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The **TIMBERJAY**



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HARBOR HOPES

TEDA OKs harbor concept plan

Proposal includes 44-unit hotel, associated commercial spaces

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER — The Tower Economic Development Authority gave its approval last week to a concept plan for the city’s harbor that calls for a 44-unit hotel along with other associated commercial spaces. The proposed development, which would be located on the harbor’s south side, was presented by landscape architect Luke Sydow, of

SAS and Associates of Duluth, and Orlyn Kringstad, who is working on contract with the prospective developers.

Work is already well underway on a related development just north of the harbor, on property located behind the Marjo Motel. The group involved in that project, Marjo RE, LLC, will likely be the primary developers of the proposed harbor hotel, although none of the parties have made a formal commitment

Right: The concept plan approved by the TEDA board last week, which includes a 44-unit hotel and related commercial buildings.

to the harbor hotel as of yet.

Approval of the concept plan will help advance a planned sewer and water connection to the Marjo property. That utility extension is

See...HARBOR pg. 9



CITY OF ELY

Ely’s HRA commits cold cash for new housing

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Talk is cheap. Ely’s Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) went from talk to commitment on Tuesday when it moved \$350,000 from its levy account to the city’s housing trust fund. Taking the plunge on a new housing project was disguised as a mundane agenda item at the HRA’s Tuesday meeting. For the first time, HRA opened up its wallet and ponied up its own funds to the proposed 37-apartment workforce housing project on the site of the old city garage on W. Pattison St.

The importance of this simple act was underscored last week when the Ely City Council designated Tuesday’s HRA meeting to be a special city council meeting. The special meeting status was required under Minnesota law if any city council members

See...HOUSING pg. 9

COUNTY SCHOOLS

District facing SOD by next fiscal year

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- The harsh reality of declining enrollment on ISD 2142’s financial status was made clear Tuesday when Finance Director Kim Johnson revealed her projection that the district will fall into statutory operating debt in the 2024-25 school year.

“Our enrollment for fiscal year 2024-25 is at levels we were back in 2013-14,” Johnson said. “Based on the way that schools are funded, that’s a very bad thing, because we’re paid state aid based on our student enrollment.”

Statutory operating debt is a condition in which the expenditures for a group of seven general fund

See...BUDGET WOES pg. 9

ECLIPSE 2024

You can’t eclipse a teachable moment

Teachers at T-S Elementary find ways to make celestial event fun despite heavy clouds

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Eclipse day in northern Minnesota featured a heavy overcast and showers, but the wet weather didn’t dampen the astronomy lessons at Tower-Soudan Elementary.

Students did trek out to the playground during the “peak” eclipse time in early afternoon, and had fun donning their eclipse glasses and trying to see something up in the sky, though mostly they just

Top: Ayva Anderson and classmates stand in the drizzle with their eclipse glasses. photo by J. Summit

Right: Levi Rahkola and Lily Russell recreate the phases of the moon using Oreo cookies. submitted

had raindrops wetting their tongues.

“Is it getting darker, is it getting darker?” students kept asking. Unfortunately, the answer was no...it was

See...ECLIPSE pg. 10



GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

New board backs funding for Tower Ambulance

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- The change in leadership on the Greenwood Town Board has brought a reversal on one of the most contentious issues in the township in recent years.

Township attorney finds no liability concern over donation

After three years of refusal to contribute financially to the Tower Area Ambulance Service’s ambulance replacement fund, the town board voted Tuesday to sign a new three-year Ambulance Capital

Aid Donation agreement, and authorized payment of \$26,025 for 2024. The payment is based on \$25 per capita using the township’s 2020 census figure of 1,041 year-round residents. These funds, collected from all

the governmental units in the ambulance service area, help pay for the purchase of new ambulances.

See...DONATION pg. 9



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Community notices

Northern Range Nursing honor guard to meet April 22

VIRGINIA - Northern Range Nursing honor guard will hold a meeting at Essentia Health Monday, April 22 at 4 p.m. The meeting will be held in the basement of McMillian A. Please feel free to come if interested in joining.

Ely EMPOWER meeting scheduled for April 22

ELY - EMPOWER, an Ely-based progressive women's group, will meet Monday, April 22 at 6 p.m. The meeting will be held at Ely Folk School located at 209 E. Sheridan St.

The evening's speaker is Kap Wilkes, executive director of Well Being Development. Wilkes will speak on addictions as a disease and WBD's efforts to start a recovery residence. EMPOWER welcomes all individuals who self-identify as women. To join EMPOWER, please mail a \$25 check for annual dues, payable to: EMPOWER, PO Box 14, Ely, MN 55731 or contact Janine at pattenj82@gmail.com.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church to host annual white elephant sale April 27

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 Wednesday-Friday the week of the sale. For more information contact the church office at 218.263-7422 or oslchibb@mchsi.com.

Cook Hospital Community Education to hold "Falls Prevention" class April 25

COOK -On Thursday, April 25 from 4-5 p.m. Amy Kemp, OTR/L, CLT will host the upcoming "Falls Prevention" class at the Cook Hospital conference room.

This free community education class is geared towards informing individuals on the prevalence of falls, identifying fall risk factors, and educating on ways to avoid and prevent falls. Beverages and snacks will be provided.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church to hold early season rummage sale on April 19

VIRGINIA - Our Savior's Lutheran Church will be having their annual clothing and used-a-bit sale Friday April 19 from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. and Saturday April 20 from 8:30 a.m. - noon. Most clothing will be 50 cents. There will also be household items, toys, tools, jewelry, and a boutique. Collector's cards (Magic, Dragon Ball Z, and Pokémon) will be for sale. The church is located at 1111 8th St. S.

Find great deals on April 20 at Kaleva Hall annual spring rummage sale

VIRGINIA - Kaleva Hall annual spring rummage sale will be Saturday April 20 from 9 a.m. -3 p.m. at Historic Kaleva Hall located at 125 3rd St. N. There will be items for everyone. Coffee 'an will be served, and everyone is welcome.

LIVE MUSIC

Mesabi Community Band to present "A Musical Spring Bouquet" concert April 18

EVELETH - The Mesabi Community Band, under the direction of Larry Baker and Bill Lavato, will present "A Musical Spring Bouquet" concert, on Thursday, April 18 at 7 p.m. in the historic Eveleth City Auditorium. The musical bouquet will feature band members Zach Biles on French horn, performing "Rondo" (from Concerto No. 3 in E-flat) by W. A. Mozart, and percussionists Larry Baker, Zeb Norenberg and Kevin Szumal on snare drums in "Haskell's Rascals Snare Drum Trio" by Paul Yoder. Also featured will be international tango teacher and dancer, Miriam Lea and Guillermo Salvat dancing to

"La Cumparsita" by Gerardo M. Rodriguez and "Libertango" by Astor Piazzolla. The band will also be presenting a range of music from Yorkshire Ballad, "The Sound of the Tijuana Brass" and "His Honor March" for the enjoyment of the audience.

As a thank you for the years of support from the community, there will not be a charge for this concert. The concert will be dedicated to former members, George Rosandich and Marijean Kniefel.

RIGHT: Zach Biles on French horn will be featured in the Mesabi Community Band's "A Musical Spring Bouquet."



OPPORTUNITY

FDLTCC to host Peace Officer and Criminal Justice Expo April 17

CLOQUET- Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (FDLTCC) is excited to host the 2024 Peace Officer and Criminal Justice Expo from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17 in the Lester Jack Briggs Cultural Center. During the event, attendees can meet with a record number of representatives from a variety of local, county, state, and federal agencies to learn about job openings and the communities they serve. The event is free, open to the public, and lunch will be provided.

"Today, there is an unprecedented staffing shortage of professionally trained peace officers in cities, counties, and in state agencies here in Minnesota and throughout the United States. The demand for highly trained and skilled applicants

is at a peak," shared Mike Tusken, FDLTCC Law Enforcement Program Coordinator. "The students who graduate from FDLTCC are held in high esteem by agencies in the local area and throughout the state and nation. We are proud to have students employed in agencies across the United States in city, county, state and federal agencies representing law enforcement and criminal justice careers."

The Peace Officer and Criminal Justice Expo is designed to provide information about the wide range of career opportunities available in the criminal justice field. More than 45 prospective employers representing police, sheriff, conservation officers, and the state patrol will be in attendance to recruit prospective

employees and provide information about their agencies and careers opportunities.

Tusken continued, "We welcome students and members of the public who have an interest in careers in criminal justice and policing to learn more about career opportunities and how FDLTCC can prepare students to get the skills and training to begin a career in protecting and serving the people in the communities they choose to live and work in."

For more information, contact Cassandra Nicholson via email at cnicholson@fdltcc.edu or visit <https://fdltcc.edu/event/peace-officer-criminal-justice-expo-2024/>.

GOOD TO KNOW

County highlights property tax refund programs available to residents

REGIONAL -With the recent arrival of 2024 St. Louis County property tax statements in the mail, county leaders want to highlight two state pro-

grams that could provide residents with property tax refunds.

For people whose home has homestead classification, the Minnesota Department of Revenue offers two types of property tax refunds - the regular homestead credit and the special homestead credit.

The regular homestead credit refund is for homesteaders whose property taxes exceed a specified percentage of household income. For taxes payable in 2024, the homeowner's household income must have been less than \$135,410 in 2023 to be eligible.

The special home-

stead credit refund is for homestead properties where the net property tax amount increased by 12 percent or more since the previous year. The increase must be at least \$100 and cannot be due to new construction. There is no income limitation for this refund. The maximum refund is \$1,000.

Nearly 29 percent of residents in the Arrowhead region, which includes St. Louis County, qualified for a property tax refund in 2021, the most recent year for which information is available.

Both programs require an application to the Department of Rev-

enue using the MIPR form, which is available online on the Department of Revenue website. The deadline for filing a 2024 return is August 15, 2024. Some taxpayers may qualify for the special refund even if they do not qualify for the regular refund.

Refunds are also not available to homeowners who owe delinquent taxes. Additional information about these two property tax refund programs be found online at revenue.state.mn.us/property-tax-refund or by calling the Department of Revenue at 800-652-9094.



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TOWER CITY COUNCIL

Tower gives go-ahead to water plant project

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

Joint Tower and Breitung project will update water treatment capabilities

TOWER— The city council here took a leap on Monday and approved the bid from Lakehead Constructors to build a new drinking water treatment plant to serve Tower and Soudan despite a remaining million-dollar funding gap. The project, now estimated to cost \$10.7 million, including construction and related engineering and construction administration, has been in the works for at least five years, but dramatic escalations in the cost of the project had prompted city and Breitung Township officials to pursue cheaper alternatives or other funding sources.

But when a new round of bidding suggested little prospect for cost savings on construction, the jointly-managed Tower-Breitung Waste Water Board recommended that the city and township move forward with the project even as the two communities reach out for additional funding.

The two communities plan to finance the project through a combination of city and federal grants, although the available grant dollars fall about \$2.1 million short of the project's estimated price tag. The communities could access that amount through a loan from the state's Public Facilities Administration, but the cost of servicing that loan would push water rates in the two towns higher than most customers could bear.

"Worst case scenario we could borrow \$2 million, but we're not going to do that," said Matt Tuchel, who manages the communities' drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Tuchel expressed his frustration. "I hate spending this much money, especially when we were told it would be half this amount," he told the council.

Tuchel noted that the project budget includes \$470,000 for contingencies. "Hopefully, we won't need all that which can reduce the cost some." He noted, as well, that the project will be built over two years, so the communities will have time to identify and request other sources of funding to help close the gap. "We have no intention of borrowing \$2 million," Tuchel reiterated. "We intend to borrow \$1.05 million."

Council member Joe Morin



The existing water treatment facility is out-of-date and unable to deal with the issue of chlorination by-product contamination.

asked if the cost would come down if the council held off and waited. "I've seen no indication of that," responded Tuchel.

In the end, the council voted unanimously, with council member Kevin Norby absent, to accept the bid of \$9.05 million from Lakehead Constructors.

In other action, the council approved a resolution to issue a capital improvement bond totaling \$290,000 to finance the purchase of the St. Louis County public works facility on Marina Drive. The council approved the bond issuance after a short, required public hearing. Steve Altenburg was the lone Tower resident to raise objections to the bond and acquisition of the county facility, which includes approximately 34 acres of land and 1,100 feet of frontage on Marina Drive. Altenburg questioned how the city was going to pay the cost of the bond, with its annual payment of about \$38,000.

"Why aren't you finding another solution that doesn't just put the city deeper into debt?" he asked. "Why wasn't a plan put in place?" he asked, suggesting that land sold by the Tower Economic Development Authority in 2022 could have covered a portion of the cost of

the county garage purchase.

Mayor Dave Setterberg responded, noting that the acquisition will provide a number of cost savings, including fuel savings for all city vehicles since the city will now be able to purchase its fuel in bulk because of fuel tanks and pumps the county is leaving behind. He noted, as well, that the city is planning to lease out space in city storage garages currently used by public works, since the equipment stored in those buildings will now be relocated to the new facility.

"And there's years' worth of sand and salt being left as well," noted Morin, adding that the additional open space around the facility could be available for other types of leased storage as well.

Setterberg said the facility should also save the city on maintenance and repair costs on city vehicles and equipment because the shop space in the main garage on the site is large enough, and equipped with a crane, to allow the city's public works staff to undertake repairs and maintenance themselves, rather than hiring it out.

"If we ever did feel it was a burden, the value of the property is much more than we're

purchasing it for," added Setterberg, and could be easily resold for considerably more.

Morin agreed. "Controlling that piece of property is a super deal," he said.

The city is purchasing the county site for \$260,000, while an additional \$30,000 for the bond will cover the cost of issuance and a deposit to capitalized interest.

Other business

In other business, the council:

► Heard that the Maxfield housing study is now complete and that the city's housing committee is currently reviewing the document. The city has also put out housing surveys at various locations in Tower and surrounding townships to solicit local views on housing needs. It's all work being undertaken to bolster the city's case for a housing program or project that has yet to be identified.

► Heard that the city received funding totaling \$370,345 for a variety of infrastructure projects. About two-thirds of the funding is slated for storm sewer repairs with \$75,000 earmarked for sewer line repairs along S. Second and Third Streets. CDBG is providing an additional \$308,750 for that work. The IRRR funds will also pay for a cemetery water line and a chip reader at the Tower Airport. Council members discussed the potential for combining the sewer work with the installation of a new Green Flush bathroom facility near the civic center.

► Heard that the city did not receive an IRRR grant to match grant funding from the Minnesota Historical Society for work at the train depot. The city is continuing to pursue the project, however, and the council approved a motion to accept the proposal from architects MacDonald and Mack to assess and develop construction documents for a major repair and renovation at the historic depot.

► Requested more information before deciding on how to proceed with a planned update to the heating system at the Herbert R. Lamppa civic center, and how it might impact a request by the Tower-Soudan Civic Club to undertake a landscaping project at the civic center entrance. The civic center has a 3,000-gallon underground fuel oil tank that may have to be removed or

decommissioned once the current heating system is replaced, which could impact any landscaping done this year.

► Set the application fee for a chicken permit at \$50.

► Approved the second reading of a minor change to Ordinance 82 that would allow for single family home construction in the Harbor North zone district.

► Directed the planning and zoning commission to draft alternative ordinance updates regarding short-term rentals, one which would prohibit short-term rentals in the city's residential districts and the other that would allow a handful of the rentals within those districts. The change would not alter the ability of Main Street or harbor zone businesses to engage in short-term rentals. Morin advocated for the prohibition on short-term rentals in the residential districts, noting that the city could loosen its regulations in the future if it deemed necessary.

► Authorized clerk-treasurer Michael Shultz to apply for a Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households (SEARCH) grant from USDA Rural Development. The grant would provide technical assistance to help the city develop a long-term plan for community infrastructure repairs. The USDA has funding available for small cities with limited financial means to undertake large-scale repairs to local infrastructure.

► Heard that Schultz has submitted an initial letter of interest in a \$40,000 grant from the Blandin Foundation to build an ADA-accessible kayak dock at the kayak launch on the East Two River.

► Authorized Schultz and the city maintenance foreman to seek grant funding for the purchase of a utility locator device. The city is looking to split the \$6,000 cost of the purchase with Breitung as well as cover as much as possible with grant funding.

► Tentatively set June 14-15 as Tidy Up Tower days this year. Unlike past years, the council indicated that they hope to focus their clean-up efforts on public spaces, like parks and roadsides along Main Street, rather than residential areas.

REAL ESTATE



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Editorial

Biden and Israel

It's time for the administration to put its foot down on the war in Gaza

The United States has long been a friend to Israel and that's appropriate. But sometimes friends have to tell a friend when they're in the wrong, and it is well past time for the Biden administration to make that point in the only way it appears that Israel's government will get the message— by demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and suspending U.S. military support for Israel's war effort in Gaza if Israel doesn't comply.

That Israel would respond to the outrageous Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas was understandable. It could not let such an atrocity go unanswered. Yet Israel's response has been so utterly disproportionate and so destructive to innocent civilians and civilian infrastructure in Gaza that it borders on a war crime.

The U.S. has rightly decried Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine and the devastating bombardment of major cities there. And while the circumstances are certainly not identical, there is one reality that is hard to avoid. In Ukraine, most residents have been able to flee the fighting. That's not the case in Gaza, where roughly a million and a half Palestinians remain trapped behind concrete walls and razor wire erected by Israel as their cities have been reduced to rubble around them. Most have fled to Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah, where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promises to next bring Israel's punishing assaults.

Hamas obviously shares responsibility for the horrendous circumstances now facing residents of Gaza, since its own actions put Palestinians at risk. Yet Hamas has been labeled a terrorist organization by both the U.S. and Israel and the world has a right to expect a greater standard of care for civilian populations by the U.S. and Israel than from terrorists. Like it or not, Israel's response to the Oct. 7 attacks has turned much of the world, which initially voiced sympathy and support for the Jewish state, against it. Through its continued military support for Israel, the U.S. shares responsibility for the devastation currently being experienced in Gaza.

It doesn't have to be this way. The people in both Israel and Gaza are the victims of a colossal failure of leadership on both sides. The inability of their leadership to find a path forward that recognizes the legitimate rights of both the Israelis and the Palestinians to live in peace and freedom in the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean, has been a failure of imagination. As a series

of speakers at last week's meeting of the group Northern Progressives made clear, the conflict in Palestine wasn't centuries in the making. This is a conflict over land, not about religion, and until both sides recognize the others' justifiable desire for peace and security (and freedom in the case of the Palestinians), this senseless violence will continue. Israel can never defeat a group like Hamas through a military response— and its current approach only ensures that the extremism fostered by groups like Hamas will continue to thrive. Peace can only come when both sides take steps to rein in the extremists in their ranks to allow the peacemakers, who are eager to get to work, to find a lasting solution.

That is what the Biden administration needs to tell Israel's leaders, in no uncertain terms. While the administration has been more critical, at least rhetorically, of Israel's actions in recent weeks, the administration's willingness to continue financing and equipping Israel's war machine leaves America directly culpable in one of the world's greatest humanitarian crises in decades.

