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The **TIMBERJAY**



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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THE BWCAW

State to sell 80,000 acres of school trust lands

DNR and USFS cancel longstanding plan for a land exchange

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The U.S. Forest Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have abandoned their longstanding effort to engineer a massive land exchange for approximately 80,000 acres of state school trust property located within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Instead, the DNR is now asking the forest service to purchase the land, for an as-yet undetermined amount of money. The sale, which is expected to be completed over the next two years, would allow the state to generate revenue for the state's school trust lands, which provide an ongoing source of funding for Minnesota schools.

"The resolution of this longstand-

Right: Paddlers in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.
file photo

ing land management issue is a major win for Minnesota's public-school students," said Aaron Vande Linde, director of the state's office of school trust lands. "The project's culmina-

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FLOOD IMPACTS

Cook dental clinic on the road to recovery

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook/Orr Editor

COOK— As Scenic Rivers Health Services CEO Keith Harvey has learned the hard way, there are two truisms related to floods—a little water can do a lot of damage, and recovery takes longer than expected.

The Scenic Rivers Dental Clinic on River St. had only three to four inches of water in the building, Harvey told the *Timberjay* on Tuesday, but the damage was extensive and will be expensive to repair.

"It pretty much just destroyed the flooring, and took a lot of the walls out," he said, "but the biggest thing is it damaged our dental equipment. The vast majority of our dental equipment is not salvageable."

Working closely with dental equipment supplier Patterson Dental, the damage assessment was grim. While the water didn't rise high enough to infiltrate the seats of the dental chairs, the bases were submerged, causing damage to critical electrical components. While four remain functional, Harvey said, all will have to be replaced over time. The sterilization equipment was a complete loss, and the cabinetry, some of it essential for housing components of the suction

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FILLING IN THE DETAILS

Giving thanks for a long-ago rescue

Former game warden Lloyd Steen and a friend responded when a small plane went down

by **DAVID COLBURN**
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL— Thirty-seven years ago, a float plane carrying a father and his ten-year-old daughter fell from the sky and crashed in Voyageurs National Park.

Last week, that now grown-up girl made a softer and far happier landing in the heart of one of the men who rescued her that day.

Former game warden Lloyd Steen and his wife Glenda were waiting on the front porch of their home in Ray last Thursday

morning for the arrival of Jennifer Vändersøl, who made the long trip from her North Carolina home to meet Steen in person for the first time since fate unexpectedly brought them together on July 10, 1987 beside the crumpled wreckage of a red single-engine Taylorcraft float plane. Their plane had just crashed near Loiten Lake, about three miles northeast of the Ellsworth Rock Gardens.

After exchanging joyful long hugs, Vändersøl and the Steen adjourned to the kitchen, where

the conversation flowed warmly and freely for nearly three hours, covering far more than just memories of the plane crash and rescue as they learned about each other's families, careers, and more.

Going fishing

Fishing was uppermost in the minds of both Steen and Vändersøl on that fateful Friday.

Vändersøl and her father, Delano Skeim, were

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Above: Ten-year-old Jennifer Vändersøl stands in front of the mangled wreckage of her father's float plane in Voyageurs National Park in 1987 with her rescuers, game warden Lloyd Steen, left, and Tom Carlstrom.

CITY OF ELY

Council weighs support for ECR

LaTourell's named 2024 Ely Volunteers of the Year

by **CATIE CLARK**
Ely Editor

ELY— The city council here, on Tuesday, agreed to consider a request for one-time financial assistance from Ely Community Resource, to help them through their tem-

porary financial bottleneck. The nonprofit group provides afterschool activities, summer programs, student mentoring, homework help, basic needs support, and other youth programming. It is one of Ely's oldest service organizations, founded in 1978.

As ECR explained in its letter to the council, "The state determined to redirect much of its youth program funding into a newly formed department. Unfortunately for ECR and many other youth programs in

See...COUNCIL pg. 9

Right: Bob and Alison LaTourell, owners of LaTourell's Resort and Outfitters on Moose Lake, were named the 2024 Ely Volunteers of the Year for their many years of work and support on behalf of the Ely Hoop Club and Ely's basketball teams. They are pictured at right after accepting the honor.

photo by C. Clark



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Community notices

Road construction on Stuntz Bay Rd. in August, road closures, delays expected

BREITUNG TWP- Stuntz Bay Road, which provides access to Stuntz Bay landing and boathouses is in need of major road work, and contractors estimate that this work will be taking place in August. Stuntz Bay Road will be closed to all traffic for a period of up to one continuous week during the month of August – exact dates are still to be determined. People should also expect delays and one-way traffic while the road is being repaired throughout the month of August. The Township of Breitung will make every effort to provide notice of these dates as soon as possible; notice will be made in local newspapers (if possible), at www.breitungtownship.org, and on Facebook at Breitung Township MN.

United Way to host two golf events

REGIONAL- United Way of Northeastern MN invites you to two golf-themed events next month. On Aug. 1 at 6 p.m., UWNEMN is putting on a \$10,000 golf ball drop at Eshquaguma Country Club. Ticket holders are invited to the club to see 1,000 golf balls dropped on to the course, determining cash prize winners. All proceeds benefit UWNEMN's Buddy Backpacks program. \$20 tickets still available; call or text 218-295-2424 for more information.

On Aug. 8, UWNEMN is hosting Veterans Connections at Greens on Foreteenths on at 4 p.m. Local Veterans, servicemembers, and their families are invited for a free round of mini golf and dinner courtesy of United Way of Northeastern Minnesota's United for Veterans program. Limit four golfers per hole. Advance registration required; register at www.unitedwaynemn.org/ufv-minigolf.

Minnesota North College removes non-resident tuition rates

HIBBING- Minnesota North College has announced the removal of non-resident tuition rates for the 2024-2025 academic year. This means that all students, regardless of their state of residence, will now pay tuition rates that are no more than resident students. However, students from reciprocity states such as Wisconsin, North Dakota, Manitoba, Canada, and those that fall under the tuition adjustment with Ontario, Canada per the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy, may still benefit from existing agreements that allow students to receive reduced tuition rates as long as they comply and are approved through current application processes.

