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**Last week to enter the Easter giveaway!**

# The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

VOL. 35, ISSUE 11

March 22, 2024

\$1<sup>50</sup>

## TRYGG ROAD TROUBLES

# Is there a fix for the flats?

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

EAGLES NEST TWP— What to do about Trygg Road? That’s the quandary facing St. Louis County public works officials as last year’s rash of flat tires on this several mile-long stretch of county gravel here appears unabated, despite efforts to address the situation last fall.

Eighty-three-year-old Caroline Owens was just the latest victim of the unusually sharp rocks embedded within the graveled surface. She was up early Monday, headed for a morning swim in Babbitt, when one of her tires picked up one of the rocks

**Right: Trygg Road offers a scenic drive through pine woods. But sharp rocks along the road are leaving drivers flat.** photo courtesy K. Soderberg

that have been plaguing users of the road since last summer. She had to get her husband out of bed to come pick her up, while she arranged for the vehicle to be towed. “This was at least my fifth flat on the road over the past year,” said Owens. “We’ve always found sharp rocks stuck in the tires.”

County officials were hopeful

See...TRYGG ROAD pg. 10



## COUNTY SCHOOLS

# Board works on response to AIPAC complaints

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- For a fourth consecutive year, the ISD 2142 St. Louis County Schools American Indian Parent Advisory Council (AIPAC) had found the district to be noncompliant with state Indian Education standards, and the school board held a working session Monday in Virginia to formulate their response to AIPAC’s complaints.

A committee comprised of members Chris Koivisto, Rob Marinaro, and Bob Larson met in late February to develop an initial draft response, and the full board reviewed their work on Monday, adding or revising information as they deemed necessary. Also involved in the discussion were Superintendent Reggie Engebretson, Director of Support Services Kim Jordan, and Finance Director Kim Johnson.

AIPAC presented the board with a list of 11 items they believe need to be addressed, as well as noting items from prior years that they said were unresolved. Some items dealt with unresponsive communication with the district, while others dealt with structural and procedural issues.

A new requirement for the district created in last year’s legislative session is to have a full-time Indian Education coordinator, a position that Engebretson

See...RESPONSE pg. 11

## THE LEGISLATURE

# Measure could lead to full-time Legislature

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Minnesota voters could see a trio of subjects consolidated into a single constitutional amendment question slated for this November seeking to overhaul certain operations of the Minnesota Legislature.

Likely the most controversial aspect of the proposed amendment would be language that would remove the restriction on the number of days the legislature can meet in regular session, which is currently capped at 120 days per biennium. The legislature is also restricted from meeting “after the first Monday following the third Saturday in May of any year.”

House File 4598, introduced

See...LEGISLATURE pg. 9



## ELY'S HISTORIC STATE THEATER

# New leadership

Theater board hires Jacob White as the organization’s first executive director

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- It’s been nearly four years since Ely’s Historic State Theater reopened its doors for the first time. And it set another milestone this past week when the board of directors that oversees the nonprofit theater hired Jacob White as its first executive director.

White, a filmmaker himself, comes with an impressive track record and longstanding ties to the Ely area. He has worked in the

film industry in Minnesota, mostly in northeastern Minnesota since moving here from New York City in 2018, but is probably best known in the Ely area as the founder and director of the remarkably successful Ely Film Festival.

White joined the nonprofit theater’s board of directors last spring but stepped down in November when they began discussions with him about becoming the theater’s first executive director.

“After four years, the board

wanted someone running the nonprofit who could step back and look at the big picture of where the theater should be going and how it can best serve the community,” White told the *Timberjay*.

### Ties to Ely

White’s ties to Ely’s Historic State Theater and to his career as a filmmaking professional both date back to 2010, when he made his first trip to the Ely area.

See...THEATER pg. 10

**Above: Jacob White smiles during the most recent Ely Film Festival, which attracted huge crowds.**

**Above left: The restored State Theater shortly after it reopened in 2020.**

file photos

## THE LEGISLATURE

# Social media bills address multiple issues



by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- As the social media and artificial intelligence landscapes con-

**Left: Exploitation of children online is one of the issues lawmakers are hoping to address this year in the state Legislature.**

tinue to evolve, legislators are playing catch-up, reacting to problems stemming from the technology that threatens online privacy and safety, exploitation of children for financial gain, and political campaign manipulation through the use of deepfake audio and video.

Bills addressing each of these issues are being considered in the Minnesota Legislature this session as lawmakers strive to tip the scales back into favor for those impacted by high-tech practices that foist unwanted

See...BILLS pg. 9



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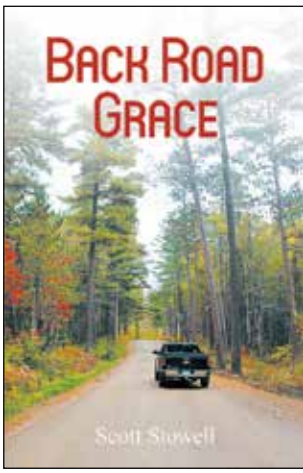


Community notices

**Author Scott Stowell to host book release and reading March 27 at Ely Folk School**

ELY—A book release party and reading for "Back Road Grace" by Ely writer Scott Stowell on Wednesday, March 27, at the Ely Folk School at 7 p.m. An open mic will follow his reading for writers, poets and musicians.

"Back Road Grace" is a collection of essays, memoirs and short fiction about Northern culture, wilderness treasures and the character of the inhabitants in the Minnesota Arrowhead. The stories elicit thought, laughter and encouragement. Readers from distant locations will learn more about year-round life in a northern climate and the moxie it takes to thrive here. Local readers will already know the lifestyle, but perhaps better appreciate the life they're living and who they're with.



Stowell grew up in the suburbs of two very large cities. But then he gravitated north, attracted to populations that dwindled from town to town. As a result, he's benefited from big-city amenities and perspectives, plus those with a small-town approach. He's found that per capita, small-town residents know more fellow residents than city dwellers know their community members. He speaks to that in the introduction of "Back Road Grace."

"Perhaps most engaging is our own species... I'm continually impressed with how small-town folks look after each other. Commonalities override differences and their character exudes depth and humor."

As a freelance writer, Stowell was a regular contributor to the "Outdoor Weekend" section of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. He is a former editor of the *Ely Timberjay* newspaper and host of the Morning Show on WELY radio. His writing, publishing and media background also includes work as a magazine editor, radio copywriter and television news field photographer. Some of his published pieces have received individual and collaborative awards from the Minnesota Newspaper Association.

Many of the stories in "Back Road Grace" have also been broadcast on "Stay Human," a literary program at public radio station KAXE/KBXE Northern Community Radio in Grand Rapids and Bemidji.

Copies of "Back Road Grace" are available at several local bookstores, art galleries and the Ely Folk School.

"Back Road Grace" was made possible in part by: a grant from Ely's Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust; and an Individual Artist Project Grant from the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

For further information, contact the Ely Folk School: 218-235-0138, info@elyfolkschool.org, facebook.com/elyfolkschool, or visit elyfolkschool.org.

**DAV hosting bus for Veterans Day on the Hill**

REGIONAL- The Hibbing and Virginia DAV (Disabled American Veterans) chapters are partnering to provide a bus to Veterans Day on the Hill in St. Paul on April 17. This full day trip includes transportation, meals, a rally in the rotunda of the capitol building and a meeting with our elected officials. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. For more information or to register call 218.969.7137 or email magnussonc@yahoo.com

AT HOME IN ELY

**New nonprofit seeks to help local college students**

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- Elyites Kes Ebbs and Lou Wiggen introduced the SAGE Foundation, a new a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, at last week's Tuesday Group meeting. SAGE, which stands for "Students Achieving Goals Equally," aims to help "underrepresented students," especially first-generation college students and students of color, at Minnesota North College- Vermilion.

Ebbs and Wiggen set up the group when they saw firsthand some of the problems students had in accessing resources in Ely. Ebbs is a Vermilion alum and Wiggen was the assistant basketball coach last year. The foundation held its first board meeting on March 1.

"The college is wonderful," said Ebbs, "and they have a lot of programs, but a lot of students have barriers to accessing those resources. What really helped me in college here was getting involved in the community, but a lot of college students that we are trying to support are just not familiar with the Ely area."

Ebbs explained that a previous, now defunct group, Project Legacy, had similar goals to the SAGE Foundation but failed. "The source of the problem was a disconnect between the college and the local community," explained Ebbs. To address that disconnect, the SAGE Foundation seeks to build connections between the Ely community and the students at the college.

**Student obstacles**

The SAGE Foundation has identified four needs: transportation, affordable food, productive activities, and a "lack of consistent advocates" for students. Ebbs commented that many students, especially students of color, struggle with the high cost of food in the Ely area and lack a vehicle to



**Kes Ebbs (left) and Lou Wiggen (right) introduce the newly-incorporated SAGE Foundation at the March 12 Tuesday Group meeting. The group is hosting a fundraiser at the Ely Folk School this weekend, on both Saturday and Sunday from 5-7 p.m. with pizza, Dorothy Molter root beer, and a silent auction.**

reach local resources like the Ely Food Shelf. Ebbs remarked that many students don't see services like the food shelf as something they can use.

Ebbs explained the difficulties in overcoming student perceptions that they aren't a part of Ely and can't access local Ely resources. "For them, it's like, 'I don't know if I need that,' or 'That's not for me.' And I'm like, 'You're part of the community—it's literally for you.' So, we're trying to get over those barriers we see with students thinking they're outside of the Ely community."

**The solution**

"The solution exists and it's everyone in this room," Ebbs said. "We're trying to create a community at the college that will be able to bridge the disconnect with the Ely community."

Part of the SAGE Foundation's plan to build those bridges is to establish mentorships with Ely residents, internships with local businesses to connect students with all the local jobs available, and getting students to stay in the Ely area and becoming part of the community instead of treating their time at Vermilion as "just

a stop to finish up at the college and then move on to the next place."

To date, the foundation has set up Sunday dinners for students at the Ely Folk School, food drops for students without transportation, a clothing drive especially for students unprepared for Minnesota winters, outdoor recreation opportunities, and arranging access to emergency transportation and medical care.

**Foundation needs**

"What we're really needing at this moment is funding for basic operations," explained Ebbs. The group's immediate goals are to raise funds and acquire a vehicle, car insurance, office space, and food donations. "We need to be sure that we can make this a long-running program, and not just a one-off, one-year program where it's going to die down when the funding goes down."

Acquiring transportation is a critical goal to connect students with Ely. The college and Ely's downtown, with its concentration of businesses, medical services, and food shelf are on opposite sides of the city. Having a vehicle to bridge the transportation gap is key

to the foundation's goals.

The SAGE Foundation currently is using a space in the college library to talk with students but would like its own space where students would feel welcome. The college also has its own food pantry, but as Ebbs explained, it always needs more items. The foundation would like to make food and clothing donations for students a more continuous process.

"We have been collecting things like noodles, canned goods, sauce, basic things that you know a college student could take home and cook a quick meal." The group also started the Sunday dinners so students could access a healthier meal than just ramen noodles on a regular basis.

**Fundraising**

The foundation hopes to raise \$80,000 this year to further its goals. Besides actively applying for grants, the organization will hold a fundraiser this weekend at the Ely Folk School, on both Saturday, March 23, and Sunday, March 24, from 5-7 p.m. Pizza and Dorothy Molter root beer are on the menu and the foundation will also hold a silent auction.

GREEN AND GROWING

**Eveleth/Fayal Garden club to host 8th district MSHS spring meeting**

EVELTH - The Eveleth/Fayal Garden Club will be hosting the 8th district MN State Horticultural Society's spring meeting on Saturday, April 20. The event will begin at 9 a.m. at the Eveleth Auditorium, located at 421 Jackson Street, and is expected to end about 3 p.m.

The 2024 scholarship recipients will be recognized at the event.

Lisa Weidemann, environmental engineer, will present the program "Climate Change As It Relates to Minnesota Horticulture."

Registration fee is \$25 per person and can be sent to Nancy Ro-

seen, 7167 Ely Lake Drive, Eveleth, MN 55734 or call 218-744-2941 by April 13.

The Country Store, silent auctions, basket raffles and door prize drawings will be held throughout the day. All are welcome.

**HOLY WEEK Services**

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**Palm Sunday, March 24**

Worship service at 8:30 a.m. with special music by Deb Tuominen and Louise Wiermaa. Brunch to follow the service.

**Maundy Thursday, March 28**

Service at 5 p.m. with a seder meal catered by Chef Chris from Vermilion Country School, will be serving lamb and a FREE traditional seder meal.

Please RSVP before March 18 by calling 218-753-3047.

**Easter Sunday, March 31**

Worship service at 8:30 a.m. with special music by Martha Bush. Brunch to follow the service. All are welcome. Martha, the Harp Lady, has a Master's Degree in Art Therapy from St. Mary's University in Minneapolis.

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## GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

# Greenwood hosts a busy annual meeting

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- Greenwood's annual meeting, held here March 12, was contentious from the start. With a nearly full house, Carmen DeLuca asked for a paper ballot to select the meeting's moderator. Election judges were summoned from the clerk's office, where they were finalizing the vote counts from the township election, and they set out the voter registration rolls and handed out paper ballots so the roughly fifty registered voters at the meeting could choose between Mike Ralston and Jeff Maus, a choice that reflected the longstanding divide within the township.

Mike Ralston won the vote, 27-23, an outcome that at least suggested change was afoot in the township. Ralston called the meeting to order at 8:24 p.m. and while he tried to keep it moving, the meeting wasn't adjourned until 10:35 p.m., after the residents had worked through a number of issues and reports.

## Birch Point Extension

Supervisor Paul Skubic gave the road report, and since the township only has one township road to maintain, discussion quickly erupted on the condition of Township Rd. 4136, otherwise known as Birch Point Extension.

The town board has wavered on whether or not the 1.5 miles at the end of Birch Point Rd., is actually the township's responsibility. But according to St. Louis County, the privately-built road is a township road because the township paid for plowing and maintenance for many years.

The township has been receiving county gas tax money since 2015, totaling around \$35,000, but the money has been deposited in the township's general fund rather than a road fund, as is typical of most other townships that maintain roads.

Former clerk Debby Spicer said the money had been put into a special fund, but current clerk JoAnn Bassing noted the township did not have a road fund. Spicer then said it was in the building/maintenance fund, but JoAnn Bassing said it had not been entered that way either.

Treasurer Jeff Maus said the money is in the general fund.

"It's not missing, it is there,"



Greenwood residents voting at the Greenwood Township annual meeting. photo by J. Summit

Maus said. He added he had talked to the county road engineer about acceptable uses for those funds, and that he and clerk Bassing were working on determining how much the township had spent on maintenance that is allowable for those monies. The funds are not supposed to be used for snowplowing expenses, though board chair John Bassing said that other townships are using those funds for plowing.

A motion by Spicer to set up a dedicated road fund carried on a voice vote. Ralston noted that such motions at the annual meeting are just suggestions to the town board, who will make the actual decision.

Skubic explained the township had tried to do repairs on potholes last summer, but the contractor hired for the job was not able to complete the work. The township has also paid to have brushing done along the road. The road was originally paved using private funds and is not up to county road specifications. St. Louis County has refused to continue to plow the road because its poor condition makes it unsafe for the county's new fleet of plow trucks. This year, the township had to hire a private contractor for plowing, but was unable to find a contractor to sand the road when it became icy.

The township has talked about assessing property owners for the cost of rebuilding the road, but no decisions have been made. One option discussed would be to remove the blacktop and maintain the road as gravel. The town board will be working

on this issue.

## Fire Department report

Fire Chief Jeff Maus reported that the department responded to 66 fire calls and 145 EMS calls. He reviewed the maintenance work done on equipment, purchase of new GPS units for the two fireboats, and training preparation underway for the early ice out (cold water rescue training), and wildland firefighting.