It's not just the punishing air assaults that have already killed tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians, mostly women and children. According to aid organizations and the United Nations, Israel's restrictions on food aid into Gaza have left many of those still alive in Gaza facing imminent famine. A growing number of Palestinians, mostly children, have already starved to death. That situation has only worsened in the wake of the Israeli attack on aid workers from the group World Central Kitchen, which has prompted many aid groups to pull their staff from Gaza.

While this conflict may be located half a world away, we all can play a role in making it better. Our elected representatives in Washington could do more to speak out about the need for a permanent ceasefire and for a renewed push for a lasting peace in the Middle East, and we, as citizens of Minnesota can make a difference by urging them to do so. It is as easy to do as sending an email or picking up the telephone to voice your opinion.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar: Virginia office- 218-741-9690 • Metro office- 612-727-5220 • D.C. office- 202-224-3244.

Sen. Tina Smith: Duluth office- 218-722-2390 • St. Paul office- 651-221-1016 • D.C. office- 202-224-5641.

The White House: 202-456-1414 or 202-456-1111.



COMMENTARY

President Joe Biden reached back in history in his recent State of the Union address, citing a January 1941 speech in which Franklin Delano Roosevelt called on America to reject isolationism and engage with the world. This was the famous Four Freedoms speech, when FDR laid out his idealistic vision of “four essential freedoms” that were worth fighting for: freedom of speech, freedom to worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

Roosevelt's immediate purpose, the one that Biden embraced, was to rally support for America's friends. As Biden said, “freedom and democracy were under assault in the world.” World War II was well underway in Europe. Hitler's forces had conquered Poland, and France, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands would fall to Germany within months. In the Pacific, Japan was expanding its empire.

Roosevelt's speech articulated one of the “big decisions” that shaped American history, which I discussed in a recent column. An ardent internationalist, he argued that the attacks in Europe and Asia would inevitably threaten our freedom, and it was in our national interest to respond. America's safety was “overwhelmingly involved in events far beyond our borders,” he told Congress.

He had just been elected to an unprecedented third term, and his Republican

opponent, Wendell Willkie, also favored support for U.S. allies. FDR said Americans agreed “by an impressive expression of public will and without regard to partisanship.” In fact, there remained a strong strain of isolationism among the public. Many people were still exhausted from World War I, which claimed over 100,000 American lives. The Great Depression had understandably put the focus on domestic suffering.

Roosevelt wasn't calling for American soldiers to go to war. Instead, he wanted funds to manufacture military supplies and equipment for America's allies. The U.S. economy would shift from a peacetime to a wartime footing. Allies didn't need manpower, he said, but needed billions of dollars' worth of weapons to defend themselves. Persuaded, Congress passed the Lend Lease Act, which let the president direct aid to the allies without violating the official U.S. position of neutrality.

On Dec. 7, 1941, Japan invaded Pearl Harbor and neutrality was a thing of the past. Roosevelt didn't use the phrase Four Freedoms until near the end of the speech, but the concept came to symbolize what America and its allies would be fighting for. The artist Norman Rockwell created iconic illustrations, published in the *Saturday*

Evening Post, that represented each of the freedoms, and the Treasury Department sold copies to raise money for the war effort.

Biden cited FDR's speech to appeal for billions of dollars in military aid for Ukraine, which has spent the past two years fighting courageously against an invasion by Vladimir Putin's Russia. Congress has, unfortunately, stalled the aid, with partisanship playing a big role.

The president was on target to point out parallels between FDR's time and our own. Donald Trump, the almost certain Republican candidate for president, has questioned U.S. support for Ukraine and argued Europe should bear more of the cost. Many Americans today are disillusioned from our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and focused on domestic problems. Trump's “America First slogan” even shares its name with an isolationist group that opposed U.S. entry into World War II.

But Biden's argument that America should stand by its friends is as true today as ever. It will not serve our national interest to stand by as Russia threatens Europe.

The debate over helping Ukraine is a reminder that our nation's big decisions often are revisited. Do we still believe in freedom of speech, freedom to worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear for all people? Will we stand by our friends? What, exactly, is America's role in the world? Each generation of Americans will have to answer these questions anew.



LEE HAMILTON

COMMENTARY

It must be a sign...our favorite travel game

Some people collect seashells or coins. Others collect art or Hummel figurines. In my household, we collect signs. To be accurate, we drive around and take photographs of signs. The long-suffering spouse and I have been promising each other that one of these years we will build a website—or maybe publish a book—of all the photos we've collected over the decades of signs we've found. We



CATIE CLARK

have been saying this since before we ever got married. I'm sure that as soon as we find some free time, this will certainly happen. Until then, let me just describe to you some of the highlights of our collection.



Our most recent signs have been local. To start, I wonder about a sign we photographed last winter on Highway 169 between Tower and Virginia. It was posted this winter too. “Free store with wrap,”

the homemade sign states. This always generates a flurry of comments as we pass it. What sort of store are they giving away with that wrap? The long-suffering spouse and I have agreed that it's probably a scam and that the “free store” in question is probably a dry-cleaning business on the hook for millions of dollars of environmental clean-up of dumping chlorine trifluoride out the backdoor.

Three local signs became part of what sold us on moving to the Ely area. First, we almost had an accident the first time we passed that well-known

business in Babbitt, the Just Bite Me bait shop. It should be at least a misdemeanor for someone to laugh that hard while driving.

The second sign was the upside down Kwazy Wabbit sign in Ely. We concluded that any town with a bar that brazenly silly had to be a great place to live. Last, when we drove into Ely for the very first time, the “Start a Movement” sign on the side of the Crapola business headquarters almost lived up to its name. After all, the last potty stop had been somewhere west of Bemidji. I confess I had

to pull over and roll down the windows to air out all the hilarity and other bodily miasmas in the car.

The long-suffering spouse and I don't go looking for signs. We just like to go for long drives and explore backroads. It was on one of those drive that I saw my all-time favorite sign. It read: “Pigs For Rent.” I'm not making this up.

Of course, context is everything. The sign was in the window of a pipeline services business in central Texas. In the oil patch, as one would say in

See SIGNS...pg. 5

FIRE DANGER

County debuts online fire evacuation map

Coordinated preparation is ongoing for heightened fire risk

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- St. Louis County has launched a new online mapping tool designed to expedite safe evacuations in the event of a wildfire, and the system was introduced in a press conference last week that brought together representatives of six different agencies to talk about fire emergency preparedness.

Representatives from St. Louis County Sheriff's Emergency Management, the U.S. Forest Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, National Weather Service in Duluth, and the cities of Ely and Duluth outlined their winter efforts to update plans for potential wildfires.

A key component of coordinated planning efforts was the development of the online evacuation map, which divides the county into 1,600 evacuation zones and allows residents to assess their community or neighborhood's fire risk. When a fire develops, the map will pinpoint its loca-

tion using the most up-to-date data and highlight the evacuation zones for those living in affected areas. The map, following the Ready, Set, Go model, aids in preparation and evacuation if necessary and is available at stlouiscountymn.gov/wildfire. Ely has developed a similar tool, ensuring compatibility with the county's system. The website also provides property fire risk reduction tips and evacuation checklists.

Josh Brinkman, St. Louis County Emergency Operations Manager, stressed the importance of cooperation among agencies.

"I just want to emphasize the cooperation that all the agencies and departments have when we're working and preparing," Brinkman said. "We're talking all hazards, all the time, so we're ready for it. We can put our heads together to come up with the best possible solutions."

St. Louis County's preparations, which began last fall,

include the Public Health Department's collaboration with the American Red Cross to update potential emergency shelter sites and the Public Works Department's efforts to clear roadway brush to ensure emergency vehicle access.

The National Weather Service in Duluth, a key planning partner, has shared forecasts and historical data. Most of the county faces moderate drought conditions, a concern exacerbated by the prediction of above-normal temperatures through April, leading to heightened fire danger until vegetation revives. Meteorologist Woody Unruh said that conditions have accelerated the typical timeline for fire season forecasting.

"It's very unusual to have drought conditions worsen during the winter because we normally have a large snowpack in place. What typically happens in May, we're seeing in April," he said.

The U.S. Forest Service has prepared for wildfire re-

sponse on the Superior National Forest with Forest Supervisor Tom Hall noting the national ability to mobilize resources amid an above-average wildfire risk forecast.

Firewise Specialist Laura Murphy with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources offered property protection tips, including recommending gutter cleaning and removing flammable materials from around homes. The Firewise website at www.dnr.state.mn.us/firewise/index.html has extensive resources for homeowners and communities on how to reduce fire risk.

Duluth Fire Chief Shawn Krizaj said that the heightened fire risk is affecting urban areas as well. His department's response to grass fires is already running well ahead of normal this year. He advised removing winter leaf cover from gardens and heeding air quality warnings during wildfires.

Letters from Readers

Too many useless words

A pet peeve of mine is when people stick, like, useless words into their speech. Didn't they, like, pass English class in high school? It's as though they don't, like, think they have enough to say without throwing in extra words. Like, why would they believe that?

It's distracting to hear all those, like, worthless words tossed in willy nilly. Some people, like, put two or more of those useless words in, like, one sentence. This is especially true for, like, compound sentences, because people, like, put one of the useless words in the first clause, and, like, another one or two in the second. Maybe someone who, like, likes to do this will, like, think back to how ridiculous this sounds and omit useless, distracting words like like.

Rich Floyd Ely

SIGNS...Cont. from page 4

those parts, a pig is a gizmo used to clean the insides of a pipeline. If you know about "pigging," it makes perfect sense that a firm servicing pipelines would rent pigs.

Texas is a great state for good signs. Anyone looking to start their own sign collection would do well off to start in Lake Jackson, south of Houston. Most of the streets

in this small town end in "way." We spent an entire afternoon collecting signs there in 2009, with acquisitions of Any Way, No Way, Some Way, His Way, This Way, and, of course, That Way.

Some of the signs in our collection are there because they don't make sense. One example is a sign with just a question mark on it, spotted on a

frontage road along Interstate 80 in central Iowa. There's nothing there. It's just a stretch of road next to a corn field, at least five miles from the nearest town with no house, barn, business, or abandoned rest area. It's a mystery why it's there, which probably explains it.

Another nonsensical sign is on the edge of the southbound rest area on

Interstate 95 in Kennebunk, Maine. It's planted in the grass next to the dumpsters. All it says is "LOAM." That's it. LOAM. It's never made sense to me. Maine is not Iowa, after all. There's nothing loamy about the place. Maine has only three soil types: peat, glacial till, and beach sand. Maybe it's an advertisement for Max Helmbert-

er's game of the same name.

I will wrap up with my favorite sign we collected in Idaho. Driving down the backroads south of Idaho Falls, where the sagebrush desert competes with the potato fields, this sign lives at a T-intersection with a gorgeous backdrop of the Blackfoot Range rising behind it. It has an arrow

pointing into the local canyon, and says simply "Rattlesnake Transfer, closed Sundays."

That part of Idaho is rather conservative and quite God-fearing. It must be a relief to the religiously minded among us that you can't transfer any rattlesnakes on Sundays in Wolverine, Idaho.

Keep it Clean,
ST. LOUIS COUNTY



AURORA TRANSFER STATION

5910 Hwy 135 N, Aurora

HOURS
Mon, Thu, Fri: 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
Tue, Wed: 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Sat: 8 a.m.–Noon

EMBARRASS CANISTER SITE

7530 Koski Rd, Embarrass

HOURS
Sat: 12:30 p.m.– 4:30 p.m.
Thu: 10 a.m.– 5 p.m.

NORTHWOODS TRANSFER STATION

9384 Hwy 21 N, Ely/Babbitt

SUMMER HOURS
Mon, Thu-Sat: 8 a.m.–3 p.m.
Tue: 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Wed:
Noon–6 p.m.

SOUDAN CANISTER SITE

5160 Hwy 169, Soudan

HOURS
Mon, Sat: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Wed, Sun: Noon–5 p.m.

REGIONAL LANDFILL

5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia

HOURS
Mon-Fri: 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Sat: 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE FACILITY

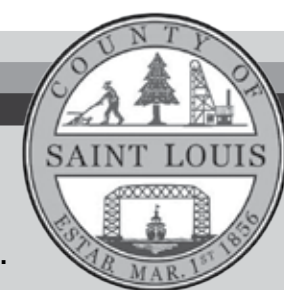
5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia

HOURS
Tues and Sat: 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

ST. LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

218-749-9703 | OFFICE HOURS MON - FRI 8 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

Summer hours effective April 15 - September 30



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the
TIMBERJAY

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

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

Week of April 15

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.

Breitung Town Board- 6 p.m. on April 18

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

**TSHS weekly winner**

TOWER- The winner of the \$100 cash prize for week 37 of the Charlemagne's 52 Club is Bergetta Indihar of Tower. Bergetta is a double winner; winning tickets were put back in the raffle pool, so some lucky winners get chosen more than once.

History Tidbit: The Duluth and Iron Range Railroad facilitated the development of the resort and tourism industry on Lake Vermilion and the surrounding area throughout the early part of the twentieth century, several decades before tourism became an important industry in St. Louis County and throughout the State of Minnesota by allowing early access to, and promotion of, the northern Minnesota lake region.

Bookmobile stops

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesdays: April 17, May 8 and 29, no bookmobile stop in June, Jul 10 and 31, Aug 21, Sept. 11, Oct. 2 and 23, Nov. 13, and Dec. 4, 2024.

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

For more information on the Bookmobile or Mail-A-Book services, contact the Arrowhead Library System, 218-741-3840, email at als@alslib.info, or website at alslib.info.

Tower-Soudan Elementary gets \$85,000 grant

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

Lake Country Power grant to fund gym and stage improvements

TOWER- An \$85,000 grant from Lake Country Power (LCP) will fund the majority of an estimated \$91,000 project to update the gym at Tower-Soudan Elementary. The district will be contributing the remainder of the project costs.

The updates include cleaning and painting the discolored brick walls, replacing the 20-plus year old foam pads on the back wall and stage wall, and purchasing new risers to be used for both school and community concert performances.

These renovations help complete other work already done in the gym, including a new sound system and better lighting.

Principal John Jirik applied for the grant, and then when the school's proposal was selected as a finalist, was asked to give a presentation to the LCP board.

Jirik was very excited the project was chosen for funding. He noted the project benefits the school along with the wider community, which uses the gym for events such as the community choir holiday concert, and other large gatherings.

The grant is from a special Lake Country Power program created to benefit schools in the cooperative's service area. The Education Improvement Program awards grants of up to \$100,000, funded through the coop's unclaimed capital credits. The coop's board of director's reviews applications, determines the finalists, and then can request



Gym teacher Scott Chiabotti gets elementary students ready to play a game in the gym.

Left: The padding on the stage front and back wall will be replaced, along with cleaning and painting of the brick walls.



photos by J. Summit

in-person interviews, before a final decision is made. This is a new program, started in 2022.

Greg Schulzetenberg, community relations manager, said the LCP board was impressed with the gym's importance to the wider community.

"The gym is central to the community," he said. "It's not just a school, but a community space."

Schulzetenberg said Jirik made a very compelling presen-

tation to the board.

This is the second year the board has made donations from this program. Last year they donated \$100,000 to the Ely High School to help renovate the chemistry classroom.

Another update coming to the school is new tables for the lunchroom, Jirik said.

Jirik said work is expected to be completed this summer.

Teacher Scott Chiabotti figured the current purple and gold

New and improved McKinley Park paved trail

BREITUNG- The McKinley Park paved trail extends from the Soudan Underground Mine entrance road to McKinley Park on Lake Vermilion. It is part of a loop that includes the Mesabi Trail between Tower and Soudan, and the Hoodoo Point paved trail.

Last year, the trail was reconstructed, widened to 10 feet, lengthened to 1.5 miles and resurfaced to provide a new, improved connection route. A significant portion of the reconstruction included re-routing a steep incline up and down a hill to access McKinley Park Campground and Beach. The project also resolved past erosion issues. Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation supported the project with \$202,500 in Regional Trails grants to Breitung Township. Total project investment was \$520,000.

The trail runs parallel to St. Louis County Highway 697, providing a safe and convenient route alternate to pedestrians using the county road. Originally constructed in 1988, the multi-use trail is used for biking, hiking, walking, and snowshoeing. The trail is utilized year-round by local residents and tourists visit-

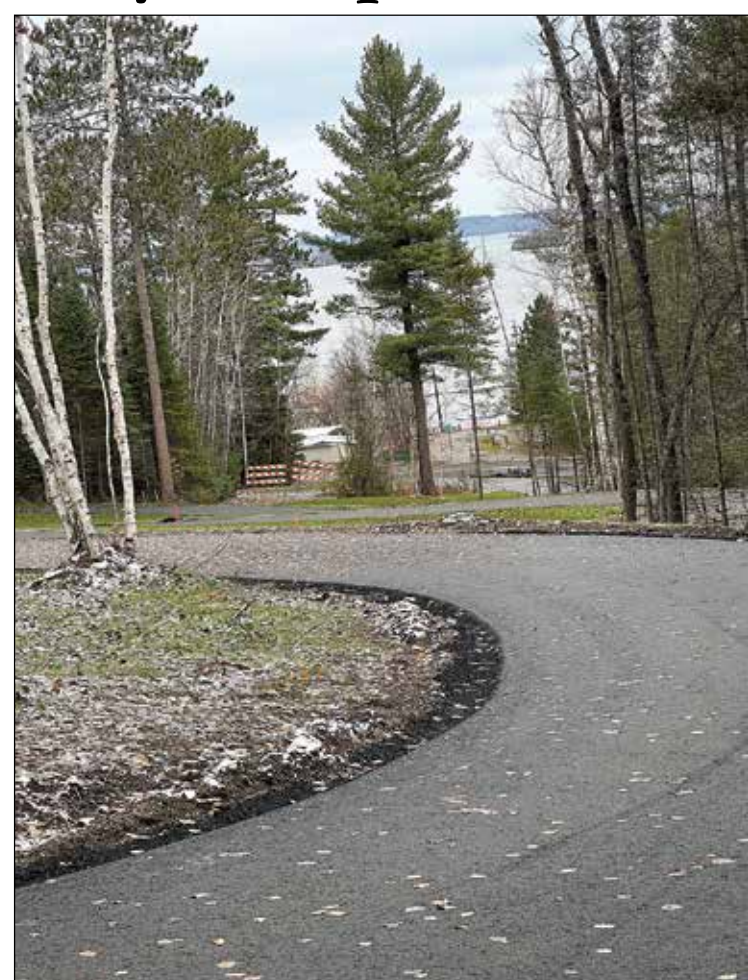
ing the region.

The McKinley Park trail connects to the Mesabi Trail, a paved trail that extends west towards the city Tower and east towards the city of Ely.

"The McKinley Park trail continues to have a major economic impact as part of our tourist-based economy," said Tim Tomsich, Breitung Township chairman. "Due to the trail's close proximity to the new state park, it has become increasingly popular."

For more information on the regional trails grant program, contact Jim Plummer at 218-274-7006.