South Dakota has announced their intent to terminate the Minnesota-South Dakota Public Higher Education Reciprocity Agreement beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year. South Dakota students currently enrolled at Minnesota North under the program shall continue to receive the reciprocity rate in order to complete the degree program in which they are enrolled at the date of termination.

In the 2023-24 academic year, there were 364 non-resident, non-reciprocity students at Minnesota North College who were affected by this non-resident tuition differential.

For more information about Minnesota North College, please contact Annika Freiburger at annika.freiburger@minnesotanorth.edu.

Ely Watercolor Club show end on July 21

ELY- Members of the Ely Watercolor Club will present hundreds of their paintings, gift bags, and greeting cards this summer at the Miner's Dry building on Wednesday, July 17, through Sunday, July 21, from 10 a.m to 5:30 p.m. Their paintings include a great variety of subjects and techniques and have held the interest of the public over the years. The 2023 show had over 1,200 guests perusing nearly 1,000 works of varied subjects and techniques.

They group meets monthly at Fransden Bank to share recent work and plan the big exhibit and sale.

RECREATION
New pedal pontoon cruises open on Lake Vermilion

TOWER- Footloose Cycle Cruise held an open house on Wednesday, July 10, at Fortune Bay Resort Casino's Marina from 3-6 p.m. for complimentary 20-minute cruises on Lake Vermilion on their new pedal pontoon "Ariel." The open house showcased a new partnership between Footloose Cycle Cruise and Fortune Bay Resort Casino.

"This one-of-a-kind lake cruising adventure features a stunning 35-foot cycle cruise boat, boasting 12 pedal stations that propel a 6-foot pedal wheel," said Footloose owner Bill Cox. "With certified captains at the helm, passengers can enjoy the ride worry-free while taking in the beautiful surroundings."

And if you prefer to kick back and not pedal, no worries—the vessel has a four-stroke 70 horsepower motor to take you on a memorable cruise on Lake Vermilion.

Footloose Cycle Cruise and Fortune Bay Resort Casino staff have been busy booking group tours leading up to the open house.

"We've already had several inquiries, plus our



"Ariel" was captained by Christine Schlotec on Wednesday, July 10, with her first mate Kyle Littlewolf. photo by S. Roeser

sales team is pitching the Footloose Cycle Cruise to groups that are coming up north," said Fortune Bay's Brian K. Anderson. "We even have a bachelor party that wants to try it out, so we think this partnership will be a win-win for both of us."

The Footloose Cycle Cruise is fully equipped with a 16-foot glossy bar that includes several built-in ice coolers, USB ports for charging devices, and vibrant LED-lit cup holders. Guests can enjoy the 100-watt stereo system and speakers, which connect directly to Bluetooth

devices, allowing passengers to control their music while they enjoy frosty beverages and food from Fortune Bay Resort Casino's culinary team.

Guests have the option to pre-purchase delicious food and drinks through the Footloose Cycle Cruise website. Fortune Bay Resort Casino's team will deliver food and beverages directly to the boat, ensuring convenience and enjoyment throughout your cruise experience. For the safety and comfort of all guests, only non-glass beverage containers are allowed

onboard. This ensures a secure environment while you have fun on the water.

"Footloose Cycle Cruise caters to everyone from ages 6 years old and up who want to cruise Lake Vermilion," Cox said. "The cruises are perfect for corporate events, parties, celebrations, and anyone interested in exploring the lake in a fun and unique way."

For more information about Footloose Cycle Cruise, visit their website at www.footloosecyclecruise.com.

LAKE VERMILION CULTURAL CENTER

Crystal singing bowl concert at cultural center in Tower on Aug. 1

TOWER- Sara Alexander will perform a crystal singing bowl concert at the Lake Vermilion Cultural Center on Aug. 1 at 7 p.m.

Alexander is a multi-instrumentalist who performs and teaches music in northern Minnesota. She uses seven singing bowls, a wind gong, Koshi chimes, a steel pan drum and other relaxing instruments during the sound bath.

Participants may bring a yoga mat, pillow or blanket. A free-will donation will be accepted as admission.

The LVCC is dedicated to community

enrichment through education and the arts by offering quality programming and providing opportunities to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the area.

To learn more about the LVCC or to donate, visit their website vermilioncultural-center.org.

This unique musical experience is set for Thursday, Aug. 1 at the cultural center in Tower. submitted



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SUMMER EVENTS

Operation Blueberry starts on July 25

ELY- The excitement is building as the 44th annual Blueberry/Art Festival approaches. This year's festival features 237 booths filled with artists, crafters, and makers, plus a couple of favorite attractions, such as the International Wolf Center and North American Bear Center.

Festival hours are 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, July 26-27, and 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday, July 28. The festival map and vendor list will be available online at Ely.org on the Events page and will also be published in the *Timberjay's* July 26 issue.

Operation Blueberry starts on Thursday, July 25, and runs through Sunday, July 28, in the storefront businesses. Operation Blueberry starts a day ahead of the festival so our visiting vendors can have time to shop. There are sales, special events, and featured products as part of the Operation Blueberry business event. A map with participating stores is available on the ely.org website on the Blueberry/Art Festival page.

This year's festival features many long-time favorites, including Raucous Jewelry, Bear



A vendor at the 2023 Blueberry/Art Festival making giant bubbles. file photo

Island Art Factory, Keepsakes, and Jim the Carver. Some new vendors are Lakota Made, Moonlight Musings Studio, Dug Designs, and Polly Noll Pottery. These are just some of the new and returning vendors. You never know who you might see.

The food court features Bob-B-Que, Becky's Oriental, SB Concessions, and many other favorites. The food court is full of delicious offerings and

the Ely Fire Department will host the beer tent, plus have their pork chops on a stick and other savory favorites. The Kiwanis are in the Pavilion dishing delicious pie (blueberry of course), coffee, ice cream, and other treats.

