Phony
110 Creates a lap
111 Blood type, for short
114 Prefix with pagan
115 Part of TTYL
116 HST follower
117 Loud noise

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19					20				21					22			
23				24				25						26			
27				28			29					30	31				
			32	33		34				35	36						
37	38	39		40		41				42							
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68				69						70					71		
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105																	108
109																109	110
112						113	114	115			116				117		
118																121	
122																	
						123										125	



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Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

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

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|-------|-------------------|---|-------|
| 1. Personal conviction | B | _____ | Freedom from pain | R | _____ |
| 2. Pirate's board | L | _____ | Practical joke | R | _____ |
| 3. Semi or pickup | U | _____ | Runner's pathway | A | _____ |
| 4. Stagger | O | _____ | Space telescope | U | _____ |
| 5. Thirst quencher | T | _____ | Hem and haw | V | _____ |
| 6. Sluggish | L | _____ | Light rain | H | _____ |
| 7. Eden fruit | P | _____ | Plenty | M | _____ |
| 8. Dormant | T | _____ | Bemoan | M | _____ |
| 9. Singer Shelton | K | _____ | Razor, e.g. | D | _____ |
| 10. Ice cream spoon | C | _____ | Meddle | N | _____ |

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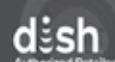
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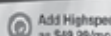


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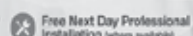
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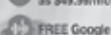
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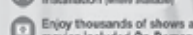
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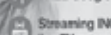
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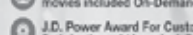
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