This article is used by permission from The Ranger, a publication of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation. IRRRR's mission is to invest resources to foster vibrant growth and economic prosperity in northeastern Minnesota. The agency's grants and loans are funded through taxes paid by Minnesota's mining industry. You can find copies of past issues of The Ranger at <https://mn.gov/irrrb/ranger/>



Rolling s-shaped curves are now featured in the trail section that connects to McKinley Park Campground.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Greenwood pickleball fundraiser set for April 20

GREENWOOD TWP- Pizza for Pickleball is set for Saturday, April 20 from 6 - 9 p.m. at the Vermilion Club. Pizza is courtesy of the Vermilion Club, and there will be live music by Jammin' Joe. There will be a silent auction, raffles, and prizes. Donations are much appreciated. There is also a raffle for a quilt donated by Diane Frerichs, with only 100 tickets being sold at \$20 each.

The event is sponsored by the Greenwood Community Recreation Board and the Lake Vermilion Pickleball Association. Donations are tax-deductible.

Singers needed for Tower-Soudan Memorial Day program

TOWER- Anyone who enjoys group singing is invited to join with the Tower-Soudan Area Singers to help celebrate Memorial Day. The annual program to honor all military Veterans will be held in the Herb Lampka Civic Center on Monday, May 27 at 10 a.m.

Rehearsals for the program will be on Mondays, May 16, 13, and 20 at 5 p.m. in the music room at the Tower Elementary School. Participants are asked to enter the building through the 3rd St. (north) entrance.

Traditional patriotic music will be performed for and with the audience. The music and folders will be provided. If you

have any questions contact Rolf Anderson at 218-753-3262.

Lunch Bunch to meet on April 17

ANGORA- The Lunch Bunch group will meet at the South Switch Bar and Grill on Wednesday, April 17, at 12:30 p.m. RSVP to Kathy 218-753-2530. Everyone is welcomed to join the gathering.

Civic Club to meet on April 17

SOUDAN- The Tower Soudan Civic Club will meet on Wednesday April 17 at 6 p.m. at Breitung Township Community Center in Soudan.

The speaker is Barbara Baldrice. She is President of the Board of Northern Lights Music Festival. She will be

speaking on the history of the music festival and providing information on the Arrowhead Concert Series. Everyone is welcome to hear this presentation.

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. Students are asked to register by April 11. Cost is \$8. Register online at <https://slc2142.RevTrak.net>.

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 jkkaufenberg@isd2142.k12.mn.us. Class instructor is Sue Pasmik.

Get Informed!

Get the Timberjay!



BOUNDARY WATERS

Book features '99 Boundary Waters blowdown

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

REGIONAL— Ely plays a central role in a recent non-fiction book by award-winning Minnesota author Cary Griffith. “Gunflint Falling” is full of white-knuckle moments as it provides a comprehensive account of how the international derecho event of July 4, 1999, affected the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and surrounding areas. The derecho storm system caused damage from South Dakota to northern Maine and it carved a massive path of destruction on either side of the Minnesota-Ontario border, flattening a swath four to 12 miles wide from Lake Vermilion to Gunflint Lake.

The book is a chronological account of the disaster which affected local residents and visitors to the 1.1 million-acre wilderness along with parts of adjacent Quetico Provincial Park as it flattened 477,000 acres of forest, destroyed over 25 million trees, and stranded thousands of campers, injuring 60. Miraculously, no one died in the incident, at least in Minnesota.

The book

“Gunflint Falling” follows the timeline of this derecho event through the stories of those who lived through it. Griffith interviewed 120 individuals for the book, including National Weather Service meteorologists, Boundary Waters campers, local pilots, search and rescue team members as well as cabin residents in the path of the storm. Griffith follows several characters from chapter to chapter as their pleasant holiday weekend in the wilderness turned into a life-threatening weather event within minutes.

The accounts begin with paddlers and meteorologists before the storm, moves to include airplane pilots and frantic campers as the weather hits, the search and rescue teams on the ground, and ultimately the whole emergency response apparatus of federal, state, and local agencies. The book wraps up with the overview of the science of the weather behind the blowdown, and how it fits in to climate change and the future of the BWCAW.

“Gunflint Falling” includes some perspectives seldom cap-

tured in disaster accounts. For example, the book details how the National Weather Service juggles severe weather in real time. It also describes the decision making behind the emergency and recovery efforts from the perspec-

tive of the individuals making those decisions. The strength of the book, however, is in the harrowing accounts of survivors like the Preus family, who huddled in the crawspace under their cabin on the Canadian side of Gunflint

Lake as trees and debris assaulted the structure.

The author emphasizes the long but quite narrow path of devastating weather which flattened millions of trees from Ely to Gunflint Lake, but was little more than a nasty rain storm down the road in Babbitt. The account verges on the surreal at times, juxtaposing the Ely Fourth of July Parade—delayed by a rain squall as the weather passed through—and U.S. Forest Service ranger Bruce Slover as he drives out to Moose Lake Road to view the flattened forest.

“Gunflint Falling” was released at the end of January. Since then, Griffith has crisscrossed the state to talk about the book and sign copies. Griffith spoke at Ely’s Tuesday Group on Feb. 20 and that event was notable because of the attendance of two people who Griffith interviewed for the book, including local resident Pete Weckman, who was a USFS ranger in the BWCAW at the time the storm struck.

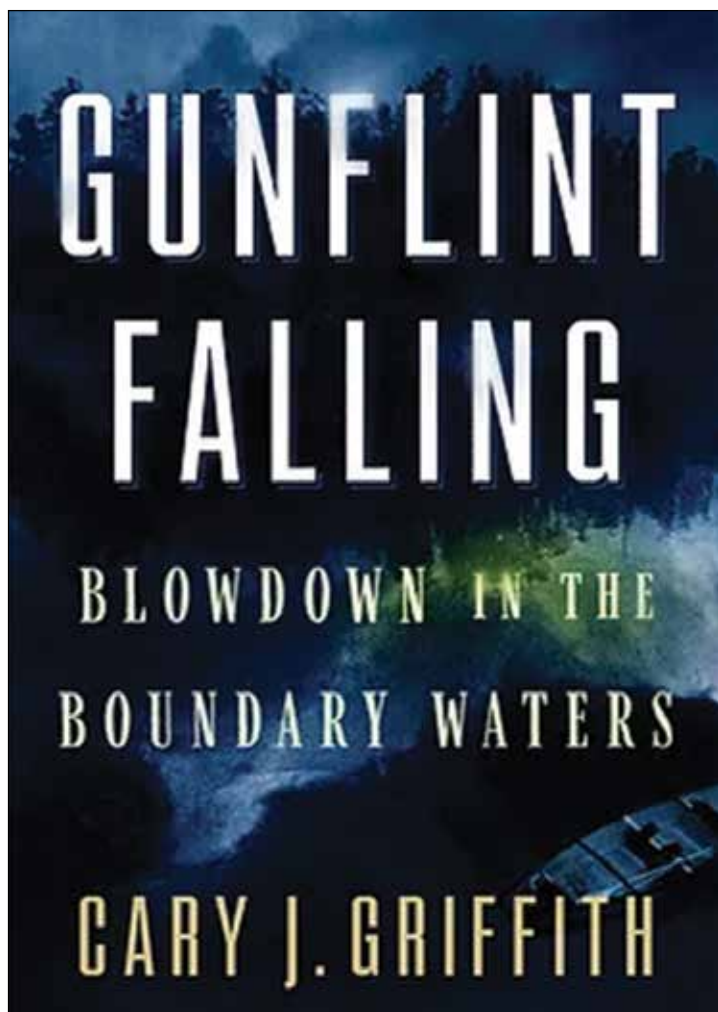
The author

Griffith, has degrees from the University of Iowa and the University of Minnesota. He had a 34-year career working as a law librarian, legal administrator, and legal marketer. Since retiring from his first career and segueing to writing, Griffith won a Minnesota Book Award for his non-fiction, “Opening Goliath” and a Midwest Book Award for the mystery novel “Wolf Kill.”

“I’ve always been writing,” Griffith told the *Timberjay*, explaining that he started when he was 19 and has made a habit of writing every day. He published his first book, the non-fiction “Lost in the Wild,” which related true stories of those who became lost in the Boundary Waters, in 2007.

“Gunflint Falling” is his seventh book. His eighth book will come out in June. Entitled “Dead Catch,” it is the fourth in his ongoing mystery series starring a fish and wildlife agent. The plot involves walleye poachers on Lake Vermilion. Griffith told the *Timberjay* that he will probably do a book signing event this summer in Ely.

Signed copies of “Gunflint Falling” are currently available at Piragis Northwoods in Ely.



Cary Griffith speaking about his book at the Grand Ely Lodge on Feb. 20. photo by C. Clark

Dramatic Dog Rescue on Fall Lake

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

WINTON- A golden retriever is alive today thanks to a daring ice rescue by the Morse-Fall Lake Fire Department last weekend, after the dog fell through thin ice several hundred feet from shore on Fall Lake.

“A man was out walking his dog,” ex-

plained Assistant Chief Jim Blauch, “and the dog took off chasing something.” The retriever fell through the ice 400 to 500 feet from the shore. The call went out to the fire department at 2:55 p.m. and the department’s volunteers arrived on the scene within just ten minutes, according to Blauch.

The rescue took lon-

ger than Blauch would have liked although he wasn’t sure how long it actually took to reach the struggling dog. “Time stands still when you’re responding to an incident. The problem was that the ice was so bad. It was tough going.”

Morse-Fall River donned their ice suits and deployed their Fortuna “banana boat” ice rescue

craft. Two firefighters handled the boat and four manned the ropes that secured the craft to the shore.

“I had the owner call the dog’s name to encourage him,” Blauch said. “He got excited when he realized the boat was coming to get him ... He didn’t give up. He wanted to survive.”

Despite the rotten

honeycombed ice, the firefighters retrieved the retriever. Together again, the owner promptly took his dog to the vet for evaluation according to the Northland Firewire.

“It’s heart wrenching listening to a dog that’s fallen through the ice,” Blauch said. “I’m happy we could save him.”

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Ely Public Library

ELY- The spice of the month is tarragon. Pick up a spice kit with a tarragon sample and recipes at the library while supplies last.

The Get Crafty group for kids ages 5 and up will meet on Tuesday, April 16, from 3-4 p.m. This month, Tricia will guide participants on how to make their own mini masterpieces. All materials are supplied. Those wanting to attend must pre-register so the library can order enough supplies for everyone.

The Library Scientists group for grades 1-3 will meet on Tuesday, April 23 at 3 p.m. This month, participants will learn and then do a hands-on project involving plant science. Pre-registration is required for this event so the library can order enough supplies. This activity is limited to 20 participants.

This library will host a grief-writing workshop for

adults with Lisa Simons on Wednesday, April 24, from 1-4 p.m. Simons is a 2023 recipient of a Creative Support for Individuals grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board.

The library will hold a Kahoot online trivia game for all ages on the Meg Langslow series, books 1-3 by Donna Andrews. Registration in advance with an email address is required so the library can send the link for the trivia game. The Kahoot will start at 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, and end at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, April 30.

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.

Summer Youth Programs

ELY- Registration is now open for the Northern

Lakes Arts Association summertime arts and theater camps and programs for kids and teens. Details are online under the “Youth Art Experiences” tab at northernlakesarts.org.

Ely Citywide Rummage Sale

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

Youth Auction

ELY- Ely Young Life has an ongoing online

auction which will run through Sunday, April 14. Proceeds will go to sending kids to summer camp. Details and the auction link are at ely.younglife.org.

Job Fair

ELY- Northspan’s Northforce Program will hold a job fair at Minnesota North College-Vermilion on Tuesday, April 16 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All are welcome.

Circus

BABBITT- The circus is coming to Ron Castellano Arena, 32 South Dr. Tickets are \$35. The circus will have three performances on Saturday, April 20, at 1 p.m., 4 p.m., and 7:30 p.m., and two performances on Sunday, April 21, at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. \$10 from each ticket will go to benefit Babbitt’s Arena Capital Fund. Call the City of

Babbitt for more information at 218-827-3464.

Homebuyer’s Class

ELY- Ely Continuing Education will hold a class for homebuyers, taught by banker Tom Omerza, on Wednesday, April 24, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., at the Ely Public School District Media Center, 600 E. Harvey St. Enter through the center door (door No. 1), and turn right. The Media Center is on the right across from the new gym.

List your event

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

In Brief

Tuesday Group schedule

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

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

►April 16: Local Author Scott Stowell and former *Timberjay* Ely editor, on his new Book, “Back Road Grace.”

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



moon covers the sun
how we love the sun to shine

supporting all life

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.

ORR CITY COUNCIL

Hotel apartment plan nixed by city council

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

ORR- A proposal by the owners of North Country Inn Motel to convert the facility to rental apartments went up in smoke Monday when Orr City Council members torpedoed a change in zoning necessary for the project to proceed.

Brandon Schuh, of hotel owners BC Ventures, answered questions about the company's proposal at the regular March council meeting, noting that they were planning to spend \$100,000 to reconfigure 12 rooms to studio apartments and also create one three bedroom apartment. A written statement from BC Ventures said that they needed to make the change to provide more predictable revenue than what off-season business generates, in order to make the motel a "sustainable investment."

But the current business zoning for the motel did not allow for residen-

tial use of the property, and the council indicated they would consult with the city's attorney for advice on how to proceed.

At Monday's meeting, Mike Muhvic, onsite manager of the motel, read a prepared statement from the owners reiterating the financial need for the change and describing the economic benefits of adding at least a dozen long-term residents.

"Our plan would be to complete this remodel this summer and have residents stay with us by June 1," Muhvic stated. "We do not expect any of our neighbors to have any issue with this as short-term residents are never as desirable as long-term ones. We're incredibly excited about investing in this opportunity and hope for the council's support. Without it, we're afraid this model is no longer sustainable and no longer makes sense."

But numerous objections to the development were raised during public

comments. Chief among them were security concerns related to Frank's Marine, which has in the past experienced vandalism, theft and trespassing that was allegedly traced back to motel visitors. The cost to erect a fence to protect the property and the boats stored there would be quite expensive. It was noted that the conversion to apartments would eliminate the bed tax collected that goes to support local resorts. One person wanted to know how potential renters would be screened. Another noted that the money earned from renters wouldn't stay in the community, but would go to out-of-town investors.

Council member John Jirik expressed his concern for future ramifications of changing the zoning ordinance to allow for residential use in a business district.

"If we change the ordinance, things can change fast," he said. "For example, by changing the ordinance, anywhere that

has a business now, or has two properties, one is a business and one isn't, if we give an ordinance to do that (permit residential) the next person that owns it can build a house there. We could slowly get rid of the town, the business area. That's my main concern."

Council members appeared responsive to what they had heard, approving Jirik's motion to keep the zoning ordinance as is without additional discussion on a unanimous vote.

In other business, the council:

►Tabled a request from Jacob Holman and authorized by Russell Holman to subdivide the Lumber-Orr-Hardware lot at 4563 Hwy 53 to allow for construction of a multi-unit rental property. Council members wanted more time to research the issues involved, particularly in light of their previous action.

►After hearing a presentation by Justin Ebel and Tim Watson, unan-

imously approved endorsing a letter presented asking that the state of Minnesota actively assert its jurisdiction as owners of the waters in Voyageurs National Park to regulate water-based activities on those waters. (a detailed article describing the presentation and issues involved appears elsewhere in this week's edition of the *Timberjay*).

►Approved a resolution accepting donations to the fire department totaling \$2,225 for the Easter Drive-through event, and additional donations of \$100 from Handberg's Marine and a donation of \$200 from Willow Valley Township to the ambulance service.

►Authorized changing the clerk's name on city financial accounts to Angela Fabish from Angela Lindgren as a result of her recent marriage to Mark Fabish.

►Approved the unorganized township fire protection services contract with St. Louis County in

the amount of \$12,821.

►Heard a report that the purchase and delivery of a used deep fryer for the muni has been completed, while the small refrigerator in the kitchen has now quit.

►Approved advertising the availability of leased storage space in the Orr Ambulance garage, formerly the ISD 2142 bus garage. The number of bays in the building is more than needed to accommodate the ambulance service.

►Heard a report that specs have been drawn up for a new ambulance to replace the 2016 Braun Industries ambulance, and gave permission to advertise and solicit bids.

►Heard from Fabish that she had received a call indicating that the state wants to help build an ADA-accessible path for the new fishing pier being sought for the Civilian Conservation Corps rest area.

Betterley among finalists for state teacher award

FIELD TWP- Of the 159 nominees for the 2024 Minnesota Teacher of the Year award, only 11 finalists remain, and North Woods art teacher Rachel Betterley is among them.

Nominations of candidates were reviewed by an independent selection panel of 17 leaders in the areas of education, business, government and nonprofits. The selection panel will meet again on May 4 to conduct individual interviews with the finalists and cast votes for the winner.

Betterley commented about the honor in an Instagram post. "I know this group each has their own story and passions and to be able to share mine alongside them is humbling, inspiring and motivating," she said. "My passion for art education, creative healing, and using our talents to make our communities a better place have all been



Rachel Betterley

essential components of this process and my role as an educator for the past 11 years."

"But perhaps most importantly I want this honor to symbolize the concept of 'human drive,'" Betterley continued. "No matter where we live, our circumstances or our traumas, we can make an impact and we can reach seemingly impossible goals."

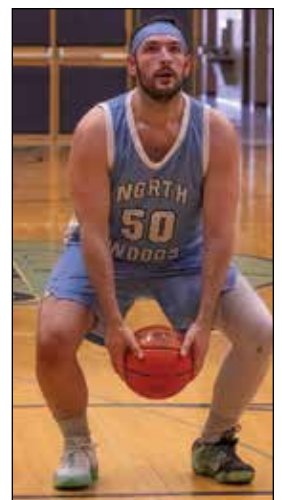
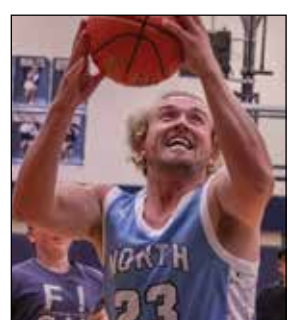
Education Minnesota, the statewide educators union, organizes and underwrites the Teacher of the Year program.

NORTH WOODS SCHOOL



Students vs. Teachers

Good behavior earned students a shot at their teachers on the hardwood last Friday. Top middle, Mark Fabish; top right, Andrew Jugovich; bottom left, Mya Buffetta; bottom center, Tate Olson; bottom right, eighth-grader Gage Aune. The teachers warmed up by rolling over the eighth-grade team 28-17. Then they managed to hang with the seniors, trailing 24-20, before fading down the stretch in the 37-25 loss. photos by D. Colburn



LIONS DONATION



Members of the Cook Lions Club gathered last week to present a \$3,000 check to volunteers at the Cook Community Food Shelf. submitted

NWFA looking for artists for June's Spring Art Expo

COOK- The annual Spring Art Expo at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery is a grand opportunity to exhibit and sell your art or craft.

Participants have approximately 4x8 feet of wall space to hang their art. Sculptures and other art that does not require wall space will have ap-

proximately six feet of table space.

Registration forms are available at the gallery or online at www.nwfamn.org and are due by Wednesday, May 22. They may be dropped off at the gallery from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., emailed to nwfamn.org@gmail.com, or mailed to NWFA, P.O.

Box 44, Cook MN 55723.

Artists must deliver artwork to the gallery at 210 S River St. by June 3 or 4. The gallery will be open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact Alberta at 218-666-2153 for special delivery times.