"We have a new layout for the park's southern end that creates a better flow than last year," said Kristen Switajewski, festival coordinator. "We also

have a new kid's section near the playground. We have Frozen Tundra with cold beverages, bobas and cotton candy, Minnesota Marshmallows, kids book authors, hand-crafted toys, and more."

Another new feature is a Parent Station sponsored by the Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital. The nursing and diaper change station allows parents a quiet, shaded area for

feeding and changing infants and toddlers. The tent is located at the intersection of the park walkways and will be marked with banners.

"There are changes to our booth judging. In the past, we only reviewed art and craft vendors and did not have maker or marketplace categories. We do this year," Said Switajewski. "In addition, we have an option for the public to select their favorite food vendor using QR Code voting. Food vendor voting closes on Saturday, July 27 at 5 p.m., and awards are announced on Sunday morning."

A final addition to the festival includes a People's Choice – Best of Show award. The public can purchase a People's Choice Judge button and ballot for \$5. A portion of the proceeds go to the top three artist, crafter, maker, or marketplace vendors. Each ballot has three spots to list the judge's favorites. Voting ends at 5 p.m. on Saturday, July 27. Awards will be announced on Sunday morning.

Watch for the *Timberjay's* special Blueberry/Art Festival section in our July 26 paper, on the newstand on July 25.

North Star Stampede returns for 69th annual event

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

EFFIE- The countdown is on for the 69th annual North Star Stampede the weekend of July 26-28 in Effie. It's the country's oldest family-run rodeo continuously operating in the same arena, and this year promises another full slate of rodeo excitement for the whole family.

Preparations have been somewhat hampered by frequent rains this summer, but organizer Cimarron Pitzen assures fans and riders alike that everything will be in top notch condition when the event has its unofficial kickoff on Thursday, July 25 with the slack competition beginning at noon.

"We're a little bit behind, but we're getting there," Pitzen said on Tuesday. "The arena is starting to dry up, so the campground is starting to dry up, so we'll be in good shape."

After the stampede begins in earnest on Friday at 5 p.m. with the colorful cavalcade of horses and flags, spectators will be treated to a full three-day slate of traditional events, including around 75 bronc riders and 80 bull riders who have

signed up for the event.

"That's how many we've got entered, of course there's no guarantee they're all going to show up," Pitzen said.

The North Star Stampede typically draws top riders from throughout the Midwest, and they'll have some new challenges to face this year as Pitzen has brought in a number of new broncs.

"I picked up several new broncs since last year out in Grassy Butte, N.D., down in Oklahoma City at the big bucking horse sale and out in Miles City, Mont. this spring," Pitzen said.

Pitzen leases his bulls for the stampede from 3T Bucking Bulls, another family-owned business, and expects there will be a few new additions to that stock as well.

Adding to the fun this year will be award-winning rodeo clown John "Lefty" Kee of Park Hills, Mo. Drawing on the comedic traditions of the Red Skelton Show and Hee Haw, Kee bills himself as an old-school rodeo clown who "puts on his baggies, applies his makeup, and keeps the crowd entertained."

Folks will find everything they've come to love about the stampede, with a couple of fan-friendly additions this



The featured ring entertainer at this year's North Star Stampede in Effie will be award-winning rodeo clown John "Lefty" Kee of Missouri. courtesy photo

year. Pitzen said that traffic flow will be improved with a new entrance for spectators that's separate from the one used

for the campground. And campers with three-day passes have the option to leave some of their food behind as a hearty breakfast menu will be available on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 8-11 a.m. to complement the usual dining options available during stampede sessions. People should be prepared to pay cash for items purchased from vendors at the event, as electronic payments aren't available at the site.

"Other than that, it's the same old rodeo," Pitzen said. "I've been doing it for so long now everybody knows what's going on."

Single day admission is \$18 for adults and \$10 for children ages six to 13. Three-day passes, which are required for campers, are \$45 for adults and \$20 for children. Friday evening's session will start at 5 p.m., while festivities on Saturday and Sunday will begin at 2 p.m. The rodeo is located about two miles north of Effie on Itasca Co. Rd. 5.

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OPINION

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Editorial

More information please

The lack of details on hospital’s ambulance proposal won’t help the idea advance

The Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital Board deserves credit for commissioning the analysis by SafeTech Solutions exploring alternative methods for administering area ambulance services. While the one-time state funding approved this year by the Legislature has helped backfill recent financial losses in Tower and Ely and a number of other ambulance services in the region, it won’t address the ongoing gap between the payments the ambulance services receive and the expenses of operating those services.

That’s why an informed discussion of alternatives is certainly worthwhile.

SafeTech’s proposal for a regionalized service capable of consistently providing advanced life support is worthwhile as far as it goes.

Consolidation of services has long been touted as a cure-all, but such approaches have yielded mixed results, and it’s not clear how consolidation of an ambulance service provides substantial cost savings. School consolidations typically involve closure of community schools and bussing students long distances to a centralized facility, but that’s not a viable option for an ambulance service in a rural area like ours since response time is so critical when it comes to emergency medical services. That means maintaining ambulance halls and staffing in each community is critical.

The proposal by SafeTech envisions halls in Ely, Tower, and Babbitt, each staffed with an EMT and a paramedic. That’s good, but the plan would seemingly more than double the payroll costs associated with the Tower and Babbitt services. With Tower already operating in the red and Babbitt running just above break-even, it’s unclear how an enormous jump in payroll expenses is financially viable.

SafeTech argues that a three-way consolidation of Ely, Tower, and Babbitt, and a new ambulance entity run from the Ely hospital, could help cover those costs through a higher reimbursement for Medicare-qualified runs. Ambulance services operated by critical access hospitals, like Ely-Bloomenson, can qualify for reimbursement at 101 percent of reasonable costs if there is no other ambulance service within 35 miles. But that qualifier would only apply if all three communities agree to a merger. That’s far from a guarantee at this point.

