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The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

VOL. 35, ISSUE 12

March 29, 2024

\$1⁵⁰

ELY SCHOOLS

ISD 696 facing major budget shortfall

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY-ISD696 Superintendent Anne Oelke revealed here this week that the Ely Public Schools is facing a nearly half million-dollar deficit in its 2024-25 budget. The school district's 2024-25 fiscal year begins July 1, so the district has a few weeks to address the shortfall.

Even so, "that's a big number for a small district with a \$9 million budget," Oelke told members of the school board during their March 25 study session.

The district's finance committee was aware two months ago that the district was facing lower revenues and increased expenses next year. Most of district's shortfall comes from increases in labor

costs and the loss of COVID-19 relief funds. "We can't cut that much all in one year," Oelke remarked, "so we need to go to a two-year plan."

Oelke stated the need for complete transparency about the budget shortfall. She emphasized that the district wants to hear from all its stakeholders for suggestions on reducing the hole in the budget.

Revenues

The finance committee started its work on next year's budget at the end of January. School revenues are based on enrollment, but the committee couldn't estimate those until Minnesota updated its funding models, which are enrollment-based. With the new models in hand, the committee now has determined both its general ed

and special ed revenue.

"Our projection models from the Minnesota Department of Education do not come out until the first week of March," Oelke explained. "We had to wait for those models to do our adjusted Average Daily Membership (ADM) projections." ADM is an adjusted enrollment number

See...**SHORTFALL** pg. 9



BETTER LATE THAN NEVER?

Packin' a punch

Spring storm brings much-needed precipitation

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— A major double-barreled snowstorm dumped as much as a foot of snow on the North Country this week, and considerably more along the North Shore of Lake Superior, providing the region with a memorable taste of cold and snow after the mildest winter

on record.

The powerful Colorado low that moved into the Upper Midwest provided an initial burst of snow starting late Sunday, which dropped anywhere from four to six inches across northern St. Louis and Lake counties. After a brief lull in the storm Monday evening, it wound up for round two on

See...**STORM** pg. 10

Above: City maintenance supervisor Ben Velcheff plows N. Third St. in Tower on Monday.

Right: Pedestrians braved the snow and wind on Tower's Main Street on Monday.



SMALL BUSINESS

Data reflects vibrance of Ely economy

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Ely was a giant of business development in 2023 according to data recently provided by the Northland Small Business Development Center (SBDC). After the Ely Economic Development Authority heard a presentation by the Northland SBDC on Jan. 30, Ely City Council member Adam Bisbee requested a report on the impact that Northland's services have had on Iron Range communities.

The SBDC delivered on that request recently, and the data it provided reflected the relative vibrance of the Ely economy— showing that Ely businesses raised more capital (\$1.853 million), had more business start-ups (three), and created and retained more jobs (61) than ten other communities on the Iron Range. Ely also had the highest number of clients receiving Northland services and clocked the highest number of consulting hours provided by Northland (see accompanying chart page 10).

The *Timberjay* noted a loose correlation between the number of jobs created or retained and the number of Northland consulting hours and clients served, suggesting that pursuing Northland's business services does lead to local small business growth.

Northland SBDC is part of the U.S. Small Business Administration. It provides free consulting and business training to small businesses, start-ups, and those thinking about starting their

See...**ELY ECONOMY** pg. 10

THE LEGISLATURE

Hauschild amendment leaves permitting bill in doubt

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

SAINT PAUL— An amendment to a permitting reform measure designed to speed up the approval process for clean energy projects in Minnesota has put the prospects for the entire measure in doubt.

The amendment, (SF 4876)

authored by Third District DFL Sen. Grant Hauschild, was introduced and approved during the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee last Thursday, but it's likely to face renewed scrutiny from DFL



Grant Hauschild

lawmakers as it moves elsewhere

through the legislative process.

Hauschild's amendment would extend the changes proposed for clean energy permitting to most other industries in the state. That's welcome news to business groups, like the Minnesota Chamber

of Commerce, which lauded Hauschild and the bill's House sponsor, Rep. Dave Lislegard, DFL-Aurora, in a recent press statement.

The chamber's foundation recently published "Streamlining Minnesota's environmental permitting process," a study that included recommendations for changes in the state's permitting

process to encourage additional economic growth.

"Minnesota's environmental permitting process has long been the topic of concern among business leaders, with several notable economic development projects having stalled out or left the state due to reported permitting chal-

See...**PERMITTING** pg. 9



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Community notices

Minnesota North College, Vermilion campus to host 2024 Sigurd Olson lecture series

ELY - On Tuesday, April 9, Minnesota North college will present the 2024 Sigurd Olson lecture series: "Wild California and the Antiquities Act." The program will be at 5:30 p.m. in the theater.

California is the most biologically diverse and most populous state in the U.S., and home to 100 federally recognized tribes, and has 25 million acres of land protected from development and extraction.

Speakers Nobby Riedy (WildSpaces) and Matt Keller (Resources Legacy fund) will explore the Antiquities Act as a land preservation tool. National Monuments have a nearly one-hundred-year history in California and have been essential in the establishment of the statewide network of protected landscapes.

Sons of Norway Haarfager Lodge #40 to meet Thursday, April 4

VIRGINIA - Sons of Norway Haarfager Lodge #40 will meet at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 4, in the city of Virginia club room. The evening's program will be "Climbing Your Family Tree" led by Jan Dzwonkowski.

Attendees are encouraged to bring artifacts and pictures to share about an ancestor. The serving committee is Bob and Kris Simensen, Sara Palazzari, and Elaine Edwardson. Anyone interested in Norwegian culture and heritage is welcome to attend.

Lokka Tupa #1 Ladies of Kaleva meeting set for Monday, April 1

VIRGINIA - Lokka Tupa #1, Ladies of Kaleva, will meet on Monday, April 1, at noon at Kaleva Hall in Virginia.

Ron Ostman featured speaker at upcoming Finnish Americans and Friends meeting on Tuesday, April 2

HIBBING - The Finnish Americans and Friends will feature Ron Ostman on Tuesday, April 2 at 2 p.m. He is a recent retiree who has made numerous trips to Finland for pleasure and work. He will share what he learned about his family and observations of Finland. The meeting is at Grace Lutheran Church located at 4019 9th Ave W. Everyone is invited, and coffee and social time is always an enjoyable part of the event.

Annual White Elephant sale scheduled for April 27 at Our Savior's Lutheran

HIBBING - Our Savior's Lutheran Church will host their annual White Elephant sale on Saturday, April 27 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Hibbing Memorial Building Arena. The hockey floor, bleachers and hallways will be filled with gently used items from toys and clothes to dishes, furniture, tools, holiday decorations and much more. Sloppy Joes and dessert lunch will be available to purchase. Gently used items can still be dropped off Tuesday-Friday the week of the sale. For more information contact the church office at 218.263-7422 or osclhibb@mchsi.com



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NORTHERN PROGRESSIVES

Upcoming program gives background on Israeli/Palestinian conflict

TOWER - On Wednesday, April 3, Northern Progressives is hosting a program on the history of the conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians and the October 7th war. The program will be from 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the Tower Civic Center located 404 Pine Street, in Tower.

The presentation will include a series of short films followed by a discussion of the complex challenges and human suffering currently facing people in the region.

Featured in the program are members of several grassroots movements mobilizing Jewish and Palestinian citizens in pursuit of peace, equality, and social and climate justice. Despite the horrors of

the last six months with Hamas's attacks against Israelis followed by Israel's long retaliatory war, these activists continue to work together on a viable path going forward. They believe the only reasonable solution is one in which millions of Israelis and Palestinians would remain on the land they each call home with peace, security, and dignity.

Northern Progressives has a progressive social and political agenda and works to educate its members and the public about current civic affairs. The event is open to the public.

For more information, contact Leah Rogne, 218-787-2212 or leah.rogne@gmail.com.



Sally Abed (left) and Alon-Lee Green of the group Standing Together, featured in a video shown at April 3 meeting in Tower

SPRING IS COMING

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.



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GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

Newcomer Roskoski elected as board chair

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- Newly-elected supervisor Lois Roskoski was unanimously elected chair at the Greenwood's reorganization meeting on March 21. Paul Skubic was elected to serve as vice-chair.

Incoming supervisors Roskoski and Craig Gilbert, along with clerk Debby Spicer noted that records had been and were still being transferred smoothly between the old and new officeholders. Former clerk JoAnn Bassing was also at the meeting to help with the transition.

The new board voted in lockstep through the entire meeting.

Committee assignments were as follows: John Bassing for the Joint Powers Recreation Board, Rick Stoehr for 911-signs and Noxious Weed Inspector, Paul Skubic for Road Supervisor and Lodging Tax Board, Craig Gilbert for Buildings and Grounds Supervisor and Broadband Liaison.

The decision on who to appoint as representative to the Tower Ambulance Commission was tabled until the April meeting. Lois Roskoski said she was interested in this position. Bassing said he might be interested, depending on how the board proceeds on the issue.

The only hiccup at the meeting was the filing of the township's 2023 financial report with the state auditor. Treasurer Jeff



Newly-elected supervisors Lois Roskoski and Craig Gilbert.

Maus said this was due at the end of March, and that he would be reviewing the document to make sure it was accurate before it was filed. The board set a special meeting for Wednesday, March 27 at 6:30 p.m. to review the document. Maus noted that all the claims and expenditures had already been approved by the board.

The board tabled setting township salaries, reimbursements, and fees until the April meeting.

Roskoski presented an updated version of the township's board policies, written in a resolution format. The resolution covers behavior guidelines for township officials and employ-

ees, meeting protocol, public comment guidelines, and how to handle township correspondence.

The resolution also details administrative guidelines for the clerk and treasurer. The clerk's duties include keeping custody of township records, books, and papers at the town hall, keeping a record of all meeting minutes, posting legal notices, balancing claims using the CTAS program, and keeping the township website operational (with the option of contracting the service out). The board also set regular hours for the clerk's office.

The treasurer's duties include receiving and taking charge of all monies belong-



Lena Lorenz decided to come see township government in action, and even brought her own popcorn, which she shared with her younger brother Ben. Though at some point during the meeting, the two decided to go outside and play on the township's playground. Photos by J. Summit

ing to the township, and issuing all proper payments, using the CTAS system to record the township balances, provide all financial records requested by the board, and provide the town board with quarterly and year-to-date expenditures, compared to budget items.

In other business, the board:

- Kept meeting dates the same, on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., except for March, where the annual meeting is on the second Tuesday, and the reorganizational meeting will be held on the

fourth Thursday.

- Approved paying for training costs, such as attending Minnesota Association of Township training sessions, for all board members, as well as the clerk and treasurer and their deputies. Several board members indicated they were planning to attend upcoming trainings in the region. The board also reviewed who has spending authority and the ability to charge at area businesses, as well as on the township credit card.

- Voted to retain the firm of Couri and Ruppe as township attorneys. The firm charges \$265 per hour for all general legal services, and \$290 per hour for all work done where a property owner or applicant is billed by the township. The township had been using Virginia-based attorney Mitch Brunfelt, who was charging a flat fee of \$500 per month.

- The board voted to name the *Timberjay* as the official newspaper even though their bid was higher than the *Tower News*. The *Timberjay* bid \$1.99 for legal-style notices and \$3.75 per column inch for boxed ads, the same rate as in 2023. The fact the *Timberjay* has a website that archives all legal notices, and this is available free-of-charge to readers, appeared to be the primary reason for the decision. Residents at the annual meeting had also voted in favor of having the *Timberjay* as the official paper.

Area projects get \$1.6 million from IRRR

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Ort Editor

REGIONAL- The Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation will be sending out \$1.6 million to support four North Country projects related to broadband, infrastructure, and housing after action taken at Tuesday's board meeting.

The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa will receive \$261,184 to complete construction of a fiber-to-the-home buildout to

bring high speed broadband to the Bois Forte Reservation. The Band received a similar grant for the project in 2019. The new grant will support 50 percent of the increased construction costs incurred due to ledge rock encountered and higher material costs.

Community Infrastructure Grant

The city of Tower will receive a \$370,345 community infrastructure grant to support new water and sewer utilities,

storm water, road reconstruction and airport technology upgrades to public locations and sites throughout the community including roadways, the historic Tower Depot and Train Museum campus, Lakeview Cemetery and the Tower Municipal Airport.

Infrastructure and construction related to a new three-story, 37-unit market rate workforce apartment building in the city of Ely will be supported with an \$850,000 grant.

A portion of a \$130,000 housing grant awarded to North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity will go toward rehabilitating a home in Tower to meet Habitat's energy efficiency standards for plumbing, wiring, and insulation. The bulk of the funds will support construction of five new homes in Hibbing, Buhl, and Virginia.

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OPINION

“CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW...ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS;”
The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

Editorial

Constitutional amendment

Don't sink healthy changes by pairing them with proposal for a full-time Legislature

Lawmakers in St. Paul should resist a proposal for a combined government reform amendment to the Minnesota Constitution that would open the way to a full-time Legislature.