In answer to a question, Maus said they were doing some initial planning on the purchase of a one-ton extended cab long-box pickup to use as a fast vehicle response rig, with extrication and medical rescue equipment. He said the department is seeing if Bois Forte would be interested in helping fund the purchase and said the department would also be looking for grants. He estimated the cost for the vehicle, medical, and extrication equipment would top \$110,000, but the department would then be able to sell their current one-ton truck and possibly some other equipment. Such a purchase would be several years down the road, he estimated.

Maus had a handout detailing department membership and their 2023 911-responses. As of next month, the department will have 12 members plus an administrative assistant. Six members are both firefighters and EMRs, three are firefighters only, and three are EMRs only. Six members are fully trained, and two are close to finishing the firefighter I and II classes, according to Maus. One new member is just hired, so will be starting

their training which must be completed within two years, a new department requirement. Five of the EMRs are trained at the EMT level or above. All of the department members except for two had over 20 responses for emergency calls, not counting those who have just joined.

In 2022, there were eight EMR/firefighters, 10 firefighters, and three EMRs. Of those, 12 responded to between 0 and 5 calls in 2022, and nine responded to at least 15 or more calls.

Maus talked about the increase in training for department members, including EMR personnel, and their collaborative work with other area departments. He said members are working on quick response training exercises, simulating skills needed at a fire scene.

## Pickleball

Lake Vermilion Pickleball Association (LVPA) President Paul Thompson addressed questions about the planned construction of three stand-alone pickleball courts near the pavilion at the town hall. With the unseasonably warm weather, pickleball enthusiasts had already set up the portable nets on the tennis courts and had spent the last two days playing outdoors.

"This is a great community project," Thompson said, while holding up a handful of king size Snickers candy bars. The \$25,000 the pickleball group was asking the township to contribute to the project works out to \$16 cost per resident, the same amount he had spent on the candy bars.

The LVPA has raised a little over \$50,000 since January, which includes a \$15,000 grant from the IRRR. The group had applied for the maximum \$30,000 matching grant, but not enough IRRR funding was available in this grant cycle.

About 60-percent of the members of the newly-formed LVPA have contributed so far, with an average donation of \$500. The group wants to get the pad for the courts installed prior to the township's repaving of the parking lot, to minimize any equipment damage to the new parking lot surface. Also, doing the project in conjunction with the parking lot paving helps with the blacktop cost.

The town board had pre-

viously decided not to put the requested \$25,000 in the 2024 budget. Money voted on at this meeting will be part of the 2025 levy payment. Maus noted that the township does have adequate reserves to cover that cost, and in fact, will be receiving more than that in interest income from the township reserves they invested in a high-yield CD.

While some in the audience expressed concerns about the township helping to pay for the project, a motion by Jet Galonski, seconded by John Bassing, to ask the board to invest the \$25,000 passed on a voice vote with no voiced opposition.

The courts will be owned by the township.

"The township is investing in recreation," said Dale Hori-han.

"It's a piece of cake for all the joy it will bring," said Galonski.

"Come play pickleball with us," said Thompson. "It's all free."

The group also offers lessons for new players, and is also hoping to plan some tournament play once the new courts are completed.

## Other business

► Heard that the town board is looking to hire someone to do updates on the township website, since the clerk is often too busy with other duties to get that work done in a timely fashion.

► Passed a motion to have the board select the *Timberjay* as the township's official newspaper, citing the *Timberjay's* website which offers unlimited access to legal notices without requiring a subscription.

► A resident who lives by the Greenwood paved trail asked the board to look into doing some maintenance work, because parts of the trail are in poor condition. The township levies \$2,000 a year for maintenance on this trail, which was a condition of the grant monies they received when building the trail. A resident of Birch Point Road asked the town board to look at options for improving pedestrian safety on that road, also.

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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

### American theocracy

Christian nationalists seek to impose a dictatorship of religion

The America that our founders framed in our Constitution guaranteed religious freedom, yet that's a tradition that is under threat in this country like never before. As we reported last week, a large national survey recently revealed that sizable percentages of Americans believe that the United States is a Christian nation and that government should aggressively enforce Christian theology (or, more accurately, an ultra-conservative version of it) through the laws and policies it enacts.

The survey sampled more than 20,000 Americans, including over 400 here in Minnesota, many of whom either espoused or were sympathetic to the following statements:

- ▶ The U.S. government should declare America a Christian nation.
- ▶ U.S. laws should be based on Christian values.
- ▶ If the U.S. moves away from our Christian foundations, we will not have a country anymore.
- ▶ Being Christian is an important part of being truly American.
- ▶ God has called Christians to exercise dominion over all areas of American society.

The good news in the survey is that a clear majority of Minnesotans (about 70 percent) overall recognize that the above statements are antithetical to America's founding principles. Yet the same survey shows that a majority of Republicans, both in Minnesota and nationally, not only favor the establishment of Christianity as America's religion but believe that religious principles should be enforced by government, not unlike the system in place in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The push to enact a Christianized version of Sharia law in America isn't just idle chatter. This idea has become known as "Christian nationalism," and the organizations espousing this philosophy are working closely with the Heritage Foundation, a prominent right-wing organization, to elevate the imposition of fundamentalist Christian principles into all aspects of government as a top objective in a possible second Trump administration.

Our nation's founders must be rolling over in their graves at the prospect. The founders certainly could have made Christianity a founding principle of the United States had they so desired. They could have written scriptural principles into the Constitution if they believed that America's governance should be controlled by the loudest bible-thumpers.

Yet, the Constitution most of us still respect and try to uphold, makes no mention of a god. Rather, it was drafted as a purely secular document, a blueprint for the development of a large and stable republic that could serve the interests of people of many faiths, or those without religious beliefs at all. The founders made clear their objectives for the government, which

include (in their words) "to establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity..."

The only mention of religion comes in the first sentence of the Constitution's Bill of Rights, which states that: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

It's encouraging to see that most Americans still recognize the value of religious neutrality as a governing principle. Most Americans don't see Iran, or "The Handmaid's Tale" as a model for America's future.

Yet, we have a political party that once stood strongly for religious liberty in which a majority of members now seek to overturn the Constitution and the vision of our founders to establish their radical religious views as the law of the land.

We've already seen some of the implications. The recent Supreme Court ruling in Alabama related to in vitro fertilization, was based almost entirely on the court's religious views and used purely religious language in place of the usual legal arguments. Is that the direction we want for our courts?

In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis's so-called "Stop Woke Act" used the force of government to prevent the private sector from providing diversity training to employees to encourage tolerance of racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, as well as LGBTQ individuals. Fortunately, the old-school conservatives on the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, correctly recognized that much of the law was a violation of the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech.

Traditional conservatives, after all, naturally oppose Christian nationalism, which is a radical vision for overturning the Constitution and reshaping our secular nation into a religiously based authoritarian dictatorship. Those espousing Christian nationalism also typically back national abortion bans, as well as bans on many forms of contraception. They would repeal same-sex marriage, reinstate laws against same-sex relations, and impose much stricter limitations on things like divorce. Indeed, Christian nationalists, were they to gain political power, would intrude on the private lives of Americans to a degree never before experienced in this country.

While we're encouraged that these views still represent a minority of Americans overall, it is disturbing to see the degree to which such clearly anti-American and anti-democratic views have metastasized within the Republican Party. That makes the GOP a clear and present danger to America's future.

'TIKTOK IS SINISTER AND NEEDS TO BE SOLD OR WE WILL BAN IT.' - U.S. CONGRESS



## Letters from Readers

### Impressed with the Greenwood annual meeting

It was with much trepidation and yet, great hope, that I attended the annual meeting of Greenwood Township on March 12. The last time I attended a meeting was with my grandmother back in the late 1980s when Greenwood members decided to move forward with the investment in our township walking/biking trail. This year, nearly 40 years later, I attended with that same hopeful spirit, to see our membership come together, once again, to support the community in the desire for improvement in our township services. I was not disappointed. In fact, I was pleasantly surprised.

The Greenwood annual meeting was unlike a regular monthly board meeting. The board members sat integrated among the township members, rather than at the front of the room. A paper ballot was used, as township members voted to determine a nominated moderator. An agenda was proposed, and then approved by vote, to start the meeting. I was pleased to note that the elected moderator did an excellent job of following the agenda and keeping the people on task.

As the meeting proceeded, it became clear that many board members, the fire chief, and several property owners, had done their research and came to the meeting prepared with factual information. Printed documents were available to all, showing data to support the needs and wants of the township for this year and next, including items such as Birch Point Road maintenance, fire staff training and equipment, helipad/parking lot maintenance, and finally, both the maintenance of existing as well as construction of new recreational facilities. I was impressed by the township members who were quick

to correct and clarify statements that veered from the facts and were made with invalid claims or information. The meeting moved along quite smoothly and though it was late, our membership sat patiently and respectfully while those who had something to say were allowed to speak. After much discussion and review of the data available, votes were taken to encourage the board to collect more money from the township property owners and then spend it on all of the above listed items. It was quite clear that our township came together to improve our quality of life and move forward into the future. With that, I found myself pleasantly surprised and shall I dare say, "proud" to be a part of the Greenwood Township membership.

It is with great hope that our newly elected town board will take the insight and momentum displayed at our recent annual meeting, in conjunction with the example set by our recent board members, under advisement and continue to move forward using transparency, facts, research, data, and member input to make a better life for our people and generate a legacy for our children and grandchildren.

Catherine Farley  
Greenwood Township

### Greenwood needs to move forward

The recent election results and positive participation of the residents attending the annual meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, sent a clear message that the leadership of Greenwood Township should advance in a new direction.

It is time to set aside personal agendas and make Greenwood Township proud again and move forward with transparency and positivity.

As suggested by the Greenwood residents attend-

ing the annual meeting, the new leadership needs to take steps to:

- ▶ Move forward on a plan to restore and staff the fire department to its previous state of excellence.
- ▶ Rejoin the Tower Area Ambulance Service (TAAS) committee and actively engage in finding solutions to the dilemma rural ambulance services throughout the state are facing.
- ▶ Additionally, Greenwood needs to accept their responsibility and financially support the TAAS by paying unpaid subsidies and keeping current on all payments until a new format is developed and agreed upon.
- ▶ Rejoin the Vermilion Trail Committee (Cook to Tower) by providing a liaison that can offer suggestions and support for the trail development. Greenwood Township contains the largest section of the trail and should have a voice in the development.
- ▶ Find a solution for maintaining Township Road 4136.
- ▶ Listen to the residents' comments for providing additional recreational opportunities throughout the Township. Support for the additional pickleball courts and development of more walking trails were a few of the comments heard at the annual meeting.
- ▶ Continue to work with the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa in their efforts to bring high-speed internet to the township; Also, work toward supplying the same service to the outlying areas not covered in the Bois Forte plan.

I feel strongly that the new board members will accept the task before them and provide for open conversation, transparency, and a positive attitude for Greenwood Township.

Congratulations to Craig, Lois and Debby and Good Luck!

Mike Ralston  
Former Supervisor  
Greenwood Twp

## COMMENTARY

# What are your body rhythms telling you?

I promised in my previous column to write in more detail about the rhythms of the body as utilized in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) to assess, diagnose, treat, and prevent illness.

Oriental medical theory arose from and cannot be separated from Chinese philosophy, which embraces cul-



BETTY FIRTH

ture, art, thought, politics, and religion. The aim of TCM is to promote harmony with nature and within one's self, to seek balance and wellness. "Most major cultural traditions identify a "vital

energy" that guides someone's physical and mental processes, called "prana" in India and "pneuma" in Greece," says Dr. Jill Blakeway, a doctor of acupuncture and Chinese medicine, "Chinese philosophy calls this vital energy "qi" (pronounced "chi") and describes it as the body's innate intelligence—the intangible yet measurable way we maintain what's known as homeostasis, or the body's

ability to regulate its internal environment to create good health." Qi and the meridian system of channels through which the qi flows in our bodies are at the core of TCM.

This is quite different from Western (also called "conventional" or "allopathic") medicine, which originally evolved out of the more holistic (wholistic) view of the body held by midwives, healers, and early gen-

eral practitioners, into a more delineated discipline during industrialization in modern times. I believe this led to a more mechanistic view of our bodies, aimed at fixing symptoms of the component parts, rather than seeking causes of imbalance. As scientific knowledge grew exponentially more complex, training for the various disciplines of allopathic medicine became more specialized, with even less

of a holistic view.

Frustration with this compartmentalized perception of our bodies and beings led to increasing interest in oriental medicine and other complementary therapies which highlighted the importance of how our bodies, minds, and spirits function together. I believe that a concurrent search for spirituality and

See BODY...pg. 5



## We thrive when we're connected

Psychologist Abraham Maslow identified a hierarchy of human needs: beginning with physiological or survival needs, followed by safety, belonging, love, esteem and self-actualization. Once basic needs are met, individuals strive to self-actualize their potential to live fully and creatively. Considering only individual needs, without concern for others, left his work incomplete.

Maslow suggested self-transcendence, a higher level, but didn't live long enough to publish his work. Beyond basic needs, social needs and self-actualizing we arrive at a need for awe and wonder about the mysteries of life through a spirituality that emerges from within. Awe is that amazement with matters bigger than and beyond ourselves. Spirituality transcends self into a concern for "the other" in oneness of social being.

Spirituality is a multi-dimensional holistic experience, unlike hierar-

chical thinking which is linear. Self and separation dissolve into seamless social connection. These experiences consist of perceptions, thoughts, feelings and sensations. With perception the ultimate experience leads to beauty, goodness, and truth; in thought to understanding liberty, equality and justice in how we relate one to another; and with feelings of love, peace, joy and happiness.

External or internal validation is no longer necessary in shared being. Boundary and category evaporate into wholeness of being. Notions of self and individualism vanish as we open up ourselves in looking out for one another, for fellow creatures, for nature and for the well-being of the planet. The cosmos is seen as interconnected, an activity, a dynamic whole.

In nature we find no squares, rectangles or cubes, no separation nor boundary. Only a limited self draws straight lines, squares corners, separates matters into rigid categories and linear thinking to confine and consign us to an artificial anthropo-

centric perspective. Let's think outside the box to discover our own true nature. We are social beings!

**Harold Honkola  
Stillwater**

## Time for action on wolves

Unseasonably warm weather has left the snowpack in the woods gone, fields bare, and grass tinder dry. Fire departments and residents are edgy that a stray spark might ignite a conflagration.

Meanwhile, another sort of wildfire is sweeping across northern Minnesota. This one, though, is not in the fields and forests, but is taking place around kitchen tables, coffee shops, hunting shacks and meetings across our communities. It's a slow burn by hunters and trappers, farmers, and many just ordinary citizens who have been ignored for too long by a cabal of incompetent leaders.

"Enough is enough!" they are saying. Enough of sitting for days and seeing nary a hair move. Enough of seeing more wolf tracks than deer tracks. Enough of only memories of hefty

northern Minnesota bucks hanging in every garage in times past. Enough of glowing programs by DNR bigwigs promising pie in the sky, but they still won't issue the simple statement that our wolves need delisting.

About this same time, a few ordinary outdoorsmen formed the Northern Minnesota group called Hunters 4 Hunters. This organization has been pulling together all the disaffected voices of hunters, farmers and common-sense citizens concerning wolf depredation. Why was the Northland deer harvest down 21 percent this year? Why did many hunters go through the whole season without even seeing a deer?

Why do farmers and ranchers continue to lose livestock that threatens their financial survival? One farmer near Blackduck said he lost 90 calves in 10 years. He is now out of business. One local producer had a big calf chewed up, and within just a couple weeks, federal trappers caught seven wolves. Another fellow by Silver Bay lost 81 head of cattle in one summer.

Even city folks are getting a dose of reality here as they watch their dogs and cats disappear. Reports and newspaper articles continue to pour in weekly about wolves prowling the outskirts - and even streets and alleys of towns like Tower, Ely, Babbitt, Embarrass, Cook - as well as communities like Palo, Makinen, Skibo and similar areas across northern Minnesota.