While the study makes a reasonable starting point for discussions, many unanswered questions remain. Even if a merged system

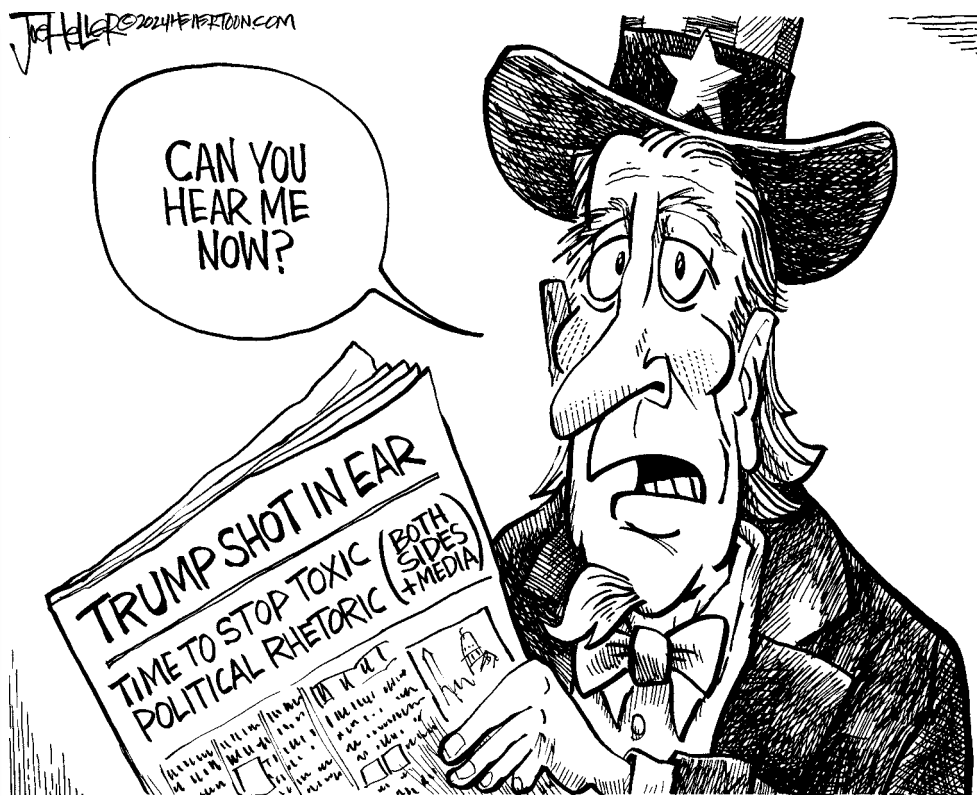
qualified for the higher Medicare reimbursement, how much additional revenue will it generate than at current reimbursement rates? How many ambulances would the service keep stationed at the various halls? How many additional inter-hospital transfers would be needed to fill the funding gap? If, as seems likely, a merged system is unable to operate in the black, who fills the funding gap? Unlike Cook, Ely-Bloomenson doesn’t currently have a hospital district that it can levy against to cover funding shortfalls. Is that something that might be proposed as part of a funding package for a new merged ambulance system?

These are the kinds of questions that are typically addressed with the release of a study because such proposals would normally come with detailed financial projections and assumptions. It was disappointing that neither the study nor the financial projections were made available during a public presentation of the plan last month. Ely-Bloomenson’s requirement that the presentation not be filmed or broadcast over local access television was highly unusual.

We reached out to hospital officials last week hoping to get more information about the proposal but were told: “There isn’t more information to share. Conversations will be to decide if the communities are willing to move forward with a regional approach. Then next steps will be determined.”

That’s disappointing. While there is certainly some willingness in the three communities to sit down and discuss the proposal, there is a recognition that the information presented to date is far too sketchy at this point for any community to make a decision on whether to move forward. If the hospital isn’t willing to provide more information as part of any discussions surrounding the proposal, it seems unlikely to advance. As we reported last week, officials in Babbitt were mostly cool to openly opposed to participating in a regional system given that their ambulance service still operates in the black. Without Babbitt, the entire model proposed by SafeTech is a non-starter since the service would not see enhanced Medicare reimbursement.

As SafeTech noted, there is already an element of mistrust between some of the key parties involved in emergency medical services in the area. The hospital’s unwillingness to release information critical to any reasonable assessment of the proposal isn’t the way to rebuild that trust.



Letters from Readers

Mr. Johnson needs a history lesson

In the July 5 issue of the *Timberjay*, Mr. Johnson expresses anger at the U.S. for many things, including the deaths of Palestinians in Gaza. However, Mr. Johnson is pointing his finger in the wrong direction. The responsibility for deaths in Gaza lies primarily with Hamas, the rulers of Gaza since 2007, who used billions in foreign aid not to improve the lives of their people, but rather to dig tunnels, buy rockets and other weapons, and prepare for a war that would ensure the deaths of many women and children as part of their strategy to stoke outrage in the international community and calls for Israel to stop defending itself. It is Hamas, not the U.S. or the Israeli Defense Force, that is committing the war crimes that cause those deaths.

Hamas has no real interest in improving the lives of Palestinians in Gaza, as proven by their behavior since taking control in 2007. Their goal is not an independent Palestinian state. Their 1988 founding charter explains Hamas is committed to Holy War aimed at killing Jews, destruction of the state of Israel, and killing or driving from the area any Jews who remain. As explained in interviews with Hamas fighters, they are prepared to die for Allah and to have their wives and children die because they will have the blessing of going straight to

Paradise.

How does one defend itself against such an enemy? Israel does it by working hard and risking the lives of its own soldiers to minimize casualties among non-combatants. The allegation of “genocide” is absurd in the extreme. According to John Spencer, Chair of Urban Warfare Studies at West Point, who has analyzed the verifiable figures on deaths in Gaza, the IDF has used extreme caution and has achieved an unprecedented low number of civilian to combatant casualties. In warfare, even when the enemy doesn’t intentionally imperil its own civilians, it is common for there to be nine civilian deaths for each combatant killed. In Gaza, the figure is around 1.0-1.5 according to Spencer’s analysis.