The measure, as the *Timberjay* reported last week, has cleared an initial committee hurdle and, if it continues to advance, it could be on the state ballot this November. As proposed, the measure has some excellent elements, including the establishment of an independent redistricting board comprised of five DFLers, five Republicans, and five members not associated with either party. Such commissions are generally the fairest way to craft legislative and congressional district boundaries, as is required after each U.S. census.

The measure would also prohibit lawmakers from becoming lobbyists for one year after leaving office. We've seen too much of the revolving door in St. Paul, where lawmakers curry favor with well-heeled special interests for a few terms, then cash out with lucrative lobbying deals immediately after leaving office. It certainly has the appearance of a conflict of interest and this measure could at least put a delay mechanism on the revolving door.

Unfortunately, these two worthwhile provisions would likely go down in flames were they paired with the lifting of the longstanding constitutional provision that limits the Legislature's time in session to no more than 120 days in any biennium.

We suspect that most Minnesotans would oppose lifting that restriction, and for good reason. For one, we question whether giving lawmakers more time will lead to better state government, only more expensive state government. Full-time legislatures in other states tend to pay lawmakers more and have larger legislative staffs than is currently the case in Minnesota. Currently, only four states— California, New York, Pennsylvania, and Michigan— maintain a truly full-time legislature, while another six states, including Wisconsin, maintain a full-time process with some modifications. Most states maintain a system similar to Minnesota, while several smaller rural states, like North and South Dakota, maintain very part-time legislatures with limited staff and low salaries.

Those who argue in favor of the change here in Minnesota, point to the difficulties the Legislature has experienced in recent years completing its work on time. From our perspective, that's more a reflection of the highly divided nature of our politics today than it is of time constraints.

As we see every year, the only time decisions seem to get made is at the last minute on the final day of the session. Without such a deadline, lawmakers and their staff could spend a lot more time spinning their wheels at taxpayer expense.

What's more, the current time limit on our legislative sessions means that residents of each of the state's legislative districts, particularly those outside the metro, tend to have access to their senators and representatives most of the year. When their representatives are in St. Paul, they face an onslaught of professional lobbyists, each with an agenda favoring a special interest. The more time lawmakers spend in St. Paul, the more exposure they have to the army of influence peddlers working the back offices. The average Minnesotan rarely benefits from that arrangement.

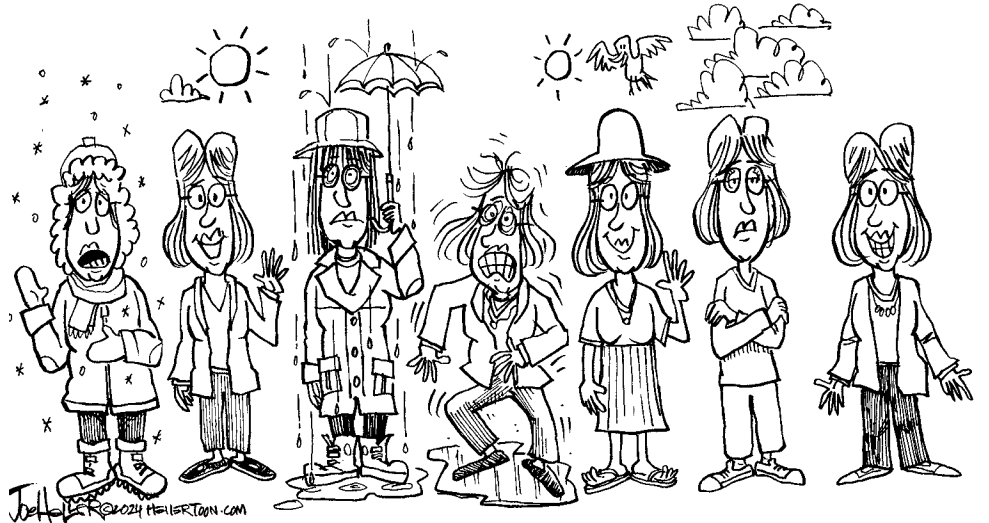
From a transparency perspective, concentrating lawmaking within a relatively narrow window helps the ever-shrinking number of news media still covering the work of the Legislature. Spreading out that work over the course of an entire year gives not only gives the lobbyists more access to the process, it's likely to leave more gaps in coverage of the legislative process. The lack of transparency, particularly during the last-minute negotiating sessions when much of the work is finalized, is already a problem.

There is also legitimate concern that a shift to a full-time Legislature could alter the makeup of the body, replacing average Minnesotans from many walks of life, with professional politicians. There is value in a citizen Legislature, because it brings a wider diversity of experiences to the committee tables.

Proponents of the change argue that it will help lawmakers level the playing field against the executive and judicial branches, both of which operate throughout the year. That's an argument, just not a very good one. The role of the legislative branch is to authorize state budgets, pass laws, and determine state policies and there's no need to do that work year-round. But we expect the executive and judicial functions of state government to be there every day to provide the services the Legislature has authorized. It's an argument that compares apples to oranges.

The bottom line? There are some good parts of this proposed constitutional amendment. Let's not scuttle it all by combining the good stuff with a change that offers few benefits and that most Minnesotans are likely to reject.

ONE DAY IT SNOWS THE NEXT DAY IS PLEASANT THEN IT BECOMES RAINS WHICH IT BECOMES ICE FOLLOWED BY A DAY THAT'S NICE AND IN BETWEEN IT'S GRAY WELCOME TO SPRING!



Letters from Readers

Government and religion mix poorly

As supported by our Constitution, this nation was not founded as a Christian nation even if it is a nation of Christians. Yet, with Christians reportedly representing some 70 percent of the population I'm reminded of the words of a scholar, who noted that whereas Europeans know what Christianity is and are turning their backs on it, Americans do what they want and call it Christianity. Our more prominent founders, from Washington and Jefferson to Lincoln, were not Christians although they were God-fearing, many demonstrating high character for leadership among constituents by association with a Christian church either in its formation, maintenance or attendance.

Whereas religion may be more a matter of the heart,

politics is a matter of the mind, although true Christians might see that differently. The point is we have a separation of church and state, designed to keep a religion from encroaching on matters of state and to keep the state from interfering with a person's free exercise of religion, presumably a two-way street. Except now it doesn't seem to be that way. The primary reasons for the separation are so people don't have to support a state religion or denomination they disagree with and to keep religious doctrine from sabotaging scientific discovery.

As representative of the people at large, the state is charged with sustaining ordered liberty under the law whereas the free exercise of religion applies to individuals in the same way that religion itself is for individuals, even recognizing the moral service to the state offered by religion through individ-

ual behavior. Yet, in the case of our High Court ruling on *Roe v. Wade*, for example, we have a branch of state exercising control over individual liberty through conservative interpretation of law on the presumed basis of religious belief since our U.S. legal code defines a 'person' for purposes of due process and equal protection as being a born-alive homo sapien.

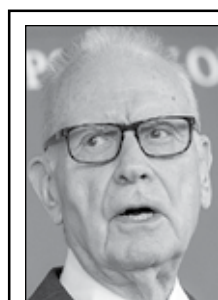
And there are numerous other examples of religious fervor reflecting the ultra-conservative Christian nationalist movement where religion appears to be the basis for political malfeasance in the highest levels of government. Our democratic government of the people is being gravely threatened by autocratic if not theocratic control.

Jerry Brown Buyck

COMMENTARY

Climate change is real and we need to act

We can no longer pretend that climate change is just a theory or that it's a problem for the future. From deadly fires in Hawaii to devastating floods in the Northeast to record heat waves across much of the country, we see constant reminders of what a warming climate can do.



LEE HAMILTON

But how can we best respond to this existential threat? That's a tough question with no easy answers. Climate change is a global problem that crosses every kind of boundary. Real solu-

tions will require cooperation and partnerships. But we can't wait for others to take the lead; every nation needs to do its share.

It's easy to get bogged down in debates over who is most to blame. Is it advanced economies like the

United States and Western Europe, which historically have produced the largest share of the greenhouse gas emissions that warm the planet? Or is it big countries like China and India, which

produce the most emissions today?

Some regions are more at risk and see the problem as especially serious. Islands and coastal areas are threatened by rising seas. Much of Africa, the Middle East and Asia are vulnerable to drought, food insecurity and conflict, which climate change worsens.

Here in the United States, unfortunately, there's still a lot of disagreement over the issue. A recent Pew Research Center survey finds most Americans want the government to support clean energy, including so-

See **CLIMATE...pg. 5**

COMMENTARY

AI is getting too smart for our own good

You're all probably channeling Ronald Regan's classic debate line "There you go again" as you realize I'm writing once again about artificial intelligence, but I just can't help myself. This stuff is moving so fast into all sorts of areas that affect our daily lives, and it remains as mysterious to most as the old DOS system that Microsoft's Windows operating system was designed to shield PC users from



DAVID COLBURN

Ironically, researcher Melanie Mitchell discovered that her 338-page book "Artificial Intelligence: A Guide for Thinking Humans" had been recreated as a 45-

page e-book authored by a fictitious person called Shumaila Majid. An analysis of the book confirmed it had been written by generative AI.

A devious variation on this theme are the e-books that are "summaries" of legitimate books that are authored by AI. Some at least include a disclaimer that they aren't written by the original author and have nothing to do with them, but the AI summaries are typically poor reflections of the books they are about, while the "authors" pick

up some easy money by trading on the real author's name and title.

And be prepared for more and more AI-generated books and articles in the months ahead, as new AI apps to create written work continue to pop up at a surprising pace. A quick Google search reveals 19 AI software programs for writing novels, for example. Many others focus on more technical writing. On the site Inflow, all you need to give it is a title and the number of chapters you want, and it will generate a 20,000-word book based on that

alone. The site operators do say that the book will need some human editing, and that it's best for nonfiction works. So, if you've been mulling for years about writing "The Ultimate Guide to A Successful Deer Hunt," have at it.

But beware – AI often gets things wrong. It probably wouldn't tell you to use an M1 Abrams tank for a successful deer hunt but there's no guarantee that everything it writes about deer hunting will be accurate.

A very handy type of AI app is one where you can take a picture of something with your phone and the AI will identify what it is. Sounds like a great thing to have when walking around in nature, but that app could turn deadly if you're using it to identify poisonous vs. nonpoisonous mushrooms to pick and eat. It's like facial recognition AI software for mushrooms, and as we've seen facial recognition programs lead to false identifications and arrests, we're now seeing AI mushroom identification apps that mistake

See **AI...pg. 5**

BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

Residents delay setting levy, show support for ambulance

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA
Staff Writer

SUDAN- Amber Zak and Erin Peitso are new members of Breitung Township government following their election as town clerk and supervisor respectively in the township elections held March 12. Both Zak and Peitso received 53 votes apiece, with a scattering of write-in votes for others.

Zak jumped into her new job as clerk moments after her election, filling in as minute-taker for outgoing clerk Dianna Sundahl, who was out sick for the annual meeting, which began after the election tally.

Fourteen Breitung residents turned out for the annual meeting, plus Chief of Police Dan Reing. Supervisor Matt Tuchel, who was on vacation, was absent.

The attendees at the annual meeting voted to wait to set the levy at a reconvened session to be held Aug. 13 at 6 p.m. at the Breitung Community Center. Chairman Tim Tomsich recommended the delay because of a large amount of unknown project costs that should be clearer by summer. Those projects include the Thompson Farm Road relocation, Center St., and Echo Point Road projects, and the ambulance subsidy.

Previously the ambulance subsidy was \$15 per resident, but residents voted to increase that to \$30 per resident for one year at last year's annual meeting. Considering the ambulance's financial struggles, coupled with Greenwood Township's refusal to provide any support for the ambulance service, the funding will likely have to stay at \$30 per resident, possibly higher. "In my opinion, they're just cheap. There are no other words, unfortunately," said Supervisor Chuck Tekautz, referring to Greenwood Township. The electors were clear

they were in support of doing whatever it takes to keep the local ambulance service. Resident Tony Sikora called the subsidy of \$30/person a "bargain" for the life-saving service.

The electors cleared the way for the Thompson Farm Rd. relocation/gravel pit expansion by passing a motion to "vacate the existing Thompson Farm Rd. and open a new access as depicted by the engineers drawing, contingent upon funding through the LRIP (local road improvement plan)." The project will also benefit the community by providing a safer access from Hwy. 169, creating a safe connection trail to the new State Park ATV Campground, and supporting economic development and congestion relief. The estimated cost for the project is \$633,200 and the town board has asked MNDOT to fund the project in its entirety. A decision will be made March 29.

The electors set a special hearing to discuss the Thompson Farm Rd. project for Tuesday, June 18 at 6 p.m. at the Breitung Town Hall.

Reports

In his report, Chief of Police Dan Reing noted there were 1,142 calls for service, down from 1,165 last year. That included 363 traffic stops, 262 business checks, 76 traffic citations, 59 residential checks, 42 outside agency assistance, 38 community engagements, 37 medical calls, 32 disturbances, 28 general calls, 25 public assistance, 25 animal calls, 23 traffic accidents, 23 informational calls, 20 arrests, 19 motorist assistance, 17 civil cases, 15 parking complaints, 13 welfare checks, 13 blight complaints, 12 ATV complaints, 12 hazard checks, 12 DWI-specific arrests, 11 suspicious activity, 10 thefts, nine firearm permits, nine mental health crisis, six burglaries, six assaults, six civil paper service, six drug calls, six

criminal damage to property, six 911 disconnects, five non-traffic citations, five fire calls, three deaths, one tobacco check, one alarm, and one fraud.