The DNR has waved off such concerns as amateur, anecdotal anomalies. Their experts have the answers.

Thank God we have some leaders who have recognized this dilemma and have jumped in with solutions! Rep. Dave Lisle and Sen. Grant Hauschild have just (belatedly) introduced legislation for managing wolves, when the feds delist them. Hmmm... I wonder why they were AWOL with a number of other bills introduced and sponsored last year by many other legislators. Surely, this wouldn't just be election year cheerleading, would it? Many other legislators attended all of these meetings

(with attendances of 300-500, even 700) where they could clearly see the pulse of the people and hear firsthand accounts of their experiences. I guess these two fellows were just too busy to listen to these people.

One thing is for sure: hunters, farmers, outdoorsmen and ordinary citizens have now united as a common voice with a roar that is being heard down to St. Paul and even Washington, D.C. This grassroots movement is spreading across Northern Minnesota faster than the wildfires streaking across Texas. Congressman Pete Stauber has a rock solid bill before the House for delisting our wolves. U.S. Sen. Klobuchar's assistant listened intently at the last Hunters 4 Hunters meeting and indicated hope that the Senator might sign on to this bill.

The time for empty promises is over. Now we need action. Those who continue to dismiss our concerns stand a good chance of going up in smoke come Nov. 5. Poof!

**Jim Hofsommer  
Markham**

# What your Senator's office can do for you

Minnesotans seek assistance from U.S. government agencies for a variety of reasons - whether it's to get an answer about Social Security, access to veterans benefits, or assistance with renewing a passport. But, too often, bureaucratic red tape gets in the way. That's why our state office makes it a priority to cut through this red tape to get action and answers. Last year alone, our office assisted nearly 8,600 people with issues regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Social Security Administration, passport applications, and more.



**U.S. SEN. AMY KLOBUCHAR**

ceive their Social Security checks, our office steps in to correct the situation and make sure seniors get their hard-earned benefits. One Elk River resident recently reached out to our office about his Social Security payments. Despite paying into Social Security for three decades, he had trouble receiving his payments on time because he received disability benefits after a medical procedure early in his career. He deserved some financial security in his retirement, so we contacted the Social Security Administration on his behalf. As a result, he received his hard-earned benefits in full - because after a lifetime of hard work, Minnesotans deserve to retire with dignity.

When Minnesota veterans are having trouble accessing

their benefits, we work to cut through the layers of bureaucracy so our men and women who served get the support they need. For example, our office recently helped a veteran from Cloquet who struggled for years to get the oral surgery he needed through his Veterans Affairs health benefits. My team reached out to the VA's Community Care system, and he finally got the care he needed. Or, a veteran's daughter from northwestern Minnesota noticed that her late father's Bronze Star certificate misspelled his last name. She contacted the National Archives to fix this mistake and didn't hear back after six months. Once my team stepped in, the Archives corrected the mistake, and the woman's father's grave marker now includes his Bronze Star with his name spelled correctly.

Our office can also break through inefficiencies that prevent Minnesotans from getting their tax refunds on time. In a number of cases, we have worked with small business owners to ensure they received the full amount of tax refunds they are owed, and we have also helped families resolve issues with the IRS. For example, our office worked with a father in Moorhead who claimed a Child Tax Credit but never received it. After our office stepped in, he and his family got the payment they deserved.

Of course, Minnesotans aren't only concerned about monetary benefits, and when their passport renewals get delayed or tangled up in red tape, we help them out. For instance, a Mora resident wanted to serve as a missionary to help Ukrainian refugees. She applied for a pass-

port and was cleared to receive one, but it was lost in the mail on the way to her home. Our office got in touch with the passport agency and explained the situation, and they expedited a new passport for the woman so she could go abroad and serve. In fact, we opened and closed nearly 3,000 passport cases last year alone, giving thousands of Minnesotans the opportunity to make it to loved ones' weddings, visit friends or family abroad, or even simply take a well-deserved vacation.

Our office appreciates every opportunity to assist a Minnesotan in need. If you need assistance navigating a problem with a federal agency, please call our office at (612) 727-5220 or visit [www.klobuchar.senate.gov](http://www.klobuchar.senate.gov) for more information.

## BODY...Cont. from page 4

the deeper meaning of life in our often scattered, over-busy, modern lifestyles has also led some people to find help and satisfaction in the modalities which embrace the broader view of healing and wellness.

While many allopathic medical professionals have been skeptical of oriental medicine and other holistic modalities, a shift in thinking has occurred for many as awareness, understanding, and appreciation have increased. Nurses, in particular, have long recognized the importance of treating the "whole" person, giving patients caring and attention beyond taking vitals and doling out drugs. Indeed, the shortage of time allocated to be with patients is a frustration for nurses and many workers in medicine today.

Many hospitals and clinics are using alternative modalities for pain management, spinal issues, emotional imbalances, and many other areas of disease as it is recognized that these methods can be more effective than drugs or invasive surgery. Nurses can get continuing education credits in Healing Touch, which was second nature to many. Some medical schools are including introductions to alternative therapies in their curriculum, which may just scratch the surface, but is a step for-

ward.

TCM has a complex organizational structure of many layers, with chi at the center, how it fluctuates through the meridians, channeling to the organs. Acupressure or acupuncture points are places where the energy is more easily accessible, and will show an imbalance, which can be caused by a deficiency or excess of chi. An acupressure practitioner's sensitive fingers can tune in to the level of energy present. Some practitioners use an electrical reader to assess the points, determined by the level of electrical resistance present at those points. Researchers reading electrical energy in the body in 1978 showed that the lines of less resistance which were detected mapped out the meridian system used in TCM.

One tool of TCM is the 24-hour clock, which identifies the two-hour periods in which each of the twelve meridians is believed to flow more strongly and function best. For example, the high tide of energy in the lung meridian is from 3 to 5 a.m., which flows into its companion meridian, the Large Intestine, at 5 a.m., which then flows into the Stomach Meridian from 7 to 9 a.m. The body clock can be used for assessment, determining when a meridian is out of balance. For exam-

ple, someone with a lung meridian imbalance may wake up or have lung congestion between 3 and 5 a.m. It is also believed that addressing issues related to each meridian during its body clock period may enhance that effort. Eating the morning meal from 7 to 9 a.m. might make the best use of the stomach meridian's energy, converting the food into qi to make a good start to the day. This is not a new idea for most of us who have often heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, advised to "Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and dinner like a pauper."

While research into the body clock is not extensive, some research has shown that there are definite biorhythms in the body that correlate with TCM meridian flows. In a review of the literature in the *Journal of the National Medical Association*, Carl C. Bell concluded that, "Clearly the Chinese had an understanding of body physiology and biorhythms and sought to harmonize their medical treatment with the natural laws of the body." He cited research that showed that some medications were shown to be more effective taken in the morning, but additionally could have an opposite, deleterious effect if taken later in the day. He surmised, "The administration of

medication, without taking into account the biorhythms of the body, may well cause a disruption of the body's natural rhythms that will result in an illness which is more chronic and severe than the original illness presented."

What does this have to do with your sleep patterns? If you wake up consistently at a certain hour, you could check out what the TCM body-clock has to say about which meridian is "in charge." You could try an acupuncture or acupressure session to see what you can learn about your body and self-acupressure that you can do at home to feel better and sleep better.

Of course, there are many factors involved, and TCM advice for healthy living in a nutshell is, "if you breathe well, eat well, and sleep well, your qi will probably be in balance." I think the importance of breathing correctly is severely underrated and misunderstood. TCM practitioners recommend doing exercise that includes focusing on your breath like yoga, tai chi, or qigong, which could bring you more focused, energetic days and more peaceful nights.

*Betty Firth has studied and practiced acupressure and conscious breathing for thirty years.*



## the TIMBERJAY

Copyright © 2024 by *The Timberjay*. *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](mailto: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.

### Subscriptions Available:

St. Louis County: \$48 year Elsewhere: \$62 year. We accept VISA/Mastercard/Discover/AmEx. NOTE: Changes of address must be sent or called in to the Tower office. Out-of-state delivery may take 2-3 weeks. For prompt out-of-state delivery try the First Class Subscription: \$119 year or \$12 per month.

Read the entire paper on-line every week. On-line subscriptions cost \$29.95/year; details and payment at [www.timberjay.com](http://www.timberjay.com).

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



Week of March 25

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

**Tuesday**  
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is April 16.

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

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

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



**TSHS weekly winner**  
TOWER- The winner of the \$100 cash prize for Week 34 of Charlemagne's 52 Club is Ralphie Gil of Ceres, Calif.

**History Tidbit:** With the exception of 1904, there were shipments from the Soudan Mine in every year. The smallest shipment in any year was 32,282 long tons. The record year was 1892 when there were nine different shafts employing 1,800 men and 568,471 long tons of iron ore were shipped from the Soudan hill. *Excerpt from "Ore, Iron and Men," July 1959 issue, written by Earl Holmes, then superintendent of the Soudan Mine.*

**Free community meal at Immanuel on Wednesday**

TOWER- Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower will hold a free community meal on Wednesday, March 27 from 4:30-6:30 p.m., or until the food is gone. This month features a meatloaf dinner, dine-in or carry-out.

**Bookmobile stops**

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesdays: March 27, Apr 17, May 8 and 29, Jul 10 and 31, Aug 21, Sept. 11, Oct. 2 and 23, Nov. 13, and Dec. 4, 2024.

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

For more information on the Bookmobile or Mail-A-Book services, contact the Arrowhead Library System, 218-741-3840, email at [als@alslib.info](mailto:als@alslib.info), or website at [alslib.info](http://alslib.info).

HOLIDAY FUN

# Two kids' Easter events set for this weekend

## Tower egg hunt to be held at the Lamppa Civic Center on 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 on Saturday, March 23

EMBARRASS- 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.

There will be an early opportunity at 10:30 a.m. for children who need a quieter space to enjoy the games.

There will be pictures with the Easter Bunny, sponsored by Miller's Just Bite Me Bait, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., along with a cake walk (cakes provided by Lex McDonald), face painting, coloring, and lunch concessions, with snacks provided by C&C Winger.

The Easter egg hunt, with golden eggs sponsored by Embarrass Style Racing, at 12:30 p.m.

The event is sponsored by the Embarrass Region Fair Association.



TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY

# Tower-Soudan Elementary spelling bee winners



TOWER- Nolan Lenci won the Tower-Soudan Elementary School Spelling Bee held on March 13. This was the second year in a row Nolan was the school's top speller. He edged out runner-up and younger brother Nash by spelling "sympathy" and "misjudged" correctly in the eighth and final round.

Back (from left): Silas Snyder, Kija Chosa, Shenze Chavez, Aydrien Dunn. Front: Nash Lenci, Arthur Gapinski, Nolan Lenci, Clementine O'Brien, Harley Banks, Kaleelah Chosa. submitted photo

# Signups starting for summer youth baseball

## BEST youth baseball registration now open

REGIONAL- BEST youth baseball season will be starting soon. All players living in the communities of Babbitt, Embarrass, Soudan, or Tower are eligible to play. There will be t-ball and coach pitch teams.

Tower-Soudan Little League registration for boys and girls ages 4 to 8 is now open. First practice will be on Saturday, May 4 at 10 a.m. at the Soudan Ballfield, 5263 Hwy. 169. Registration fee is \$25. Scholarships are available, email [towersoudan-littleleague@gmail.com](mailto:towersoudan-littleleague@gmail.com) for information. Practices will be on Saturdays, with games on Mondays and Wednesdays.

More info and online registration by scanning the QR code.



BEST T-BALL/ COACH PITCH

You can also register/pay the first day of practice.

## BEST Golden Knights Baseball registration on March 25 for ages 9-12

EMBARRASS- Registration for Golden Knights Minors and Majors youth baseball will be held on Monday, March 25 at Embarrass Town Hall, 7503 Levanter Rd., Embarrass. Early registration fee (paid on or before March 25 is \$50 for the first child and \$35 for any additional children) After March 25, fees are \$75 and \$50 for additional children. Scholarships are available, please email [bestgoldenknights@gmail.com](mailto:bestgoldenknights@gmail.com).

All players living in the communities of Babbitt, Embarrass, Soudan, and Tower are

eligible to play BEST youth baseball.

Minors teams are for boys and girls ages 9 and 10, and majors are for boys and girls ages 11 and 12.

Online registration is also available by scanning the QR code.

## Babbitt-Embarrass Little League

Babbitt-Embarrass Little League for boys and girls ages 4 to 8 is open. First practice is Tuesday, May 7 at 6 p.m. at 71 South Dr., Babbitt (behind the municipal building). Registration fee is \$50. More information and registration form is available by scanning the QR code.

Or by emailing [babbittrecreation@babbitt-mn.com](mailto:babbittrecreation@babbitt-mn.com).



BABBITT-EMB. LITTLE LEAGUE

## Embarrass sets levy at \$198,700

EMBARRASS- Approximately 24 residents attended the Annual Township Meeting in Embarrass on Tuesday, March 12. They approved the 2025 proposed levy of \$198,700 after a brief discussion, with four residents voting no. The levy is an 8.2-percent increase over the 2024 levy of \$183,650.

The levy sets a general fund budget of \$100,000, down from

\$123,150 in 2024. But other areas of the budget show increases, including for the road and bridge fund, fire department, town hall, solid waste, recreation, campground, and historic properties.

There was some discussion of the 2023 Treasurer's Report which showed a beginning balance of \$190,851, an ending balance of \$125,965, and \$100,084 in investments.

Other issues raised at the meeting were the current condition of township roads, the pur-

chase of an emergency generator for Town Hall, a request for more detailed accounting of maintenance employees' hours, and a request to compare Embarrass Township wages and salaries to other local townships.

## Vermilion Lake sets levy at \$40,215

VERMILION LAKE TWP- Vermilion Lake Township residents set their 2024 levy at \$40,215 during the annual meet-

ing on March 12. Seven residents attended the meeting. This includes \$18,715 for the general fund, \$4,000 for the road and bridge fund, and \$17,500 for the fire department. Residents also approved the \$25 per capita ambulance subsidy, a \$200 donation to the Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Recreation Board, and the one dollar per capita dues for the Lake Vermilion Trail Joint Powers Board.

EASTER CHURCH SCHEDULES

### St. Martin's Catholic Church Easter Schedule

Holy Thursday, March 28  
St. Mary's - 5:30 p.m.  
Good Friday, March 29  
Holy Cross - 3 p.m.  
St. Martin's - 6 p.m.  
Holy Saturday, March 30  
Blessing of the Easter Baskets - St. Martin's - 12:30 p.m.  
Easter Vigil Mass - St. Mary's - 8 p.m.  
Easter Sunday, March 31  
Holy Cross - 8 a.m.

St. Martin's - 10:30 a.m.

### St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Easter Services

SOUDAN- Palm Sunday, March 24, worship service at 8:30 a.m. with special music by Deb Tuominen and Louise Wiermaa. Brunch to follow the service. Everyone is welcome to attend.  
Maundy Thursday, March 28, service at 5 p.m. with a seder meal catered by Chef Chris from Vermil-

ion Country School, will be serving lamb and a traditional seder meal. Please RSVP before March 18 by calling 218-753-3047. All are welcome.

Easter Sunday, March 31, worship service at 8:30 a.m. with special music by Martha Bush. Brunch to follow the service. All are welcome. Martha, the Harp Lady, has a Master's Degree in Art Therapy from St. Mary's University in Minneapolis.