Artist biographies are requested and should be emailed to Shawna Kishel at shkishel@gmail.com before June 3.

All proceeds for items sold during the expo go directly to the artist. No commission is collected during the event from Wednesday, June 5 to Friday, June 29.

NORTH WOODS THIRD QUARTER HONOR ROLL 2023-24

A Honor Roll Seniors

- Evelyn Brodeen
- Jonah Burnett
- Annabelle Calavera
- Brandon Cook
- Madison Dantes
- LeMar Drift
- Talise Goodsky
- Riley Las
- Cadense Nelson
- Victoria Olson
- Jessy Palmer
- Tiauna Peltier
- Ella Smith
- Trinity Vidal
- Adriana Whiteman
- Jacob Whiteman

- Amber Sopoci
- Lydia Trip

Sophomores

- Lincoln Antikainen
- Lauren Burnett
- John Danielson
- Victoria Mathys
- Isabel Pascuzzi

Freshmen

- Alethea Bangs
- Corralyn Brodeen
- Emarie Gibson
- Andrew Hartway
- Carson Johnson
- Ella Kruse
- Barbara Littlewolf
- Sophia Mathys
- Kaycee Zupancich

Eighth Grade

- Gage Aune
- Sophia Bangs
- Zoey Burckhardt
- Carsyn Burnett
- Colt Chosa

- Sawyer Glass
- Cyrus Johnson
- Joshua Long
- Aubrey Olson-Stoltenberg
- Vincent Pascuzzi
- Alice Sopoci

Seventh Grade

- Savannah Abts
- Olivia Baumgartner
- Anelise Brodeen
- Michaela Brunner
- Tessa Burnett
- River Deatherage
- William Flores-Leander
- Josie Gibson
- Laurin Glass
- Lila Kajala
- Buckley LeForte

B Honor Roll Seniors

- Cora Chapman
- River Cheney
- Sean Drift
- Emily Grahn
- Cynthia Kirkman

- Zefrym Mankowski
- Alex Niles
- Covington Rintala
- Dayton Rintala
- Isaac Spears
- Davis Villebrun
- Keenan Whitney
- Luke Will

Juniors

- Nicholas Abramson
- Rory Bundy
- Aliya Ehrbright
- Nia Gaskell
- Nevada Gauthier
- Rose'Lee Knott-Morgan
- Jaida Lambert
- Brielle Lindgren
- Victoria Ryan
- Dakota Schwarzenberger

Sophomores

- Tatum Barto
- Brynn Chosa
- Rowan Christian
- Ira Isham
- Isabelle Koch

- Brittin Lappi
- Brent Morrow
- Anna Nelson
- Rogelio Noyes
- August Peltier
- Payton Scofield
- Sadie Spears
- John Warren

Freshmen

- Kate Cheney
- Presley Chiabotti
- Abigail Dargontina
- Bryleigh Drift-Geshick
- Kaelyn Ehrbright
- Collin Gramh
- Lae'la James
- Elijah Lindgren
- Aiyeshia Mohamed
- Victoria Phillips
- Caleb Rutchasky
- Cash Rutchasky
- Hunter Schwarzenberger
- Danika Udovich
- Donald Villebrun
- Ariana Vines
- James Yernatich

Eighth Grade

- Johnathon Hampson
- Felicity Hoagland
- Cedar Holman
- Rebecca Koch
- Brittan Koskela
- Tysen Lenzen
- Kalle Nelson
- Cassidy Pinski
- Peyton Swanson
- Evalyn Thiel
- Donelle Villebrun

Seventh Grade

- Mallory Bibeau
- Beau Fabish
- Caitlynn Goodbird
- Cooper Long
- Keziah Nabangi
- Bayla Rutchasky
- Elias Sheffer

DONATION...Continued from page 1

This decision once again gives the township a vote on the TAAC, which consists of representatives of all the governmental units in the ambulance service area, except Embarrass.

"I admire the work our EMS does," said board chair Lois Roskoski. "I feel it is worth the \$15, \$20, or \$25 per person to have the service." While campaigning, Roskoski said she heard from several residents who were upset that the township was not making these ambulance subsidy payments.

While township officials had repeatedly cited liability concerns over the contribution, Roskoski said that recent correspondence with the town's attorney, Mike Couri, dispelled that notion. "The agreement is a donation agreement rather than a contract for services," Couri wrote in an email to the township. He added that the ambulance provides service in

the township regardless of whether the township makes a donation.

"Since the township is not contracting for services, I do not believe that the township will need language in the agreement to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the township from the actions of TAAS.

Couri noted that TAAS is providing a service pursuant to state statute, and not pursuant to this agreement.

Couri did say that the agreement was probably not legally enforceable, because it didn't meet the threshold of being a contract, and that he did not feel there could be any action taken against the township if they decide to not donate funds in future years.

This advice from Couri is different from the claims Greenwood officials used to challenge the previous ambulance agreement, when board members repeatedly stated their attorney had advised them

it would be "crazy" to enter into the agreement without specific indemnification language. The city did add Greenwood's suggested language one year, but then removed it and used language suggested by the city of Tower's attorney.

"Bottom line please," asked Supervisor John Bassing in an email to Couri after reading his current opinion, "Would we be crazy if we signed... it seems your position has changed? Didn't you say we would be crazy to sign without indemnification."

Couri specifically wrote that "in short, the township would not be crazy to sign this donation agreement without first inserting an indemnification provision."

Roskoski said that Couri told her he was led to believe the previous agreement including being part of the operations of the ambulance service.

Bassing was still clearly against making any

donation to TAAS, noting that they had been in breach of the previous contract.

"All the supervisors voted against this in 2020," he said. "Nobody balked at it then."

Bassing also complained that the new agreement "is stripped down to absolutely nothing, and they took out the \$1.66 payment required from Tower for transfer miles."

"That's not a reflection on their service," Bassing said. "It's a reflection on their management."

Supervisor Paul Skubic said he supported rejoining the commission and making the donation.

"We were led to believe we could get an ALS system up here pretty quick," he said. "Tower does a good job. We should pay for the service we are getting."

Skubic noted the township had spent a "lot of money" on an ambulance study.

"We need to support them now," he said.

Resident Lee Peterson, who has been a vocal critic of TAAS, said the Legislature is working on changes for the system, statewide.

"We don't want to lock ourselves into a lesser ambulance service," he said.

Resident JoAnn Bassing asked if it was fair to Cook to make the payment based on the township's total population, since a portion of the township's western edge is in the Cook Ambulance's service area.

Resident Paul Thompson said he didn't think this was a valid issue, noting that the seasonal population of the township was easily four times as large as its census figure, and those people all use the service.

The motion to accept the 2024-2026 Ambulance Capital Aid Donation agreement was made by Roskoski and supported by Skubic. An amendment

by Bassing to change the motion to limit the term to one year was not supported by Roskoski and was denied.

The motion passed 3-2, with Roskoski, Skubic, and Craig Gilbert in support, and Bassing and Rick Stoehr voting against.

The vote earned a round of applause from the audience, which numbered more than 35.

A motion by Bassing, supported by Stoehr, to have a vote of no confidence in the township attorney failed 2-3, with Bassing and Stoehr the only votes in favor.

The board then voted to appoint Roskoski as the township's TAAS representative, and Gilbert as the alternate.

The TAAS will be holding their next meeting on Monday, April 29 at 5:30 p.m. at the Vermilion Lake Town Hall.

HOUSING...Continued from page 1

other than the HRA liaison wished to attend. City council member Paul Kess and Mayor Heidi Omerza were at the HRA meeting in addition to Angela Campbell, the city council liaison and HRA chair. Anticipating HRA's commitment, the city council created the housing trust fund on Feb. 20.

Competing for money

The \$350,000 is four percent of the \$8.4 million price tag on the project. Ely

has moved aggressively over the last year to tap state funds allocated for workforce housing. "There is an unprecedented \$39 million in housing funds right now from Minnesota," Ely's Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski told the HRA at its meeting. "The state made that money available during last year's Legislature to address the need for workforce housing. Usually, they only allocate around \$3 million."

Working with develop-

er D. W. Jones of Walker, Minn., the project will add 37 workforce apartments in a range of sizes to the city's housing stock, with rents ranging from around \$750/month for one-bedroom apartments up to \$1,350/month for three-bedroom units.

Ely is in the final lap of competing for funds from that \$39 million pot of state money. "Getting grants from the state housing funds is a competitive process," Langowski explained.

"No other (local government) competes as well as Ely does," added John Fedo, Ely's economic development consultant. "Ely is currently well placed to compete." The city is after a \$4 million grant from the state. The final application for the housing grant is due at the end of this month.

Assembling the pieces

The city took several steps to gain a competitive standing, starting with

tossing its old housing study, which it updated last summer, hiring Maxfield Research for \$8,200.

Since then, the city has aggressively pursued multiple sources of money for the project, assembled a funding package, and found a developer willing to work in rural Minnesota.

The funding package includes the HRA's levy funds now in the housing trust, an \$850,000 housing grant from the Iron Range Resources

and Rehabilitation Board, the donation of labor and land from the city, and a projected \$270,000 sales tax exemption currently on the Legislature's floor. The rest of the funds will be financed using St. Louis County's bonding capacity.

The next hurdle for building the new apartments is winning the \$4 million grant from the state.

BUDGET WOES...Continued from page 1

line items, collectively called the unassigned fund, exceed revenues by more than 2.5 percent. Johnson projected the unassigned fund balance for 2024-25 will be in the red by 2.8 percent, a total of \$956,376.

Falling into this funding hole means the district will have to create a plan for the 2025-26 fiscal year to erase the debt and have it approved by the Commissioner of Education. And with a continued projected decline in enrollment leading to even less state aid, the district will have to make more hard choices about cuts to resolve the deficit.

"We have a lot of work to do to try to figure out how we are going to, in the long run, eliminate our SOD problem and get back on track with limited enrollment and funding options," Johnson said.

The shortfall means the district will have to resort to borrowing money.

"We are probably going to have to start borrowing money for cash flow purposes next year, probably mid-year is my guess," Johnson said. "And

what that does is increase our interest costs when we have to borrow money for cash flow purposes."

The board already approved the elimination of ten full-time equivalent faculty positions for 2024-25, but with the projected revenues and expenses that move was insufficient to prevent the district from falling into SOD. And it's likely the district will have to look at more staffing cuts, as spending of \$34,430,602 for salaries and benefits next year represents almost three-quarters of the district's projected expenditures of \$46,606,843.

"That is one of the reasons why when the district has to make cuts to costs, salary and benefits are the first place we look," Johnson said. "That's the only place that has a significant enough total dollar value to make any difference."

Enrollment declines

For purposes of state aid, enrollment is expressed in terms of average daily membership, or ADM, a calculation of the total number of students factored against attendance.

In the case of a student who drops out of school early to take a job, the district would receive reduced state aid for that student. In 2013-14, the district's ADM was 1,879 students and that number grew to 2,016 by the 2019-20 school year. The district took a big hit from the COVID pandemic as the district's ADM fell the following school year by 137 students as many families opted for homeschooling to keep their children out of group-based education. Many of those students returned as the district rebounded slightly the next year, but ADM has been on a steady decline since 2022-23, and is projected to be at 1,860 for 2024-25, below that of 2013-14. And while overall enrollment is down over the past decade, expenses have only continued to rise, creating the current financial dilemma.

The decline in enrollment has left the district unable to fully capitalize on the historic investments in education made by the state Legislature last year. Additionally, some funds were earmarked for purpos-

es outside of general aid, such as special education, and such earmarks do not allow the district to use those funds for anything other than the designated purpose.

As Johnson walked board members through the intricacies of each fund and line item, she frequently pointed out where the district's hands are tied when it comes to reallocating funds to other areas.

"I cannot use my long-term facilities maintenance or my operating capital or my taconite building maintenance for anything except facilities, maintenance, and operating capital, that is all," she noted at one point. "I can't use those to fund teacher salaries. I have to use my unassigned fund balance for those kinds of things."

Maintenance costs will likely skew higher next year due to the planned repair of the wastewater plant at North Woods. That project will go out for bids next year and it will probably come in well above original estimates. The district tackled the same issue at South Ridge this fiscal year,

with an initial \$200,000 commitment, but bids came in around \$400,000 higher than that—an overage the district had to eat.

"Right now, we don't know what the cost of the North Woods wastewater project is going to be," Johnson said.

Current year

While finances have also been challenging this year, the district's unassigned fund balance, projected to end the fiscal year about \$66,000 in the red, isn't near triggering statutory operating debt just yet. The district realized some savings from the change in health insurance providers, although half of the nearly \$350,000 has to be allocated to the next budget cycle. Additionally, Johnson expects the cost of the plan to increase in the last half of next year when the agreement allows for a maximum increase of nine percent.

Possible respite?

As the largest geographic district in the state, rich in seasonal recreation properties, the district has struggled in

the past to win approval for excess operating levies. But Sen. Grant Hauschild DFL-Hermantown, has introduced legislation that would create a seasonal and recreation tax base replacement aid program that would reduce the tax burden facing local residents when considering an operating referendum. The aid program would underwrite 44 percent of taxes levied under a general operating referendum in ISD 2142, Johnson said, significantly reducing the amount levied on individual homeowners.

"An operating referendum has to be voted on by all of the voters," Johnson said. "If we were to go out for an operating referendum, the state would pick up 44 percent of the cost and give it to the district and therefore the taxpayers would not have to pay for that. This is a big deal. We don't know if (the bill) is going to pass. But it's something we have to keep in the back of our minds when we're looking at our position and going into SOD in 2024-25."

HARBOR...Continued from page 1

expected to extend from existing utilities located on the southeast corner of the harbor and would run roughly parallel to the harbor before crossing under Hwy. 169. The new service lines would connect with up to 50 new units of housing planned for roughly 18 acres located between the Marjo Motel and the Your Boat Club marina. The first three units, which are currently being built in Vinstra,

Norway, are scheduled for delivery in June, with additional units expected to be delivered later this year.

Marjo RE, LLC is owned by Luke Kujawa and Michael Jellish, the principals of Your Boat Club, who see the project, at least in part, as a means to provide lodging for members of their club when they come to Lake Vermilion. Jamie Tatge, president of Leisure Hotels and Resorts, has also indi-

cated an interest in helping to advance the project and manage the property once the development is complete.

Kujawa, who joined last week's TEDA meeting virtually, thanked the TEDA board for its support for their ongoing project. TEDA and Kujawa were set to close as early as this week on the sale of 5.02 acres of land along Marina Drive to provide road access and utility easements for

the Marjo property. That property, which TEDA is selling for \$25,000, is subject to a development agreement that calls for the construction of multi-family housing as well as streets and utilities. Combined with the Marjo property, which Kujawa and Jellish acquired last year, Marjo RE will have approximately 23 acres available for development with a prime location just off Hwy. 169, sandwiched between the

harbor and the marina.

Should the planned hotel move forward at the harbor, it would also likely be the subject of a development agreement. As of yet, the parties have not discussed a price for the harbor property.

In other action, the TEDA board approved a contribution of \$2,000 to pay for an architectural study by Widseth Architects. The nonprofit Vermilion Housing

Corporation, which manages apartment buildings in Tower and Soudan, is looking to renovate the Tower apartment building in hopes of increasing occupancy. Currently some of the rooms are not in rentable condition and the nonprofit is seeking funds to enable the renovation to create more housing opportunities in Tower.

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ELY SCHOOLS

Donation to fund new murals and signage on new addition

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- The ISD 696 school board accepted \$30,000 in donations from the Ely Educational Foundation at its regular monthly meeting on Monday. Two-thirds of the money is for murals and signage for the school featuring the district's timberwolf mascot. The graphics include a timberwolf head under the Ely Public Schools sign on the front of the district's building complex, a giant timberwolves sign at the top of the wall in the commons area in the new addition, and opaque door graphics for both sets of double doors at entrance No. 1 between the high school and elementary school offices.

"We spoke with the Ely Police Department about the door graphics," Superintendent Anne Oelke remarked, "and they like it because it prevents someone [who might intend harm] from seeing into the school."

The remaining \$10,000 of the donation is for health textbooks and the reading intervention program.



An artist's rendition of the timberwolf mascot head on the outside of school offices at the Ely Public Schools.

Benefits dispute

In a bit of new business that generated no discussion, the school board denied a level three grievance lodged by the Ely Education Association (EEA), the local teachers' union, and approved the text of a letter to EEA stating its reasons. The EEA took

issue with paying administrative and brokerage fees on top of employees' contributions to premiums for the district's Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) health insurance.

The BCBS policy is new. Because of cost savings of over 13 percent, the school board and the

EEA approved a new health insurance policy from BCBS in fall 2023. The previous provider was the Minnesota Public Employees Insurance Program (PEIP).

In its letter to the EEA, the school board remarked that administrative and brokerage fees are not itemized but bundled in the monthly bill from BCBS, just like they were in the past with PEIP. The district pays the monthly bill "according to contract provisions and longstanding past practice," according to the school board's letter to EEA.

The letter goes on to state, "The EEA was aware at [the] time it elected to accept BCBS as a carrier, that such fees would be part of the premiums."

Following the meeting, Oelke explained the grievance procedure. "There are three levels of grievance in the EEA contract. The first two levels give the two parties an opportunity to discuss both sides and determine if the parties can come to an agreement on the grievance issue. Level three goes before the school board."

If the EEA is not satisfied with the board's decision, it can now initiate arbitration.

In other business, the school board:

► Approved the March 2024 financial report, showing receipts of \$871,152, and disbursements of \$469,327.

► Approved the request from Amy Kingsley for an extended leave of absence for three years beginning August 2024.

► Accepted the resignation of Grace Johnson from her position as paraprofessional effective April 27.

► Accepted the resignation of Max Gantt from the position as head girls basketball coach effective immediately. School board chair Ray Marsnik expressed the district's appreciation for Gantt's efforts in leading the team to all its recent victories and championships.

► Hired Beth Ohlhauser as assistant girls track coach.

► Approved Jayne Dusich as a volunteer assistant track coach and Cheri DeBeltz as a volunteer assistant golf coach for

the spring season.

► Approved the third reading and adoption of revised Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA) policies for out-of-state travel by school board members, and employment background checks, and its Code of Ethics; and for the third reading and adoption of the MSBA policy on service animals, which is a new policy for the district.

► Heard the report of Tim Leeson, director of facilities, who wanted to thank the snow removal staff for the district, Ely, and both counties "on keeping the roads open" during multiple days of snow the week before Easter. "Sorry to everyone who wanted snow days," he quipped.

► Heard the report by Superintendent Anne Oelke that she will bring the financial committee's recommendations on raising revenues and cutting costs to the upcoming school board study session on April 23. The district is looking at a half million dollar shortfall for the 2025 fiscal year, as reported in the April 5 edition of the *Timberjay*.

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Handy Ma'am House & Cabin Cleaning	Vermilion Vet Clinic
Lamppa Manufacturing	Zups Foods

ECLIPSE...Continued from page 1

just as grey and gloomy as it had been since morning.

Hoping for clear skies, the school had prepared in advance, purchasing eclipse-viewing glasses for all the students and staff, but with thick cloud cover, the glasses were hardly necessary. Still, they did provide plenty of entertainment for the students, who oohed and aahed over how dark everything appeared while wearing the glasses.