Most types of crime held steady or dropped over the past few years. The types of calls that had increased in volume include traffic citations (from 44 to 76), community engagements (from 24 to 38), drug calls (from one to six), disturbances (from 20 to 32), animal (from 18 to 25), and traffic accidents (from 15 to 23).

The department's several community engagements included their Tacos with Cops fundraiser, Tower-Soudan Early Childhood Big Truck Night, Kids Cops and Cars, Northwoods Elementary Books and Bagels, Tower Cafe Community Breakfast, and teaching the G.R.E.A.T. program at Vermilion Country School, Tower-Soudan Elementary, and North Woods. The department employs Chief Dan Reing, officers Issac Karolczak, Jim Battin, James Vukad, and Brad Roy.

Tim Tomsich presented his chairman's report, highlighting the town's accomplishment's over the past year. According to Tomsich:

► The bike trail reconstruction from Soudan Store to McKinley Park is near completion and funding was received from IRRR of \$202,500 and \$150,000 from the DNR. Matching funds from McKinley Park Campground also paid for the project.

► Road construction is still underway for black topping Spring Rd., sewer work on Poplar St., and rebuilding a section of Church St. where it connects to Hwy. 169. Funding for these projects was received from IRRR in the amount of \$200,00 and CBDG with an additional \$90,000 grant.

► A contract to reduce inflow and infiltration was awarded, including work on First Ave. and Church St. with funding

from IRRR and CBDG.

► A contract for upgrades to Stuntz Bay Rd. was awarded with construction to start this year.

► Grant funding for improvements to the recreation area and additional water, sewer and roadwork are prepared and some are already under review by various agencies.

Tomsich also mentioned ongoing work on the ambulance commission, a year-long extension of the police contract with Tower, a three-year contract with the union representing township maintenance employees, demolition of the old playground and purchase of a new playground at McKinley Park Campground with grant funding from the county, wrapping up of the manhole replacement project and thanks to employees and volunteers for their service to the citizens of Breitung.

Maintenance Director Tom Gorsma was present to report on the township's maintenance. He said the gentle winter has allowed the township to save money on plowing, sanding, and rink maintenance.

Fire Chief Trevor Banks was not present but prepared a report of the department's 2023 activities. The department received 26 emergency calls, up from 22 in the previous year. Mutual aid was provided nine times and received four times. The calls included five hazardous conditions, four auto accidents, four public service calls, three structure fires, three calls that were canceled en route, and one each of a power line incident, snowmobile accident, unauthorized burning, auto extraction, vehicle fire, uncontrolled permit burn, and a water rescue.

The department has a membership of 16. There was one retirement and two resignations. The department contributed 90 man-hours for fire department and community events, and 166

man-hours for emergency calls. The department received a DNR 50/50 grant to purchase several sets of Wildland Fire PPE. They participated in the 4th of July parade, the Breitung community picnic, and Big Truck Night.

McKinley Park Campground Manager Susie Chiabotti prepared the campground's annual report. She noted that rate increases and increased monthly campers contributed to an increase in revenue, to \$189,918 in 2023 compared to \$174,039 the year before. This past year the campground had high-speed internet and wifi installed. The playground was removed and new playground, dock decking, picnic tables and a roof for the store are scheduled to be installed this summer. Chiabotti encouraged residents to come enjoy the beach this summer.

Funding

The electors reviewed funding requests. They approved \$3,000 for the Tower Cemetery, \$2,000 for the 4th of July Community Picnic, \$500 to Tower-Soudan Historical Society, \$300 to Joint Powers Recreation Board, \$300 for Big Truck Night, and \$200 for Old Settlers. The electors denied a request for Iron Range Youth in Action and will review a request at the Aug. 13 continuation of the meeting for Northwoods Partners after gathering more information.

Banking

The township reported that at the end of the year it had \$338,571 in liabilities, a loan for the community center building; \$278,044 in reserve funds, savings for things like equipment replacement, sick days, pensions and matching funds; \$331,346 for operating funds; and \$140,000 in savings certificates.

CLIMATE...Continued from page 4

lar and wind power. But there's a deep partisan divide: Nearly 80-percent of Democrats say climate change is a major threat, compared to 23-percent of Republicans.

Scientists may disagree on the severity, but there's a consensus that we have a problem. The most recent report from the International Panel on Climate Change says it's "unequivocal" that human activities, primarily the burning of coal, oil and gas, contribute to global warming. Experts predict devastating consequences within decades if current trends continue.

We can rarely point to a specific catastrophe and blame climate change, but

the evidence keeps piling up. Researchers have long warned that a hotter climate would bring more frequent and stronger storms, and we're seeing that now. The average number of heat waves in U.S. cities has increased from two to six per year since the 1960s, the Environmental Protection Agency says. Phoenix saw a record 31 straight days this summer of temperatures over 110 degrees Fahrenheit. July 2023 was the hottest month, globally, in the 174-year records of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

More than 120 million Americans in the Midwest and Northeast

have been under air quality advisories this year because of wildfires in Canada. The fire that killed more than 100 people in Lahaina, Hawaii, burned fast because unusually hot weather had dried vegetation and because winds from a Pacific hurricane drove the flames.

International responses to climate change have proceeded in fits and starts. The Kyoto Protocol, which took effect in 2001, was a first effort but had limited support. The Paris Agreement, starting in 2015, required countries to set targets for cutting emissions, but disagreements remain over how to monitor compliance and how to protect

and compensate vulnerable countries.

The issues are difficult. Should we prioritize slowing climate change or mitigating its impact? Do we focus on regulating industry or on promoting new technology? Should we turn away from fossil fuels immediately or gradually reduce their use? These are real questions.

But there shouldn't be any doubt that this is urgent. The disasters that we're seeing now are sure to get worse if we don't act. It may be a cliché, but we only have one Earth. We need to do what we can to ensure future generations can live here and thrive.

AI...Cont. from page 4

poisonous mushrooms for edible ones. Foraging for wild mushrooms is risky business, and there's no substitute for investing the time, effort, and real-world experience to learn the unique characteristics of local species yourself. Oh, and if you're thinking about buying an e-book mushroom guide for your phone, check it out well if it's been published in the last couple of years – if it was generated by AI, it's subject to the same kinds of errors.

A much darker side to the growth of the AI industry has been the use of AI tools in the creation of pornography, including child pornography. Fake images and videos created by AI abound online, with archives found on the so-called "dark web" containing thousands of images classified as child sexual abuse material. A

particularly nefarious act is the creation of deepfake images and videos utilizing the faces of people mapped onto the faces of porn actors, making it seem like it's those people participating in the film. The term "revenge porn" was created in response to such videos where a jilted spouse or lover takes the image of their former partner and uses it to create a porn video that they then spread online to harm them. With people routinely posting their own pictures to social media, material for perpetrators is easy to come by. Just last week, a 67-year-old third grade science teacher at a Christian school in Florida was arrested for creating AI child pornography images using yearbook photos. Legislators in Washington, D.C. and throughout the country are rushing to make

AI-generated child sex photos and videos illegal. Last year, Minnesota legislators passed a law criminalizing the making and distribution of deepfake sexual imagery. A bill in the current session that would place the onus on cell phone, computer, and tablet vendors to install filters on those devices to automatically block access to websites known to display child pornography, revenge pornography, or obscene material harmful to minors has not advanced beyond an initial committee hearing.

Despite it all, AI is being used for enormous good in the world. For example, in the field of health care, AI is accelerating the development of new drugs, enhancing medical research, and improving diagnostic tools, while AI management tools are being used to

improve efficiencies and cut down on costs. There are few areas of endeavor these days that haven't been touched by AI in some way, and its potential is literally transformative. But as with most technological advancements in the digital age, there are nefarious actors who would use AI to propagate harm and evil in society. Social media is a prime example of technology conceived with positive intent that has been exploited for ill. It's happening again with AI. Are we outsmarting ourselves with our technical achievements in AI, creating fantastic capabilities without a full understanding of their implications? The answer appears to be yes, and we're once again playing catch up. But is AI racing too far ahead to catch up to it?

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TIMBERJAY

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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
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Official Newspaper:

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

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

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

Week of April 1

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.



TSHS weekly winner
TOWER- The winner of the \$100 cash prize of Charlemagne's 52 Club - Week 35 is Elaine McGil-livray.

History Tidbit:
Volunteers from the Tower-Soudan Historical Society are working on documenting a list of 143 men who died in or near the Soudan Mine from 1884 to 1957. The goal is to have the information available to the public at the Dry House Visitor Center at the state park and at the Tower Train Depot Museum. The men to be honored died of injuries sustained in the Soudan Underground Mine, in the adjacent open pit mines, or on the nearby property and railroad. The final phase of the project will be to have the data digitized for the University of Minnesota Digital Library.

St. Martin's Catholic Church Easter Schedule
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-
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 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.

Subscribe to the TIMBERJAY!
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HOLIDAY FUN



The Easter Bunny was busy in Embarrass and Tower last weekend, with events on Saturday at Timber Hall and on Sunday at the Lamppa Civic Center. Clockwise from top: Children rushed out on the field at Timber Hall to collect eggs. Ellie Ogilvie pets Cadbury the Bunny at Timber Hall. Bonnie Overton brought real bunnies for children to pet. Kamia Wolf, and her mom Madison, visit the Easter Bunny in Tower. Brenda Broten helps her granddaughter Leone pick up some of the almost 8,000 eggs on the lawn at the civic center. River Milbridge shows off his shark face at Timber Hall. Azriel and Estella Linn visit the Easter Bunny at Timber Hall. Sadie Snyder bites into some of the candy she collected during the egg hunt in Tower. The event in Embarrass was sponsored by the Embarrass Region Fair Association. The event in Tower was sponsored by the Tower Fire Department's Relief Association. photos by J. Summit



COMMUNITY EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Tower-Soudan youth soccer to begin in April
TOWER- Area youth ages 7 to 12 are invited to play soccer on Thursdays, from 3 - 4:30 p.m. The sessions will run April 18 through May 23, with play outdoors, weather-permitting, on the ballfield. This will be the fourth year soccer has been held and lead coach Amy Banks is hoping to see lots of returning and new players. Participants will practice kicks, passing, drills, and scrimmages, while focusing on teamwork and sportsmanship.
Students are asked to register by April 11. Cost is \$8. Register online at <https://slc2142.RevTrak.net>. Any questions,

call the school at 218-753-4040 or email cdahl@isd2142.k12.mn.us.

Swim lessons at NE Range pool
BABBITT- Registration for swimming lessons will be held Monday, April 8 from 4-6 p.m. in the NER Media Center. There will be a maximum of 16 students allowed per class, so please be aware that sessions fill up quickly and in-person registration is required. Anyone who cannot make the registration date can be placed on the list for the summer sessions of lessons in June. Swim lessons are held in the school pool. Children should

bring a water bottle, two dry towels, and change of clothing to their lessons.

Spring swimming is for levels one and two. Class times will be Monday through Friday from 4 - 6:40 p.m., and specific class times will be provided after registration.

Summer swimming lessons for levels one, two, and three are planned. If there is enough interest, a infant/toddler class, along with levels four through sixth may be offered.
Cost is \$65 per person.

Lifeguard training class
BABBITT- Northeast Range Community Education will hold a lifeguard training class for ages 16 and older. NER currently has open lifeguard positions. This is a hybrid Red Cross class with online classroom starting in May and water training and testing June 3 - 7. Lap swimming and conditioning times will be announced on the first day of class. Cost is \$160 per person. Limited scholarships are available for NER students. For more information contact Joe Kaufenberg at 218-827-3101 or email jpkauferberg@isd2142.k12.mn.us. Class instructor is Sue Pasmik.

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.



BEST T-BALL/ COACH PITCH

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 for information. Practices will be on Saturdays, with games on Mondays and Wednesdays.
More info and online registration by scanning the QR code.

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

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



BEST GOLDEN KNIGHTS

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.
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.



BABBITT-EMB. LITTLE LEAGUE

LOCAL BUSINESS

The growing ripples of Ely's Pebble Spa

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- As with a pebble tossed into still waters, the ripple effects of Pebble Spa's success continue to spread. The busy day spa, headquartered in Ely at the corner of Sheridan and 3rd Ave., combines a wide range of spa services along with a retail boutique. It's a model that has proven to be remarkably successful, at least in the capable hands of Wendy Lindsay, who founded the business in her home on James Street back in 2002.

Over the years, the business expanded to locations in Virginia, Duluth, and Rochester in Minnesota and is now working to open new locations in Iowa and North Dakota and is actively exploring franchising at the same time.

Humble beginnings

Wendy Lindsay, age 45, began her massage business out of her home, with help from her husband Ryan, who was—and still is—a teacher in the St. Louis County School District. He helped during the summer, giving massages himself, and helping year-round with other aspects of the business.