*In Loving Memory of  
Dana Christine Blair Mason  
Who passed away one year ago,  
March 21, 2023  
Joining her son, Aaron, who passed  
away September 20, 2007.*

*Sadly missed by all  
who knew her lovely soul*



# “Fiddler on the Roof” is sold out!



All the remaining performances on March 21, 22, and 23 are now sold out. For those who did not secure tickets, the Northern Lakes Arts Association will have a waitlist that will open at 5:30 p.m. before each show on the last three days. To join the waitlist and possibly snag some seats, be at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, 1900 E. Camp St., in person before the performance you would like to attend. photo by C. Clark

## AROUND TOWN



**Upper Left: The Ely Senior Center held an Easter Bonnet Parade last Saturday with prizes for serious and whimsical Easter hats.**

**Upper Right: The Ely Folk School held their yearly St. Patrick's Day Dance last Friday at the Ely Senior Center.**

**Lower Left: The youngest entrant at the Easter Bonnet Parade was Nolan Abreu (standing) in his Easter hat decorated with bunnies and eggs, and his mother (seated) Brooke Gruba. He won the "Best Sport" award, which was a teddy bear.**

**Lower Right: At the Easter Bonnet Parade, Sue Leino's hat was decorated with dyed eggs around the hat band. The hat won the "Most Egg-quisite" award.**

photos by C. Clark



## In Brief

### Tuesday Group schedule

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

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

►March 26: Learning about Owls with Eben Spencer

►April 2: Meet new Elyites

►April 9: Basics for Solopreneurs: “What I wish I Knew” with Heather Westmoreland

## Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



swans on the river arrived early with the warmth

perhaps wished they'd not

## Libraries

### Ely library

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

### Babbitt library

Monday 10 am-6 pm  
Tuesday 10 am-6 pm  
Wednesday 10 am-6 pm  
Thursday 10 am-6 pm  
Friday 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 218-827-3345

## Support groups

### AA - Alcoholics Anonymous

**OPEN AA - 7:30** p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely.  
**AA FRIDAYS - 7 p.m.** Fridays, First Presbyterian Church, 262 E. Harvey St., Ely.

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

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

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

**BABBITT AL-ANON - Thursdays, 7 p.m.,** at Woodland Presbyterian.

**CO-DEPENDENTS' 12-step support group,** 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays, Wellbeing Development, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 712 S. Central Ave., Ely.

**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION GED** Study materials and pre-test available. Call 218-365-3359, or 1-800-662-5711.

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS:** Babbitt: 3rd Monday of Month: 6-7:30 p.m. at Carefree Living. Ely: 4th Monday of Month: 10-11:30 a.m. at Ely-Bloomenson Hospital. Conference Room B.

# Elyites earn academic honors and scholarships

**MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL-** The University of Minnesota Twin Cities named senior Nathan Nettifee at the College of Science and Engineering to the 2023 fall semester Dean's List. To qualify for the Dean's List, a student must complete 12 or more letter-graded credits while attaining a 3.66 grade point average.

**HIBBING-** Minnesota North College honored the following students from Ely for their academic achievement by naming them to the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester.

Students on the Dean's List completed 12 or more credits while earning a grade point average of 3.25 or higher.

Esther Anderson  
Kristen Anthony  
Lauren Belland  
Claire Blauch  
Raymond Cavalier  
Max Cochran  
Courtney Eilrich  
Mary Erickson  
Monica Gross  
Gunnar Hart  
Thomas Homer  
Hanna Jensen  
Rena Johnston  
Madeline Kallberg  
Ryan Kosinski

Desiray Lawrence  
Gavin Marshall  
Tyler Mattila  
Anya Moger  
Kristian Nelson  
Xavier Pauly  
Hannah Penke  
Lauren Rehbein  
Shannon Rushlow  
Chase Sandberg  
Katrina Seliskar  
Lindsay Sikora  
Bethany Thompson  
Blake Walsh  
Joshua Warner

**DULUTH-** The Minnesota Sheriffs' Association (MSA) announced its annual list of scholarship winners on Monday, and

an Ely area college student is one the 16 recipients of the award. Elyite Nils DeRemee received a \$2,000 scholarship to assist with his education costs as he pursues a degree leading to a career in law enforcement.

St. Louis County Sheriff Gordon Ramsay presented DeRemee with his scholarship check on behalf of the MSA. DeRemee will be graduating from St. Mary's University this spring with a major in Criminal Justice. He also studied at Vermilion campus of Minnesota North College. Last sum-

mer he interned with the Sheriff's Office.

The MSA awards scholarships each year to law enforcement students to assist with training and education expenses. This year's recipients represent a broad spectrum of applicants. They were chosen for academic excellence and qualifications reflecting the dedication and pride of those who enter the difficult but rewarding profession of law enforcement and public service. Additional information about the award and the MSA can be found online at mnsheriffs.org.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

### Ely Public Library

ELY- The library will be closed on Friday, March 29.

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.

The library will celebrate World Theater Day on Wednesday, March 27, from 2-3 p.m. with activities for all ages involving the world of theater. Please register for this program in advance so the library can have enough materials on hand for all participants.

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

The Library Board will meet on Wednesday, April 3, from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

The Curiosity Cohort for adults will meet on Thursday, April 4,

from 1-2:30 p.m. to see a demonstration about corages and then to make them. Please register for this program in advance so the library can order enough materials for participants.

The library will hold a Kahoot online trivia game for all ages on the beginning reader and picture books by Mo Willems. 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, April 5, and end at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, April 10.

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

All library events are at the Ely Public Library at 224 E. Chapman St., unless otherwise noted.

### Babbitt Public Library

BABBITT- The library will close on Friday, March 29 at noon and will be closed on Monday, April 1.

The library is holding an Easter raffle. Tickets

are \$1. The prizes are Easter baskets. The drawing for the raffle will be on Thursday, March 28.

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.

### NLAA Art Show

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association art show for March, “Weaving Color in Comfort” by Grace Klein, opened on March 18 and will run through March 31 at Ely's Historic State Theater. This novel and colorful show displays 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.

### Ely Citywide Rummage Sale

ELY- Registration is now open for the Ely city-wide rummage sale, business crazy sale day, and

the used equipment and watercraft sale — to be held on Saturday, May 18. Registration for all three events will be accepted through May 9 at the Ely Chamber of Commerce office, 1600 E. Sheridan St. Registration forms can be picked up at the chamber office or downloaded from ely.org/citywide.

### Easter Egg Hunt

ELY- The Grand Ely Lodge, 400 N. Pioneer Dr., will hold an Easter Egg Hunt and Activity Day for kids, on Saturday, March 23, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., with crafts, games, juice and cookies and a bicycle giveaway

### SAGE fundraiser

ELY- The SAGE (“Students achieving goals equally”) Foundation will hold a fundraiser on Saturday, March 23, and Sunday, March 24, from 5-7 p.m. at the Ely Folk School, with pizza, Dorothy Molter root beer, good company, and a silent auction. The Sage Foundation nonprofit helps local underrepresented Minnesota

North College students with food, clothing, transportation, and community engagement.

### 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.

### Smokey Bear

ELY- A special art show of historic Smokey Bear art will be at the Kawishiwi District Office of the Superior National Forest on Thursday, March 28, from 4-6 p.m. Smokey Bear may be in attendance. For those not able to make it to the show, the 19 paintings on tour can be viewed during office hours, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., March 26-29.



# Orr council scrutinizes city operations at special meeting

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

ORR- Meeting in a special session on Monday, Orr City Council members made quick work of two business items before turning their attention to a lengthy discussion of a number of items that could improve city operations.

The first order of business was to authorize Bolig Engineering to solicit contractor bids for the crack seal project at the airport when the Federal Aviation Administration is ready to proceed. As the project will be done at no cost to the city, the council gave its approval.

Council member John Jirik took the opportunity to report on a visit he made to the airport, and had numerous positive things to say.

"First of all, I was absolutely astounded by the amount of things that have been bought because we have an airport," he said. "If you look at the trucks and plows and everything else that's out there, that's a lot of money going into that."

Jirik said he wasn't sure what he was going to find, as he's heard some complaints from citizens that there was junk all over the place, but that was not the case at all, he said.

"Please, please don't think that the airport is out of control and a pigsty, because it's not," Jirik said. "It was fairly organized, and it was wonderful talking to the manager of the airport (Ethan Olson) and seeing where they're going with it. Most of that stuff can be very easily stored elsewhere. There's other sheds there that we can easily move stuff into, and we've got a truck we can get rid of. I don't see this as being anything even close to an emergency. I feel very confident and Ethan really was lis-

tening, he understands where we're coming from and what we need to do, and he's willing to work with us to make sure we follow the rules."

Mayor Robert Antikainen then moved on to the next item, securing a new auto fryer for the Orr Muni.

"The element in it is burned out," Antikainen said. "I looked at it on Friday myself, and there's grease inside that machine in places where there should not be grease."

Manager Laura Manai said the fryer was purchased in 2007, and that it recently had started cutting out. She said she had found a possible replacement on eBay.

"It looks to be the exact same one that we have there now," she said, noting that the seller would take \$2,500 to sell it outright instead of going through the bidding process. Manai said the bidding would close in six days and they could wait to see if they could get it at a lower price.

"It's somewhere in the cities so I'd have to pick it up," she said.

Leaning that the muni has \$7,000 remaining in its budget to cover equipment, the council authorized Manai to proceed with the purchase.

## Operational issues

Jirik had apparently asked to have the item "review of multiple policies and procedures for clarification and updating" placed on the agenda, as he came prepared with a list of issues for the council to discuss.

"One of the first things I noticed was our mayor, as I was with him for about a week or two, was taking all of these emails from everybody complaining and yelling and screaming and hollering and whatever else it was on there," Jirik said. "I suggested then right away don't take that

ever again. We don't need that in our lives. If someone is complaining about anything to you, my suggestion would be to have them go to city hall and put it in writing. That way we can just deal with it. There's no way any one of you should ever deal with any of that."

A suggestion was made to create a fillable form on the website for complaints, but Jirik argued against that option.

"I wouldn't suggest that because some people will just sit around and write complaints all day long," he said. "If there's something serious enough they can come to city hall or at least call Angela and ask 'Can I get one?' (complaint form)."

Council member Bruce Black pointed out that clerk Angela Lindgren could end up being the one to catch some heat.

"With them coming in, if they have an axe to grind, they're gonna grind it with our clerk," Black said.

"Which would be my second question," Jirik responded. "If it's a community member that wants to do that, do what you need to do. You can ask them politely to leave, and if they don't, call the cops. That's what we do at school. It's done. It's over. If it's one of the employees, that's a different ball game. That needs to immediately get taken to committee and then an immediate write up with what can happen."

Manai, formerly assistant clerk, said that she hadn't encountered intimidating people when she worked in the office.

Jirik's next question related to scheduling for employees at the liquor store, in maintenance and at the airport. Manai described how she schedules employees at the liquor store, and then Jirik explained why he was asking the question.

"My concern is more

oversight, not that you're doing anything wrong," he said. "You're the oversight of the two employees, right, so you would be able to check on their schedule. As far as oversight of managers (for maintenance and liquor store), your schedule, do you send it anywhere? What I would do is have your schedule so that it gets filed here, and that would be the same for Paul (Koch) because he's oversight of that. What hours you are working, just so we have that. That's just standard operating procedure. That's for everyone's protection."

Jirik then broadened the scheduling discussion to consider situations in which a department is without someone to address an issue because multiple people have taken time off at the same time.

"I don't know if this is true or not but I've heard we even have some on-call stuff going on during work hours, mostly, for example, someone's taking time off a half a day and then the other person's gone the whole day, but who's making that schedule?" Jirik said.

Lindgren said the issue has come up because of comp time earned by the city's two maintenance workers, which by contract has to be used as soon as possible. It becomes a possible problem when Koch gives someone a Friday off, which coincides with Koch's regular four-hour work days on Fridays, as he works four hours on Saturdays and Sundays doing necessary department activities.

"And then there's nobody here, and it's happened a couple of times where I've had to contact them and I don't know who to contact," Lindgren said. "I just need to know what I'm supposed to do in that instance."

"I don't know," Jirik

responded. "That's why I'm asking. As the managers, what would we expect as city council to make it work? What has to be covered? Is there an on-call? Can we ask that they don't take their days at the same time unless it's absolutely necessary? A lot of places do that."

Council members were in agreement that Koch's weekend hours were necessary to take care of things like checking the pump house and garbage, so being off Friday afternoons is reasonable.

"But when you're taking those four hours, that's not the best day to have the other person gone," Jirik said.

"It's in our personnel policy that every department is supposed to be staffed from the time that you start till the time that you end," Lindgren said. "I know Paul keeps track of all the hours in and out. He knows exactly when they were here, and it's all documented. They're both 7:30 to 4:00, Monday through Friday."

"When there's a change in the schedule those changes need to go somewhere where we can kind of see it," Jirik said.

Council member Melissa Wright emphasized that she believes it's good communication to start learning more about what's happening, saying that there's been a significant lack of communication.

Wright said that if there was a Word document of the city's policy manual, tools such as redlining could be used to track changes the council discusses.

"That's something we could bring back to the group to review to see what it is we're updating and where we're changing, to review that language to approve it."

Jirik said there are many things that come

up on a routine basis that should be addressed in policy.

"Some of this stuff is just stuff I've heard constantly from all of us, like how does this work," he said. "I hear what's going on with personnel where sometimes someone from one department is mad at someone in another department and they're yelling at each other - how do you deal with that? Would you know where to go?"

"What I think we really need is an orientation packet, one that's specific for us," Wright said. "I can recall coming in feeling very lost and unorganized. I've heard of people not sure who they report to if they have an issue, or what the purchasing protocol is for different stuff. They learned, but I think just having a nice packet for when someone new comes on (would be good) so they don't have to wait."

The council continued discussing other ways to improve city operations, including a concern Lindgren raised about sending out disconnect notices for past due water bills. Lindgren said that creating the notices is time-consuming, particularly because they're typically not enforced.

"We never shut them off, and we never hear from them," she said. She said some people with past due accounts have contacted her to make payment arrangements, while others seem to ignore notices altogether.

Black proposed a course of action to Lindgren.

"You make a policy for what you want to do and we'll look at it at the next meeting," he said.

Monday's meeting lasted for more than an hour, with the overwhelming amount of time spent on discussing and trying to find possible solutions for issues.

## MELGEORGE'S ANTIQUE AND CLASSIC SNOWMOBILE RACE RESULTS

### ANTIQUE

Rear engine, 8HP and under - Lee Carlson, Culver, 1963 Abe Matthews Trailmaker; Todd Carlson Duluth, 1963 Sno-Tracker.

2 Cycle 9HP and under - Wayne Schlauderaff, Detroit Lakes, 1966 Foxtrac RT10; Todd Carlson Duluth, 1966 Polaris Colt.

2 Cycle 10HP and over - Wayne Schlauderaff, Detroit Lakes, 1968 Moto Ski Mater; Terry Smith, Mora, 1968 Bolens Diablo.

4 cycle 9 HP and under - Terry Smith, Mora, 1965 Arctic Cat D-100.

### CLASSIC

250-300 cc's Stock Liquid cooled - Todd Carlson Duluth,

1969 Arctic Cat Panther.

250-300 cc's Stock Air Cooled - Tucker Jacobson, Pelican Rapids, 1970 Arctic Cat Lynx; Jeffery Harman, Orr, 1976 Arctic Cat Jag.

250-300 cc's Modified Air Cooled - Wesley Reini, Iron, Ski-doo Olympique; Jeffery Harman, Orr, 1976 Arctic Cat Jag.

340-400 cc's Stock Liquid Cooled - Scott Gillette, Linwood, Polaris TXL 340 1978.

340-400 cc's Stock Air Cooled - Scott Wright, Orr, 1972 John Deere; Aston Shelde, Cook, 1977 Polaris TX.

340-400 cc's Modified Air Cooled - Dylon Vancannet, Zumbrota, 1972 Arctic Cat Cheetah; Ken Ross, Britt, 1971 Arctic Cat Lynx.

440-500 cc's Stock Air Cooled - Avery Frazee, Gilbert, 1973 Ski Doo Silver Bullet; Tucker Jacobson, Pelican Rapids, 1974 Arctic Cat Panther.