Teachers, however, did use the day to teach some basic astronomy lessons in their classrooms.

Students in Mrs. Horvat's class were using Oreo cookies to learn about the phases of the moon, nib-

bling the chocolate cookies into shapes resembling gibbous, crescent, and full moons, a combination of a morning snack and science lesson.

In the Kindergarten room, Kristine Smith led her young students across a large floor carpet map of the United States, tracing the path of the eclipse, as the classroom digital project showed live broadcasts of the eclipse.

First-graders had decorated the hallway with eclipse paintings and stories, featuring facts about the eclipse. Which goes to show that even when Mother Nature rains on your parade, or your



Shelby Troop and Cecilia Majerle strain to see the sun through their eclipse glasses.

imagination. there's still a learning opportunity in there somewhere with just a little

EBCH
Ely-Bloomenson
Community Hospital

Hospital Connection
EMS Survey

Q: Why did EBCH decide to commission an EMS survey?
A: Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital (EBCH) has always been a supportive contributor to the Ely Area Ambulance Service (EAAS). We have provided them with various in-kind and financial support. However, in recent years, EBCH leadership began to hear concerns from our medical staff regarding emergency medical transportation of patients in relation to EAAS. Simultaneously, EBCH was asked to contribute more funding annually to support the service. As with any concerns, the EBCH Board of Directors conducted their due diligence by requesting financial and operational information from the EAAS before providing additional "cash" funding. This request resulted in further communication breakdown. EBCH looked for other ways to support Emergency Medical Service (EMS) throughout our service area. EBCH hired Safe Tech Solutions to complete a comprehensive regional study of EMS. In doing so, EBCH hopes to identify new, collaborative models that could be innovative and ensure that all of our local ambulance services are successful.

Q: Is EBCH's goal to bring in a third-party ambulance service?
A: No. EBCH's primary goal is to provide the highest quality patient care possible. Part of that care is the peace of mind in knowing that, when needed, we can get our patients to a higher level of care as quickly as possible. EMS services nationwide, not just locally and statewide, are struggling. The care at Safe Tech Solutions includes working paramedics who help develop a sustainable model that can ensure viability for the future of EMS in our service area. Our decisions will always be in the best interest of our patients to ensure emergency medical transportation is available in the communities we serve.

Q: Has EBCH seen the survey results?
A: No. EBCH has not seen the survey results. Our experience has been that there are often delays with any large-scale project. They are typically unintended and certainly should not contribute to rumors or speculation. This work aims to provide high-quality care for our communities, and we will do everything possible to ensure this goal is met. However, since EBCH is the primary contact for the survey and has paid for its completion, we eagerly anticipate the results. We assure you that we are committed to transparency and will review the results thoroughly and roll them out appropriately when available, keeping you informed at every step.

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.

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK

Area businesses urge state to assert jurisdiction

Cite park service's increasingly intrusive management and aggressive law enforcement

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A concerned group of business owners who depend on providing services to visitors to Voyageurs National Park are mounting a concerted effort against proposed changes in park policies that they say threaten their livelihoods.

That effort was in full view Monday at the Orr City Council meeting, where longtime fishing guide Tim Watson and houseboat operators Justin and Heather Ebel asked council members to sign on to a letter asking the state of Minnesota to assert its rights to regulate the waters of the park, which under state law belong to Minnesota and not the federal government. Justin Ebel addressed the council first.

"To put it simply, coming in 2025 up around Voyageurs National Park there's going to be some significant changes policy-wise regarding how we can recreate and do commerce within the boundaries of the park, specifically on the water," Ebel said. "We're asking for support of a letter that we want to (deliver) at the state level to uphold the statute that basically states that the state of Minnesota did not relinquish the water rights to the lake when they transferred the land and jurisdiction."

Citing relevant statutes and treaties, the informal confederation of owner/operators is imploring "the governor, the attorney general, other constitutional officers, and other public officials, such as the commissioner of natural resources" to "vigorously assert and defend" the state's jurisdiction over the water and related resources in the park.

While the letter acknowledges the National Park Service's authority to regulate the land ceded to the federal government to create the park, the complainants assert that recent actions and proposals to regulate water-related activities have crossed the line

into activities that they contend should rightly be regulated by the state.

Multiple issues

The current kettle of discontent began simmering in the summer of 2022, when resort owners and service operators aired vigorous complaints about heavy-handed enforcement of boating regulations by the park's law enforcement rangers in four public forums hosted by the park service. They contended the actions were negatively impacting their customers and were creating an environment in which many would not return for fear of having to deal with the situation again. Additional anger was stoked with the June 2022 tasing of Ebel as he was trying to help customers on one of his houseboats seek safety after running aground on a rock near the Ash River Visitor Center. Park officials refused to discuss the incident and would not answer questions posed to them by the *Timberjay*, resulting in a months-long effort to uncover the truth through Freedom of Information Act requests for body cam footage and documentation of the incident. The *Timberjay* still has requests pending for the results of Department of Interior investigations of the incident.

State Rep. Rob Ecklund expressed his concern at the time, and asked DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen to review the agency's agreements with the park concerning law enforcement.

Park officials served up a new bone of contention last year when they proposed a plan for regulating access and use of frozen lake surfaces in the park during the winter. Two public meetings drew huge crowds, most objecting to plans to impose access fees and restrict lake access to within 300 feet of ice roads and designate areas beyond the roads as low-access, restricting traffic to snowmobiles only. The proposed plan would allow only snowmobiles or other nonmotor-

ized means to transport ice fishing houses to low-access locations, and the ice houses would have to be occupied overnight by the users. Park Superintendent Bob DeGross encouraged participants to submit written comments for the park to consider as development of the plan moved forward. DNR Northeastern Region Director Shelly Patton made it clear in both public comments at the Kabetogama meeting and in a letter submitted to the park that she had serious concerns about the jurisdiction of the park service to impose such plans on the state's waters.

According to multiple court decisions cited by Patton in her letter, frozen lakes remain public waters and therefore federal regulations "cannot be applied to the state's public waters to restrict access across the surface of public water, be it open or frozen." Implementing the Frozen Lake Surface Access and Use Plan would severely restrict the public's access to the entire surface of public frozen waters and effectively represent NPS seizing the rights of ownership that were not conveyed to them, Patton noted.

A third issue has arisen this year with alterations to how the park handles commercial use authorizations, or CUAs, the permissions granted to vendors to operate services within the park. The park has 17 different categories for commercial use, primarily including water-based business activities like fishing guides, private tour boats, boat rentals, and towing, repair and support services. Historically, operators could include multiple business services under one CUA application, for which the fee is \$200, and the CUA was good for two years. This year, all current CUA holders were required to reapply at a fee of \$100 per application in order for the park to bring everyone in line with a standard two-year management cycle, according to DeGross.

Watson told the council that

the park's new policy is that businesses have to apply for separate CUAs for each service they offer. "In the past with our CUA, we could do what they called the bundle," he said. "With the new plan, I would have to pay a CUA fee for each activity."

As an example of the impact, the Ash Riviera Resort is listed on the park's vendor webpage as having six CUA services. While formerly an application for those services could be filed as a bundle and cost \$200, individual filing fees for each will cost \$1,200. And Watson said the application fee will go up to \$350 for 2025.

Additionally, the park will be imposing a management fee for CUAs which has yet to be determined. Watson said one option being considered would be charging three percent of the gross receipts for a service, while another would be based on head count. Either way, Watson believes the additional fee is unwarranted, excessive, and could create financial hardship for businesses operating on thin profit margins.

Legal precedent

While Minnesota law appears to be on the side of the group advocating for state control, past court decisions have aligned with the authority of the park service to regulate activities within its boundaries, including on the waters.

In the case of *United States vs. Brown*, Carl E. Brown received criminal citations for duck hunting on Black Bay on Rainy Lake, within the park's boundaries. The district court judge ruled that the park service did have jurisdiction over the waters within the park's boundaries and could enforce NPS regulations. The judge reasoned that Minnesota's active involvement in establishing the park included an implicit understanding that the park service would have regulatory authority for all activities within the park, both on land and on water, despite the state's claim to authority

due to its continuing ownership of the waters. Subsequent cases have relied on the rationale from Brown to reinforce the federal government's position.

But Watson and his companions are not deterred by past court rulings. He references a case in Alaska where the court issued an opposing finding saying that Alaska law prevailed over federal regulations when navigating a river running through a national park as evidence that the Brown decision is faulty and that Minnesota should assert its rights over the waters of VNP.

The group, which currently includes members representing the communities of Ash River, Kabetogama, Rainy Lake, and Crane Lake, decided to try for some additional clout for their effort by seeking the endorsement of governmental bodies and officials connected to the areas surrounding the park. The Orr council, which voted unanimously to sign on to the effort, is the second such body to give its approval, following Kabetogama Township. Organizers hope the resolutions of support will help convince state officials to come on board, and the group is also seeking endorsements from Eighth District Congressman Pete Stauber and U.S. Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith.

"Everything that's dealing with land in the park, we have no quarrels with that at all," Watson said. "What we have a problem with is federal regulations on water that they don't own, that belong to the state and citizens of Minnesota. It negatively affects all those winter businesses that are out there - that's huge. And the CUA situation with the fees is going to get exorbitant and do they really have the right to do that, because most of those fees pertain to access to the water that is still state water. Jurisdiction is the big deal, and it's up to the state to stand up and defend those water rights according to state law."

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Funds sought to replace Morcom community center

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

BEAR RIVER- A crumbling area educational landmark could be on its way to the dustbin of history if the Legislature approves a \$2.923 million bonding request to fund a new community center for Morcom Township and the surrounding area.

The current Bear River Community Center and former Bear River School is a familiar icon for drivers on County Hwy. 22, sitting prominently on the southwest corner at the intersection with Hwy. 5. The uniquely styled brick school was designed by Eveleth architect Elwin Berg and built for \$65,000 in 1933, according to an article in the former *Eveleth*

Former Bear River School is considered beyond repair

News. The school was reportedly the first small rural school designed by the county district to serve as both a school and a general community social center. The school closed due to low enrollment in 1973.

Since then, time has not been kind to the building, and an engineering study has shown that it would cost more to fix it than to tear it down and build a new one.

"We had an engineering study done of the current structure as we had hopes of remodeling the building to make it ADA compliant and to resolve some of the larger structural issues," Morcom Township clerk Sasha Lehto told a House committee on Monday.

"This study showed that it would be more cost effective to build a new facility. The engineers determined it would take approximately \$1.9 million to rehabilitate just the main floor of the structure and the exterior, which would not even touch the larger issues that we have, such as the attic, the basement, the crumbling front steps that are tied into our foundation, nor that we have to put garbage cans in our great hall to catch water that leaks from our roof."

The authors of the bill, Rep. Dave Lislegard, DFL-Aurora, and Rep. Roger Skraba, R-Ely, emphasized that the building serves essential functions for the 1,800 citizens who live in

the rural areas of northeastern Itasca and northwestern St. Louis counties, and Lehto expanded on that in her comments.

"To give you an idea, it hosts 12 to 15 events a month," she said. "It's our election polling place to host our elections. We conduct all our township government operations, EMS and fire trainings and meetings there. It is our children's playground and movie theater, book club, men's coffee club, the place we hold family reunions, holiday gatherings, craft fairs, potlucks, and a gathering place for our veterans. It's the place we say goodbye to loved ones at all our funerals, the

home to many receptions, and also where we celebrate our high school graduates. More notably, it is the home of our famous 103-year-old Bear River Fair." Lehto noted that the community center serves as the place where Northeast Itasca Rescue and Bearville first responders connect with air ambulance helicopters, an essential need as the nearest hospital is 35 to 45 minutes away.

"The building is critical to the people who live and work here," Lehto said. "If we do not do something this building will no longer exist. We are a low-to-moderate income geographic area and our township alone carries a very high

levy to support the repairs needed to keep the building operating. We have never requested assistance from our state Legislature. This is our greatest need in terms of infrastructure and rural development. If we are one Minnesota, I am asking you to consider the request as we are in great need at this time."

If approved, the funds would provide for demolition, pre-design, design, site preparation, construction, furnishing, and equipping the new community center. Sen. Robert Farnsworth, R-Hibbing, has sponsored the companion bill in the Senate, which has been assigned to the Capital Investment Committee.

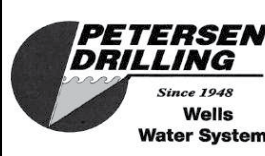
Briefly

Tower woman injured in crash

KUGLER TWP- A Tower woman was transported to the Virginia hospital with non-life-threatening injuries after her vehicle struck a front end loader on Hwy. 135 south of Tower on March 27. Tina Shackelton, 57, was southbound on the snow-covered and icy highway when her 2002 Jeep Liberty struck the

front-end loader, which was driven by Jeremy J. Leskiw, age 44, of Embarrass. Shackelton was treated at Essentia Health- Virginia, while Leskiw was uninjured.

Alcohol was not involved in the incident. The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, Breitung Police Department, Babbitt Police Department, Virginia Fire, and Tower Ambulance all responded to the scene.



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GREENWOOD

Pickleball project expands, set to begin later this spring

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

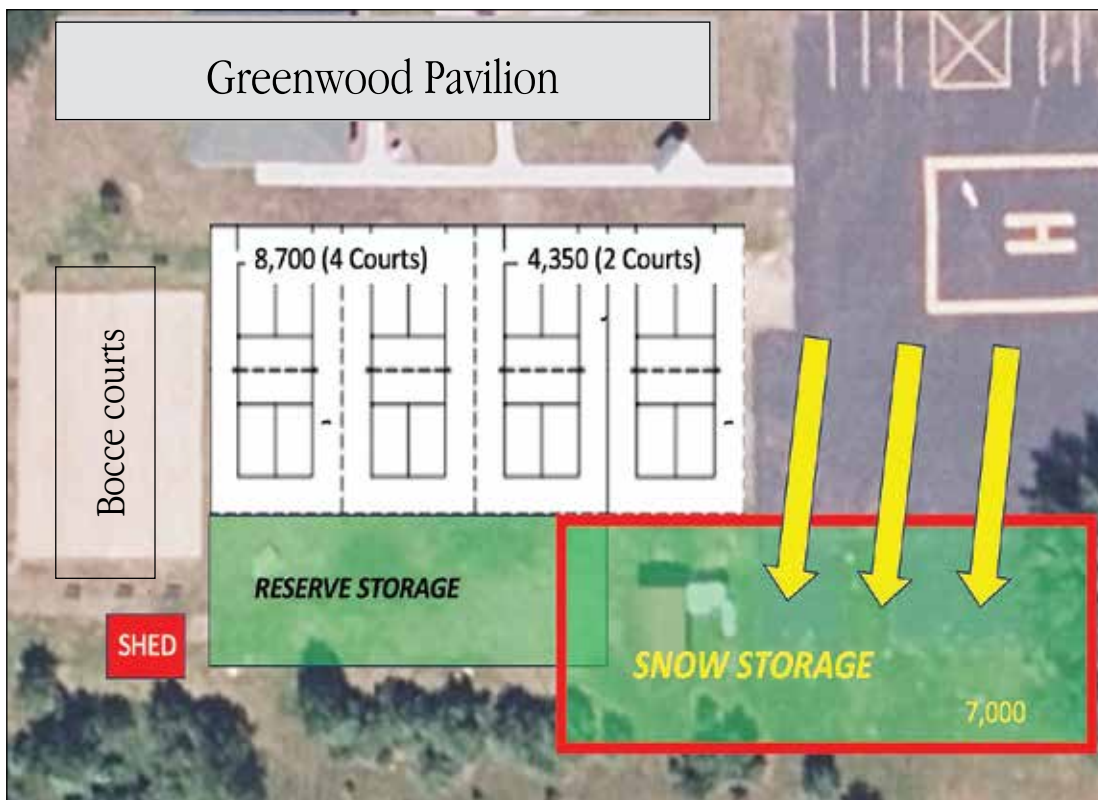
GREENWOOD TWP- Plans for new pickleball courts in Greenwood Township took a big step forward, Tuesday, as the Greenwood Town Board approved a \$25,000 donation to the project, as well as an updated plan to build four courts instead of the previous three.

Lake Vermilion Pickleball Association (LVPA) President Paul Thompson told the board that counting the township's donation, the group has raised a little over \$80,000 so far and has grant requests out to two or three other programs. The total cost for the four courts is estimated to be a little over \$100,000. Thompson said fundraising may even be on track to pay for a resurfacing of the existing tennis court, which is starting to show its age.

In addition, the group is hosting a fundraiser on Saturday, April 20 at the Vermilion Club from 6-9 p.m., with donations being taken and free pizza and live music.

"We are in excellent shape to begin construction," Thompson said.

Thompson said the request to build four courts is in response to several issues, including the growing and continuous amount of community support, the success of the fundraising efforts, and the efficiencies of per court costs in building four



The new plan calls for four parallel courts, adjacent to the pavilion and bocce court area.

versus three.

Some board members were concerned initially that the fourth court would occupy an area traditionally used to pile snow in winter from the township parking lot. But Thompson noted there was plenty of room on the edge of the parking lot parallel to Hwy. 77, that had previously been the site of the recycling canisters.

Supervisor John Bassing

said it would be harder to plow the snow in that pattern and might take longer. But supervisor Paul Skubic said it shouldn't be a problem.

"I plow for a living," said Skubic. "You just have to get your banks back far enough to start."

A motion to approve the four courts passed 4-1, with Bassing voting against. "We had a deal," he said.

Chair Lois Roskoski said she was working with the township attorney to arrange the payment and said the township will actually donate \$24,999, to stay under the \$25,000 limit to avoid having to call for bids. The project is being overseen by the LVPA and the Greenwood Recreation Board, and they have already received an acceptable bid for the work from Mesabi Bituminous. Once built, the courts

will be township property.

Work on the courts will need to be done before the township has the parking lot resurfaced, so the heavy equipment does not damage the new blacktop.

Thompson said they hope to begin as soon as road restrictions are lifted.

Parking lot project

The board reviewed the bids received for the parking lot mill and overlay project, and did award the bid to Mesabi Bituminous, which had the low bid of \$99,800, pending approval by the township attorney. The two other bids received were for \$167,685 and \$358,049. The township has been working with Benchmark Engineering on the design of this project.

The township had opted to do this work in 2024, a year ahead of the planned schedule, because a blacktop plant will be set up nearby for roadwork being done in the area, which was expected to greatly reduce the cost of the blacktop.

Questions were raised about how the bids for the parking lot project were handled, and if it was proper to have the bids opened and posted publicly prior to the meeting. Roskoski will consult with their attorney to make sure the process was handled properly.

MINING

Testing of Pulsar helium deposit near Babbitt continues

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

BABBITT- Those who missed the tours of the helium exploration southeast of Babbitt in February now have a chance to see the drill site on video. The Reuters news syndicate published a short documentary on Pulsar's helium projects last Friday, April 5.

The video was produced by Acumen International Media and went live online on the Reuters Plus Global Health channel. The seven-minute video includes five minutes of footage at Pulsar's Topaz project southeast of Babbitt off the Dunka

River Rd. The video discusses the industrial uses of helium and Pulsar's exploration goals to produce "primary helium," which is not a by-product of natural gas wells. Most of the helium historically produced in the world is extracted from fossil fuel production.