"We would do massages all day and laundry all night," Lindsay told the *Timberjay*. Every massage requires a fresh change of clean bed linens, requiring a laundry operation on the scale of a small motel.

After a year, Lindsay had sufficient business to open in a four-room commercial space on the east end of Sheridan. "One year more, and I had to hire staff," Lindsay recalls. Her day spa business was doing well enough that she opened a second location in Virginia in her third year.

"We moved to our current location in Ely 14 years ago," Lindsay said. At the time, her family lived in one half of the building and ran the spa out of the other half. After a year, the Lindsays moved, and the entire building at 229 E. Sheridan became the spa.

The Ely center offers eight "treatment rooms," which accommodate the spa's full slate of massages, facials, manicures, pedicures, waxing, acupuncture, soaks, and sauna treatments. One room is just for facials. Other

From living room to chain

rooms feature large tubs for soaks.

The mainstay of the business remains massages. "I'd say 70 percent of the business is classical massage," followed by other massages," Lindsay said.

Expansion

Lindsay opened her Duluth location in the touristy Canal Park neighborhood in 2021.

The Duluth location opened during the second year of the pandemic and Lindsay was able to take advantage of the economic shocks at the time to negotiate a favorable lease. "Construction (businesses) were not busy, there was space to lease, and people were still get-

ting massages.

"I now have locations in a variety of settings. Ely and Duluth are touristy. Virginia is non-touristy. And now I have an urban location."

In November 2023, Lindsay opened her urban spa on the popular Peace Plaza in Rochester, a block from the downtown campus of the Mayo Clinic. "Lots of businesses had closed (during the pandemic), making it easy to get space," Lindsay said. The Rochester spa currently employs six in Rochester but she anticipates she'll have 15 on staff by summer.



Wendy Lindsay



Pebble Spa on Peace Plaza, walking distance from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. photo by C. Clark

Lindsay told the *Timberjay* she is also exploring expansion in Des Moines, Iowa, and Bismarck, N.D. "These will be corporate-owned initially," Lindsay said, "with the idea that someone like a staff member will buy it out as a franchise."

Lindsay started looking into franchising more than ten years ago. "Back then," she explained, "we started researching franchises, going to franchising conferences and such. People said you couldn't franchise a business like a day spa." Since that time, however, several day spa and massage franchises have started up, like Hand and Stone Massage and Massage Envy, showing that day spas can expand through franchising.

"Pebble Spa is a step up from those businesses with what we offer. I'd like to franchise the look and feel and the branding of Pebble Spa."

Need a job?

One of the unique aspects of Pebble Spa is a core of long-term employees, many of whom have been with the firm for over a decade. "Turnover is minimal," Lindsay commented, "but it's hard to find massage therapists."

Lindsay's solution was to start her own massage therapy school last year, called Camp Pebble Wellness Institute. The training combines online and hands-on training, with loans and work-study financing available through the spa. Students can get on-the-job training through the school at the Ely and Virginia locations.

The training is 650 hours, and the student receives a specialty degree. Though Minnesota does not certify massage therapists, several cities do. The training will satisfy liability insurance and most certification requirements in Minnesota. Minnesota required Lindsay to certify the school itself. "It was a ton of money and a ton of paperwork. The licensing fees are high, and not just anyone can teach." Teachers must have a bachelor's degree and three years experience as a massage therapist.

The next session of the massage therapist school begins on June 1. And so the ripples continue to flow.

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:

►April 2: Meet new Elyites

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

►April 16: Local Author Scott Stowell on His New Book, "Back Road Grace"

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



a big pile of snow sufficient for a winter

arrived with one storm

Libraries

Ely library

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

Babbitt library

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

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous

OPEN AA - 7:30

p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely.

AA FRIDAYS - 7 p.m.

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

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

BABBITT AA - 7 p.m.

Thursdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church.

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

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

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

ADULT BASIC 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.

AROUND TOWN



Left: Alison Bajan, age 6, was all smiles, when she won a bicycle at the Grand Ely Lodge Easter Egg Hunt and Activities Event on Saturday, March 23. photo by C. Clark



Right: Local artist Dafne Caruso with the mural which she helped eight students paint as part of the Ely Mural Project. The forest scene mural was one of two that the project presented to the Ely Public Schools on Tuesday, March 26. submitted photo

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Ely Public Library

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

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 triv-

ia 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.

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, will run through March 31 at Ely's Historic State Theater. This novel and colorful show displays works of hand-made 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. Regis-

tration 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.

Poetry

ELY- The Call of the Wild Poetry Reading with an open mic will be on Thursday, April 4, at 5 p.m., at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan St. Bring your own poems to read or bring a poem you like by someone else to read, or just come and listen. All are welcome.

Fix That Bike Tire

ELY- The Ely Bike and Kicksled at 125 N. Central Ave. will hold a

hands-on workshop on fixing flat bike tires on Saturday, April 6, from 4-6 p.m.

Youth Auction

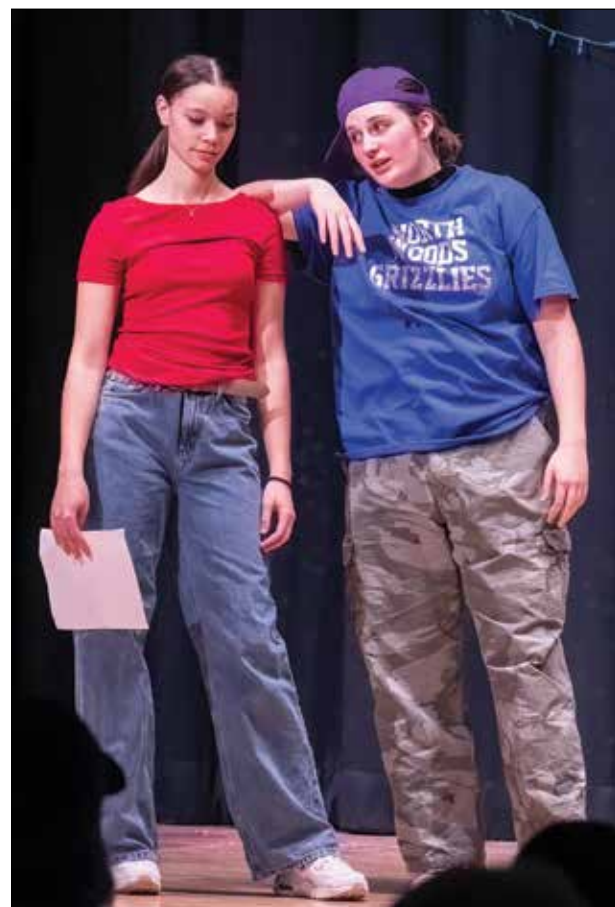
ELY- Ely Young Life will hold an online auction starting on Sunday, April 7, at 6 p.m. and closing on April 14. Proceeds will go to sending kids to summer camp. Details and the auction link are at ely.younglife.org.

Nuclear power

ELY- The Ely Climate Group will meet on Tuesday, April 9, at 4 p.m. at 41 E. Chapman St. Go up the stairs and turn immediately right to the Natural Resources Library. The April topic is Nuclear Power and whether Minnesota's moratorium should be lifted.

MUSICAL MAGIC

North Woods rocks Mean Girls Jr. production



The Plastics and the Mathletes squared off against each other at North Woods School last Thursday, with poor Cady Heron, new student from Africa, caught in the middle in "Mean Girls Jr.," a shortened version of the hit Broadway musical based on the "Mean Girls" movie.

Left: Cady Heron, left, played by Mya Kinsey, talks with the captain of the Mathletes, played by Amber Sopoci.

Right: There were few songs in the show that didn't call on the vocal talents of Mya Kinsey. Musical numbers were backed by a fully orchestrated musical audio track that lent an air of Broadway to the production.

photos by D. Colburn



Middle left: A nervous Mathletes team frets about whether Cady will come up with the right answer to win the competition.
Lower far left: Nevada Gauthier gives an animated performance as Plastics member Karen Smith.
Left: Another of the Plastics, Gretchen Wieners (played by Talise Goodsky), catches a piece of the crown thrown by Cady after winning the Spring Fling Queen vote.
Above: Victoria Olson, left, was the notorious head of the Plastics, Regina George, but she wore a big smile of gratitude as she handed flowers to music teacher Lorenda Daugherty, who produced and directed the show.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NWFA reception to fete photo contest winners today

COOK- A special reception today, Friday, March 29, at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery will honor the photographers whose work has been on display in March as part of the annual NWFA photo contest "A Closer Look." Enjoy artwork and refreshments from 5-7 p.m. and see who the voting public chose as the contest winners. The gallery address is 210 S River St. All are welcome and invited to attend.

Come by the gallery for information on NWFA art classes, events and concerts using and to browse the work of continuing artists and special exhibits. Gallery hours are Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Cook kids' Easter party is Saturday

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

Gallery hours change for garage sale kickoff Apr. 3

COOK- The Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook is transitioning to summertime hours in April as they debut their monthlong "Good Stuff" Art Garage Sale. In addition to beautiful, thought provoking artwork on exhibit, there will be donated art and other "Good Stuff" on sale from Wednesday, April 3 until Saturday, April 27. Come

check out all the great deals during gallery open hours of 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturdays at the gallery at 210 S River St. in Cook.

Two-day watercolor workshop coming to Cook on May 9-10

COOK- Learn to work with a simple design and limited color to create a successful painting during a two-day watercolor painting workshop featuring award-winning artist and instructor Mary Beth Downs on May 9-10 at the Cook Community Center.

Sponsored by Northwoods Friends of the Arts, this class will provide demonstrations to guide students and is perfect for all levels of artists' experience.

Downs began studying fine art in 1975 and currently teaches five classes per week at her studio in Duluth, The Art Cellar. She often gives presentations to local or-

ganizations and conducts watercolor workshops. Visit www.artcellarduluth.com for more information.

The class begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. on Thursday, May 9 and Friday, May 10. Check www.nwfamn.org for complete workshop details, including an extensive list of supplies each student must bring to the class. Visit the web page at: www.nwfamn.org where you will find more information

about classes and event sponsored by NWFA. NWFA also has a list of other art classes scheduled for 2024.

FIRED UP FOR EASTER



Volunteer members of the Orr Fire Department pose on Saturday with the guest of honor at their Easter Drive-Thru at the visitors center, the Easter Bunny. There were more than enough colorful goodie bags available for children, but to get one of the bicycles or scooters required being at or near the front of the line, as those items were gone in the first half-hour.

STATE OF THE STATE

Walz touts progress, calls for more action on guns

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Gov. Tim Walz delivered his annual State of the State message on Tuesday evening with a new school in Owatonna serving as backdrop to highlight his administration's accomplishments for children and families.

"I couldn't be more proud of the work we've done in our window of opportunity to improve education inside the walls of this school, and in every school across the state," Walz said. "We've given our children a brighter future by making the largest investment in public education in our state's history. Tonight, I'm proud to report that the state of our state is strong, Minnesota - because the kids of our state are better equipped to thrive."

As part of that investment, Walz noted the efforts to increase teacher pay, recruit more teachers from diverse backgrounds, and to expand resources for students such as mental health services, career education and free school meals.

"We've expanded special education and career and technical education as part of our commitment to making sure every Minnesota student receives a world-class education, regardless

“We know that we can't legislate against every act of violence but surely we can do more.”

Gov. Tim Walz

of where they live or where they go to school," Walz said.

Walz also emphasized efforts to strengthen academic achievement by implementing curriculum to ensure that every student can read at grade level, and to provide access to pre-Kindergarten programs and affordable child care.

Initiatives to make it easier for families to balance career and family responsibilities, including paid family and medical leave and a child tax credit to reduce child poverty, and to provide for food security were highlighted by Walz.

While Walz sought to highlight progress on education, he took time to note the work his administration has undertaken to advance economic growth, environmental protection, and infrastructure development to improve

the lives of all Minnesotans.

On economic development, Walz noted investments to bring high-paying jobs to Minnesota, particularly in green energy sectors, and efforts to expand the right to organize and provide tax cuts for seniors.

Referring to an Alabama court's recent ruling that a human embryo holds the same legal status as a human being, and to the Supreme Court's reversal of Roe v. Wade, Walz reinforced his stand for reproductive rights. "We took action after Roe v. Wade fell, writing protections for reproductive freedom into our state laws, and making sure that people - not politicians - can make their own reproductive choices. And that includes IVF (in vitro fertilization)," he said. "So let me make this clear: As long as I'm Governor, IVF will continue to offer a lifeline of hope for Minnesota families."

Walz touched on public safety initiatives he has sought, both in regular budget initiatives and his proposed bonding bill.

"Our plan invests in making sure every community has safe streets," he said. "Violent crime declined in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and across the state last year. Still, we take public safety seriously, and we're putting real funding behind that commitment, includ-

ing expanding capacity for the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and planning for a new Minnesota State Patrol headquarters."

The infrastructure investments Walz highlighted from his \$989 million bonding proposal included projects for clean water, safe streets, affordable housing, and renovations to public buildings, with an emphasis on using union labor.