440-500 cc's Modified Air Cooled - Cody Long, Orr, 1977 El Tire; Jim Lafavor, Silica, 1974 GPX 440 Yamaha.

500 cc's & up Stock Air Cooled - Tucker Jacobson, Pelican Rapids, 1971 Ski-doo TNT; Wayne Schlauderaff, Detroit Lake, 1967 Ski-daddler.

500 cc's & up Modified Liquid Cooled - Cody Long, Orr, 1976 Z El Tigre.

### VINTAGE

250-300cc's Modified - Harrison LaFavor, Silica, 1979 Yamaha Enticer.

340-400 cc's Stock - Ter-

ry Smith, Mora, 1982 Polaris Snomoboat; Brody Baldwin, Chisholm, 1979 Polaris TXL.

340-400 cc's Modified - Austin Berens, Babbitt, 1979 Enticer.

440-500 cc's Stock - Drew Alberts, Superior, Wis., 1982 Ski-doo Blizzard 9500; Brian Najdek, Oak Grove, 1980 Ski-doo Blizzard 5500.

440-500 cc's Modified - Jack Novak, Mazeppa, 1981 El Tigre Arctic Cat; Nels Gabrielson, Orr, 1980 Polaris Indy.

KITTY CAT - Braxton Glass, Orr, Arctic Cat; Bristol Glass, Orr, Ski-doo 120.

### GENERAL

Elmer Smith Award (best unrestored) - Rob Grover, 1972 Columbia Track Master.

Rat Sled - Wayne Schlauder-

hoff, 1969 Ski Daddler "sno-mater", looks like Snomater from Disney movie.

Beauty of Show - Chuck VanCunneytu, Zumbrota, 1972 Arctic Cat EXT.

Best of Show - Lee Carlson, Culver, 1963 ABE Matthews Trailmaker, made in Hibbing, used for "utility".

Best Cutter - Scott Gillette, Linwood, 200 Mercury Cutter.

Best Dressed - Sterren Myklejord, Fosston.

Best Mini - Case Zacharia-son, Detroit Lakes, "sno-mite"

Fan Favorite - Alex Burckhardt, Orr, 1969 Bolens Sprint "Archie Bunker" - had a couch attached.

Rarest Sled - Ryan Holman, Orr, 1969 Snow Bug.

## Cook kids' Easter party is March 30

COOK- It wouldn't be Easter in Cook without the annual Children's Easter Party at the Cook Community Center on Saturday, March 30 from 9-11 a.m. for kids ages 0-ten.

The big event will once again feature games, Easter bags, and boys and girls bikes to be given away.

The event is co-sponsored by Northwoods Riders, Cook Lions Club, Cook VFW, Zup's Grocery Store, Cook Timberwolves Snowmobiling Club, Cook Fire Department, Cook Building Center, the *Cook News-Herald* and the Junction Bar.

## NWFA photo contest voting is open

COOK- Time is running down to take "A Closer Look" and vote for your favorite photos at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery contest in Cook, 210 S. River St.

This "popular vote" photo contest exhibit is on display until Friday, March 29 when a celebratory reception will be held at the gallery from 5 to 7 p.m.. Two winning photos and the photographers will be announced and awarded a cash prize! Voting hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 9 -a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. See examples of last year's winners at Northwoods Friends of

the Arts website: [www.nwfamn.org](http://www.nwfamn.org).

## Catholic Holy Week service schedule set

REGIONAL- The Catholic Parishes of Lake Vermilion and Pelican Lake have announced their Easter Holy Week schedule.

**Holy Thursday, March 28**

St. Mary's - 5:30 p.m.

**Good Friday, March 29**

Holy Cross - 3 p.m.

St. Martin's - 6 p.m.

**Holy Saturday, March 30**

Blessing of the Easter Baskets at St. Martin's - 12:30 p.m.

Easter Vigil Mass - St. Mary's - 8 p.m.

**Easter Sunday, March 31**

Holy Cross - 8 a.m.

St. Martin's - 10:30

a.m.



Orr firefighters Daniel Holman, John Barto, and Jeremy Wright display the results of the generosity of local donors to the Easter Drive-Thru.

## Firefighters to hold drive-thru Easter event in Orr

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.

Seven local donors have contributed a total of

\$1,000 to help with the event, and donations will continue to be accepted from businesses, groups, and individuals to make this Easter extra special for those children who can attend.



## LEGISLATURE...Continued from page 1

by House Majority Leader Jamie Long, DFL-Minneapolis, would remove those constraints, effectively paving the way for a full-time Legislature. The proposal was approved last week by the House Elections Finance and Policy Committee with primary support coming from DFL legislators.

Long emphasized the necessity of rebalancing powers between the part-time legislative branch and the full-time executive branch, citing instances of executive overreach in the past. He argued that granting the Legislature greater flexibility in scheduling sessions would ensure fair representation for voters.

"This is, at its core, a balance of powers issue with the executive (branch)," Long said. "Given our limitations on calling ourselves into session we have seen abuses by executives of both parties... Unallotment has been used six times since 1980 to unilaterally reject legislative appropriations,

including three times by Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Gov. Mark Dayton line-item vetoed the legislative pay, holding it hostage to an unrelated policy demand which prompted a constitutional crisis. And, if we want to go more recent in the COVID outbreak, our emergency powers laws were based on a lack of trust that the governor would call us back into session which resulted in the most special sessions in state history. The Legislature is the closest branch to the people and our voters deserve fair representation in the legislative process. We should be on equal footing with the governor for when we can meet."

Rep. Kristi Pursell, DFL-Northfield, supported the measure by noting the increasing workload faced by legislators, suggesting that the current time constraints hinder effective governance.

However, Rep. Ben Davis, R-Merrifield, expressed concerns that

the proposed changes could lead to a permanent legislative presence, diverging from the desires of his constituents.

"This language opens the door for us to become a full-time legislature," he said. "Folks that I serve, they want me in my district."

Outside of the committee hearing on the bill, House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth, R-Cold Spring, issued a statement strongly opposing the proposal.

"This bill would turn Minnesota into a legislature for professional politicians," she said. "We need legislators who understand the challenges of being a small business owner, a teacher, a farmer, and all of the other professions and experiences that each of us bring to this work."

### Redistricting

A second provision of the bill would change the way in which legislative districts are determined every ten years following

a national census.

The Legislature is charged with redrawing district lines to reflect population shifts and ensure equal numbers of constituents per district, but the courts have routinely had to step in to determine the final outcome.

The bill would establish a 15-member independent commission to create the boundaries, composed of five DFL members, five Republican members, and five members not associated with either party.

The commission would be charged with creating districts that provide "the equal opportunity of racial, ethnic, and language minorities to participate in the political process and to elect candidates of their choice, whether alone or in coalition with others."

There would be restrictions put in place describing when a tribal reservation can be divided between districts, and the commission would need to minimize dividing communities of

interest.

The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, a nonpartisan public policy and law institute, was asked to review the redistricting proposal and provided written comments praising the plan.

"The Brennan Center strongly supports H.F. 4598, which, in our opinion, is among the best and most coherently designed redistricting-reform proposals to emerge from a legislature in recent years," the center said. "If passed, we believe the bill would build on Minnesota's long and storied tradition of serving as a model for states around the country looking to create an inclusive democracy that works for everyone."

A third provision of the bill would restrict legislators from becoming lobbyists for one year after leaving office, a provision currently in House rules that is unenforceable.

### Question criticism

Republicans objected to including all three issues in one ballot question, offering an amendment to separate them that was defeated by DFL legislators. "We have a tradition in Minnesota of constitutional amendments that include multiple related subjects," Long said. "These subjects are all good government topics, so it makes sense to be on the ballot together."

The House bill has been referred to the State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee for further deliberation. A companion bill in the Senate, SF 4785, cleared that chamber's elections committee and will next be heard by the state and local government and veterans committee.

If approved by the House and Senate, the proposed amendment will, per the prescribed process in the constitution, bypass Gov. Tim Walz and proceed directly to a public vote in November.

## BILLS...Continued from page 1

and sometimes fraudulent content on unsuspecting users and increasingly turn kids into lucrative social influencers by promoting sponsored, i.e. paid, content.

### Privacy concerns

House File 4400, titled "Prohibiting Social Media Manipulation Act," authored by Rep. Zack Stephenson, DFL-Coon Rapids, would flip the script for social media companies such as Facebook, X, Instagram, and TikTok by requiring them to enact strict privacy protections for new accounts as defaults when they sign up. While all have privacy safeguards, users typically have to "opt-in" to them by going to the app settings and choosing which safeguards to enable. HF 4400 would mandate that all safeguards would be automatically enabled for new accounts, and a user would have to choose to "opt out" of them.

The goal is to prevent social media platforms from pushing content to users through their algorithms that don't align with what they want to see. Algorithms, increasingly powered by artificial intelligence (AI), track users' interactions with an app's content and push more of that type of content into their feed with the intent of increasing the user's time and engagement with the program. If a user clicks on political content on Facebook, for example, an algorithm will attempt to show more political posts in a user's news feed.

Loose privacy defaults have particularly impacted child users of social media apps who are often oblivious to their opt-in safety features.

"You sign up (for these apps) to talk to your friends and you don't realize that anyone in the world may be able to contact you," said Ravi Iyer, a former Facebook executive who now leads research at the

University of Southern California Marshall Center for Ethical Leadership and Decision Making.

The bill would enact numerous safeguards for Minnesota social media users, including:

- Requiring an interface that allows users to indicate what content they do or do not want. An app is specifically prohibited from pushing content to users that does not align with their preferences.

- Default privacy settings that focus on keeping user-generated content within their own chosen social network and not available to the general public. Platforms would be prohibited from using generative AI to scrape and utilize a user's content without a user's consent. A user would be able to change their privacy settings.

- Account holder daily usage limits would restrict the amount of time new users can be on the app, and also restrict highly active account users to limit their impact on Minnesota users. This guards against distortion or domination by a small minority of users who may exert undue influence on content and how algorithms disseminate it.

- Requires apps to provide specific heightened protections such as a prohibiting features that encourage increased usage, such as auto-play of next videos and infinite content feeds. It would also include a prohibition on visual counts of "likes" on user-generated content. Heightened protections would be opt-in, and a user who chooses heightened protections as a device option on their cellphone or tablet would automatically have them applied to any apps they use on those devices. If a parent has enabled parental controls on those devices, parental controls would be enabled on the apps as well.

Multiple trade industry groups voiced opposition to the bill, including written comments from TechNet and the Computer and Communications Industry Association. Comments by Robert Singleton, director of policy and public affairs for California and the Western U.S. at the Chamber of Progress, a tech industry trade group, echoed the overall industry concerns. Singleton said the bill is vaguely written, would have a chilling effect on social media platforms, "broadly infringe" on the First Amendment, and be "destined to lose in court."

Platforms would self-censor out of fear of litigation and decline to show any content that might possibly contradict a user's preference, Singleton said.

The committee voted to refer the bill to the Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee for further consideration.

### Child influencers

A new type of occupation spawned by social media is that of a social media "influencer," an individual or group with a large number of followers who create content to share their expertise of a particular topic and partner with companies to promote their products or services. Mega influencers have over one million followers, while at the lower end nano influencers have 10,000 or fewer.

Companies pay influencers handsomely for their promotions, and in the world of influencers kids are generating lots of business. For example, 12-year-old YouTube influencer Ryan Kaji has over 36 million followers who have viewed his 2,600 videos more than 45 billion times

as of January 2023. Kaji's channel became popular for his toy reviews and has branched out to include personal vlogs and reviews with other members of his family. Kaji became so popular that he has his own Ryan's World toy line and a Race with Ryan game for video gaming platforms. His income exceeds \$30 million annually, and his net worth has been estimated at \$140 million, fifth highest among all YouTube influencers.

Some Minnesota legislators want to be sure that kid influencers in the state aren't being financially exploited by their parents. Zach Stephenson authored this bill as well, which would require parents to establish a trust account for payments received for content using a minor's likeness that would be maintained until they reach the age of 18. Records would have to be kept on minors who appear in at least 30 percent of a content creator's videos, detailing when the videos create income, how much compensation was generated, and how much was paid to the trust account.

The bill also limits children under 14 from appearing in more than 30 percent of a creator's videos.

The bill provides that a minor 14 and older is allowed to do such work under state law and is entitled to have any content deleted at their request once they turn 13. A minor or an adult previously depicted as a minor would have the right to sue for damages if any provisions of the law are violated.

"It's over a \$1 billion industry in the United States, and I think it's time for it to have some guard-

rails," Stephenson said.

Teen Vogue reporter Fortesa Latifi told FOX 9 news in February that child influencers aren't covered under child labor laws. "It's totally legal in 49 states in this country for these kids to basically have full-time jobs their entire childhood and adolescence and get to 18 and have nothing to show for it," Latifi said.

The Minnesota bill is modeled after one passed in Illinois last year.

### Deepfake teeth

Last year the Legislature passed a law regulating deepfakes, video and audio representations that mimic real people doing and saying things that typically are misinformation and often reflect negatively on them.

The unusually rapid advance of AI over the past year and a half has put the power of creating extremely realistic, low-cost deepfakes into the hands of anyone. A quick Google search revealed over 40 deepfake apps available for use on phones or online. A recent highly publicized use of a deepfake for political manipulation was an AI-generated recording of President Joe Biden's voice used for robocalls prior to the New Hampshire primary telling Democrats not to go to the polls.

The Minnesota law criminalized the creation of sex-related deepfake photos, videos, and audio, as well as prohibited political deepfakes intended to influence elections.

This year, a bill in the Senate written by Sen. Erin May Quade, DFL-Apple Valley, seeks to put more teeth into the political portion of the law by increasing the severity of

the penalties.

"This is a new frontier for all of us. We are really grappling with technology that you're looking and seeing and hearing something that did not happen from somebody who did not do it," Quade told WCCO News. "There has never been a time in our life where we could look at something and be so sure we're looking at the real thing, and it absolutely is not. It tests our sense of reality in a way that's really troubling."

Content-manipulated deep fakes created without the consent of the person depicted and with the intent of hurting a candidate would be a crime 90 days before a general election and 30 days before state, local, and presidential primaries and political party nominating conventions.

A candidate or other person who has created and disseminated a deepfake would be subject to imprisonment for up to 90 days and payment of a fine up to \$1,000. If the deepfake was intended to cause violence or bodily harm, the maximum penalties would increase to 364 days and \$3,000.

A repeat offense within five years of a prior conviction could get someone up to five years in prison or a \$10,000 fine, or both.

A candidate convicted of using a deepfake who won the vote will be disqualified from office and may not be appointed to fill that office should a vacancy occur during its regular term.

The bill has been referred to the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee for additional deliberation.

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Operating support is made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



# THEATER...Continued from page 1

White grew up in a small town in western Tennessee and, like so many before him, first came to Ely on a canoe trip to the Boundary Waters through the Boy Scouts Northern Tier High Adventure camp.

"I have this memory of my first time I came to Ely," White related, "of driving up the hill in a shuttle from Minneapolis with a bunch of Boy Scouts and seeing the marquee. Then, coming back for the next four summers that I worked at Northern Tier, I always thought it'd be so cool to see a movie at the State Theater, to see that place reopen."

White's experience at Northern Tier not only inspired his appreciation of the wilderness, it was a key to setting him on his path to becoming a filmmaker. "I was thinking I'd go to a state university and get a degree in civil engineering. But one of my counselors at Northern Tier convinced me to follow my aspirations to do something different from the norm, saying, 'If you shoot for the moon, you just might land in the stars.'"

## Filmmaking and the State Theater

His counselor's advice led White to apply to filmmaking schools around the country and was accepted at New York University (NYU), one of the leading filmmaking schools in the country. As a college student, White worked at Northern Tier every summer from 2011-14.

After graduating from NYU in 2015, White worked in the film industry in New York but knew he wanted to be back in Ely. So, White packed up and made the move six years ago, and hasn't looked back.