The Acumen visited the Topaz site when drilling began in February. "This was the film crew that visited the same day that we gave the media and public tours," Pulsar CEO Thomas Abraham-James told the *Timberjay*.

The video is online at [reuters.com/plus/acumen-global-health/pulsar-helium-industrial-gases](https://www.reuters.com/plus/acumen-global-health/pulsar-helium-industrial-gases).



The drill rig in February at Pulsar Helium's exploratory borehole site southeast of Babbitt. submitted photo

Other Pulsar news

Pulsar received the results from their wireline survey of the exploratory borehole, which they hope to convert into a production well if they advance to developing the local helium resource. The wireline results confirmed what last summer's seismic tomography survey had already suggested: that the Precambrian Duluth Complex rocks penetrated by the borehole host significant gas-filled voids. The geophysical firm Baker-Hughes collected the data for Pulsar at the end of February. Pulsar announced a favorable interpretation of the data on March 25.

In exploration jargon,

a wireline survey is a set of geophysical measurements made by lowering a suite of sensors called sondes on an electrical cable—or wire—down a well or borehole. The sondes can measure a wide variety of physical conditions in the hole like temperature, rock density, rock porosity, background radiation, electric resistivity, and seismic velocity, just to name some of the more common properties assessed.

According to Abraham-James, the next step for Pulsar is to test the rate of gas flow out of the borehole. The flow test will be one of the deciding factors in whether Pulsar will advance to building a helium production facility southeast of Babbitt. Though the geophysical results

suggest a lot of gassy void spaces under the ground, those voids must be sufficiently linked to ensure gas flow—a property called effective porosity. Though the geophysics suggests there are enough voids which are filled with gas, only the flow test can confirm whether the effective porosity is sufficiently high to justify the construction of the \$50 million helium plant.

Legislating helium

Meanwhile, in St. Paul, it was no great surprise that the state senator whose district includes Babbitt initiated legislation to regulate Minnesota's nascent helium industry. Sen. Grant Hauschild (DFL-Hermantown) introduced bill SF 5048 on March 18 that aims to set up a technical advisory committee to create state regulations for the "long-term oversight" of Minnesota's geologic gas commodities. The committee would be required to report their findings to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 2025. The bill also directs the Department of Natural Resources to require permits for gas extraction, including non-hydrocarbon gasses like helium. It also

includes provisions regulating leases for carbon sequestration and oil and gas exploration and production on state lands.

SF 5048 received its first hearing in the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee on April 4. It received a recommendation "to pass as amended" by the committee and was referred for further action to the Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Committee on Monday.

"The discovery of [the helium] deposit is an exciting opportunity for northern Minnesota to once again become a domestic source for a critical mineral, and this legislation makes sure the state is ready to capitalize," said Hauschild. "Now it is up to us as policymakers to move with urgency, get this legislation passed, and prepare for the future work we need to do to make Minnesota a global leader in helium extraction."

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BUILDING A LEGACY

Lamppa recognized for 700th baseball win

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

Tower native has built a tradition of success at Itasca Community College

REGIONAL— When Justin Lamppa was named head baseball coach for Itasca Community College in Grand Rapids in 1997, he was just a young Itasca graduate, fresh off the field, armed with a love for the game. Growing up in Tower back in the 1980s and 90s, it was his father and longtime coach Lon who instilled that appreciation of the game.

“His passion became my passion,” said Justin, who has built his own storied coaching career at Itasca, having notched three state championships, 17 conference titles and, most recently, his 700th career win for the Vikings in a game last week against Central

“Sometimes life has a way of leading you down unexpected paths.”

Justin Lamppa

Lakes College.

“I was 21 when I started coaching. I’d only planned to stay for a year,” Lamppa recalls. “But sometimes, life has a way of leading you down unexpected paths.”

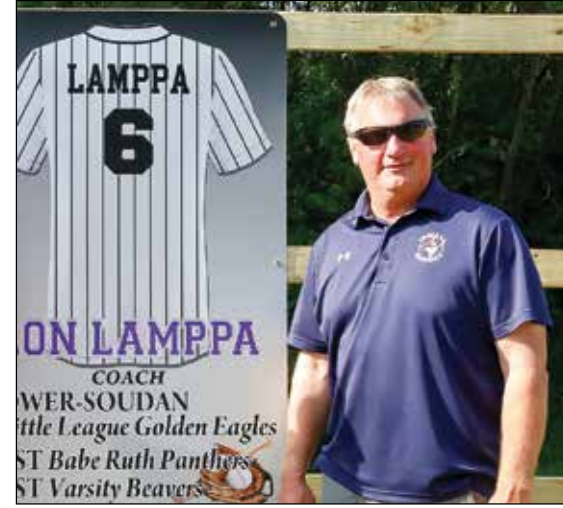
Being the youngest coach at Itasca, he found himself supported by

Right: Justin Lamppa was present in Soudan last June when his father Lon’s coaching jersey was officially retired. Justin has carried on in his father’s footsteps and has created his own legacy as a college baseball coach.

file photo

everyone. “It’s different to come into a program you just graduated from to being the coach. I give credit to Mike Johnson, the dean at the time, and the players I coached my first few years. Without them, the program would not

See **LAMPPA...**pg. 2B



RECOGNITION

Tower manufacturer named SBA’s Family Business of the Year

Lamppa Manufacturing now in its fourth generation



Lamppa Manufacturing CEO Garrett Lamppa poses in one of the test saunas at the company’s headquarters in Tower. file photo

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

TOWER— A prominent local business has been named the Minnesota Family-Owned Business of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration, or SBA. The SBA made the announcement this week, highlighting Garrett Lamppa, who assumed management of Lamppa Manufacturing three years ago, for the remarkable expansion of the sauna stove and wood furnace manufacturer.

“The family-owned small business award honors legacies that last for generations,” said Brian McDonald, SBA’s Minnesota district director. “Garrett is continuing to build upon Lamppa Manufacturing’s reputation for quality products, competitive jobs, and strong support of their rural community in Tower.”

Four generations of Lamppas built the manufacturing operation on Minnesota’s Iron Range. Garrett Lamppa’s great-grandfather, Richard Lamppa worked as a blacksmith in Embarrass, in the

1930’s, and began making sauna stoves for the Finnish settlers who lived nearby. Garrett’s grandfather, Herbert Lamppa, helped Richard build the stoves and eventually took over the business with Garrett’s father, Daryl, in the 1970s. Herbert and Daryl worked together for decades, and ultimately created one of the cleanest and most efficient wood-burning furnaces on the market. During this time, it was Daryl’s passion to burn wood better and all of his endless testing led to the product evolution of today. This includes the efficient and clean burning Kuuma BluFlame, a gasification sauna stove designed from their patented furnace technology released at the end of 2023.

In 2008, Garrett took over Herbert’s management responsibilities to help the family business as a side job. Garrett said, “Working with my dad was the best thing that ever happened to our relationship.” Garrett transitioned into CEO and full-time employment in 2021.

See **BUSINESS...**pg. 2B



COLLEGE HOOPS AHEAD

Grizzlies’ Burnett signs with University of Northwestern

North Woods’ hoops star chooses blend of faith and basketball

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- Many North Woods boys basketball fans might swear that senior Jonah Burnett soars like an eagle when he floats down the lane for a shot, and an Eagle is what he will be for the next four years after signing a letter of intent to play for the University of Northwestern-St. Paul (UNW) Eagles.

Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich served as master of ceremonies for the well-attended ceremony on Friday and offered high praise for Burnett, who led the team to a 22-6 record while scoring 813 points as the eighth best scorer among all Minnesota players.

“Jonah, as your coach for the past two years, I want to congratulate you,” Jugovich said. “You have been a staple of this program for years and without you our record and just our whole ability of being able to play against high competition would not have been as good.”

Burnett was a force to be reckoned with this season, leading the team in scoring, rebounding, points in transition and points off turnovers, total minutes played, and was second in assists. And he did all that against teams whose game plans focused on stopping him.

But as he’s done throughout his career, Burnett was quick to credit



Above: Flanked by his mother, Jenny, and father, Tom, North Woods senior Jonah Burnett signs a letter of intent to play basketball for the University of Northwestern-St. Paul Eagles next year.

the play of his teammates as a major reason for his success.

“It definitely took a lot of pressure off of me because I wasn’t worried about scoring as much as possible when I have teammates I can rely on,” Burnett said. “So I’m glad they stepped up this year and got a lot better from last year because we needed them. Defensively, rebounding, and everything else, they stepped up and I’m thankful for teammates like that.”

Since he first stepped on the court for organized basketball in third grade, Burnett has seen a fair number of coaches, and several have left lasting impressions on him.

“In my elementary years with the Nett Lake Eagles program Brandon Benner was always a really good coach, he really cared about us,” Burnett said. “And then Will Kleppe did a good job helping me become a better basketball player, and Jugovich was also good at that, too.”

But there’s one coach who’s been on the sidelines the whole time, pushing him, encourag-

ing him, supporting him, and that’s his dad, Tom Burnett. “It’s been really nice to have my dad always there teaching me new stuff,” he said. “It’ll be a little bit different in college.”

The elder Burnett has enjoyed every minute of being a part of Jonah’s development.

“It’s been a blast,” Tom said. “I’ve been able to coach him since third grade, not only him but all of his friends, too. It’s good to see how well they all get along together and they’re best of friends. The basketball part was fun, but more important are the friendships and relationships we built, and the stuff you can teach them through basketball, hard work and dedication and those sorts of things. It’s been wonderful, and I’m going to miss it.”

Burnett has also honed his skills playing club basketball in the off-season with the Wisconsin Playmakers basketball program in Superior, Wis.

“That’s really helped a lot, playing so much more than we do in the season,” Burnett said. “In (the

See **BURNETT...**pg. 2B



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LAMPPA...Continued from page 1B

be what it is now.”
 “Being able to build a program that has sustainability and success both on and off the field is something I’m proud of. I think it’s also important to stay in touch with students after they graduate. I won’t remember what games we won or lost, but I do remember who played third base one year.”

The importance of that personal connection was ingrained in Justin from early on. Growing up in Tower, baseball wasn’t just a sport, it was a lifestyle, one that encompassed the many young players who Lon took under his wing, from Little League to up through high school.

“I think the number one lesson my father taught

me was having patience and allowing kids to fail, that’s where you build success and learning comes from failure. That attribute comes directly from my dad.”

Of course, many others contributed along the way, notes Justin. “Bill Hare was a blessing to have as my assistant coach. He had a great relationship with

students and was someone I looked up to for many years.”

While coaching has always been central, Lamppa’s impact extends well beyond working with players. He’s also served as the Men’s Division President on the MCAC Executive Committee and Men’s Athletic Director for Itasca Athletics.

Yet, amidst the achievements, Lamppa remains grounded, attributing much of his success to the support and mentorship of his colleagues, including former players turned coaches Mike Gebhart and Kurt Fenner, and Chris Brown, his pitching coach. Their camaraderie and collective dedication have shaped Itasca’s baseball

program. However, his extended family and his wife Amanda have been the true backbone to his coaching success.

“It takes a village to have a successful program, and there are a lot of people behind the scenes here at Itasca and in the northland that have made this possible. I’m forever grateful to them!”

BURNETT...Continued from page 1B

high school) season we only play about 28 to 30 games, and in club ball you’ll be playing close to 50 to 80 games a season, and the competition is a lot better, too, down in the cities or wherever we’re at.”

Burnett had one more game on tap this week, Wednesday’s Border Battle All-Star game in Duluth, where he was teamed up with a duo from Cherry’s state-championship team, Isaac Asuma and Noah Sundquist, against some

of the best ballers from Wisconsin in the charity game.

And then his sights will be set on UNW, a private Christian university with about 3,400 students that competes at the NCAA Division III level. UNW was Burnett’s top pick among several options for the opportunity to continue to grow in his faith.

“The number one thing I look forward to with that program is that they make Jesus the center

of the program, which I really like doing,” he said. “That’s basically the main reason why I considered going there and then also their history of performing well.”

And indeed, Burnett will be stepping into a high-powered program at UNW. In 23 seasons under Coach Tim Grosz, the Eagles have won 16 Upper Midwest Athletic Conference regular season titles and 13 tournament championships. The team

once notched a string of seven consecutive appearances in the NCAA Division III tournament, including a Sweet 16 run, and has had a total of nine tourney bids, the most recent in 2022. UNW also has won two National Christian College Tournament championships.

There was an undercurrent of excitement in his voice as Grosz talked about Burnett joining the Eagles.

“He’s just an outstanding player, hard worker,

great teammate, very versatile both offensively and defensively, he’ll be able to guard a lot of different positions, which is great,” Grosz said. “And he has the skill set to be able to get downhill and get to the rim, and he handles the ball well, shoots it well, so he really fits well. We like to do motion offensive basketball, taking advantage of player strengths, taking advantage of matchups, so we’re really thrilled to have him in our program the next

four years and just see how he does.”

Burnett said he plans to major in kinesiology with a pre-physical therapy emphasis. With full certification in physical therapy requiring a doctorate these days, he said for now he’ll concentrate on the pre-physical therapy program and see how that works for him first and evaluate his career options later.

“If I like it, then maybe I’ll go on for the extra schooling,” he said.

BUSINESS...Continued from page 1B

Today, Lamppa Manufacturing sells wood-burning furnaces and wood sauna stoves out of their facility in Tower and the Kuuma sauna stove remains their flagship product. The original team of 3-4 skilled employees, who made an average of 100 sauna stoves and 40-50 furnaces annually, has since expanded to 18 full-time employees. During the peak of the pandemic, Lamppa Manufacturing sold 650 sauna stoves, and over 100 wood-burning furnaces, which are EPA certified as meeting strict air emissions standards.

In early 2022, Garrett participated as an SBA resource partner, and

the Entrepreneur Fund’s Quality Jobs program, which helped him invest in his employees by improving safety, offering competitive wages, and adding benefits packages. In 2023, the Entrepreneur Fund collaborated with Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation on two working capital loans for Lamppa Manufacturing’s production, testing, marketing, staff training, and inventory of new products. In October 2023, Lamppa Manufacturing was recognized as a regional business of excellence by the Entrepreneur Fund.

Lamppa Manufacturing is incredibly involved in the com-

munity, providing quality jobs and support to the surrounding rural area. Recently, the business has partnered with Bluejacket Career Academies and Industrial Technology at the Hibbing High School to build a sauna with students. With ninety years and four generations of experience and hard work, Lamppa Manufacturing is striving to make Tower the “Sauna Capital of the World”.

National Small Business Week 2024 is taking place the first week of May and will include a multiday virtual event open to all. The conference will feature numerous educational panels, and recognize national award

winners, including naming this year’s National Small Business Person of the Year. For registration and additional information on National Small Business Week, visit <https://www.sba.gov/national-small-business-week>.





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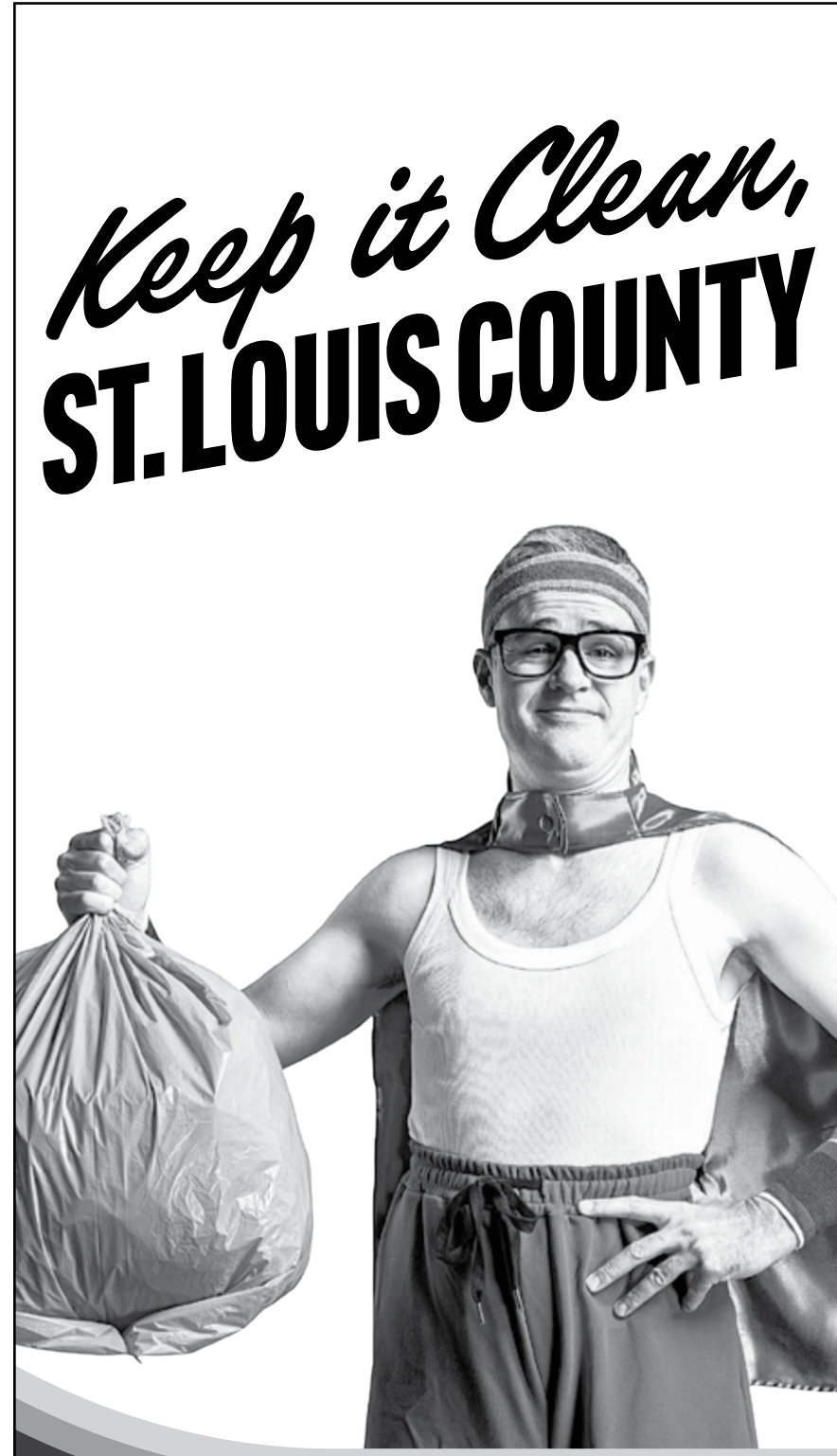


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<p>ASH RIVER TRAIL CANISTER SITE 11391 Ash River Trail</p>	<p>WINTER HOURS Sat: 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>
<p>COOK TRANSFER STATION 2134 S. Beatty Rd. Cook</p>	<p>HOURS Mon: 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Tues thru Sat: 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.</p>
<p>COUNTY 77 CANISTER SITE 2038 County Rd. 77 Greenwood Twp</p>	<p>SUMMER HOURS Tue: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m. Thu: 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Sat: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sun: Noon–5 p.m.</p>
<p>KABETOGAMA LAKE CANISTER SITE 10150 Gamma Rd</p>	<p>HOURS Wed: noon – 4 p.m. Sat: 8 a.m. – noon</p>
<p>ORR CANISTER SITE 4038 Hwy 53</p>	<p>SUMMER HOURS Tue: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Thu: 2 a.m. – 7 p.m. Sat: 8 a.m.–noon Sun: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.</p>
<p>PORTAGE CANISTER SITE 6992 Crane Lake Rd, Buyck</p>	<p>WINTER HOURS Tue, Sat: 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>
<p>REGIONAL LANDFILL 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia</p>	<p>HOURS Mon-Fri: 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sat: 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m.</p>
<p>HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE FACILITIES</p>	
<p>5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Tues and Sat: 8 a.m.–1 p.m.</p>	<p>3994 Landfill Rd, Hibbing Sat: 8 a.m.–1 p.m.</p>

ST. LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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Summer hours effective April 15 - September 30



Obituaries and Death Notices

**James W. Gawboy**

James Walter "Jim" Gawboy, "Waasagiiizhik" "Animikii Aanakwad", 87, died at home in his wife's arms on Thursday, April 4, 2024. A Traditional Wake was held on Sunday, April 7 and a Traditional Service was held on Monday, April 8, both at the Vermilion Wellness Center in Tower. The Spiritual Leader was Ricky Defoe. Military Honors were accorded by the Bois Forte Honor Guard, Cook VFW Honor Guard and Orr American Legion Honor Guard. Casketbearers were Donald

Swartz, Tristan Day, Issac Gawboy, Jordan Gawboy, Lorenzo Gawboy, Timothy Gawboy, Rollin Burba, Liam Burba, Rogelio Noyes and Ryan Bajan. Burial was on sacred ground.