Mr. Johnson also mischaracterizes what happened in 1948 and parrots the Palestinian narrative. The idea that the “Palestinians” (basically Arabs who lived, or whose ancestors lived, in what was once designated the Palestinian Mandate of Great Britain) had their land stolen to create the state of Israel is factually incorrect. Arabs living within that mandate never experienced sovereignty or had a state of their own. They lived mainly in tribal bands alongside Jews in the area. The area had been the homeland of the Jews for about 3,000 years, and although most of the Jews were expelled by force from time to time, some always remained there. When Great Britain

and the U.N. decided to create a Jewish homeland, they designated a small area for Israel and gave most of the mandate to the Arabs, creating the Kingdom of Jordan. In 1948, 32 percent of the population of the mandate were Jews, and most of them lived in the area that was designated for Israel. While the Jews accepted this small bit of land, the Arabs did not, and waged war to drive out the Jews. They failed. The creation of the state of Israel was legitimate in that: (1) It was accepted by international agreement, (2) was defended by the citizens, and (3) the citizens improved the land, created a viable economy, and a stable, democratic government. There is no clearer way to establish a legitimate state.

What we have here is a land dispute, with both Jews and Arabs claiming rights to the same territory. But that was settled decisively in 1948, just never accepted by the Palestinians, who to this day continue to insist that all of the territory, including all of Israel is rightfully theirs.

Charles Marsden Ely

We welcome your letters

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

COMMENTARY

Could a photojournalist have changed the course of history?

Readers of the *Timberjay* and other weekly newspapers may not realize it, but every time they open our pages, via the print edition or online, they’re reaching back to the very beginning of journalism as we know it today. The very first modern newspapers were weeklies, due in no small part to the tedious process involved in producing them. Handwritten weekly periodicals appeared in Italy as early as 1566, while those produced with moveable type printing presses began to flourish in the early 1600s. It wasn’t until 1650



DAVID COLBURN

that the first daily newspaper was published in Germany.

It seems somewhat fitting, then, that it was a weekly newspaper that ushered in the age of photojournalism. Newspapers and the news industry were forever changed on July 1, 1848 when the weekly French newspaper *L’Illustration* printed a photo of barricades in the streets of Paris to accompany a story about the June Days uprisings. The image wasn’t the photo itself but was rather

an engraving painstakingly reproduced by etching the photo on a wooden block. Photojournalism really came into its own in the early 20th century with advances in both cameras and photo reproduction technology.

It is impossible today to imagine a significant news story that isn’t accompanied by photos that place the reader in the midst of the story itself, conveying as only pictures can, the real-time events, and most importantly, the emotions that accompany them. And those pictures are conveyed to us in real time through video broadcasts and in almost real time by photos that can be uploaded to the internet within moments after capture with a digital camera.

Some images are so impactful that they have changed history. Take two iconic photos from the Vietnam War era as examples. Intensely emotional photos showing Mary Ann Vecchio screaming beside the body of Jeffrey Miller, a student who was shot by the National Guard during a protest at Kent State University, and a young Vietnamese girl, Phan Thi Kim Phuc, running naked down a road after being severely burned by napalm, intensified and solidified the anti-war sentiment in the U.S. that contributed to the war’s end.

Photojournalists don’t seek to change history, they’re there only to document it, but the potential for an image to shift the perceptions of the public

in a meaningful way is always present. Who would argue that the images of George Floyd pinned to the ground by Derek Chauvin’s knee on his neck, taken by a bystander but widely circulated by the press, didn’t inflame the civil unrest that followed? Floyd was surely not the first Black man who died from a fateful encounter with a white officer, but the images made this incident all too real.

This past weekend, *Associated Press* photographer Evan Vucci was in position to snap what has fast become one of the most iconic photos in American political history, his stunning shot of Donald Trump immediately after his attempted assassination in Pennsylvania on Saturday. Among all of the pho-

tos captured in the stunning moments after the shots were fired, Vucci’s photo is from a photographic standpoint the most perfect of them all. A bloodied but defiant Trump standing in a crowd of Secret Service agents with his fist upraised dominates the foreground, while a waving American flag fills the right third of the photo. The framing of Trump against the deep blue sky between the angular lines of the flagpole and flag couldn’t have been imagined any better if this had been a staged studio shot rather than a candid photo taken in the moment. The Atlantic’s Tyler Austin Harper echoed many of his journalism colleagues,

See HISTORY...pg. 5

Week of July 22

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. New location in the old St. James Church building. Next food shelf day is Aug. 20.
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.



TSHS weekly winner
TOWER- The Week 51 winner of a \$100 cash prize of the Charlemagne's 52 Club is Kevin Norby of Tower.

History Tidbit:
Friday, Aug. 1, 1884, had been designated by mining company president Charlemagne Tower, Jr., as the date when the first train would make its run immediately following completion of the laying of the single track. However, widespread superstition at the time considered Friday to be bad luck, and Thursday, July 31, was given the signal honor.

Children's Day at Tower Farmers Market on Friday, July 26
TOWER- The Tower Farmers Market will host their annual children's day on Friday, July 26 from 4-6 p.m. LuAnn Zuadtke will be hosting karaoke. Children are invited to come in costume, and there will be prizes for the best children's and adult's costume.

St. Paul's VBS set for Aug. 5-8
SOUDAN- St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church will host Vacation Bible School on Monday through Thursday, Aug. 5-8, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. each day for all area children ages 4-13.

Counselors from Camp Onomia will be leading four days of music, crafts, and fun. Snacks and lunch provided. Sponsored by St. Paul's and Soudan Baptist churches.
Preregistration is appreciated by calling 218-753-3047.

Free community meal at Immanuel
TOWER- Immanuel Lutheran Church is hosting a free community meal on Wednesday, July 24 from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., or until the food is gone. The meal this month is shredded pork, coleslaw, and buns. Dine-in or carry-outs available.