"I started my own business in 2018 and worked a variety of film jobs around the area," White said. But he never lost sight of the State Theater and once he arrived permanently in Ely he looked for ways to be more involved in the project.

He eventually pitched the film festival concept to the board of directors in 2022, which led to the first two Ely Film Festivals in February 2023 and 2024. The success of the inaugural film festival led to

White's joining the board of directors last year.

"When they started talking seriously about hiring me as the first executive director, that's when I stepped down in November."

## Future plans

"The first thing people should know is that the price and concessions have gone up. Tickets have been \$5 since the theater reopened," White said. "We've never raised prices but costs have caught up with us." Tickets for movies are now \$7.

By comparison, movies in Duluth or the Virginia area are \$1-3 more expensive, not including the time and the cost of the drive. The national average for a movie ticket is \$11 according to the *New York Times*, although tickets in the Twin Cities typically range from \$15-19.

For now, the programming at the theater won't change. Movies and feature-length animation will continue, as will the UFC live streaming mixed martial arts programming.

"We'll be keeping the UFC fights," White said. "Those have been drawing a good audience."



A packed house for one of the many films shown last month during the 2024 Ely Film Festival.

As for movies, White plans to evaluate the sales records of past films to see what movies attract the best attendance. "I'll be doing an internal audit of the last few years so we can make informed decisions about what sorts of movies will be

showing in the future."

Part of that audit will look at timing because movie distribution companies impose restrictions when a movie is new, often preventing any other movie from being shown on the same screen. "What I'd like

to know is whether people will drive down to Duluth to see a movie when it opens or if they will wait to see it for less money in Ely four weeks later," he said.

White also wants to expand the use of the theater for more than just movies. "We can do plays, musicals, and concerts. I'd like to have more community events every one to two months." The theater is already moving in that direction. "We just got a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board for \$35,000 for a local concert series," White said. "I want to team up with other arts organizations in the Ely area for this."

"We also received a \$9,000 grant from the United Way of Northeastern Minnesota for working with area youth in a meaningful way to introduce them to film."

White has experience working with young people already. He's taught filmmaking classes at Vermilion Country School in Tower as well as other locations. "That's another way we can reach out to the local community," he said.

# TRYGG ROAD...Continued from page 1

they had resolved the issue last November, when they added a four-inch layer of gravel from a different pit to the road. That seemed to help, but only for a time. When county public works graded the road on Jan. 2, residents along the road reported three flats the very next day. While the road is typically snow-covered for several months during the winter, which would presumably reduce the problem, this year's record warmth and lack of persistent snow-cover had left the road bare most of the year so far. Since the first of the year, at least five flats have been reported on the road, including one experienced by the local mail carrier.

Residents along the road say they're incredibly frustrated at the inconvenience and expense the situation is causing. Resident Barb Soderberg said she's worried whenever she has an appointment that she'll end up with a flat along the way, something that already happened for a doctor's appointment last fall. "The uncertainty of being able to go to meetings, run errands, or go to critical appointments is really wearing on residents," she said. Between Soderberg and her husband Kurt, the couple has had eight flats since last summer when the county added six inches of newly-crushed gravel to the road. That's cost them about \$1,000 so far for tire

repair and replacement, and towing.

As awareness of the issue spread throughout the township, residents along the road note that friends won't visit any more for fear of a flat. Owens said her local book club will no longer meet at her house for the same reason.

Township officials have tried to respond. The town board sent a letter to Jim Foldesi, the county's public works director, back in January, requesting a solution, but they've yet to receive a formal response.

## Seeking answers

While the county has yet to develop a solution, Foldesi said one is in the works. He said he's dispatched several top public works officials to Trygg Rd. more than once in recent days to assess the situation and determine how best to fix it. "I know folks are frustrated," said Foldesi in an interview with the *Timberjay*. "We are too. But this is a headscratcher for us. It's a real anomaly."

Indeed, Foldesi said this is the first time the county has ever run into such a situation, which is saying something in a county that maintains over 100 borrow pits and 3,000 miles of public roads, about half of which are gravel. "We've been putting gravel on roads for 100 plus years and we have not seen this issue before," he said.

According to Foldesi, the county typically maps

out an annual maintenance plan, which will involve several roads in an area. Then, they'll hire a contractor to crush enough gravel for the work in a nearby pit. In a typical summer, they'll have four or five contract crushers operating in the north half of the county, with just as many operating in the south half.

"All gravel has crushed rock in it," notes Foldesi, and some of that crushed rock will include sharp edges, which actually helps to improve traction on gravel roads. Foldesi said the crushed material used on Trygg Rd. appears to have fractured edges that are more elongated than usual, which appears to be creating the problem.

Foldesi said he had expected that adding four inches of a different gravel to the road last November

would have resolved the problem. While that seemed to help for a time, it appears the problem has come back in the wake of the most recent grading, which may have brought some of the sharper material back to the surface.

What isn't known is whether certain segments of the road are causing the problem, or if the sharper material is exposed along the entire roadway. That's part of what county officials are hoping to determine. "We'll continue to look at it," said Foldesi. "We're gathering data and hope to find a fix for it. Our goal is to find a solution sooner rather than later." Any fix, of course, will have to wait until road restrictions are lifted, which typically isn't until May.

## Possible solutions

If there's a "for sure"

solution to the problem, it lies in the removal of the top several inches of the roadbed, which would include the top four inches of gravel added last fall along with the six inches of the problem gravel added early last summer.

"We could use a milling machine to pick it up," said Foldesi. That's a machine that is more typically used to remove blacktop before resurfacing a roadway. The material would be collected and could be used as base material on another project. "We wouldn't want it for surface use," said Foldesi.

While Foldesi said the county could ultimately go that direction, it's an expensive option, although he said he hasn't gotten any quotes on it at this point. He estimated the county already spent about \$100,000 to add the

additional gravel to the road last fall, and all that gravel would need to be removed to get at the problem material below.

"At some point, maybe we go there," said Foldesi, although he'd first like to rule out cheaper options.

The only other alternatives would be to add even more material to the road, or to use county staff and equipment, like a grader, front end loader, and haul trucks to scrape off the problem gravel, before adding fresh gravel from a different pit.

While a solution is a high priority, Foldesi said his engineers are also trying to figure out how the problem occurred. "We're working hard to understand it, not only so we can address it, but so we don't ever see this again."

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## Hospital Connection

### What about Telehealth/Telemedicine

**Q: What is Telehealth or Telemedicine?**  
**A:** Telehealth and Telemedicine have become prominent in medicine throughout the pandemic. These terms are often used interchangeably to describe a general distribution of healthcare-related services using electronic means and methods. The difference is often related to scope, with Telemedicine referring more to actual clinical services such as diagnosing and treating. At the same time, Telehealth often includes additional non-clinical work such as provider training or administrative work.

**Q: What are some of the various methods of Telemedicine?**  
**A:** There are three main types of Telemedicine care delivery.

- 1.) **Store and Forward** when data about a patient is collected through a medical device that the provider can later download.
- 2.) **Remote Monitoring** allows providers to get real-time information through various medical devices and is most often used to manage a patient with a chronic condition.
- 3.) **Real-time interactions** include live interactions between patients and providers using electronic devices. These interactions can include video conferencing platforms or adaptive technology for patients with disabilities such as hearing impaired.

**Q: Is Telemedicine used at Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital?**  
**A:** Yes —EBCH utilizes technology to deliver care for our patients in various ways. We have the option to contact with a Specialty providers through the Emergency Department for consultation on cases such as Mental Health crises. The Cardiopulmonary Department offers a Zio patch home device to monitor heart-related diagnoses. Even the Refill Rx app can be used to communicate with Ely Community Pharmacy and refill prescriptions.

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

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CITY OF ELY

# Council sets hearing on 45 Boundary St. violations

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- After months of little to no progress on the unsafe residence at 45 E. Boundary St., the Ely City Council scheduled a public hearing for 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, April 16, to discuss mitigation measures.

The single-family home sustained fire damage in an altercation on Sept. 13 between one of the property's owners, Jason Gillson, and the woman living with him. The incident, which began as a dispute between the two residents escalated, with Gillson discharging firearms, starting a fire inside the home, then fleeing the scene with a pursuit by law enforcement that ended with Gillson's apprehension in Waasa. Gillson was arrested and charged with five felony counts including

the discharge of firearms within city limits, domestic assault, and arson. Gillson was scheduled for a plea bargain hearing on Feb. 12 which was rescheduled at the last minute for April 8.

The city's building official, Douglas Whitney P.E., issued a notice of violation on March 7 for the property—one of several issued against the property since Sept. 13—giving Gillson and co-owner Mark Herman of Jacobson 30 days to fix the unsafe conditions. The notice states the property is out of compliance with Ely City Code and Minnesota building and fire laws.

Whitney made his determination that the property is unsafe based on the fire damage, the unsanitary and hazardous conditions inside the home, and the junk and debris scattered around the

exterior of the home. The notice lists 15 specific items which must be met within 30 days. According to the notice, if the conditions are not addressed the city will hold a hearing on what actions it will take to remedy the unsafe conditions.

Given that Gillson and Herman have not mitigated most of the unsafe conditions and fire damage at the property since the Sept. 13 incident, the city council went ahead and scheduled the hearing for the first city council meeting date after the 30 days are up.

In other action, the council:  
 > Approved the recommendation from the projects committee to direct the City Attorney to work up a city ordinance committing the property at the old city garage site to the city's Housing

and Redevelopment Authority for the city's workforce housing project. This is one of the many bureaucratic steps necessary for the housing project to go forward.

> Approved a recommendation from the projects committee to pay a \$2,000 invoice from Maxfield Research for a housing study update.

> Approved a request from Bob Koschak to buy scrap poles, pipes, hydrants, and rails from the old city garage site and a pile of logs from the old city dump site for \$952.

> Approved the first reading of Ordinance 376 2nd Series revising the Ely City Code Chapter 11, Section 4, on conditional and permissible uses for the city's zoning districts. After the city council meeting, Deputy Clerk Casey Velcheff said the

revised list of conditional and permissible uses will be posted to the city's website. The city council will hold a public hearing on the revised planning and zoning ordinance at 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday, April 16.

> Approved Ely and Ely Utilities Commission claims for payment for March 19 for \$4,584.

> Approved the appointment of Ely resident Paul Dunnom, a retired St. Paul police officer to the open seat on the Police Commission with a term expiring Jan. 31, 2026.

> Approved the on-sale and Sunday liquor license for the soon-to-open Frisky Otter restaurant at 302 E. Sheridan St., pending proper paperwork, insurance and background check.

## RESPONSE...Continued from page 1

noted is still in the process of being created. The district has had a full-time cultural liaison position, which will be phased out, and many of those duties will be incorporated into the coordinator job description currently being developed. The district has been working with Katie Pratt of the state Office of Conflict and Resolution to develop the position in line with state standards.

AIPAC requested to have representation on the district's curriculum advisory committee, and the board will request a nominee from AIPAC to join the committee.

AIPAC had multiple concerns about budget processes, including:

> The district should improve communication with AIPAC on "what is happening" with funding, and should have maximum involvement in the process of each funding source. The board's response indicates that AIPAC leads the development of the district's state Indian Education Plan, which includes collaborating on the budget. The district's current practice is to hold monthly meetings to report progress on grants, and the meetings include the majority of the district's federal and state grants. Engebretson noted that state regulations provide for AIPAC to be involved with state funding for Indian Education, and not necessarily the additional federal funds.

> AIPAC said they should be involved in the expenditure of all relevant funding sources before

being paid out. The board maintains that AIPAC is involved in determining expenditures through development of the state plan, and that they're made aware of expenditures through the monthly budget updates.

> AIPAC indicated that all funding sources are to be kept in separate accounts and not co-mingled. The council would like to see revenues and expenses in ledger form with detailed explanations, something they said was promised last spring. The board's response indicates that the district's normal practice is to have separate accounts for funding sources and that expenses are made according to the approved plans. Johnson noted that the district is still awaiting the state's final approval of this year's plan, and that when approval is received the district makes any necessary adjustment.

> AIPAC reiterated the standard guidance that Indigenous Education funding is to be used to supplement other funding and not supplant any dollars from state or federal sources or co-curricular programs but did not note any instances where this was violated by the district. Board members noted that the district is in compliance and agreed with the statement.

> AIPAC also noted stipulations it gave to the board to accept the 2022-23 budget that they assert remain unresolved. The council also indicated that it considers a "timely" response to requests for information to be one week

from the date of the request and two weeks prior to meetings. The board agreed that the district will "do their best" to meet requests and communicate delays if the requested information is not accessible.

The board agreed with AIPAC's statement that the council should receive the board's recommendations at the same time that they are sent to the state Office of American Indian Education. AIPAC said that last year they had to request them and did not receive them until May.

The discussion on Monday also addressed the issue of staffing Indigenous support positions, with Jordan noting that a vacancy at Tower-Soudan Elementary exists because there are no applicants for the position. Qualified applicants for Indigenous education are hard to come by, she said. Board members did not agree with a request from AIPAC to have a member included on employee search committees, indicating challenges in providing the extensive training in the legal aspects of the hiring process. They did encourage AIPAC members to help recruit and refer viable candidates to the district.

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## MENTAL HEALTH

# Experts discuss growing problem of rural suicide

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

**REGIONAL-** The growing problem of rural suicide and what can be done to reverse the trend was the subject of an expert panel discussion earlier this month, sponsored by the Center for Rural Policy and Development, or CRPD.

More people are dying by their own hands in rural parts of the state, and nowhere is that trend more evident than in northeastern Minnesota,

“For every death by suicide, there are a number of survivors that are impacted.

**Monica McConkey**  
licensed therapist

which has the state’s highest rate of suicide.

An analysis created by CRPD vice-president for

research Marnie Werner and Tracie Rutherford Self, a faculty member at Minnesota State University-Mankato, was the focus of discussion. Werner reviewed statistics derived from the report detailing the scope of the problem, as well as dynamics particular to rural areas that contributed to higher suicide rates.

“A lot of this has to do with diseases and deaths of despair,” Werner said. “That was a term that was coined in 2015 by two researchers

who noticed an acute rise in the number of suicides, the number of deaths by drug poisoning or overdose, and alcohol related diseases. These have been rising steadily over the past 25 years. Since 2018, the higher rates (of suicide) have been in northeast Minnesota and northwest Minnesota. The southern metro counties actually have the lowest rates in the state.”

Among the higher

See **PANEL...** pg. 2B



## TRAVEL JOURNAL

# Seeking heart, light, water, and coffee

by JEAN GENDREAU  
Contributing Writer

Heartlessness has always been easy to find. But if you know where to look, you’ll find kind eyes and warm hearts too.

Shiny palm tree fronds glitter in the sun. I can’t stop looking at the light. High overhead parakeets chitter and flutter like whirling leaves. A three-foot lizard darts by and runs up a tree trunk, stopping dead as I come close. I reflect that one night at 30 degrees would kill thousands of these bug-eaters. But this is not Minnesota’s north woods. This is northwestern Puerto Rico, where people put on thick fleeces if the temperature dips to 68. There are no 30-degree nights here.

The February light in Puerto Rico shocks me. Even in Minnesota’s June, there is no sunshine so warm, so bright, so yellow. We squint, pull our hats lower, and rub on sun block. We walk for miles along exquisite beaches. We gorge on orangey-red papaya and sweet, small bananas that grow alongside the road. The roads and town squares are clean. I mention this to a local woman. She smiles and says that every night crews come out to clean the streets.

On the beaches light and water make magic. On some we hike the dunes for miles

**Above: Enjoying a natural pool in a Puerto Rican forest.**

**Right: A brown pelican makes its way down a pristine Puerto Rican beach.**

submitted photos

next to flat water. I can’t get over the colors of the water—clear turquoise and aquamarine. On other beaches, waves crash on huge sharp rocks. We pick our way along a narrow path. Puerto Rico has hundreds of beaches, some famous, long and flat with planned walks. There are also tiny, unknown beaches, hidden at the end of little streets so that only the locals know how to get there. On my favorite day, I sit by the sea in a high wind, tugging my hat low. The waves pound out a rhythm that seems to come from another life.