Jim was born in Cloquet on July 17, 1936, and lived his early life on Vermilion Reservation, later moving to his grandmother's farm near Ely after her passing. He graduated from Ely High School in 1953 where he was a renowned swimmer. He then enrolled in the University of Minnesota where he swam sprints and ran cross country for the U of M. After graduating from the U of M with a degree in anthropology and zoology, he was drafted into the U.S. Army where he served for two years. He then went on to work as a game warden for the Minnesota DNR for 30 years.

In 1990 Jim moved to Kugler Township and, together with his wife Becky, created a working farm. After his retirement, he taught American Indian studies at Mesabi Community College for two years. Jim and Becky then became licensed foster parents. Over a ten-year period, they fostered nearly 100 children and went on to adopt 12. When people asked why he adopted so many kids, his reply was "no one else would and besides I never learned to play golf." During their 34 years together, Jim and Becky were inseparable. They traveled with their kids to Powwows throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Ontario. Together they took cruises, train trips, traveled often to the Yucatan in Mexico, and drove their camper out west several times and to North Carolina to visit

family there.

On a trip to Ireland, Becky bought a tin whistle which Jim learned to play and led him to play the piano at age 62. Although he had no musical experience, he became an accomplished pianist. Jim also built a dozen saunas, the family home on Lake Vermilion Reservation, and added a large addition to the farmhouse that he was remodeling. Jim was well known for his sense of humor, his brilliant intellect and his creativity.

Jim is survived by his loving wife, Rebecca Holm Gawboy; children, Linden Gawboy, J.T. Gawboy, Briita (Donnie Swartz) Noyes, Sigurd Noyes, Rolando Noyes, Ann Gawboy, Shawn Gawboy, Miranda Gawboy, Naomi Gawboy, Isaac (Angel Day) Gawboy, Timothy Gawboy, Jasmine (Tristan Day) Gawboy, Desmond Gaw-

boy, Juanita Gawboy, Roger Gawboy, Lorenzo Gawboy, Jordan Gawboy and Victor Diaz; beloved foster son, Steven Isham; son of his heart, Ryan Bajan; brother, Carl (Cindy Donnes) Gawboy; brother and sister-in-law, John and Amy Holm; 30 grandchildren; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; six siblings; oldest son, Galen Gawboy; granddaughter, Amy Gawboy; and first wife, Kathleen.

Richard F. Hall

Richard Fred "Dick" Hall, 80, of Birch Lake-Ely, passed away on Sunday, March 31, 2024, at Boundary Waters Care Center in Ely. Funeral services were held on Saturday, April 6 at Grace Lutheran Church in Ely. Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz

Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his wife, Vicki Saari Hall; daughter, Jenny Hall of Virginia; son, Russell (Miriam) Hall of Eau Claire, Wis.; and granddaughters, Elizabeth and Lily.

Donald H. Lettow

Donald H. Lettow, 88, of Breckenridge, passed away on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, under the care of CHI Hospice and Twin Town Villa. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 13 at Joseph Vertin and Sons Funeral Home in Breckenridge, with Pastor Ale Tulu officiating. Visitation will be for one hour prior. Burial will be at St. Mary's Cemetery in Breckenridge.

Ely Young Life

19TH ANNUAL SWEET SPRING AUCTION

Bidding is OPEN NOW until Sunday, April 14

Items close at half-hour increments starting from 2:30-6 PM



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Adventure Inn - Two nights king jacuzzi suite
 AJ's Fast Lube - Oil changes
 Anderson, Dawn - Owl dream catcher
 Arrowhead Outdoors - Various winter hats, Otter Pro-Tech 48 rod case, rechargeable "Brute" Life PO4 lithium battery kit, MarCum Roamer Shuttle rechargeable battery kit
 Bina, Cindy - Fine silver jewelry
 Bloomers - \$25 gift certificates
 Blue Loon Boutique - Ely blanket
 Boat Club Restaurant - \$50 gift certificates
 Boathouse Restaurant - Microbrew tasting & appetizers
 Boes, Lori - Melaleuca cleaning product & bucket
 Boundary Waters Septic - Residential septic pumping
 Brainstorm Bakery - Four granola varieties
 Brgant, Eric - Two Artistic Mud Pottery mugs
 Britton's Cafe - \$20 gift certificates
 Cache Lake - Camping food
 Canoe Country Outfitters - One-week Kevlar canoe rental
 Chernak, Sue - Pottery bowl, mosaics
 Cinema 6, Mtn. Iron - Movie tickets
 Cole, Autumn - Hand-crafted pie server and pie plate
 Cove Point Lodge Restaurant - \$100 gift cert
 D & D Accounting - \$125 in services
 Dairy Queen - Ten small blizzards (1/month)
 Dan MacCoy Chimney Sweeps - Chimney sweep and inspection
 Dan's Garage - \$50 gift certificate
 Dannenbring, Greg - "Higher Calling" maple slab fractal wood burn
 Dirty Dog Manufacturing - YL logo clothing
 Dock on Wheels - Cedar dock benches
 Domino's Pizza - Two large one-topping pizzas
 Dorothy Molter Museum - Family membership, root beer package
 Dutchman Tree Service - \$2500 toward Phase 1 balsam trimming
 Ely Bike and Kicksled - Bike & kicksled rental, bike tune-up
 Ely Chiropractic Clinic - Tri-Core cervical pillow
 Ely Fire Department - Private ride & tour of fire station
 Ely Flower and Seed - Moss hanging flower basket
 Ely Golf Club - Nine-hole round of golf for two with cart
 Ely Memorial Senior High - Athletic passes
 Ely Mercantile Co. - Custom sweatshirt, Camp Ely tumbler, water tower print
 Ely Surplus - \$25 gift certificate
 Ely Veterinary Clinic - Earthborn holistic dog food
 Ely Vision Center - Nonprescription sunglasses
 Ely's Historic State Theater - Ely film festival pass
 Erzar, Debbie - Various quilted table runners
 Evergreen Spa & Wellness - 60 minute massage
 Faltsek, Evan - Custom cutting board
 Fisher Maps - Set of nine maps covering Ely area
 Forest Concrete - Class 5 gravel
 Fortune Bay Resort - One-night stay
 Gator's Emporium - Pizza party!
 Gene Hicks Gourmet Coffee - Coffee baskets
 Gracie's Plant Works - \$25 gift certificate
 Grand Ely Lodge - Grand fishing package
 Great Lakes Aquarium - Four admission passes
 Gunflint Lodge - Zipline and horse-drawn sleigh/wagon ride
 Healthy Family Chiropractic - Fondue set, Backjoy seat, hot stone spa kit
 Highland Bank - Stadium blankets
 Holen, Jo - Melaleuca & RENEW products gift packages

Hunter, Anne - \$100 Cabi gift certificate
 Insula - \$50 gift cards & bottles of wine
 International Wolf Center - "What's for Dinner" with admission passes
 Jessie Brooks Massage - 60 minute massage
 Kaetterhenry, Dennis - Whiskey barrel five candle holder, custom made shelf
 Kahle, Sarah - Dog or cat sitting
 Kaiser, Bob - Suncatchers
 Kawishiwi Lodge and Outfitters - Canoe outfitting package
 Kidd, Kris - Metal print, greeting cards
 Kottke, Carrie - Carrie-Mels & \$25 gift cards
 KTIS Northwestern - Four annual Christmas concert tickets
 L & M - \$50 gift certificate
 LaTourell's Resort - Canoe paddles
 Lee, Stephen - Twins tickets (second row)
 Lepisto, Andrea - Two-hour house cleaning; bracelets
 Lien, Mary Ellen - Matted watercolor and Ely painted rock
 Lobo Leather - Women's leather bracelet
 Log Cabin Coffee - Logo coffee cup & \$50 gift cert
 Low Impact Excavating - Class 5 gravel
 Magee, Heather - 5 Pines Candle Co. candles
 Mealey's Gift & Sauna - \$25 gift certificate
 Merhar's Ace Hardware - Eric Sherman images puzzles
 Mischke, Sue - "Forest Sunset" watercolor painting
 Mitska's Market - \$10 gift certificate
 MN State Fair - Two tickets
 North American Bear Center - Admission tickets with "Behind the Scenes" bear tour
 North Shore Camping Co. - Glamping - 2 nights stay
 North Shore Scenic Railroad - Family membership
 Northern Expressions - Single scoop waffle cones
 Northern Grounds - Mother's Day mimosa brunch for two
 Olson, Brenda - Handmade soaps
 Orcutt Guide Service - Half-day guided fishing for two
 Passananti, Joyce - "Being Here is Home" wall art
 Passananti, Stan - Authentic Italian dinner, two-night remote cabin stay
 Paws and Claws - Pet grooming
 Pebble Spa - \$100 gift card package
 Penke, Matt & Sherry - Hiboy EX6 e-bike
 Phoenix Fire Ceramics - Two "free-flow" mugs
 Piragis Northwoods Co. - Northwoods picnic package
 Portage North - Utensil roll
 Potluck - "Think Spring" basket & mixing bowl set
 Range LP Gas - 20# LP cylinder tank refill
 Raven Words Press - 2 books; notecards
 Razor Edge - \$30 certificates
 Roderick, Gary - Cozy northwoods cabin: two-night stay
 Serena's Carpet - \$100 Zup's gift card
 Smith's Piano Tuning - One regular piano tuning
 Spirit of the Wilderness - Canoe carry kit, hydro flask, Granite Gear day pack, two-day paddle board rental
 St. Paul Saints - Two outfield reserved tickets
 Stahl, Carol - Watercolor prints
 Stony Ridge - \$50 gift certificates
 Subway - 15-portion platter, 6" subs
 Sundell Eye Associates - Plano sunglasses
 Sundog Sports - All-terrain dog booties
 Swanson Excavating - Class 5 gravel

Tara Kay Photography - Photo shoot \$100 gift certificate
 The Wilderness at Fortune Bay - Round of golf for two
 Tim's Auto - Oil change
 Today, Dave - Half-day guided fishing trip for two
 Tranquility by Jaime - Tranquility gift bag
 Tupperware - Peggy Erzar - Impressions classic bowl set, serving center and pitcher, Lunch on the Go set
 Urbas, Larry - Handmade pine bench
 Vermilion Veterinary Clinic - \$100 gift certificate
 Willy Vosburgh Moose Lake Tow Service - Round trip for two
 Wetzel, Tom & Mischke, Larry - Walleye fish fry
 Wick, Chuck - Hand-crafted charcuterie boards, lazy susan, side table
 Wilderness Wood Fire Pizza - Two specialty large pizzas
 Wolfand Computers & Hobby - Little Ely water tower
 Young Life Camp Fundraiser - Three-hour spring yard clean-up
 Z'up North Realty - Gift basket
 Zup's Food Market Ely - \$100 grocery gift card
 Zup's Food Market Babbitt - Variety of brats for grilling

Anonymous Donations:

- Bader's Pheasant Run - Ten bird hunt
- Seaquist Orchards: Pick of the Best Gift Box
- Manicure & Pedicure at Roots Salon
- Haircut & Partial Foil at Roots Salon
- \$100 Amazon Gift Card
- \$100 Top Golf Gift Card
- \$100 Athleta/Gap/Old Navy/Banana Republic Gift Card
- \$50 Hobby Lobby Gift Card
- \$50 Kunnari's Gift Card
- \$50 Natural Harvest Food Coop Gift Card
- Solo Stove Bonfire 2.0 Fire Pit

Donating Specialty Baked Items:

- Erika Bagge
- Kris Bercher
- Joe & Mary Bianco
- Janet Dunnom
- Donna Gustafson
- Susan Laine
- Erin Moravitz
- Justin Olson
- Jan Rue
- Nancy Streit
- Carol Stouffer
- Sharon Svatos
- Anna Thompson

Financial Contributions:

- Ely Credit Union
- Frandsen Bank
- RMS Virginia
- Voyageur Lumber





Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

STATE PARKS

Plan now for the upcoming camping season

REGIONAL— With the late March snowfall all but faded, North Country residents are increasingly thinking ahead to spring— and for many that will include a camping trip to one of the region's many state parks.

That's why the Department of Natural Resources is offering tips to help campers plan their summer camping adventures.

"We know Minnesotans love being outdoors, and camping at Minnesota state parks and recreation areas is more popular than ever," said Ann Pierce, the DNR's state parks and trails director. "Camping provides so many benefits, like

connection with nature, relaxation, and quality time with loved ones. We know Minnesotans are eager to plan their summer vacations and we want to make it easy and fun to plan a summer camping adventure."

Choose the right location

While many of the state parks in northeastern Minnesota are among the state's most popular camping destinations for folks from points south, for residents of the North Country, state parks elsewhere in the state can offer opportunities and vistas a bit different from those located in the region. Whatever you're looking for in a state park, you can use the DNR's interactive

Right: Camping at Lake Vermilion Soudan Underground Mine State Park.

file photo

ParkFinder (mndnr.gov/parkfinder) tool to find the park with the scenery, amenities, and recreational opportunities you're looking for. Among other things, ParkFinder can screen for accessible campsites and bathroom facilities. Trip planners can search by programs, things to see, camping or lodging types, recreation facilities, trail types or rental equipment offered.

See **CAMPING...**pg. 5B



NORTHERN FINCHES

Crossbills come and go

I'd been jealous most of the winter as I regularly heard reports of red crossbills at area feeders. Everyone seemed to have a visit from these colorful finches. Even the old, beat-up feeder at my father's house right in Tower had a regular stream of crossbills for the past couple months. And yet, the deluxe feeding station at my house on the edge of the Lost Lake Swamp seemed totally ignored.

That is until late last week when a flock of eight of them, both males and females, dropped out of the sky to crunch sunflower seeds with my diminishing flock of redpolls. They ate for several minutes, while I grabbed my camera and started shooting. Then, just as sudden-

ly as they arrived, they took off and, in true crossbill fashion, I haven't seen them since.

Crossbills are nomads by nature, in part due to their unusual dependence on conifer seeds. Their crossed bills are a unique adaptation that gives them an advantage over other finches by allowing them to wrest open the scales of pine and spruce cones, which allows them to pull out the seeds using their thick, muscular tongues (which remind me of parrots).

While many birds have favored foods, most can turn to other options when their main fare is in short supply. But crossbills are specialists, which means they



Above: A male (r) and female red crossbill stop by for sunflower seeds.

Left: An image that highlights the crossed bills.

photos by
M. Helmberger

follow their food supply. And cone crops vary from year-to-year, so crossbills are often on the wing, looking for areas where the cones are abundant.

It's not clear why crossbills showed up this year at so many area feeders. Most years, they don't seem to bother with feeders, preferring to spend their time breaking open pine and spruce cones instead. Here in the North Country, where conifers are abundant, crossbills are a year-

round resident in our region, though the numbers fluctuate from year-to-year depending on the cone crop. We seem to have lots of them around this winter, although I've only seen red crossbills this winter. The other common species is the white-winged crossbill, which is easily distinguished by their white wing bars and generally more pinkish coloring. Red crossbills tend to be more of

See **CROSSBILLS...**pg. 5B



**MARSHALL
HELMBERGER**

WATER LEVELS

DNR: Low water could impact lake/river access

REGIONAL— Minnesotans could find that launching a boat this spring is more difficult than usual due to low water levels on many lakes and rivers. The lack of snow this winter and persistent dry conditions have left lakes without the normal spring recharge.

"With unusually low water levels, people launching larger boats and pontoons with longer trailers will need to pay extra special attention to ramp lengths and depths," said Nancy Stewart, DNR water recreation consultant.

In addition to repair work now underway, DNR crews

will use the month of April to install docks. For DNR public access sites, dock-in dates are shown on LakeFinder (mndnr.gov/lakefinder); search for the lake then click on water access sites noted on the lake map to find dock details on the water access site webpage.

Spring boaters should

always anticipate and prepare for cold water conditions. This year, they should also watch out for obstructions such as rocks and sand bars that typically are not an issue for spring boaters.

Stewart offers the follow-

See **ACCESS...**pg. 5B

Learn something new

Learn how to help an injured loon



Kevin and Linda Grenzer ready to release a juvenile loon saved from fishing line entanglement.

REGIONAL— If you found an injured loon out on one of our area lakes, would you know what to do?

Learn from the experts during a free Basic Loon Rescue and Transport Strategies webinar, sponsored by Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates. The webinar is set for Thursday, April 18, at 7 p.m. and can be accessed at: meet.google.com/zfjhw-tqd. Enter the PIN: 916 690 025#. You can also access the presentation by phone at 1-530-500-4231.

Kevin and Linda Grenzer, of Loon Rescue, Inc., have been rescuing loons and other birds in need of help since 2013. This husband and wife duo specializes in rescuing loons all year long, including ice rescues.

They are nationally respected loon rescue experts who have traveled hundreds of miles across the entire state of Wisconsin to rescue loons that are in need of help. They often encounter and deal with loons that are hooked, entangled, suffering from lead poisoning, stranded in small ponds, and have been struck by boats. They have many different techniques and equipment to safely capture these loons. Kevin and Linda will discuss the correct and safe ways to rescue and transport a loon that is in need of rescue. Techniques will be discussed on how to approach a beached loon, and an entangled loon that is easily approachable and does not dive.

Skywarn classes set for around the region, including one in Ely

REGIONAL— Spring is right around the corner, and that means it's time for Skywarn spotter classes. This spring the National Weather Service office in Duluth is offering 20 classes across the Northland, including in-person and virtual options.

Classes in northern St. Louis County include:

► Monday, April 15, at Messiah Lutheran in Mt. Iron from 6-8 p.m.