While the speech was long on accomplishments, Walz also took the opportunity to advocate for legislative action on gun safety, invoking the tragic deaths of Burnsville officers Matthew Ruge and Paul Elmstrand and firefighter/paramedic Adam Finseth in a Feb. 18 gun battle.

"This is a dangerous world. We were reminded of that this year when three of our bravest first responders lost their lives at the hands of a man with a gun he shouldn't have had," Walz said. "We know that we can't legislate against every act of violence but surely we can do more. Tonight, I'm urging the Legislature to join me in making our schools - and our communities - a little bit safer still by strengthening requirements for safe storage of firearms, reporting lost and stolen guns, and increasing criminal penalties for straw purchasers. Asking our neighbors to keep

their guns stored safely, and to report to law enforcement when their guns are lost or stolen, is a simple step that could save lives. And it's high time we took that step here in Minnesota."

Unlike the State of the Union address delivered by the President to Congress, there was no formal speech replying to Walz's remarks from Republicans, but opposition party legislative leaders were quick to offer their own take on the DFL and Walz's leadership, criticizing the growth in the state's budget, the failure to provide Social Security tax relief, and the insufficient amount of \$16 million Walz has proposed for emergency medical services when legislators have called for \$120 million.

"We grew government in a way that is unsustainable," House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth, R-Cold Spring, said after the speech.

Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson, R-East Grand Forks, countered Walz's decidedly rosy picture of Minnesota. "Minnesotans overwhelmingly are saying that they don't feel as if they're better off in this generation as they were in the last," he said, while noting a sense of pessimism about the performance of the state's education system.

SHORTFALL...Continued from page 1

which is used by the state to determine funding for each public school in the state.

ADM is usually lower than actual enrollment. For example, Ely's enrollment for the current school year is 530, but its current ADM is 515 and the current projection for next year cuts that to 506. Though funding for enrollment-based revenues will increase next year, by about \$178,000, that's not as much of an increase as it would have been if the district's ADM to increase or remain at 515. The committee estimated enrollment-based revenues for next year increased by \$178,735 compared to this year.

However, whatever general ed increase the district might experience

for next year is likely to be offset by reductions in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds. Congress created the ESSER Funds as part of the COVID-19 relief legislation in December 2020 to inject additional money into school budgets. For the current school year, ESSER funds added \$270,000, but that revenue will disappear effective with the 24-25 school year.

Expenses

Though the district has not completed its contract negotiations with one of its employees "bargaining units," the finance committee felt confident enough to estimate an increase of \$374,644 in wages and benefits next

school year, compared to this year. The committee also estimated that other expenses like propane and office supplies would see a year-over-year increase of \$20,000, pushing total projected expenditures about \$395,000 over last year.

When the finance committee added it all together, committee members estimated a budget shortfall of \$486,000 for next year.

What's next

Oelke presented two pages of suggestions that staff have contributed to date. She emphasized, "Nothing right now is final, and no recommendations have been made to the board at this time."

The list contained the predictable reductions in staff hours and positions,

cuts in education programs, as well as more innovative options like increasing energy efficiencies, installing solar power, renting out meeting and auditorium space to outside groups, and four-day school weeks. Oelke said the district is open to suggestions from all its stakeholders and the community at large on lowering expenses and increasing revenues.

"We will continue to talk about this for the next four to six weeks," Oelke said. The time constraint is because the district can't drag its feet in putting together the budget for next year. In the near term, the finance committee will present recommendations for reductions to the school board in April. The

administration will "notify and discuss reductions with identified staff." The district must determine any faculty cuts before May 15, when teachers receive their class assignments for next year.

After Oelke presented the finance committee projections, the school board was more eager to explore ways to increase revenue, including seeking out grants and legislative initiatives, than it was to make cuts.

"When it comes to cutting positions or jobs, it's hard because behind every job there's a person or a family. So, these are very tough decisions," said school board chairman Ray Marsnik. "We want to make sure that our cuts are

made as far away from the students as possible."

Marsnik, who weathered a previous budget shortfall as a school board member, reminded the rest of the board of state laws regarding school district budgets. "If we go more than three percent (in the red), then we go into statutory operating debt. What happens there is we have to come up with a plan to get out of debt. Then, if we do not come up with a plan, the state will take this district over, and then they'll be looking at other things like consolidation." Consolidation, as Marsnik pointed out, is contrary to the school board's objective to remain a financially viable and independent school district.

PERMITTING...Continued from page 1

enges," stated the chamber in their release. "We are dedicated to improving this system without lowering our high standards, ensuring that Minnesota can accelerate economic investments while protecting our natural environment," said Doug Loon, president and CEO of the chamber.

Lislegard praised the chamber foundation's study. "It gave us a solid foundation to work from for this legislation," he said. "This legislation will grow our economy while protecting the health of our citizens and protecting our natural resources."

Hauschild's amendment came as a surprise to environmental groups, which already had mixed opinions of the energy

permitting reform. The energy permitting provisions came, in part, as a result of a stakeholder process coordinated by the state's Public Utilities Commission, that focused on how to streamline permitting for large-scale clean energy projects, such as utility-scale wind and solar projects or power lines. Opposition to such projects has been a growing obstacle to the expansion of renewable sources of electrical power, in Minnesota and nationally, so clean energy supporters have been willing to back some permitting reform measures for the energy sector that they likely wouldn't support for some other industries. That support would likely drop dramati-

cally were the changes extended to other major industries. "Everyone is pretty confused by it," said Maggie Schuppert, with the group CURE, an environmental group based in Montevideo, Minn. "[Hauschild's] amendment has made an already pretty complicated measure even more so. Where it goes from here may be even more complex."

Hauschild's provision encompasses several significant changes, including:

- ▶ Reviewing and revising the approach for the determination of completeness of environmental permits.

- ▶ Issuing construction permits separately from operating permits to encourage more economic

development projects.

- ▶ Creating an ombudsman to assist businesses throughout the environmental permitting process.

- ▶ Requiring coordinated project plans for the DNR and MPCA to provide clarity and timelines for projects.

- ▶ Increasing the use of expedited permits.

"This is an important step in growing our economy," said Hauschild, in commenting on his amendment. "Finding efficiencies in our permitting process will help foster economic development and grow jobs."

Environmental groups, which have considerable sway within the DFL caucus, will likely be skeptical of Hauschild's take.

As of this week, environmental groups told the *Timberjay* that they are still studying Hauschild's amendment. "It's lengthy and interacts with several areas of law," said Aaron Klemz, with the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. "We believe that the energy permitting bill should reflect the consensus recommendations from the Public Utilities Commission stakeholder group, so we oppose the amendment for that reason."

Given the narrow partisan divide in the Legislature, the prospects for passage of

the amended version of the permitting reform bill have grown cloudier. While the amended version is likely to lose some DFL support Schuppert said it could pick up Republican backing. She said one of the consistent GOP complaints about the measure had been that it was, at least initially, limited to the energy sector.

"This definitely throws the politics a bit out of whack," she said.

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REMEMBERING

Cross Range thruway to be named for Tomassoni

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- In a politically polarized Legislature, there's at least one bill this session that has the power to bring Republicans and DFLers together—a bill that would designate a 40-mile stretch of U.S. Hwy. 169 as the Sen. David Tomassoni Memorial Cross Range Expressway.

Accolades for the late Chisholm senator began well before his passing in August 2022 from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, and have continued to the present day

from his legislative colleagues, friends, and numerous community organizations that have named various events in his honor, including fundraising efforts for ALS. The honors reflect not only Tomassoni's legislative accomplishments but also how he went about achieving them by reaching across the aisle to form relationships that enabled him to bring much back to his constituents on the Iron Range.

Sen. Robert Farnsworth, R-Hibbing, chief author of the Senate bill, described why naming the highway for Tomassoni would be an appropriate honor when

introducing the bill in the Senate last month.

"Decades ago, a plan was identified to turn the two-lane section of Hwy 169 between Grand Rapids and Virginia into a four-lane highway. For the last 30 years, Sen. Tomassoni, during his time in the (House), and more recently, during his time in the (Senate) worked to complete this dream. He was able to get funds about five to ten miles at a time. This project would not have happened without the determination of Sen. Tomassoni."

The senator's son, Dante Tomassoni, told the Senate com-

mittee that Tomassoni saw the road project as vital for both commerce and the safety and quality of life for families on the Iron Range. "This highway was an important part of his career," Tomassoni said.

Strong emotions were evident as others shared remembrances of Tomassoni and their support for the bill, including committee chair Scott Dibble, DFL-Minneapolis, as he brought the bill to a vote.

"It's hard, it's really hard," he said. "It's fair to say we loved David a lot. He was a giant of the Senate and this is a worthy

recognition."

The House version of the bill got a second hearing in committee on Monday, with chief author Dave Lislegard, DFL-Aurora, speaking on its behalf.

"Sen. Tomassoni was an incredible individual, and this is to acknowledge him as a highway between Marble and Mt. Iron," Lislegard said. "It drives right past his home, in Chisholm, and his family is going to pay for the cost. The family is going to raise the funds for the signage."

STORM...Continued from page 1

Tuesday, combining heavy snow, high winds, and temperatures in the teens to make for some of the toughest conditions of the entire winter season.

"It was a classic storm system," said National Weather Service meteorologist Josh Sandstrom in Duluth. "And it had just enough cold air and the track was just right. It was also moving slowly which accounted for the extended periods of snowfall."

The low moved up from the southwest and was sitting over the Minnesota-Iowa border on Monday, leaving the heaviest snow to the south of the North Country. On Tuesday, it moved up through Wisconsin, putting the Arrowhead in the bullseye for the heaviest snow and wind.

Reported snow totals around the area ranged from about seven inches in Cook to 14.3 inches at a reporting station a mile northwest of Ely, which was the highest reported to the National Weather Service in northern St. Louis County. Other reports included 11.6 inches at a station two miles southwest of Ely, 12-14 inches in the Babbitt area, and 9.5 inches in Embarrass. The International Falls airport reported 11.6 inches. No reports from the Tower area were available as of press time.

Snow totals were even higher closer to Lake Superior, with some areas reporting close to two feet of snow from the storm.

While the storm packed a punch, the North Country was spared some of the worst effects a major storm can bring. While other parts of Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin saw periods of rain and ice, the North Country remained on the dry and snowy side of the storm, helping to reduce the impacts often associated with large storms. While roads were snow-covered during the storm, they did not appear to be icy and that minimized traffic

accidents in the region. As of Tuesday, the State Patrol was reporting no injury accidents in the region despite the snow.

Lake Country Power was listing no power outages in the region, thanks in large part to the lack of ice or wet, sticky snow, which can build up on powerlines and tree branches.

The snow brought some welcome relief from an intensifying drought in the region and should help boost lake and river levels, which have been remarkably low for the end of winter. Many streams in the North Country had been experiencing levels more typical of August than March in recent weeks. Water levels are usually buoyed this time of year by snowmelt, but the minimal snowfall this winter had already disappeared with no noticeable bump in water levels.

The U.S. Drought Monitor had recently upgraded the drought status in northeastern Minnesota from abnormally dry (the lowest level of drought) to moderate drought.

The snow has also offered a respite from the high fire danger experienced in the area in recent weeks. While a spring fire season is typical in the region in the wake of the snowmelt, this year's melt came earlier than ever. And with low humidity and plenty of wind, conditions typical of late winter and early spring, the worsening drought had left area forests primed for fire.

This week's snow should linger for a while, at least. High temperatures are expected to remain in the 30s through early next week, with lows ranging from the single digits to the upper teens. That's just slightly below the area's average high in the low 40s this time of year, with lows in the mid-teens.

ELY ECONOMY...Continued from page 1

own business. The SBDC program is funded through federal, state, and local governments. The EEDA contributed \$4,000 annually to the

Northland SBDC, which serves communities on the Range.

"I think we're getting our money's worth," noted EEDA

President Paul Kess, during the brief discussion of the Northland data.

2023 Northland Small Business Development Center Metrics						
Community	Capital Raised	Business Starts	Jobs Created/Retained	Clients Served	Hours of Consulting	Population
Ely	\$1,853,136	3	61	16	174	3,233
Hoyt Lakes	\$1,100,000	1	18	4	36	2,005
Virginia	\$494,000	1	52	24	140	8,337
Tower	\$30,389	0	39	7	46	424
Eveleth	\$500	1	1	9	48	3,461
Babbitt	\$0	0	0	3	10	1,385
Gilbert	\$0	0	0	1	2	1,675
Mt. Iron	\$0	0	4	3	16	2,859
Two Harbors	\$0	1	9	15	35	3,621
Chisholm	\$0	0	15	2	2	4,723
Nashauk-Keewatin	\$0	0	41	10	45	1,946

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Hospital Connection
Change Health Breach

Q: What is Change Healthcare?
A: Change Healthcare is owned by UnitedHealth Group. It is an essential "pipeline" between healthcare insurers and providers. It electronically facilitates the flow of claims to insurance companies and the payments from insurance companies back to providers (e.g. EBCH). In addition to United Health Care, many payors (insurance companies) use Change Healthcare, including Atena, UCare, and Medica. Their claims clearinghouse processes approximately \$2 trillion in claims annually.