Ice cream social in Embarrass July 21
EMBARRASS- The Embarrass Fair Association is hosting a free ice cream social on Sunday, July 21 from 1-3 p.m. at Timber Hall. There will also be a blood drive from 12 noon - 3 p.m., with the Memorial Blood Center bloodmobile at the Timber Hall parking lot. Schedule your appointment online at www.mbc.org/search-drives with sponsor code 5046, or by contacting bonnie_overton@yahoo.com or 218-780-3058 to schedule your donation.

TRADITION

Old Settlers Picnic set for Saturday, July 20

BREITUNG TWP- The annual Vermilion Range Old Settlers Reunion and Picnic will be held on Saturday, July 20, at McKinley Park Campground. Booyah served at 12 noon sharp. Booyah is a beef, pork, and vegetable stew, cooked outdoors over a wood fire in huge cast iron pots that are over 100 years old. Booyah is served until it runs out, so don't be late.

Volunteers assemble the afternoon before the picnic to chop up the hundreds of pounds of potatoes, cabbage, carrots, celery, onions, and green peppers that go into the pots.

Memberships are \$10 and can be pur-

chased the day of the picnic. Each membership gets you and your family the best booyah one can imagine, along with bread and butter and coffee. Families round out the meal with their own picnic fixings and desserts. Attendees need to bring a pot to put their steaming hot booyah in, and their own bowls and dinnerware. Families are welcome to bring their own folding table and chairs, but there is also plenty of picnic style seating available under shaded pavilions.

Take-outs are available, but the fun of the day is staying for the picnic, live music, and raffles.

Membership in Old Settlers is open to anyone born or living on the Vermilion Iron Range. Guests are also welcome at \$10 per person. Old Settlers is an annual tradition, started back in the day when the mining company put on a day-long event for the mine employees and their families.

Cold drinks can be purchased at the campground store. Children will be able to try out the brand-new playground equipment. McKinley Park also has a swimming beach, changing rooms, and showers.

FOURTH OF JULY



Tower-Soudan Fourth of July children's races results

TOWER- There was a great turnout this year for the sawdust scramble and children's races after the Fourth of July parade. Winners listed in order, first, second, third. All winners received cash prizes.

Please excuse any name misspellings, winners were all handwritten immediately after each race...

6-Yard Dash
Boys 2-3: Rudy Dehmer, Lucas Vraa, Callahan Larson
Girls 2-3: June Wycoff, Cora Boes, Hadley Smith

Backwards Race
Boys 2-3: Finn Suihkonen, Jackson Kepler, Nicholas Sheehan
Girls 2-3: Hadley Smith, Eva Scherer, Isla Swanson

Boys 4-5: Jack Siebert, Wyatt Dehmer, Penn Anderson
Girls 4-5: Emery Roseland, Emma Purkat, Sawyer Suihkonen

Boys 6: Hudson Kosiek, Braydan Kralich, Brooks Anderson
Girls 6: Deim Droomwaldt, Shayla Howard, Colpie Stellmach

10-Yard Dash
Boys 4-5: Leif Lamppa, Wyatt Dehmar, Jack Siebert
Girls 4-5: Emma Purkat, Emery Roseland, Layla Vraa

20-Yard Dash
Boys 6-7: David Beutz, PJ Goodsky, Boone Wachlaronic
Girls 6-7: Norah Zubke, Harper Olson, Sara Lossing

50-Yard Dash
Boys 8-9: Micah Van Egdom, Owen Ruml, Holden Clarke
Girls 8-9: Allie Vesel, Emma Overbye, Tayah Stellmach

Boys 10-11: George Rofido, Hollis Collier, Behr Schroeder
Girls 10-11: Mariah Johnson, Brenless Hackenmueller, Jacy Meinzer

Boys 12-13: Isaac Licari, Aiden Luukonen, Dalton Hutchinson
Girls 12-13: Addison Lobe, Ingrid Huber, Bella Raj

Boys 14-15: Kaston Clarke, Robbie Beutz, Nate Crow
Girls 14-15: Aubrie Takanen, Zoe Amborn, Etta Woodford

Sack Race
Boys 7-8: Knox Roseland, PJ Goodsky, Luke Hampson
Girls 7-8: Tayah Stellmach, Eveleyn Riihiluoma, Everest Peters

Boys 9-10: Kai Standish, Tyler Peterson, Will Peterson
Girls 9-10: Allie Vesel, Flora Erickson Christian, Emma Overbye

Boys 11-12: Louis Fink, Thomas Stellmach, Cameron Greenwaldt
Girls 11-12: Ellie Licari, Mariah Johnson, Addison Lobe

Boys 13-14: Nate Crow, Luke Toll, Dalton Hutchinson
Girls 13-14: Ingrid Huber, Gigi Rosati, Etta Woodford

Wheelbarrow
Boys 7-8: Luke Hampson & Ellis Oliver, Vincent Vesel & David Beutz, Finn Bennett & Lincoln Bennett

Girls 7-8: Evelyn Riihiluoma & Sara Lossing, Noelle Dietz & Stella Siebert, Ellie Semo & Seija Snyder

Boys 9-10: Bode Hutchinson & Cormac Oliver, Kai Standish & Ayden Davris, Cade Jorgenson & Jay Lobe

Girls 9-10: Emma Overbye & Ellie Licari, Hailey Omuim & Emmi Clow, Elizabeth Beutz & Liv Hampson

Boys 11-12: Lachlan Robideau & Charlie Loftus, Harrison Rosch & George Rofidahl, Ryden Amborn & Ethan Ziegler

Girls 11-12: Addison Lobe & Olivia Jorgenson, Lauren Pettinelli & Ada Osmundson, Lauren Hampson & Autumn Ulmer

Boys 13-14: Ian Crow & Nate Crow, Luke Toll & Noah Toll, Dalton Hutchinson & Cameron Burgess

Girls 13-14: Amelia Osmundson & Anna Pettinelli, Lucy Rofidal & Ingrid Huber, Gigi Rosati & Charlotte Rosata