At first, I think I don’t know this water at all. The huge waves feel easy and enchanted. The sound of the surf soothes like a lullaby. But I’ve missed a huge point. Just as in the north we know how dangerous it is to fall through the ice, the people here know that the big waves hide rip currents, and that the danger of drowning is real. Just as in the north sometimes it’s safe to drive a truck across ice on a lake, here in Puerto Rico the water is often soft and safe. Toddlers laugh and splash while their grandparents stand

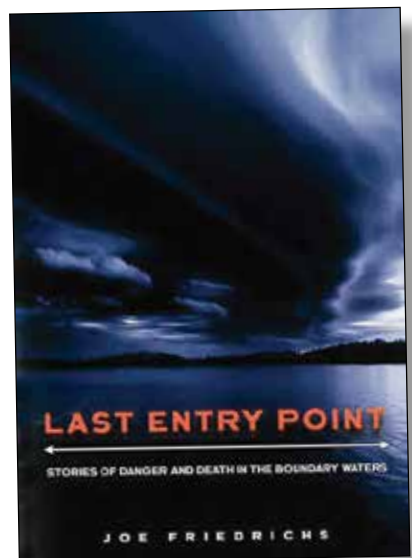


nearby knee deep in water. But when there is danger, it is real and quick and totally merciless—and the locals know this. In some spots the experts—the surfers—ride the waves, just as in the north, experienced skiers bushwhack into the BWCA through fresh deep snow. They know what they’re doing. But for novices and tourists, there are warnings. When we first arrive, there is rough water

the north. In every grocery store and coffee shop, the locals make a point of telling us that we absolutely must not swim today.

My ignorance, my wrong assumptions, shatter in a lovely heap. The people around us are healthy and elegant in black long-sleeved clothes that would look right in New

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## REVIEW

# New book highlights the BWCAW’s darker side

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

**REGIONAL—** For the vast majority of visitors to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, the experience is awe-inspiring. But for a very small number, a trip in the wilderness ends in tragedy.

Their experiences are the subject of a new book by Joe Friedrichs, “Last Entry Point, Stories of Danger and Death in the Boundary Waters,” published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press and set for release on April 30.

When tragedy strikes in the wilderness, the details are typically limited. Brief press statements from local law enforcement offer little but the bare facts of an overturned canoe, a lightning strike, or a fallen tree and rarely provide much insight into how what should have been a pleasant adventure have gone so wrong. The impact of the fatalities on friends and family go unreported for the most part.

Friedrichs has gone well beyond the press statements to learn more about these rare instances when people have died or been badly injured in the BWCAW. It’s fast-paced and it is bound to connect with anyone who has spent time in the canoe country.

The stories can be gut-wrenching at times, especially since many of the victims highlighted were young people, whose lives were snuffed out far too early. Friedrichs talks with some of the survivors and the impacts of their experiences and the loss of friends, family, or partners. For many, even those who had stayed at home, the impacts have remained with them for years, even decades in some cases. For those few, the Boundary Waters has taken on a sense of darkness and foreboding.

With the canoe season rapidly approaching this year, Friedrichs’ book offers a useful reminder that a trip into the wilderness always puts Mother Nature in charge. High winds, lightning, and cold water, all can kill, and quickly. Even those who

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# TRAGEDY...Continued from page 1B

are thoroughly prepared and experienced may still encounter the unexpected. In those cases, being ready for anything can mean the difference between a memorable trip and a life-changing, or even life-ending one.

While a canoe trip always comes with risk, Friedrichs writes that his book is not intended to scare, only to inform in the hopes of raising awareness of the importance of preparedness when venturing into the wilderness. As some noted, visitors to the BWCAW often face at least as much risk on the car ride north as they do out on the water.

Friedrichs, a longtime journalist and paddler, has spent ten years report-

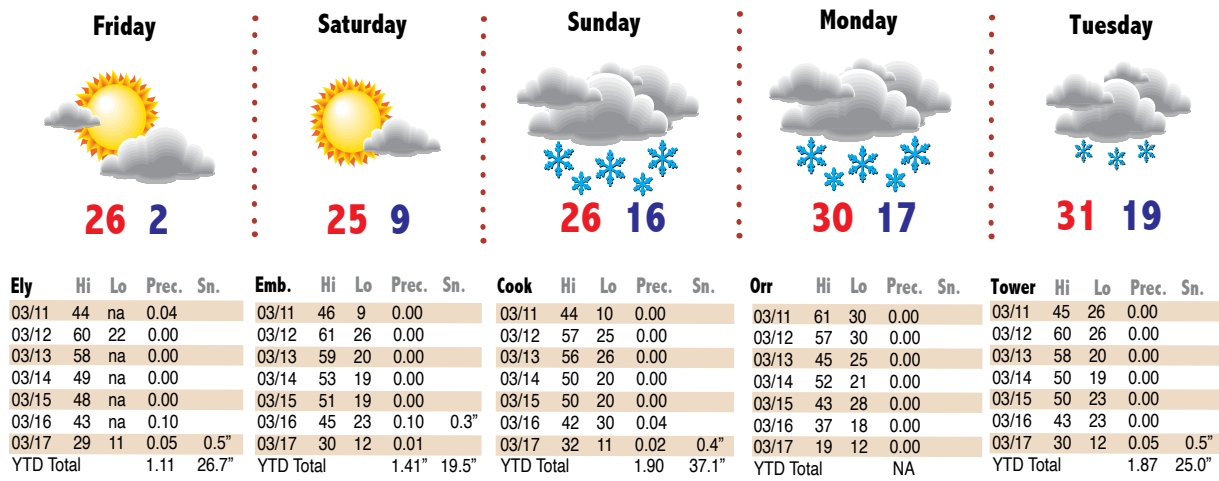
ing from the edge of the Boundary Waters. He co-founded the award-winning Boundary Waters Podcast and is the author of "Her Island: The Story of Quetico's Longest Serving Interior Ranger."

Friedrichs reported on a number of fatalities in the Boundary Waters while working for WTIP, the local radio station in Grand Marais and he's talked at length with many of the emergency personnel who respond, often in difficult conditions, when the calls come in.

The 224-page paperback is set to retail at \$19.95, \$9.95 for the e-book version.

# LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather



Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
03/11	44	na	0.04		03/11	46	9	0.00		03/11	44	10	0.00		03/11	61	30	0.00		03/11	45	26	0.00	
03/12	60	22	0.00		03/12	61	26	0.00		03/12	57	25	0.00		03/12	57	30	0.00		03/12	60	26	0.00	
03/13	58	na	0.00		03/13	59	20	0.00		03/13	56	26	0.00		03/13	45	25	0.00		03/13	58	20	0.00	
03/14	49	na	0.00		03/14	53	19	0.00		03/14	50	20	0.00		03/14	52	21	0.00		03/14	50	19	0.00	
03/15	48	na	0.00		03/15	51	19	0.00		03/15	50	20	0.00		03/15	43	28	0.00		03/15	50	23	0.00	
03/16	43	na	0.10		03/16	45	23	0.10	0.3"	03/16	42	30	0.04		03/16	37	18	0.00		03/16	43	23	0.00	
03/17	29	11	0.05	0.5"	03/17	30	12	0.01		03/17	32	11	0.02	0.4"	03/17	19	12	0.00		03/17	30	12	0.05	0.5"
YTD Total			1.11	26.7"	YTD Total			1.41"	19.5"	YTD Total			1.90	37.1"	YTD Total			NA		YTD Total			1.87	25.0"

# READ THE TIMBERJAY!

# PANEL..Continued from page 1B

risk groups identified by the Minnesota Suicide Prevention Task Force, Werner highlighted data about a group prevalent in northern Minnesota: Native Americans.

"Their suicide rate has been higher than the general population for many years, and the rate in Minnesota for Native Americans is higher than the average rate for Native Americans in the U.S. in general, too."

Indeed, the report shows that since the year 2000, Native Americans in Minnesota have had suicide rates higher than the national average for all but two years. In 2018, Native suicides in Minnesota doubled the national rate. Possible factors for this disparity include a lack of economic opportunities and being in small, isolated populations, increasing the chances of experiencing chronic distress.

Werner said farmers are another demographic susceptible to higher rates of suicides.

"Farmers were a big topic of discussion before the pandemic, and they're still an issue," Werner said. "Farmers struggle with a unique set of issues, including volatile income, fear of losing the farm and stigma around mental health. And then access to firearms. In rural areas, there are simply more guns. Taking your own life is an act of impulse, and if you have a gun at hand, it's easier to make that happen. In entirely rural areas there's a higher percentage of people using firearms for suicide. When you take firearms out of the mix you can see that the suicide rate drops considerably."

Werner described mul-

multiple aspects of rural culture than can contribute to suicide, including:

- ▶ A high value placed on independence and self-reliance.
- ▶ Isolation.
- ▶ Lack of trust of those outside of one's social network.
- ▶ The lack of anonymity.
- ▶ The stigma surrounding going to mental health providers.

Self said how we do or don't talk about suicide is also a factor.

"I think there's multiple facets at play here, but if we could look at one thing in particular, the thing I would come back to consistently is the fact that talking about suicide is still incredibly taboo," she said. "So many people simply don't have conversations when they're starting to have thoughts of suicide. They will keep that to themselves. Suicidal ideation is incredibly common. I think probably everybody on the planet at some point in their life has had the thought of suicide, and for some people that happens more pervasively, but we still don't have the conversations. That's one of the key places we have to start in order to really address the epidemic."

David Goehl-Manolis, Suicide Prevention Coordinator for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, expanded on how common suicidal behaviors are.

"When we talk about the statistics, the number of people who have attempted suicide and survived is, I think the ratio is around 25 people who have attempted and survived to one person who has passed, and so you can imagine the millions of

people that have attempted it who survived. But then there's even another level to it, and those are people that have had serious thoughts of suicide but haven't attempted it. The last statistics I saw from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, there was over 12 million people in 2021 who had serious thoughts of suicide. It's very common to have thoughts of suicide as just a way of feeling overwhelmed by the life problems that somebody might be encountering."

Goehl-Manolis echoed Self's comments that there needs to be a greater comfort level in having discussions about suicide.

Panelist Monica McConkey, a licensed marriage and family therapist and rural mental health specialist, noted that suicide has a troubling ripple effect.

"For every death by suicide, there are a number of survivors that are impacted," she said. "And we know that their risk for suicide attempts or death by suicide also increases when they have lost a friend or a loved one to suicide. So that compounds the issue."

McConkey said the report "hit the nail on the head" when describing contributing factors to suicide.

"There's a lack of services, lack of resources, increased isolation, and stigma is still alive and well in our rural communities," she said. "There are lots of reasons why this sense of hopelessness is really pervasive among so many people."

Self noted that there was actually an unexpected drop in the suicide rate at the beginning of the COVID pandemic.

"The anticipation was that we would see a pretty dramatic increase in suicidal deaths, and we didn't actually see that," she said. "Except, we did."

While the overall numbers did decrease among white middle-class men, Self said that when they got into the data, it showed that the suicide rate actually increased for marginalized populations.

"It increased for those with low (socioeconomic status) who might not have had the same access to resources and who were more stressed by the pandemic," Self said. "So, what we saw was a drop, but that drop really is a bit deceptive because it was really only a drop for people with the greatest access to resources."

Access to local resources was an issue that panelists repeatedly came back to, both as a current problem and a potential solution.

"Individuals who die by suicide from rural communities almost never have a mental health diagnosis prior to their death," said Self. "One of the things we know is that they're not seeing a mental health professional. And, again, I go back to that isolation piece, that we're not having these conversations. And if there is a lack of availability of providers in that area, who do I refer to?"

Werner said that access is also hampered by lower income levels in rural areas, and people may not have access to health insurance that covers mental health services.

Transportation is another critical component for accessing help, and people with low incomes

in rural areas may have unreliable transportation or limited access to cumbersome public transportation alternatives, according to Self.

"If you can't get to your practitioner's office, it's really hard to actually access the care that you need," she said.

Telehealth isn't an ideal alternative for rural areas because of limited broadband access and also because in-person interactions facilitate a sense of connection that helps people to tell their "deepest, darkest secrets," Self said.

Listeners were interested in hearing strategies to address the problem of rural suicide, and panelists were ready with a number of suggestions:

- ▶ Increase the diversity and cultural competence of the mental health workforce serving rural clients.
- ▶ Collect more extensive data from marginalized populations to enhance a database currently skewed toward white middle-class males to more accurately identify, describe and address differences for rural areas.
- ▶ Develop pay parity to attract more people to the mental health workforce.
- ▶ Increase public awareness of what words and language are best used when discussing suicide.
- ▶ Acknowledge that suicide is uncomfortable, and make conversations about suicide a normal, everyday part of conversation to reduce stigma and isolation.
- ▶ Facilitate collaborative relationships between mental health professionals and school staff and clergy.
- ▶ Provide more tailored training, both in-per-

son and online, directed to trusted anchor members of communities who may be more likely to encounter individuals with suicidal thoughts.

▶ Increase awareness of the 988-help line.

▶ Develop and utilize mobile mental health crisis teams.

▶ Use an integrated health care approach promoting relationships between behavioral and medical health professionals.

▶ Promote gun safety education and take steps to make gun access more difficult to help prevent impulsive actions, including the use of Minnesota's red flag law.

"When we look at rural communities, we have issues with accessibility, availability, and acceptability," Self said. "When we start to use those informal resources, we start to increase the acceptability of talking about those things in rural areas."

"Just notice the people around you," McConkey said. "We get so into our busyness and our tasks and what we need to focus on, and a lot of people are hurting right now. Any of us can notice if they're hurting and be there with an invitation to talk and listen."

To access the full written report "The Suicide Epidemic in Rural Minnesota: How we got here and how we move forward," go to the Center for Rural Policy and Development website at [www.ruralmn.org](http://www.ruralmn.org). A recording of the webinar can be viewed on the center's YouTube channel.

# JOURNAL...Continued from page 1B

York City. Many people have lived in New York and are completely fluent in English. Many have fantastic tattoos. This is not Mexico—the food is not chili-pepper hot. Instead, the comfort food, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken), is as delicious and mild as homemade macaroni and cheese. Seafood mofango, a local specialty of seafood with rich sauce on a bed of mashed plantains, is as rich and filling as stew with dumplings.

On the beaches, in restaurants and at fairs, we see three-generation family groups. There are a few tourists. Families come with sun umbrellas, chairs, beach towels and bags of snacks. A grandfather laughs as his tiny granddaughter puts her face in the water for the first time. A very pregnant bikini-clad young woman talks her sister into taking photos against the backdrop of the roaring waves.

What happened to

Puerto Rico's indigenous people is as cruel as what happened in the U.S. and Canada. Columbus, looking for gold for the Spanish, stepped onto the beach here one year after 1492. The Spanish immediately began making the Taino, the local tribal people, into slaves. In 1508 there were about 30,000 tribal people. In 1511 there was a Taino uprising. By 1520, only 1100 survived. Because gold mining was such brutal work, by 1513, the Spanish started supplementing the work crews with enslaved African people. By 1540 most of the gold had been carted away to Europe. Instead, the Europeans used the slave labor on coffee, sugar, and tobacco plantations.

A few of the Dominican friars who came with the Spanish soldiers followed their hearts and worked to free the slaves. In 1511, Fra Antonio de Montesino said this: "Are these not men? Have they not got

rational souls? Are you not bound to love them as you love yourself?" Although he was driven out of his position, he succeeded in convincing the Spanish court, and in 1512 the first law was passed that forbade the slavery of the local indigenous people. Yet, conditions set for freedom were that the local people needed to be "clothed, Christian, and capable." African enslaved people were not freed until 1873. Today's genetic studies show that the Puerto Rican population is approximately 15 percent mestizo (mixed indigenous), 21 percent African and 64 percent European. We visited the Convent of Porta Coeli (Gateway to Heaven) in San German, built by Dominican friars in 1604. In the museum's art we saw the gaunt, beautiful faces of the people.