Q: What happened with the breach?
A: In February, Change Healthcare was the victim of a cyberattack. A breach of this magnitude lends itself to the potential disclosure of confidential information, so they were forced to completely shut down their systems to prevent greater information loss. They have slowly worked to bring systems back online for the last month. However, electronic insurance verification for most companies remains down.

Q: Could this breach affect me?
A: Possibly. Because we cannot quickly verify insurance coverage electronically, there may be delays if you need a service or procedure that requires Prior Authorization. These Prior Authorizations must be verified manually, which entails calling the company. When we call the companies, hundreds of other healthcare providers nationwide are also calling. It can be an extensive and time-consuming process. Additionally, claims are taking significantly longer than usual to process. This means you may not receive a bill for your (patient responsibility) portion for some time following an appointment.

Hospital Connection is an ongoing feature of Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital (EBCH). We are excited to share our most recent updates and information in a question-and-answer format featuring a new topic each week. We will share important information about healthcare at local, state, and national levels, along with exciting information about EBCH, our services, and how we are a partner in the communities we serve. You can also find more information about EBCH by visiting our website at www.ebch.org. Like our Facebook page to keep up with current events and announcements.

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

COUNTY SCHOOLS

School board tackles teacher staffing cuts

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

VIRGINIA- The ISD 2142 School Board saved it's most challenging tasks for last on Tuesday, those related to the release of teaching staff.

Based on a projected budget shortfall for the 2024-25 school year, the board had already determined a need to eliminate 11 teaching positions which board members had hoped could be accomplished by eliminating positions held by probationary employees.

However, at Tuesday's meeting the board had the unwelcome task of placing four part-time teachers with continuing contracts on unrequested professional leave, including half-time Title I teachers Amy Nelson at North Woods and Kathleen Meier at Tower-Soudan. State law allows districts to place continuing contract and tenured staff on unrequested leave in the event of discontinuance of a position, lack of pupils, or financial limitations. Staff placed on unrequested leave retain the right to be reappointed by the district to a similar assignment at the same hourly equivalent

cy if one should arise.

Additionally, the board took on the annual task required by Minnesota law of notifying probationary teachers of contract non-renewals. Twelve teachers at North Woods, ten at Northeast Range, one at Tower-Soudan, and a total of 19 at South Ridge and Cherry were affected by the move. Teachers in affected positions have typically been hired in the absence of any regularly certified candidates for a position and have been teaching with a one-year temporary or limited license and are not eligible for continuing status. Provided their performance has been acceptable, these staff are typically eligible to reapply

for these positions and be rehired if conditions permit.

"I know that this is a nonrenewal list, and it's enormous," board member Chris Koivisto said. "I see a lot of valuable people on here, so I always question the why of it."

"It's not a practice we would do if we could keep them," Superintendent Reggie Engebritson responded. "If they have been in an out-of-field placement or they're teaching in an area that they're not licensed we're required by law to do this. We do not have a blanket (policy) that all probationary teachers must go and then bring them back. If they're probationary and appropriately licensed and we could use

and need them, we would keep them."

"Well, it's always uncomfortable," Koivisto said. "We've had some good experiences with lots of those teachers and I want them to know that. We don't get in the news that we recognize the good work that they're doing. Sometimes we have some easy ones, but this is not an easy one."

"It's unfortunate about the number of teachers but some of these teachers will come back, depending on licensing," Engebritson said after the meeting.

In other action, the board:

► Approved the board's response to the American Indian Parent Advisory

Committee formulated by a board subcommittee and discussed and revised last week at a working session of the full board.

► Approved a new contract for the district's paraprofessionals.

► Hired Brielle Anderson and Andreastar Traut as paraprofessionals at North Woods.

► Hired Sheila Moravitz as a paraprofessional for bus duty at Northeast Range.

► Hired Patty Skube as a substitute nutrition employee and Amanda Rasmussen as a substitute homebound teacher, both on an as-needed basis at NER.

► Hired Brett Brodeen as assistant track coach at

NW.

► Hired Kaileen Redmond as head volleyball coach and Rebecca Lappi as assistant coach for volleyball at NW.

► Accepted the resignation of Tower-Soudan paraprofessional Kelsey Cooke, effective April 2, and a request for voluntary reduction in hours dating from March 18.

► Formally terminated long-term T-S substitute teacher Jennifer Fredrickson, who completed her assignment on Nov. 27, 2023.

► Congratulated the Cherry boys basketball team on winning the Class A state championship.

Briefly

Hibbing man dies in crash north of Orr

ORR- A 30-year-old Hibbing man died in a one-vehicle accident on the Orr-Buyck road on Friday, March 22.

Erikur John Weber Arnason was driving a Jeep Cherokee eastbound at about 2 p.m. when it left the road near the southwest end of Myrtle Lake. According to Eric Hanegmon of the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, the Cherokee entered the ditch, struck a rock, and rolled several times.

When emergency responders arrived at the scene, Arnason was declared deceased. He was the sole occupant of the vehicle.

Arnason was not wearing a seatbelt, the road condition was dry, and speed appears to be a contributing factor to the incident.

The incident remains under investigation by the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office and St. Louis County Sheriff's office.

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<p>2015 EDGE SPORT AWD</p> <p>\$17,698 #8122</p>	<p>2014 GRAND CHEROKEE SUMMIT ONLY 38K MI</p> <p>\$24,972 #8124</p>	<p>2023 EXPEDITION LIMITED 12K MI</p> <p>\$65,972 #25658A</p>	<p>2018 GRAND CHEROKEE LIMITED</p> <p>\$21,385 #81104</p>	<p>2019 MKZ RESERVE AWD</p> <p>\$23,412 #45745A</p>
<p>2022 MAZDA CX-5 2.5 TURBO</p> <p>\$29,978 #25698A</p>	<p>2016 MKC AWD SELECT</p> <p>\$12,900 #7941B</p>	<p>2020 FUSION TITANIUM AWD</p> <p>\$18,471 #8099</p>	<p>2016 EDGE SEL AWD</p> <p>\$16,714 #8126</p>	<p>2021 EXPLORER LIMITED 63K MI</p> <p>\$28,392 #8102</p>
<p>2018 ESCAPE TITANIUM AWD</p> <p>\$16,791 #8129</p>	<p>2016 EDGE SPORT AWD</p> <p>\$18,668 #8083A</p>	<p>2017 JOURNEY AWD CROSSROADS</p> <p>\$14,980 #9564C</p>	<p>2015 EXPEDITION EL XLT</p> <p>\$14,921 #25642A</p>	<p>2020 FUSION TITANIUM HYBRID</p> <p>\$18,529 #8105</p>
<p>2008 F150 FX4 CREW 185K MI</p> <p>\$4,980 #25701B</p>	<p>2022 COMPASS LATITUDE ONLY 10K MI</p> <p>\$24,971 #25457B</p>	<p>2021 ESCAPE SEL AWD</p> <p>\$18,471 #25639A</p>	<p>2018 TAURUS SE 84K MI</p> <p>\$13,754 #8108</p>	<p>2019 FUSION SE AWD</p> <p>\$16,980 #8137</p>
<p>2014 MUSTANG COUPE V6</p> <p>\$12,980 #8136A</p>	<p>2020 ESCAPE AWD SEL</p> <p>\$13,410 #25677A</p>	<p>2018 RAPTOR 55K MI</p> <p>\$45,972 #25171A</p>	<p>2017 SANTA FE SPORT 2 AWD</p> <p>\$7,980 #25672B</p>	<p>2021 VOYAGER LXI</p> <p>\$19,974 #805</p>
<p>2021 BRONCO SPORT BIG BEND</p> <p>\$23,397 #8109</p>	<p>2017 LACROSSE ESSENCE</p> <p>\$16,265 #25668A</p>	<p>2015 F150 XLT 6.5FT BOX</p> <p>\$20,972 #25692A</p>	<p>2014 F150 XLT W/ LEATHER</p> <p>\$19,701 #25716A</p>	<p>2004 YUKON SLE</p> <p>\$4,980 #25627C</p>

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GOOD EATS

Ely's new Frisky Otter hopes to open mid-May

New owners of the former Rockwood Grill site bring years of restaurant experience to town

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- The restaurant property at the corner of Sheridan and 3rd, most recently the home of Rockwood Grill, is about to come back to life. Michael and Nicole Cascone plan to open the Frisky Otter Restaurant by the start of fishing season in mid-May.

"That's our target date. It's going to be tight, but things are things are coming along nicely."

The Cascones have years of experience rehabilitating and running restaurants. "We're really into the food part of it," Michael Cascone told the *Timberjay*. "The Frisky Otter is going to be more like

a Wisconsin supper club with daily specials ... we're going to have some steaks and chops, a variety of fish, burgers, stuff like that. But we're going to have healthy options and a nice array of salads." On Friday through Sunday, the restaurant will also serve breakfast.

Cascone said they want to have affordable menu items. "Not everyone wants to get the \$40 steak, but that will be an option. But there will also be daily specials like meatloaf and pasta that will be more reasonably priced."

The Cascones plan to run the restaurant year-round. "We may close for two or three weeks in mid-February, just to clean and take a

Right: Michael Cascone, in the outdoor seating area of the new Frisky Otter Restaurant, currently under renovation.
photo by C. Clark

breather. But I think there's definitely a niche to be open all year."

Redesign underway

"I've done a lot of rehabs and I've rehabbed restaurants before," Cascone said. The couple owned a restaurant in the Lake Geneva resort area of Wisconsin. "That was the first rehab I did. I rebuilt that place up from the studs." The Cascones ran that restaurant for 12 years before

See **FRISKY...**pg. 2B



Clockwise from top left: Kids make a bee-line for Easter eggs in Ely recently; the Easter bunny gives a hug to Betty Graham, of Tower; Theodore Salo hunts for eggs outside Timber Hall in Embarrass; James Hinkel gives a big smile with his full bucket of colorful eggs; and one of Orr's firefighters sets up bikes and other big presents they gave away to lucky area children as part of their Easter festivities.
photos by Timberjay staff

A RITE OF SPRING

The hunt is on...



THE LEGISLATURE

Deal reached on additional state spending

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- DFL and Republican legislators have differing viewpoints regarding the \$512.5 million supplemental budget framework agreed to last week between Gov. Tim Walz and DFL legislative leaders. That measure was approved Monday by the House Ways and Means Committee.

The agreement, more than double the \$226 million figure first proposed by Walz, passed the committee on a 17-9 party-line vote. Out of the \$512.5 million allocation, over \$477.54 million for targeted areas has been agreed upon, preserving leeway for potential future additions.

The measure maintains the budget reserve at \$2.91 billion, designates \$350 million for the cash flow account, and prohibits additional expenditures in health care access or workforce development funds for this biennium.

Committee chair Rep. Liz Olson, DFL-Duluth, said, "As we

See **SPENDING...**pg. 2B

A JOB WELL DONE

Wastewater treatment facilities recognized by MPCA

REGIONAL— Wastewater treatment plants in Cook, Winton, and at two Iron Range taconite mines have been recognized for consistently meeting state requirements for monitoring, operations, reporting, and maintenance.

The four plants in St. Louis County were among 253 municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants recognized this year for their successful operations in 2023. The two area mines receiving recognition include Northshore and United Taconite's Fairlane plant. The treatment plants in Cook and Winton are operated by the local city government.

To receive this recognition, facilities must demonstrate consistent compliance with monitoring, operations, and maintenance

See **RECOGNITION...**pg. 2B

RECOGNITION...Continued from page 1B

requirements, must submit accurate, on-time reports to the MPCA, and must employ staff certified by the MPCA in wastewater operations.

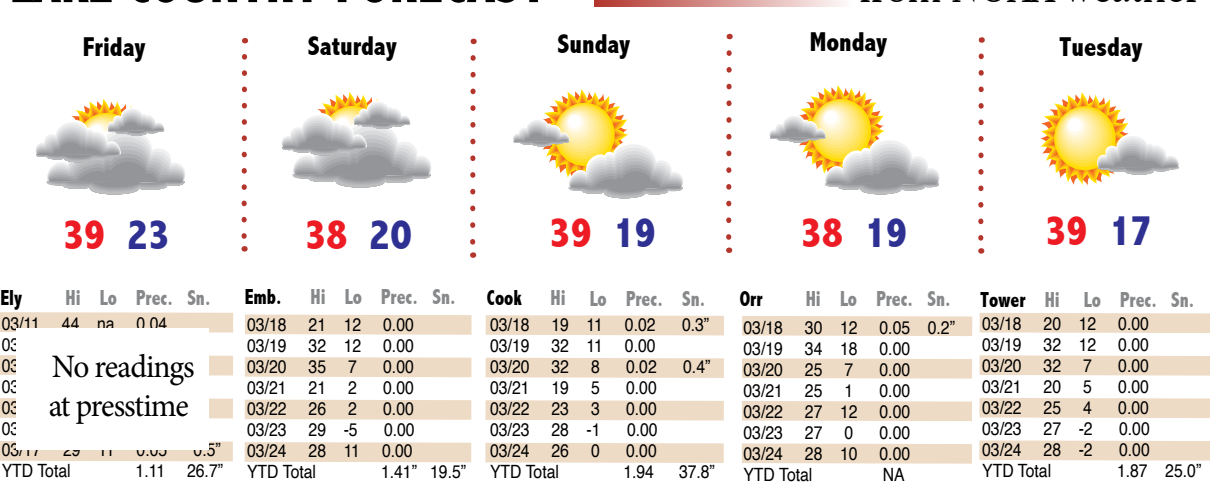
“Communities across Minnesota rely on wastewater treatment facilities to stay healthy and well,” said Nicole Blasing, Municipal Division director at MPCA. “Operators at these facilities are critical to protecting and preserving water quality, and the MPCA is deeply

grateful for their considerable efforts and service to their community.”