Adult 50-Yard Dash
Men 15-25: Noah Lamson, Owen Lamson
Women 15-25: Ava Fink, Allison Fink
Men 26+: Garrett Lamppa, Adam Kugel
Women 26+: Amanda Trunzon, Leah Erickson

He/She Sack Race
Ages 15-25: Kencie Moeckel & Noah Toll, Ava Fink & Jace Westebur
Ages 26+: Regina Kugel & Adam Kugel, Greg Dietz & Alanna Dietz

Water Balloon Toss
Ages 15-25: Ava Fink & Jace Westebur, Emily Majerle & Caston Clark
Ages 26+: Amanda Trunzo & Jeff Standish, Gavin Bialke & Cara Santelli

BREITUNG COMMUNITY PICNIC



This year's Breitung Community Picnic featured family fun plus a very popular dunk tank. Above: Fire department member Brian Zak got dunked by his daughter Amelie. Left: Brooklynn Jensen served up a selection of orange and root beer floats. photos by J. Summit



Above: Amelia, Zoey, and Paisley Koski. Right: Tori Tomsich at the Tower parade. Below: Aili Rauk got a huge balloon sculpture flower from Chimpmy Tuominen.



LANDS...Continued from page 1

tion will result in millions of dollars deposited into the Permanent School Fund. This investment will support the state's public education system in perpetuity, fulfilling our fiduciary duty to ensure that both current and future beneficiaries receive maximum economic returns from school trust assets."

The designation of the Boundary Waters as a federal wilderness has, for decades, sharply limited the state's ability to generate revenue from the trust lands located within the wilderness boundaries. Traditionally, the state has generated revenues from school trust land either through the sale of the land itself, from the sale of timber, or the leasing of mineral rights. Given that logging and mining have been prohibited in the BWCAW for decades, the sale of the land is the most straightforward means of generating income for the school trust.

But talk of a sale had

regularly prompted push-back from local lawmakers, who argued that the school trust would be better served by a land exchange, through which the state would obtain federal lands outside the wilderness, where extractive activities would be encouraged. The DNR and the forest service agreed to pursue the exchange back in 2012, but the effort languished for multiple reasons, according to Vande Linde. "This was the largest land exchange project in the nation, with a lot of very intricate issues in the Boundary Waters that we had to work through," he said.

All three parties involved in the exchange—the DNR, the forest service, and The Conservation Fund, a nationwide nonprofit, had invested considerable time in the process and commissioned several different appraisals in an effort to find an exchange of equal value but could never reach agreement on the valuations. More

recently, said Vande Linde, during federal consultation with the three 1854 bands, including Fond du Lac, Bois Forte, and Grand Portage, it became clear that the exchange was not going to meet tribal goals for the affected lands. "So, we opted to go in a different direction," Vande Linde said.

While some lawmakers had argued in the past that an exchange would ultimately yield a better return to the school trust, Vande Linde strongly disputes that suggestion. "It comes down to the time value of money," he said. "The trust will receive cash on the barrel and be able to invest it straight-away." According to Vande Linde, it would take many decades, likely even more than a century, to generate enough revenue through timber sales on the exchanged lands to even match the original purchase price the school trust will receive once the sale is completed. By that time, through

investment, the school trust will have earned many times that amount, thereby meeting the trust's obligation to maximize revenue generation.

"The state's school trust lands are designated to maximize long-term economic return for the Permanent School Fund and provide a continual source of funding for every K-12 public school district in the state," said DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen. "This important land transaction ensures that the DNR can fulfill its fiduciary responsibility to the school trust.

The deal will also benefit the forest service, according to Tom Hall, forest supervisor on the Superior National Forest, where the trust lands are located. "The purchase of these lands will help reduce administrative issues the state and the forest service have faced for a long time," he said.

The proposal is also backed by the 1854 bands

as well as environmental groups. "This is a good day for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Minnesota students," said Ingrid Lyons, executive director of Save the Boundary Waters. "It solves a key issue that has been unresolved for thirty years."

Third District Sen. Grant Hauschild had no immediate comment on the proposal, but said he planned to meet soon with DNR officials for a briefing on the plan.

Moving forward

Completing the sale won't happen overnight. The state is constitutionally prohibited from selling school trust lands, except at public auction, so a massive, pre-arranged sale to the U.S. Forest Service will require a different process. According to Vande Linde, the state will need to pursue a condemnation proceeding involving the 80,000 acres of trust land in the wilderness, which will remove the trust status from the lands,

making it possible to sell to the federal government.

The condemnation proceedings will need to include a new appraisal, which will be used as a basis for a final agreement on the purchase price. The forest service is expected to tap funding from the federal Land and Water Conservation Funds to complete the acquisition.

With the cancellation of the land exchange, the forest service may end up acquiring additional lands within the boundaries of the national forest. The Conservation Fund is now proposing to sell up to 15,000 acres, located outside the BWCAW to the forest service. At the same time, the DNR is evaluating some of the nonprofit's lands in consultation with the forest service, local counties, and 1854 bands, to identify parcels suitable for state acquisition.

COUNCIL...Continued from page 1

our state, that new department will not be functional and awarding grants until after July 1, 2025. That has left us with an unanticipated \$200,000 gap in our funding for 2024 ... For those of you that can help us, we need you now."

After reading ECR's letter, city council member Al Forsman contacted the local lawmakers.

"I immediately sent an email to our representatives asking how this happened," Forsman said. "This is the response I got ... from Senator Grant Hauschild: 'I assure you this is the first time I'm hearing these concerns on the shift to the new agency for children and their families. I have not been made aware of any delays or changes in funding. And if that's the case, I will definitely look into it.'"

City council member Paul Kess remarked, "I think it's time we stepped up and did the right thing. Our finances are good ... I propose \$25,000 to help them get through this crisis."

The council approved sending Kess' proposal to the budget committee, which next meets on July 22 at 4 p.m.