Along Puerto Rico's highways American corporations dominate—Wendy's, MacDonald's,

and Walgreens. There are huge facilities for Hewlett Packard and Lockheed Martin, and we saw the remnants of massive U.S. military facilities. There are, of course, hundreds of Catholic churches and dozens of Presbyterian, Baptist, and Pentecostal churches. We visit during Lent. On weeknights in the evenings, church lights are on and pews are full.

We see much wreckage from Hurricane Maria in 2017, in which winds of 175 mph killed almost 3,000 people. We swim and snorkel among the shattered ruins of reinforced concrete buildings, visible 30 feet below. We drive on roads with serious potholes. Many Puerto Ricans complain that the U.S. is a negligent guardian.

Someone asks me if I think the Puerto Ricans are "ready for statehood." I think of the indigenous people in the U.S. and the First Nations of Canada. Their experience is not at all

that of a privileged majority lining up to vote. And yet they live everywhere in the U.S., speaking up and teaching truths.

I am happy for the kind eyes, strong bodies and close groups I see. We meet many who had worked in the U.S. and were now home. Every now and then we hear Caribbean drummers who play at farm markets, at art festivals and on the beaches.

I sip my coffee. There's no acidity, no bitterness. We meet coffee farmers up in the highlands at the coffee festival in Maricao. The old plantations are gone. One farm owner says, "If you

want more bitter coffee, just ask my husband's cousin." She smiles and points to the stall across the way.

This coffee is not bitter. I've bought a dozen bags because it's easy to love. If you know where to look, you can find kind eyes and warm hearts.



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HONORING NURSES

# Nursing Honor Guard formed for our area

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

REGIONAL- Paying tribute to nurses at their time of death is the mission of the newly-formed Northern Range Nursing Honor Guard. A group of nurses, some working, some retired, are now offering free honor guard tributes for funerals, memorial services, or graveside services for any licensed or registered nurse, active or retired, in the northern Iron Range area. Services are based on availability of honor guard members.

The group can also do a "Living Tribute" for those who are critically or terminally ill.

The group has done seven funerals so far, and they have also participated at the Festival of Trees Parade and Alzheimer's



Walk.

"Honor guard services can be customized according to the wishes of the deceased or their families," said Laura Alarcon, honor guard member.

"Nursing is a profession prided in many traditions," said Alarcon.

"We use these traditions as symbols, which reflect honor and respect for those who have given so much and served so well."

Services can include "The Nightingale Tribute," along with other tributes. This service is similar to a military trib-

ute and officially releases the nurse from their nursing duties.

Honor guard members dress in a traditional white uniform, complete with cap and cape. The ceremony is brief, lasting about five minutes and consists of reciting the desired tribute and lay-

ing a white rose on the casket or next to the urn, to symbolize the nurse's dedication to their profession. After the tribute, the nurse's name is called three times, along with the ringing of a triangle. A lit Nightingale lamp is carried up at the beginning for the ceremony and is then extinguished and presented to the family. Materials presented at ceremonies are funded by donations to the honor guard group.

Anyone wishing to learn more about the group can contact Wendy Voss at 218-780-1940 or Laura Alarcon at 218-741-4642. The group is on Facebook@northern-rangenursinghonorguard.

## Firearms field day to be held in Aurora

AURORA- A firearms safety field day will be held on Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the East Range Sportsman and Conservation Club range.

A classroom session will be held prior to the field day on Monday, April 22 from 5-8 p.m. at the Loon Lake Community Center.

The Instructor for the event is Steven Lerol. To register or for questions contact Lerol at 218-865-4384 or Rhonda Byron at firearmsafety2024@yahoo.com.

Students must be 11 years old by the time of class start date. They must complete the online firearms safety course and bring a voucher showing they have completed the course. Preregistration is required.

A parent or guardian must stay for at least the first 30 minutes of field day.

## Obituaries and Death Notices



### Philip A. Hagedorn

Philip Arthur "Phil" Hagedorn, 85, of Ely, passed away on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at his home. Memorial services are pending.

He is survived by his wife, Dulcie; children, Christopher (Sarah Stretitz), Jane (Doug) Anderson, Elizabeth (Andre) Debrey and Jason (Jeanne) Stahlberg; nine grandchildren; brothers, John and Peter; sister, Julie; and first wife, Elizabeth Hagedorn.

### William J. Ulicsni

William "Bill" J. Ulicsni, 86, longtime resident of Mt. Iron, died on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at St. Luke's Hospital in Duluth. A celebration of life will be held for family and friends at 12 noon on Saturday, March 23 at the Mt. Iron Community Center. Family services are provided by Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

Bill was born on Oct. 9, 1937, in Virginia, the son of Joseph and Mabel Ingstad Ulicsni. He was united in marriage to Florence Johnson on Nov. 22, 1958, in Virginia. Bill was a driver for Century Motor Freight, was a longtime Mt. Iron School Board member, and was a Teamster. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, riding ATV, berry-picking, and was especially fond of the community around their cabin on Black Duck Lake.

Bill is survived by his three children, Steven (Eileen) Ulicsni of Vero Beach, Fla., Barbara (Jack) Rettker of Alpharetta, Ga., and Thomas Ulicsni of Mt. Iron; four grandchildren, Christopher "CJ" (Sherri) Ulicsni, Tiffany (Andrew) Johnston, Sarah Rettker and Michael Rettker; and great-grandchildren, Ryleigh and Logan.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Florence; and sisters, Patricia Conaway and Lorraine Dundas.

### Eileen P. Swanson

Eileen P. Swanson, of Tower, passed away on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at Vermilion Senior Living in Tower. Funeral services were held on Monday, March 18 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower with Pastor Joel Guttormson officiating. Arrangements were with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

### Sidney O. Adams

Sidney Orville Adams, 81, of Tower, passed away on Saturday, March 16, 2024, surrounded by family and the great staff at Vermilion Assisted Living. Tribal rites and viewing were held on Wednesday, March 20 at the Vermilion Wellness Center. Vernon Adams was the Spiritual Advisor.

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

He is survived by his sisters, Gladys Averill and Marlene (David) Farmer; brothers, Ronald (Vivian), Gary (Linda) and Gordon (Barbara); and extended family, Kathy, April, Antonella and Ava.

## Celebrate Ely: Wildlife Safari

Featuring Key Note Speaker  
**Steve Fredlund - "The Safari Dude"**

Join us at the Grand Ely Lodge  
Thursday, April 11, 2024, 4:30-8:30 p.m.  
Cost: \$30/person  
Ticket includes: meal, activities, and speaker.

Have some fun and come dressed for your safari adventure!  
More details at [Ely.org/CelebrateEly](http://Ely.org/CelebrateEly)

Purchase tickets at the Ely Chamber of Commerce,  
1600 E. Sheridan St, Ely, or call 218-365-6123.

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# EMPLOYMENT



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**Jay Gustafson [jay@piragis.com](mailto:jay@piragis.com)  
218.365.6745**

105 North Central Avenue [piragis.com](http://piragis.com)



**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](mailto:info@vermilioncountry.org) for more information:

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

- Special Education Teacher (licensed)
- Literature/Language Arts and/or Social Studies (licensed)
- Science and/or Math Interdisciplinary Teacher (licensed)
- Social Worker (skills and students services focus on individual and small group skills work. LSW, LGSW, LICSW, Licensed School Social Worker, or alternative certification considered LADC etc.)

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

- Special Education Assistant /para(Special Education) (Hourly \$17.50 - 24.50/HR +)
- Student Success Counselor (\$40,000 annual salary)
- Student Success Program Specialist, (hourly \$24-\$30/hr+ DOE)

**Part Time:**

- 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](mailto:info@vermilioncountry.org) and/or 218-248-2485**

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**TOWN OF EMBARRASS Summer Job Opening**

The Embarrass Township will have an opening for a Seasonal Maintenance Laborer. This position will be Monday – Thursday 7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. but hours may vary depending on needs. The position will be held from June to August.

Please stop by or email the Embarrass Town Hall Clerk Office for an application. Call Clerk with questions at 984-2084 or [embarrastownship@frontiernet.net](mailto:embarrastownship@frontiernet.net)

**Seasonal Maintenance Labor shall complete the following duties:**

1. Carry out responsibilities set by the Township Board of Supervisors, Clerk and Maintenance Contact.
2. Coordinate and resolve work-related problems.
3. Mowing, raking, trimming, and clearing away brush.
4. Painting and repairing masonry or wood-work features of buildings.
5. Cleaning of Town Hall, rest rooms, and other work and public areas
6. Transport garbage and waste to disposal area.
7. Replenishes bathroom supplies, light bulbs and other supplies.
8. Transport equipment and tools to work sites.
9. Maintains equipment when needed.
10. Set up and take down tables & chairs at Town Hall.
11. Abides by all local, state and federal safety and health laws.

**Job Descriptions are subject to change with different activities that the Township is engaged in.**

**Must be at least 16 years or older and have a valid driver's license.**

Published in the Timberjay, March 22, 29 & April 5, 2024



**Traffic Control Technician (2) (Virginia) (Open)**  
\$25.20 - \$30.57 Hourly  
Apply by 03/25/2024

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## King Crossword

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

**ACROSS**

- 1 Gold-loving king
- 6 Soviet space station
- 9 Actress Dennings
- 12 "That — I ask"
- 13 Longoria of TV
- 14 Writer LeShan
- 15 "What — mean?"
- 16 Journal
- 18 Singer Timberlake
- 20 Monster
- 21 Med. plan option
- 23 Sweetie
- 24 Different
- 25 Exile isle
- 27 Russian villa
- 29 Deceived
- 31 There
- 35 Rocker Adams
- 37 Harvard rival
- 38 City near Venice
- 41 Prefix with gender
- 43 Shril bark
- 44 Teensy bit
- 45 Frenzied
- 47 Pampering places
- 49 Dizzying designs
- 52 Dad on "Black-ish"
- 53 Swiss canton
- 54 Bellini opera
- 55 Feminine side
- 56 Favorite
- 57 Idyllic spots
- 6 Islamic holy city
- 7 Infamous tsar
- 8 Shaft of light
- 9 IRA relative
- 10 Worship
- 11 Greedy sort
- 17 Plant science
- 19 Hot rum drink
- 21 Skirt edge
- 22 Roman 1051
- 24 Discoverer's call
- 26 Photo collections
- 28 Doubter
- 30 Notable time
- 32 Workplace perk, maybe
- 33 Yalie
- 34 Gym unit
- 36 Nails the test
- 38 Rice field
- 39 Arcade pioneer
- 40 Senior member
- 42 14 pounds
- 45 Aesopian also-ran
- 46 Apple product
- 48 Young dog
- 50 LBJ's successor
- 51 Prof's aides

**DOWN**

- 1 Central
- 2 Equal (Pref.)
- 3 Nine-to-five gigs
- 4 Matty of baseball
- 5 Melting snow

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

**CITY OF TOWER, MINNESOTA NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Tower will meet on April 2, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the Civic Center, 404 Pine Street, in Tower, Minnesota, per City Ordinance 82 Section 17.02, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on an amendment to Zoning Ordinance 82, Article XIV City of Tower, Tower Harbor Renaissance (THR) Zoning District Requirements.

For a copy of the proposed ordinance amendment, contact Clerk/Treasurer Michael Schultz at [clerk.treasurer@cityoftower.com](mailto:clerk.treasurer@cityoftower.com) or 218-753-4070. Written comments will be accepted through April 2nd and may be emailed to [clerk.treasurer@cityoftower.com](mailto:clerk.treasurer@cityoftower.com) or mailed to: City of Tower, PO Box 576, Tower, MN 55790.

Published in the Timberjay, March 22, 2024

**CITY OF TOWER, MINNESOTA NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSAL TO ADOPT A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND THE INTENT TO ISSUE GENERAL OBLIGATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN BONDS**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Tower, Minnesota, will meet on April 8, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Civic Center, 404 Pine Street, in Tower, Minnesota, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on (a) the proposal to purchase a St. Louis County Public Works Facility and (b) the intent to issue general obligation capital improvement plan bonds not to exceed approximately \$290,000, under its capital improvement plan for capital improvements described in the capital improvement plan.

All persons may appear at the April 8th public hearing and present their views to the City Council orally or in writing.

If a petition requesting a vote on the issuance of the general obligation capital improvement plan bonds is signed by voters equal to five percent of the votes cast in the last municipal general election and is filed with the City Clerk/Treasurer within 30 days of April 8th, 2024, the City may issue the general obligation capital improvement plan bonds only after obtaining the approval of a majority of the voters voting on the question of the issuance of the general obligation capital improvement plan bonds.

By order of the City Council  
April 8th, 2024  
By: Michael Schultz, City Clerk/Treasurer

Published in the Timberjay, March 22, 2024

**STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION**

Estate of LeRoy Thomas Gulbranson, Decedent

Court File No. 69VI-PR-24-45

**NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION OF INTERSTACY, DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP, APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on April 22, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at Virginia, Minnesota, for the adjudication of intestacy and determination of heirship of the Decedent, and for the appointment of Jo Ellen A. Haines, whose address is 4710 Cedar Island Dr., Eveleth, MN, 55734 as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate. This hearing will be held remotely via Zoom Technology.

BY THE COURT  
Andrew Peterson  
Judge of District Court  
Jennifer Miller  
Court Administrator  
Chelsea Opdahl, Deputy

Attorney for Petitioner  
Angela E. Sipila  
Sipila Law Office, LLC  
412 1st St. S.  
Virginia, MN, 55792  
Attorney License No: 024501x  
Telephone: (218) 741-5000  
FAX: (218) 741-5000  
Email: [ange@sipilaw.com](mailto:ange@sipilaw.com)

Published in the Timberjay, March 22 & 29, 2024

## Super Crossword

**Answers**

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

**Snowflakes**  
solution



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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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!

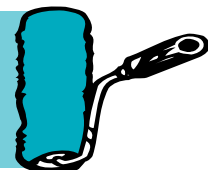








# HOME IMPROVEMENT GUIDE



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Wishing You

# Easter Blessings!

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8-5:30 M-F



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## SEEKING BIDS



### Seeking Lawncare Bids

Term of service: May 15 - September 30, 2024

Requirements:

- Lawn mowed weekly and includes detailed trimming, and pick up and disposal of sticks, garbage, etc.
- Service must have insurance and list the Chamber as an additional insured. Copy required.
- Submit monthly invoices within two weeks of the close of each month.
- Service provides all tools required to maintain grounds.

Bid must include all costs, including taxes and cost overruns. Costs above the quote amount will not be accepted. The Ely Chamber of Commerce reserves the right to decline any and all bids.

Submit bids to director@ely.org by April 15, 2024, by 3 p.m. Questions, contact Eva at 218-365-6123.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### BEARVILLE TOWNSHIP LOCAL BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Appeal and Equalization for Bearville Township shall meet on Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at the Bearville Town Hall. (13971 Hwy. 22, Bearville Township) The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether taxable property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor.

If you believe the value or classification of your property is incorrect, please contact your assessor's office to discuss your concerns. If you disagree with the valuation or classification after discussing it with your assessor, you may appear before the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization. The board will review your assessments and may make corrections as needed. Generally, you must appeal to the local board before appealing to the County Board of Appeal and Equalization.

The Bearville Township Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting will be held in person at the Town Hall. The Bearville Township Board encourages those wishing to appeal their valuation to contact the Itasca County Assessor prior to the meeting with their concerns.

Kathy Cressy, Bearville Township Clerk  
bearvilletownship@gmail.com  
218-376-4495

Published in the Timberjay, March 22 & 29, 2024



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