The MPCA recognizes outstanding wastewater operators each year. Minnesota has approximately 1,600 municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities. A total of 767 facilities, from communities of all sizes, were reviewed, with 253 qualifying for the outstanding operations recognition.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather



FRISKY...Continued from page 1B

selling it to one of their employees.

The renovation isn't a complete makeover. The restaurant will keep the wood interior and booths from the Rockwood but the old tile floor has already been replaced with wood. The interior will have two fireplaces and a new sound system.

“We looked at the Rockwood and the kitchen was just fabulous.”

The Cascones aren't doing much to the kitchen. They ordered a new stove and steam table and they will remove most of the smokers. Other than that, the kitchen will keep its current configuration.

Inside the dining spaces, the area facing Ely's Historic State Theater will become a bar with a large flat-screen TV for watching sporting events. The other half of the seating area will be a dining room, though it too will have a giant flat-screen TV.

“I want a place where a customer can come and watch a game and get a full meal at the same time,”

Cascone said.

“We're trying to keep all our contractors local,” Cascone explained. “Everyone was concerned that we'd have a hard time finding people to work on things and I guess we're lucky that we're able to. We're getting things done and it's progressing very well.”

The Frisky Otter will also sport state-of-the-art electronic ordering.

“My wife Nicole has a lot of previous restaurant experience. She's coming in with all handheld ordering equipment for the servers, so there's no miscommunication. When you put in your order at the table, everything will go right to the kitchen. We're trying to streamline everything and make it a good customer experience.”

The Cascones

“I've been coming up to Ely every summer. I've missed three summers up here since I was a teenager,” Cascone said. “I have a lot of friends up here.”

Michael Cascone is from the northwest Chicago

area and received a business degree from National Louis University in Chicago. Nicole Cascone is from the Lake Geneva area and attended the University of Illinois campus in Chicago. After they sold their restaurant in Wisconsin, they moved to Florida where they started and ran Blue Gulf Realty for over 37 years.

The family owns a summer cabin on Fall Lake, a house on Chapman Street that they rent out, and their current four-season home “a mile down Hwy. 1.” The Cascones are transitioning to living in the Ely area full-time. Their 17-year-old daughter has been a student at Vermilion Country School in Tower since the beginning of this school year.

“We were thinking of retiring to Ely and maybe starting a restaurant in a few years,” Cascone said. He noticed the number of recently closed restaurant properties in Ely and took a look at them.

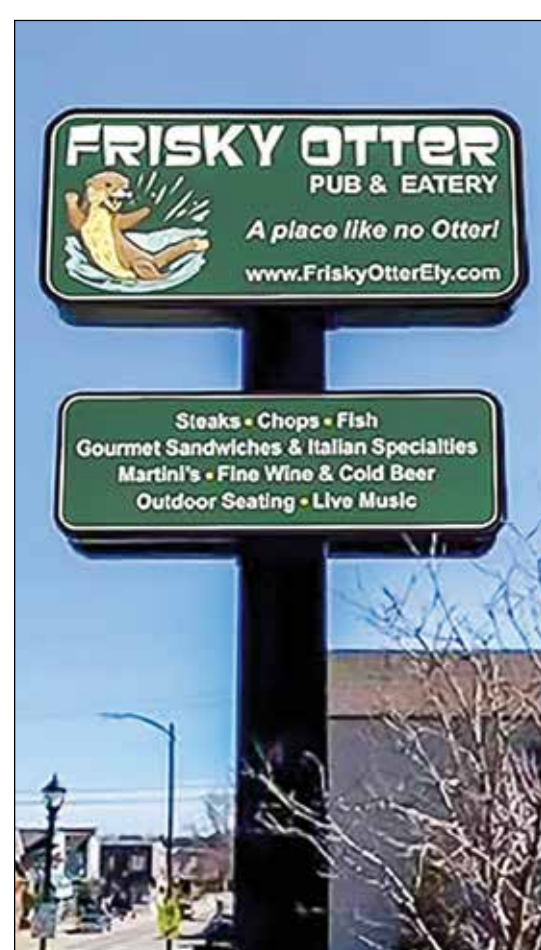
“I looked at the steak house and Sir G's, and, of course, Rockwood... I

decided to pull the trigger and buy it.” The Cascones put their offer in for the Rockwood property this fall. Commercial real estate takes more time than residential, with more complicated financing and longer contingency periods. There was also another offer for Rockwood at the same time as the Cascones'. When that offer fell through, the Cascones' offer was accepted.

Looking for work?

“We're still looking for some employees in different areas. We have hired some folks already and we've had a pretty good response.”

Cascone is especially eager to find people for the kitchen crew. “It's funny, because everybody wants to be a bartender. But we need kitchen staff ... We're looking to get a core group of about eight to 10 full-time people. Part time people are great, but it's nice to have dependable full-time people that become part of that family and that you can count on. We're gonna try to go that route.”



The new sign for the Frisky Otter recently replaced the sign for the Rockwood Grill. photo by C. Clark

SPENDING...Continued from page 1B

all know, we had the main budget last year, so this is just a reflection of our ongoing priorities and needs for the state we see in our supplemental budget.”

Rep. Pat Garofalo, R-Farmington, cited Minnesota Management

and Budget Office forecasts to suggest increased spending for a supplemental budget is unwise knowing that the upcoming Legislature might need to trim general fund spending by approximately \$4.5 billion.

“This is a fiscal cliff that's being created,” he said. “The idea that the government of Minnesota doesn't have enough money and is not spending enough money and needs to do more is simply not in conjunction with mathematical

reality.”

Key components of the supplemental spending plan include \$53 million for tax aids and credits, \$43 million for education, \$42.13 million for human services, \$36 million for the judiciary, and nearly

\$31.46 million for one-time educator pension contributions.

Olson noted that it will take significant effort from committee chairs to deal with the multitude of additional spending requests filed by legislators this term.

the strong advocacy from the Iron Range.”

“We'll keep fighting for more funding as we move into the latter part of session,” Hauschild continued. “But in addition to the emergency aid, we are also making reforms to the EMSRB oversight board to be more responsive to the needs of EMS statewide, and we will be putting money towards innovation zones to test out new models for EMS. All of this together is one small step in the right direction of what will be a multi-year effort to solve this complex challenge.”

EMS funding

While the overall compromise with Walz could be considered a generous windfall, one area that wasn't targeted for additional funding was emergency medical services, an issue Walz pegged \$16 million for in his original proposal.

The amount falls far short of the \$120 million requested by Sen. Grant Hauschild, DFL-Hermantown and Rep. Dave Lislegard, DFL-Aurora based on the findings of a legislative task force that has been examining the staffing and financial problems faced by the state's ambulance services, particularly in rural Minnesota. Hauschild nonetheless stuck a positive tone when asked by the Timberjay for his thoughts on Tuesday.

“I've been advocating since this summer for support for EMS. Given that effort, I'm proud that the EMS emergency aid made it into the Governor's supplemental budget,” Hauschild said. “This is a big deal, especially given it is a non-budget year and we have a very slim budget. While it isn't as much as I'm hoping we can ultimately get, it is important to note that EMS alone received more than entire policy areas because of how important it is and

Tyler settlement

The largest single item in the supplemental budget is \$109 million for the Tyler settlement, a class action lawsuit that was recently settled on the heels of a May 2023 U.S. Supreme Court case that found state law regarding property forfeiture was unconstitutional.

The nation's highest court ruled unanimously that Hennepin County violated a homeowner's constitutional rights when it sold her forfeited property for more than she owed in back taxes and fines and kept the \$25,000 difference. State statutes indicate the property was taken in the name of the state of Minnesota.

Two class action lawsuits have since been filed against the state on behalf of Minnesotans who lost property to tax forfeiture and counties kept the surplus money. However, the settlement includes that the state will cover 80 percent of settlement costs and counties would reimburse the rest, meaning about \$26.73 million will revert to state coffers in the 2026-27 biennium.

SCHOOL SAFETY

School resource officer fix signed by Walz

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

Questions remain for St. Louis County program reboot

REGIONAL- Last week Gov. Tim Walz signed a strongly bipartisan bill designed to fix legislation approved last year that prompted dozens of law enforcement agencies across the state to pull student resource officers (SROs) out of schools across the state.

The prohibitions against the restraints in last year's bill raised concerns about legal liability among numerous groups representing law enforcement officers and agencies, leading to about 40 of them suspending their SRO programs last August as the new school year began. That included the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, which suspended its program on the advice of the county attorney's office.

The new bill exempts SROs from those new regulations, while still holding them accountable for other laws regarding police conduct. SROs will have to receive additional training in how to de-escalate volatile situations and how to respond to mental health crises, and officers may not be used by schools for student disciplinary purposes.

St. Louis County Undersheriff Jason Akerson said on Tuesday that the department was pleased that the Legislature acted to resolve the concerns.

"The change in the law and the improvements that were made this session through the Legislature were certainly welcome," Akerson said. "I applaud a lot of our local legislators who did a lot of meetings and research to find out what the issues were and bring that back this year. That was great to see."

While the sheriff's office pulled its SROs from ISD 2142 schools in August, deputies were still frequently present in the schools and at sporting events, an effort intended to preserve the connection between the schools and sheriff's office.

"We encouraged the road guys when and where and if they were available to please stop in either at the school or sporting events," Akerson said. "From our perspective, and I think the school district would agree, we have a great relationship between the two entities, and we certainly want to keep that going and work

hand in hand with them."

Positive relationships have been the primary focus of the SRO program, Akerson said.

"The whole SRO program is to build relationships," he said. "People know we're there to help. At times we're going to have to take some kind of action with different situations, but by and large the whole goal is to build relationships and be a positive influence on the students and staff and be there to help."

Next steps

It won't be a simple thing to reboot the SRO program, as a number of factors will have to be considered for their potential impact on a new program.

At the moment, Akerson said the sheriff's office is waiting on the Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training to develop a model policy for SRO programs, as dictated in the new law. The department will have to assess past practices against the model policy to determine what changes may be necessary and how they would accommodate them.

And while the program would have been staffed back in August, Akerson said the sheriff's office currently has some vacancies that could affect a reboot.

"We are short some staff, so we're going to have to look at that," he said. "One, two, three

months down the road you can lose people fast. So, once we get the model policy, we're going to have to touch base with the school board and the school district to see where they're at, then see where we are at staffing-wise and gauge it from there. We're committed to the program, but we're just kind of waiting on this last piece."

ISD 2142 Superintendent Reggie Engebritson said Tuesday that it would be nice to restart the program but said it would be up to the sheriff's office to take the lead. "We are still in limbo because it's up to the sheriff's department," she said. "It would be up to Chief (Gordon) Ramsay to decide if the language

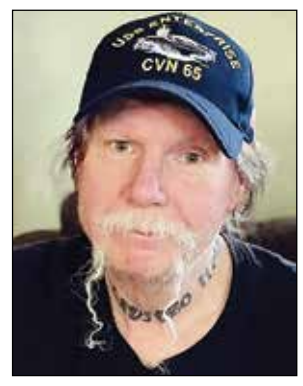
meets what they're looking for."

An additional obstacle could be the district's ability to fund its share of the program costs. The district recently cut 11 non-tenured teaching positions to stay within its projected 2024-25 budget. "We'd have to see what their budget funding is and we need to see if we can even afford it," Engebritson said.

Akerson expressed hope that the sheriff's office will be able to restore the program.

"At the end of the day, it's about providing a safe environment for the kids and the staff at the school," he said. "In my eyes, if we're able to do that, that's a great thing."

Obituaries and Death Notices



David J. Crego

David Jonathan Crego, 69, a veteran of the Vietnam War and a longtime resident of Cook and Hibbing, passed away on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, surrounded by family. A Memorial Service with Military Honors will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 30 at Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service. Lunch and fellowship will follow the service at the VFW in Cook.

Dave, as he was known to many in the area, was born on April 16, 1954, and attended Orr High School before enlisting in the U.S. Navy. Dave saw action aboard the USS Enterprise, and he had many amazing stories of his time in the service with his seabag on his back.

After his enlistment, Dave returned home and married Sherry Gustafson on Feb. 14, 1975. Together they resided in Cook, where they proceeded to have three daughters.

Dave held various jobs but found his niche and became a certified welder as he loved to work with his hands. Dave was an avid motorcycle rider, loved music, and he could always be found in his garage tinkering with something or working on his hotrod. Dave held roles in various motorcycle clubs and played in many bands throughout his lifetime.