► Tuesday, May 14, in Ely, from 6-8 p.m. in the city council chambers at Ely City Hall.

This year, the weather forecasters are asking everyone who attends to bring a friend to help grow the Duluth office's network of volunteers. Rural observers are in the shortest supply.

Visit <https://www.weather.gov/dlh/skywarn> to see the full details for each class, including the times and locations for in-person classes and links to register for our virtual classes.

Outdoors briefly

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday					
52 31					59 38					62 35					60 37					56 39					
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	
04/01	40	6	0.00		04/01	41	9	0.00		04/01	39	16	0.00		04/01	46	12	0.00		03/29	37	42	0.00	0.00	
04/02	50	22	0.00		04/02	44	11	0.00		04/02	44	17	0.00		04/02	43	28	0.00		03/30					
04/03	39	na	0.00		04/03	42	27	0.00		04/03	42	27	0.00		04/03	45	28	0.00		03/31	No readings at presstime				
04/04	43	na	0.00		04/04	45	28	0.00		04/04	42	29	0.00		04/04	50	27	0.00		03/31					
04/05	50	16	0.00		04/05	50	18	0.00		04/05	47	26	0.00		04/05	52	21	0.00		03/31					
04/06	51	na	0.00		04/06	52	17	0.00		04/06	48	24	0.00		04/06	55	28	0.00		03/31					
04/07	56	26	0.00		04/07	51	19	0.00		04/07	52	24	0.00		04/07	57	34	0.00		03/31	34	27	0.00		
YTD Total	2.87 44.6"				YTD Total	2.44 30.7"				YTD Total	2.80 52.2"				YTD Total	NA				YTD Total	3.23 41.9"				

Apply soon for 2024 bear license lottery

REGIONAL — Prospective bear hunters have until Friday, May 3 to apply for a bear hunting license from the Minnesota DNR.

A total of 4,030 licenses are available in 15 quota areas where licenses are limited for the 2024 season, which opens Sunday, Sept. 1, and closes Sunday, Oct. 13. Lottery winners will be notified by Saturday, June 1. The deadline to purchase bear hunting licenses awarded by lottery is Thursday, Aug. 1. Any remaining unpurchased licenses will be available over the counter starting at noon on Tuesday, Aug. 6.

An unlimited number of bear licenses also will

be sold over-the-counter for the no-quota area that includes east-central and far northwestern Minnesota. No-quota licenses are valid only in the no-quota area.

Hunters with either a quota or no-quota license who are interested in taking a problem bear should contact the DNR wildlife manager for their area(s) of interest to be added to the hunter contact list for any opportunities that might arise.

Complete instructions about how to apply for a bear hunting license, maps of permit areas and a listing of permit availability for each area are available on the Minnesota DNR website.

CROSSBILLS...Continued from page 4B

a brick red.

Because crossbills are so dependent on conifer seeds, they can nest and raise young at any time of year. Birds generally raise their young when their food supply is most abundant, which is why insect-eating birds arrive by the millions in the North Country each year to raise their young on the hordes of nutritious insects that seem to explode in our woods right around Memorial Day each year.

But the best time for raising young if you're a crossbill is whenever you find a jackpot of cones, and that can happen any time of year, but most often in the fall or winter, after the previous summer's new cones are dried and mature. While most birds feed insects to their young, crossbills feed their young pine and spruce seeds, so as long as there

is a sufficient cone crop, crossbills will get down to business at any time of year.

All of which only adds to their unpredictability, even occasional fickleness. I still remember one winter, back in the 1970s, when crossbills became regular visitors to the bird feeders I maintained at our family's home in Bloomington. The birds came like clockwork for weeks and one day I posted their presence to the rare bird alert maintained by the Minnesota Ornithologists Union. At least one excited bird watcher called and made an appointment to come for coffee the following morning to see them. He showed up, binoculars and camera in hand, but the crossbills were no-shows, and they never appeared at our feeders there again. That's just like a crossbill.

CAMPING...Continued from page 4B

Book campsites and lodging early and be flexible

Now is a good time to make plans for summer camping. Reservations for campsites and lodging in state parks and recreation areas can be made up to 120 days in advance. This means all of June and some of July are already within the reservation window. Reservations are in high demand for holiday weekends, campsites with electric hookups and the most popular parks, so it's best to plan ahead if you're thinking of a visit to popular parks during the peak of the season.

If reservations are full for your preferred location and dates, the DNR has three suggestions. First, sign up for the "notify me" function on the reservation website to get notified by email if there's a cancellation. Cancellations do occur regularly. Second, consider a camping trip on weekdays instead of a weekend, which tend to fill up faster. Third, look for open reservations at less busy parks. There are more than 70 state parks and recreation areas across Minnesota,

and many of them always have camping reservations available. If the first choice park is full, use the ParkFinder tool (mndnr.gov/parkfinder) to find another location.

Cancel if plans change

If you've made a reservation but your plans have changed, reservations can be canceled on the DNR website (mndnr.gov/reservations) or via phone at 866-857-2757. Campers who will not be able to use their reservation are strongly encouraged to cancel, not just to get a full or partial refund, but to open those opportunities to other campers. There is no cancellation fee if a reservation is canceled 14 or more days prior to the scheduled arrival.

Find state park events and programs

Events are scheduled at many state parks throughout the year, offering a wide range of activities from fishing and birding to guided hikes to crafting to learning about park wildlife. No prior experience is necessary to participate, and most events are free. Find event listings

on the parks and trails event calendar (mndnr.gov/ptcalendar).

People camping with kids will want to check out the Junior Ranger program. Junior Ranger booklets can be picked up at ranger stations during open hours or printed at home. Kids who complete the program earn a badge. There's no cost to participate. Details are available on the Junior Ranger webpage (mndnr.gov/junior-ranger).

Check visitor alerts before leaving home

Staff post visitor alerts on the DNR website to communicate important information related to safety, closures, construction projects and other things that might impact trips. Find visitor alerts at the top of each individual park website (mndnr.gov/park-list).

Don't get lost

The Avenza Maps app uses GPS location tracking so park visitors can find their location, even when off the grid. After the app and a park or trail map is downloaded, no internet or cell service is needed. DNR

ACCESS...Continued from page 4B

ing tips for launching boats in low water conditions:

- Launch slowly.
- Have a spotter in the boat while launching so trailer tires and boat axles don't fall off the last plank where an existing blowhole might be present.
- Have hip boots or waders and a life jacket as it might help to

get in the water and guide the boat or check the ramp for firmness and water depth.

- Lower the motor only after making sure there is enough water depth.
- Use a lake map as a guide to avoid shallow areas and watch for obstructions.
- Boaters who encounter prob-

lems at a DNR public access site can contact their local DNR office or the DNR Information Center at 888-646-6367. For public water access maps, state water trail maps and boating information, go to the DNR's public water access webpage (mndnr.gov/wateraccess).

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LTD
Voluntary Benefits available by payroll deduction

Website Address: https://boisforte.com/jobs/

Published in the Timberjay, April 12, 2024



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

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.

105 North Central Avenue piragis.com



OPENINGS

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

Vermilion Country is a project based learning school seeking to expand our staffing. We are adding new positions! Also interviewing for positions for the 2024/25 school year for other licensed teaching positions.

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

- Special Education Teacher (licensed)
Literature/Language Arts and/or Social Studies (licensed)
Science and/or Math Interdisciplinary Teacher (licensed)
Social Worker (skills and students services focus on individual and small group skills work. LSW, LGSW, LICSW, Licensed School Social Worker, or alternative certification considered LADC etc.)
Student Support and Community positions (no education license required) Benefits Eligible
Special Education Assistant /para(Special Education) (Hourly \$17.50 - 24.50/HR +)
Student Success Counselor (\$40,000 annual salary)
Student Success Program Specialist, (hourly \$24-\$30/hr+ DOE)
Part Time:
Transportation Driver (Van) 5-20 hours per week. Hourly rate DOE
Transportation Driver (Class C School Bus) 5-20 hours per week. Hourly rate DOE

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

BOIS FORTE VERMILION PUBLIC WORKS / FOOD SHELF FACILITY TOWER, MINNESOTA

The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians will receive sealed bids for the "BOIS FORTE VERMILION PUBLIC WORKS / FOOD SHELF FACILITY", until 10:00 a.m., THURSDAY, APRIL 25th, 2024, at the office of the Nett Lake Tribal Government Center.

Labor and Material Payment Bond) as required by the Specifications within ten (10) days after Notice of Award of Contract.

Bid Documents (plans and specifications) will be available electronically beginning March 28th, 2024. Free access to the plans & specifications may be obtained by contacting DSGW Architects, Inc., (218) 727-2626.

No Bidder shall modify, withdraw or cancel their Bid or any part thereof for sixty (60) days after the date designated for the receipt of bids.

Contractors who would like to visit the site are to contact Carol Burr to set up a date & time via email at cburr@boisforte-nsn.gov.

Published in the Timberjay, April 5, 12 & 19, 2024

CABIN CLEANERS

Pike Bay Lodge on Lake Vermilion is hiring cabin cleaners. Weekends+, competitive wages. Call or email Jay at 218-753-2430 or info@pikebaylodge.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOCAL BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION KUGLER TOWNSHIP

Important Information Regarding Property Assessments. This may affect your 2025 property taxes

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Appeal and Equalization for Kugler Township shall meet on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 from 10 - 11 a.m. at the KUGLER TOWN HALL 9072 HWY 135, TOWER

The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether taxable property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor, and to determine whether corrections need to be made.

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.

Any questions, call Paul Cherry at 218-365-8235

Chris Suihkonen, Kugler Township Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, April 12, 2024

KUGLER TOWNSHIP REGULAR MEETING NOTICE

The Kugler Town Board will hold their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at Kugler Town Hall at 5:30 p.m.

Chris Suihkonen, Kugler Township Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, April 12, 2024

VERMILION LAKE TOWNSHIP Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Notice

Important Information Regarding Property Assessments. This May Affect Your 2025 Property Taxes.

The Board of Appeal and Equalization for Vermilion Lake Township will meet on Tuesday, April 30, 2024 from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. at the Vermilion Lake Town Hall, 6703 Wahlsten Road

The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether 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 the assessor, you may appear before the local Board of Appeal and Equalization.

Generally, you must appear to the local board before appealing to the County Board of Appeal and Equalization.

* Assessor's Office 218-749-7147, North Land Office Center - Suite 2R 307 1st Street South, Virginia, Minnesota

Frank Zobitz, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, April 12, 2024

LEGAL NOTICE City of Tower



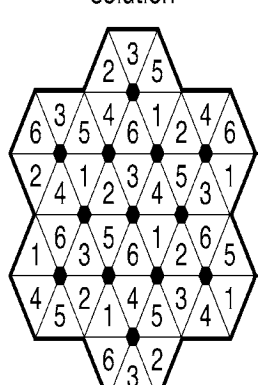
Publishing of Ordinance 82N An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 82

1st Reading February 12, 2024 Public Hearing April 2, 2024 2nd Reading April 8, 2024 Given length of Ordinance, please view at:

https://cityoftower.com/city-ordinances

Michael Schultz Tower Clerk-Treasurer

Published in the Timberjay, April 12, 2024



GENERAL NOTICE TO CONTROL OR ERADICATE NOXIOUS WEEDS

Notice is hereby given this day of April 12, 2024, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 18.83, Subdivision 1 (2015), that all persons in St. Louis County, Minnesota, shall control or eradicate all noxious weeds on land they occupy or are required to maintain.

https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants-insects/noxious-and-invasive-weed-program

Kristin Fogard, County Agricultural Inspector Land and Minerals Department 320 West 2nd St, Ste 302 218-726-2606 fogardk@stlouiscountymn.gov

Published in the Timberjay, April 12, 2024

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Flair
5 Enterprise letters
8 Stuffing herb
12 Taunt
13 Aussie hopper
14 Hockey legend Phil, to fans
15 Home of the Packers
17 Compared to
18 Congeal
19 Sturdy tree
20 Spassky's game
21 - -Manuel Miranda
22 Huge
23 Bottom
26 Fear-stricken
30 "E Pluribus -"
31 Blue hue
32 Lighten
33 Arty area
35 Hinder
36 Sailor
37 Soda container
38 Norwegian inlet
41 "It's c-c-cold!"
42 Right angle
45 Actress Russo
46 Chinese brew
48 Diminutive suffix

Grid for King Crossword with numbers indicating starting points for across and down words.

- 49 Mosquito barrier
50 Cupid's alias
51 Thames town
52 Multipurpose truck
53 Compass point
Job" actor
9 Tennis champ Arthur
10 Transcript stats
11 Eternities
16 Dark film genre
20 Spy org.
21 Color named for a fruit
22 Journalist Nellie
23 Gist
24 Year in Spain
25 "Gee, ya think?"
26 Alias abbr.
27 Yoga pad
28 Jargon suffix
29 Aachen article
31 Bro or sis
34 '60s chic
35 Challenge
37 El Greco's birthplace
38 Gratis
39 Joan of rock
40 Aware of
41 Author Harte
42 To be, in Toulon
43 Some July babies
44 Endure
46 Wildebeest
47 Up-to-date

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

9x9 grid for Weekly Sudoku with some numbers filled in.

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

Moderate Challenging HOO BOY!

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TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

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

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

MARINE
Centrally Located On Lake Vermilion
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218-749-0751

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DREAMWEAVER SALON & DAY SPA
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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.

MARINE

WANTED
SELIGA CANOES WANTED: We'll buy old Seligas in Good Shape. Turn your classic canoe into cash.

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.

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

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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.

Even Exchange answers
1. Tense, Terse 6. Barter, Banter
2. Candy, Cindy 7. Purse, Purge
3. Galley, Valley 8. Sailor, Tailor
4. Tiger, Tiger 9. Patty, Party
5. Planet, Planes 10. Clover, Closer

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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: Medium
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Super Crossword CROSSWORD DIVERSION

ACROSS
1 Extreme self-deniers
9 Common proof of age
15 Plotting band
20 Cousins of croci
21 Worker whose job is fitting
22 Nice smell
23 Stylized bow that's a token of affection
24 Godly
25 Fragment
26 Unwrap
27 Put on fancy duds, with "up"
29 Many Punjabi believers
30 Take forcibly
31 Marry
32 Cultural
35 Many August babies
36 Ford bomb
37 Writer Elinor or Philip
39 Praise highly
41 Toad feature
43 Toppings for nachos
45 "The King —"
46 Shakes up
51 Entertainer Falana
52 Nutrition std.
54 "— Kapital"
55 Tapering off
56 Flying hooters
57 They have depots: Abbr.
58 Father of Beau Bridges
60 Most bizarre
61 Rugged truck, in brief
62 Sandy islets
63 Napoleon's isle of exile
64 News anchor Huntley
65 Hebrew holy scroll
67 Plus others: Abbr.
69 "Noah" actress
71 Chewed
75 Title for a fictional Southern rabbit
77 Cowboys' city, informally
79 Writer Dinesen
81 Suffix with Seattle
82 Behind bars
85 Bruno — (shoe brand)
86 Moo — pork
87 Be boastful
88 Hurting from hiking, say
90 Color tone
91 Gridiron stats
92 Pale brown
93 Legume-family plant
94 Incline
96 "Not so!"
98 PC memory units
99 19th-century Shakespeare editor
100 Chevy muscle car
101 Farfalle, e.g.
105 A8 carmaker
107 Paige of "Evita"
109 Gene-splicing need
112 Trellis plants
113 Current style
115 Finale
116 Colorado ski mecca
117 Vetoed
118 Early online protocol
120 Rip apart
123 Justice Kagan
124 Distinctive film director
125 Ripped apart
126 Impertinent
127 Meager
128 Jewel box holders ... or eight features of this puzzle?
14 Equestrian training
15 Bit of outdated hi-fi equipment
16 Traveled in a curved path
17 Tennis' Becker
18 Astonish
19 Suit coat flap
28 — monster (large lizard)
32 Lofty trains
33 — del Fuego
34 Romantic evening meal
38 In-favor votes
40 Longtime politico Mo
42 Rival of Xerox or Canon
43 Political pull
44 DIYer's book
47 Build upon
48 Deadlock
49 Mil. officer
50 Mil. officer
53 Mgr.'s aide
59 Tasty tuber
62 December 25
64 Periodic payment to a stockholder
66 Taper off
68 Judges' org.
70 Very fine rain
72 Hora or hokeypokey
73 Classic arcade name
74 Smooth transition
76 31-Across on the sly
78 Viscous
80 Novelist Jane
82 Possibilities
83 This moment
84 Java
85 Fulfill expectations
87 Really tired
89 Sailing races
95 "Take it out" mark
97 Beatified Fr. woman
101 Really yearns
102 Teresa of —
103 "Boxcars" roll
104 Cold temps
106 River mouth
108 Silly prank
110 Constituent of gunpowder
111 At — for words
114 — ex machina
116 Observe
119 III, to Italians
121 Inclined
122 '16 Olympics host

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22
23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34 35 36
37 38 39 40 41 42
43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50
51 52 53 54 55
56 57 58 59 60
61 62 63 64
65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74
75 76 77 78 79 80 81
82 83 84 85 86 87
88 89 90 91 92
93 94 95 96 97
98 99 100
101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111
112 113 114 115 116
117 118 119 120 121 122
123 124 125
126 127 128

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.
Clue: Z equals R
FN E LZKH DN OMFKEPEZU
FB JKDPK RD LU ZUBFBREKR
RD LZUEJFKC, FR MEB E CDDH
OZEOJ ZUODZH.

Answer

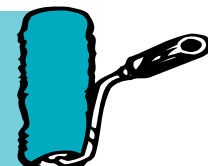
4 5 6 1 8 3 2 9 7
7 9 3 4 2 6 5 1 8
8 1 2 7 5 9 3 6 4
6 2 9 5 4 1 7 8 3
1 3 8 6 7 2 4 5 9
5 4 7 3 9 8 6 2 1
3 8 5 2 1 7 9 4 6
9 7 4 8 6 5 1 3 2
2 6 1 9 3 4 8 7 5

King Crossword - Answers
Solution time: 23 mins.
ELAN USS SAGE
GIBE ROO ESPO
GREENBAY THAN
SET OAK CHESS
LIN BIG
NADIR ALARMED
UNUM SKY EASE
BOHEMIA DETER
GOB CAN
FJORD BRR ELL
RENE GREENTEA
ETTE NET EROS
ETON UTE WEST

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Super Crossword

Answers

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

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Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

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

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|-------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Nervous, jumpy | ___ N ___ | Short and sweet | ___ R ___ |
| 2. Gumdrop, e.g. | ___ A ___ | Model Crawford | ___ I ___ |
| 3. Ship's kitchen | G ___ | Glen, Dale | V ___ |
| 4. Large striped feline | ___ G ___ | Rome's river | ___ B ___ |
| 5. "___ of the Apes" | ___ T | Aircraft | ___ S |
| 6. Negotiate | ___ R ___ | Witty conversation | ___ N ___ |
| 7. Handbag | ___ S ___ | Expunge | ___ G ___ |
| 8. He weighs anchor | S ___ | Clothes maker | T ___ |
| 9. Actress Duke | ___ T ___ | Merrymaking | ___ R ___ |
| 10. Shamrock | ___ V ___ | Last pitcher | ___ S ___ |