Dave is survived by his beloved wife, Sherry; daughters, Melissa (James) Friederichs, Dawn Kehoe and Carrie (Erik) Brown; brothers, Pat Crego and Dole (Karen) Crego Sr.; grandchildren, Tyler, Trevor and Austin Kehoe, Isabella and Dawson Friederichs, and Waylon Brown; special aunt and uncle, Tom (Denise) Hakala; aunts, Janda (John) Mahlberg and Diane Hakala; special mother-in-law, Barbara Matts; mother, Rose Marie Musakka; numerous brothers- and sisters-in-law; and many nieces and nephews.

Delphi Grebenc

Delphi "Del" Grebenc, 93, of Ely, passed away at Boundary Waters Care Center on Friday, March 22, 2024. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

- If you have a child who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2024 they are eligible to enter Kindergarten in Ely next fall.
- You are invited to attend Parent Information and Registration Night on Wednesday, April 10th from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in Washington Auditorium.
- This informational session is a chance for parents to ask questions and start the registration process.
- If your child is not enrolled in a pre-school program, please contact the elementary office at 365-6166, ext. 4.
- We look forward to creating a positive transition to kindergarten for your child! Feel free to contact us if you have any questions – 218-365-6166, ext. 4.

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\$14.99 Sale Foster & Thrive 24 All Day Allergy Cetirizine Hydrochloride 10mg - 60 Tablets	\$10.99 Sale Foster & Thrive All Day Allergy Loratadine 10mg - 70 Tablets	\$25.99 Sale Xyzal Allergy 24hr Levocetirizine 5mg - 55 Tablets

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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 embarrasstownship@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



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Are you looking for a fast paced and incredibly fun summer where you can work and play at the edge of the **Boundary Waters Wilderness?** Piragis Northwoods Company is actively seeking and hiring seasonal staff to join our team from April through October. Stop into the shop to see Jay or give him a call. Feel free to send in your resume or fill out an application online as well. We're so excited to meet you!
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Number in position: 1
 Immediate supervisor: HRA Commission

SCOPE:

Under the broad direction of the HRA Commission, the executive Director shall direct, establish priorities, assign work and discipline employees; and administer funds, programs and policies of the HRA. Represent the Housing Authority in interactions with the public and other governmental agencies, and act as the contract officer of the agency.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- > Customer service background
- > Possess a valid driver's license
- > Possess the ability to make intelligent decisions in emergency situations

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- > 2 or 4 year post secondary degree
- > Supervisory experience

NORMAL WORKING HOURS:

Position is exempt and hours are flexible
 Pay to be negotiated

APPLY:

Resumes must be submitted by Friday, April 5, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
 Mail: Klun Law Firm, 1 E. Chapman St., PO Box 240, Ely, MN 55731
 Email: alison.richards@klunlawfirm.com

Published in the Timberjay, March 29, 2024

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

OPENINGS



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

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

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

- > Special Education Teacher (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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Weighing device
- 6 Sitar tunes
- 11 Fearful
- 12 Using the Internet
- 14 Eagles' homes
- 15 Julianne and Demi
- 16 Away from SSW
- 17 Auto style
- 19 Wager
- 20 Food regimen
- 22 Cariou of Broadway
- 23 Visibility hindrance
- 24 Cancel
- 26 Journeys
- 28 Head of st.
- 30 Animal doc
- 31 "Lolita" author
- 35 Summary
- 39 Plow pullers
- 40 Felon's flight
- 42 Sitarist Shankar
- 43 Soccer's Hamm
- 44 Prom duds
- 46 Heavy weight
- 47 E-business
- 49 Boring type
- 51 New citizen, perhaps

	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				

- 52 Is anxious about
- 53 Messy places
- 54 Leaks slowly
- 9 Car safety feature
- 10 Allergy season sound
- 11 Hourglass fillers
- 13 "Melrose Place" actor Rob
- 18 "Lion" star Patel
- 21 Yank at
- 23 Misanthrope
- 25 — choy
- 27 " — outta here!"
- 29 Library array
- 31 — plume
- 32 Wise sayings
- 33 "Scram!"
- 34 Preventive shot, in slang
- 36 40 winks
- 37 Sidesteps
- 38 Lipstick shades
- 41 Repairs
- 44 Rent
- 45 Foolproof
- 48 Hollywood trickery (Abbr.)
- 50 Ruby or Sandra

DOWN

- 1 Picturesque
- 2 Life's work
- 3 Onassis nickname
- 4 Cask sediment
- 5 '50s Ford
- 6 Peter the Great, e.g.
- 7 Shortly
- 8 Day- — paint

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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 INTES TACY, 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.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

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

Published in the Timberjay, March 22 & 29, 2024

LEIDING TOWNSHIP MEETING CHANGE NOTICE

The Leiding Town Board will hold their next regular board meeting on Tuesday, April 16, instead of the regular second Tuesday meeting date.

Marie Milan, Town Clerk

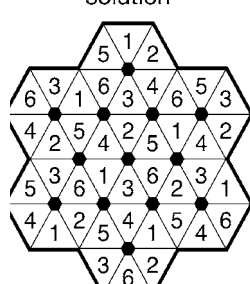
Published in the Timberjay, March 29, 2024

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SNOWFLAKES

solution



Read the TJ Online at www.timberjay.com

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
 ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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

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HOSPICE

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

PET CREMATION

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

HELP WANTED

CABIN CLEANING on Crane Lake. Full/Part-time positions available. Please call 218-993-2330. 3/29

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WANTED

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SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AA MEN'S PRIMARY PURPOSE meeting, Tuesdays at 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 226 E Harvey St., Ely, 218-235-38191

King Crossword

Answers
Solution time: 21 mins.
SCALE RAGAS
SCARED ONLINE
AERIES MOORES
NNE SEDAN BET
DIET LEN HAZE
SCRUB VOYAGES
GOV VIET
NABOKOV RECAP
OXEN LAM RAVI
MIA TUXES TON
DOTCOM NUDNIK
EMIGRE DREADS
STIES SEEPS

Even Exchange answers

- 1. Submit, Summit
- 2. Guest, Quest
- 3. Prude, Prune
- 4. Yankee, Yanked
- 5. Braise, Bruise
- 6. Night, Fight
- 7. Lever, Level
- 8. Teller, Taller
- 9. Alive, Allike
- 10. Saint, Ssint

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆
◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆ Difficult
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CryptoQuote
AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW
One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.
XBUMSJSOCQ OR CVSBQ
LCS KOSGCMS IBXOS JQE
NCRS KOSGCMS VJMNS.
- BQLNORG UXCZBXY
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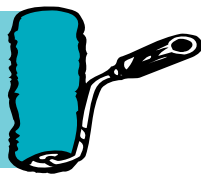
Answer
8 9 4 6 5 7 2 3 1
5 2 1 8 4 3 9 6 7
7 6 3 2 9 1 5 4 8
1 5 2 3 8 4 6 7 9
3 8 7 9 6 2 1 5 4
6 4 9 1 7 5 8 2 3
2 1 6 7 3 9 4 8 5
4 7 8 5 1 6 3 9 2
9 3 5 4 2 8 7 1 6

Super Crossword PHONY-BALONEY

- ACROSS**
1 Wearing nightclothes, for short
6 Meanie's look
11 In addition
15 Eyelid hair
19 Steel, e.g.
20 Ancient Greek region
21 Empty spaces
22 World's fair
23 Illegal detention
25 Columbus is its capital
26 British actor Guinness
27 "Mind your — business!"
28 High, round collar not folding over on itself
31 Without any variety
35 Ingest
36 Boston NBAer, for short
37 Part job made to look like marble, wood, etc.
41 New Nintendo console of 2012
43 Big antlered beast
47 Opposite of dep., in an airport
48 Thin porridge
50 Saw against the main grain, as wood
52 Bit of money seized by a Secret Service agent
58 Ecol. monitor
59 Middays
60 Tiny arachnid
61 J. — Hoover
64 Like overdue birthday wishes
67 Bill & Ted went on one in a 1991 film
70 Wombs
71 Bible book after Prov.
74 Q-V linkup
75 "Spider-Man" director Sam
76 Wedlock not based on love
79 Cheer up
81 Burros, e.g.
82 — occasion (never)
83 Paris' river
84 Toronto-to-Montreal dir.
85 Prada or Fendi replica, maybe
91 "Beloved" novelist Toni
94 Buc, Bronco or Niner
95 Beauty of film
97 Cindy Brady player Susan
98 Former jets to the U.K.
101 Bit of non-needed body art
105 Sour plum
107 Stage star Hagen
109 Title for Kate Middleton
110 Component of a coated glass-bead bracelet, perhaps
117 Even score
118 Forum attire
119 In the past
120 Apt cry of disbelief for this puzzle
125 Coagulate
126 Rebuke from Caesar
127 Like a weeab
128 About, before a date
129 At this place
130 Lather (up)
131 Gather up
132 Hoodwinked
DOWN
1 Global finance org.
2 Teacher's union, in brief
3 Old TV ministry inits.
4 2002 "Friday the 13th" sequel
5 Whole lotta
6 Knightly title
7 Bulblike base of a stem
8 — cat (two-base game)
9 Neighbor of Minn. and Ill.
10 Jewish potato pancake
11 Relative of a guinea pig
12 Lion portrayer Bert
13 Feature of Betty Boop's hair
14 "— Mio"
15 Crude sheds
16 Car shaft
17 Project detail, for short
18 Sell at a pawnshop
24 Opponent
29 "I taut I — a pudgy tat!"
30 Shade trees
31 Flip — coin
32 DEA worker
33 Irish money
34 Bring about
38 Some flawed garments: Abbr.
39 Add-on to the end of a wd.
40 Bit of a bray
42 Most polar
44 Sea nymph
45 Sovereign
46 Letter two before iota
49 VIP vehicle
51 Margarine
53 Deprives of weapons
54 "Sorry, too busy"
55 Bodily digit
56 Big striped cat, in French
57 A/C output qty.
62 Landscape painter Asher Brown —
63 Like low-quality eggs
64 City transport
65 Alcohol in liquor
66 Landlords or landladies
67 Empty
68 Having protruding hearing organs
69 Yang go-with
72 Sings gently
73 U.S. pres., militarily
77 Inquires
78 "Continue"
80 Architect Maya
83 Chiang Kai —
84 Broody rock genre
86 Investigate pryingly
87 Very loudly, in music
88 Miami loc.
89 Stud money
90 Old Storms and Trackers
92 Paraphrase
93 On Sunset Blvd., e.g.
96 Two, in Chile
99 Maintenance job on a car
100 Indy sponsor
102 Ballet outfit
103 Something very easy
104 Vegas casino
106 Some Siouan speakers
108 MetLife rival
110 Concern for a dermatologist
111 Concern for a dermatologist
112 Horror film lab assistant
113 Twice tetra-
114 "Pssi"
115 — avis
116 Some old Fords
121 The "S" of GPS: Abbr.
122 Hosp. zones
123 Ideal serve
124 Young fella



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CryptoQuote

answer

Reputation is often
got without merit and
lost without fault.
— English proverb

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Super Crossword

Answers

I	N	P	J	S	SC	O	W	L	AL	S	O	L	A	S	H			
M	E	T	A	L	I	O	N	I	A	G	A	P	S	E	X	P	O	
F	A	L	S	E	A	R	R	E	S	T	O	H	I	O	A	L	E	C
OW	N	MO	CK	T	UR	T	L	E	N	E	C	K						
ON	E	NO	T	E	E	A	T	C	E	L	T							
FA	UX	F	I	N	I	S	H	W	I	I	U	M	O	O	S	E		
ARR																		
CO	UN	T	E	R	F	E	I	T	B	I	L	L	E	P	A			
NO	ON	S	M	I	T	E	E	D	G	A	R							
B	E	L	A	T	E	D	B	O	G	U	S	J	O	U	R	N	E	Y
U	T	E	R	I	E	C	C	L	R	S	T	U	R	A	I	M		
S	H	A	M	M	A	R	R	I	A	G	E	G	L	A	D	D	E	N
A	S	S	E	S	O	N	N	O	S	E	I	N	E					
E	N	E																
M	O	R	R	I	S	O	N	N	F	L	E	R						
O	L	S	E	N	S	S	T	S	F	A	K	E	T	A	T	T	O	O
S	L	O	E	U	T	A												
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	E	T	T	U	N	E	R	D	Y	C	I	R	C	A	
H	E	R	E															

Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

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

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. Put forward | ___ B ___ | Pinnacle | ___ M ___ |
| 2. Visitor | G ___ | Mission | Q ___ |
| 3. Stuffed shirt | ___ D ___ | Trim the shrubs | ___ N ___ |
| 4. New York player | ___ E | Tugged | ___ D |
| 5. Simmer | ___ A ___ | Black-and-blue mark | ___ U ___ |
| 6. Evening | N ___ | Box | F ___ |
| 7. Machinery arm | ___ R | Steamroll | ___ L |
| 8. Bank employee | ___ E ___ | More statuesque | ___ A ___ |
| 9. Existing | ___ V ___ | Similar | ___ K ___ |
| 10. Canonized one | ___ A ___ | Stretch of activity | ___ T ___ |