Mayor Heidi Omerza emphasized that helping ECR will take more than just the city. "As a teacher," she said, "I see firsthand all the good things that ECR does. As a mayor, I would like to reiterate that we cannot (bail out ECR) all by ourselves as the city of Ely. We will definitely do our part. I have no problem saying that. But we need everyone in Ely to step up to the plate as well."

ECR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Readers can send donations by check to Ely Community Resource, 111 S. 4th Ave. E., Ely, MN, 55731. Readers can also use the QR code on the ECR website to donate, at ely-communityresource.org.

Cannabis hearing

The city council heard the report from Ely City Attorney Kelly Klun that St. Louis County is now considering its own county-wide moratorium prohibiting the registration and operation of cannabis businesses through the end of this year.

The county's liquor licensing committee recommended the moratorium to the county commissioners in June. The St. Louis County Board has now scheduled a public hearing on the proposed

moratorium, which will be held in council chambers at Ely City Hall on July 23 at 10 a.m.

Klun, in response to a question from the mayor, told the council that the language of the moratorium passed by the Ely council on July 2 was "pretty darn close" to the language of the county's measure.

2023 Audit

The city received the audit of its 2023 books. The audit report was given by accountant Tom Kelly of Walker, Giroux, and Hahne. Overall, the results of the audit were similar to the previous two audits for 2021 and 2022. Ely received the auditor's highest evaluation available, "the financial statements were fairly presented in all material respects," noting that the city had overall good performance, a healthy general fund, and healthy cash flow.

Kelly remarked that the difference in the budget for the 2023 general fund and the actual revenues and expenditures was less than one percent. Ely budgeted \$4 million in revenue and \$3.91 million in expenditures. Revenues exceeded the budget by \$40,997 while expenditures exceeded the budget by \$30,484.

Kelly noted that 97 percent of the general fund was unassigned and available for spending on the city's operations. "Such a high percentage is a good indicator of a healthy cash flow."

Kelly noted that Ely still suffered from the same two problems identi-

fied last year and the year before. "These problems are nothing new," Kelly remarked, "but it's our job as auditors to point these out to you."

First, Ely has inadequate segregation of duties in its accounting practices. He also noted that this is a persistent condition in Ely because the city can't afford to hire enough staff to completely segregate accounting tasks.

Second, the auditors recommended that the city adjust how much it levies for debt service. "While it appears the city is levying an appropriate amount for debt service obligations not paid by other revenue sources, the city should specify an amount on the final levy that exceeds (debt service) obligations by five percent."

The auditing firm added a new recommendation this year. "Since 2020, Ely's residential loan and economic programs have ramped up significantly," Kelly pointed out. "It is important that loan balances, disbursements, and receipts, are reconciled regularly." To make reconciliations easier, the auditors recommended that all receipts and expenditures be coded to their own specific accounts "in which no other transactions are coded."

It is important to note that audits of local governments are not designed nor intended to be forensic tools to find fraud. Audits are to ensure that local governments are following

both generally accepted accounting procedures and state laws regarding budgeting.

In other business, the council:

- Heard from Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski that the train depot redevelopment project failed to get the grant for the remediation of contaminated soils on the site. "We will reapply again to the Department of Employment and Economic Development in the fall. The owner of the property is still responsible for the costs of the cleanup, but if we can get the grant, we'll be able to reimburse some of those."
- Approved advertising for bids for the excavation and removal of contaminated soils at the train depot site.
- Accepted the \$11,000 donation of six park benches and the cost of the labor and materials to set them up. The benches are the gift of the Sherpa running app, which is also the principal sponsor of the Ely Marathon. The benches, which will be green, will be placed in different locations around Ely, including in Whiteside Park, Trezona Trail, and Pillow Rock. The donation includes the \$650 cost to the city to pour the concrete pad for each bench, according to Langowski.
- Approved the following claims for payment: \$104,828 for the city of Ely and the Ely Utilities Commission through July 16; \$126,282 for pay esti-

mate No. 1 from Max Gray Construction for the Ely Regional Trailhead Building; \$12,330 for change order No. 1 and final pay estimate No. 2 from Low Impact Excavators Inc. for the 9th Avenue East Project; \$4,146 for invoices Nos. 96026 and 96037 from AE2S for the Wastewater Treatment Improvements Project and general consulting services from AE2S.

- Approved a lease of vacant land between the city of Ely and Robert and Sharon Mattila for the placement of a residential dock.
- Accepted the resignation of James F. Beaty from the Heritage

Preservation Commission.

- Approved Resolution 2024-029 allowing Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters to apply for a raffle permit.
- Approved Resolution 2024-030 allowing the Ely Blue Line Club to apply for a raffle permit.
- Approved Resolution 2024-031 to appoint Scott Kochendorfer as a temporary deputy clerk for the 2024 absentee ballot election periods for the primary and general elections this fall.
- Approved the work request for city labor from the Ely Chamber of Commerce for the Blueberry/Art Festival.



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The WC Heiam Foundation in Cook is announcing their...

W.C. Heiam Medical Foundation | **ANNUAL Fundraiser Event Saturday, August 3**

The event will be at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade Hall.
All are welcome to attend for a fabulous evening of music, dinner (catered by Boomtown), libations and silent / live auctions.
Please visit their website (Heiamfoundation.org) or (heiambenefit.cbo.io) for more information and to purchase tickets/sponsorships.

This is a fabulous event to help support the Heiam's mission: *Through continued growth of the endowment, is to support programs, services and facilities that serve the medical needs of Cook Health care area residents.* To date the WC Heiam Foundation has given over \$840,000 to support the Cook Hospital.


We hope to see you at the event!

Eagles Nest Fire/EMS Auxiliary
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Thursday
July 25, 2024
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM



Eagles Nest Town Hall
1552 Bear Head State Park Rd

For more information visit
ENFEA.ORG

THANKS...Continued from page 1

on a family vacation at Lake Kabetogama from their home in Ramsey when they took off on a father-daughter fishing excursion to Loiten Lake. "I didn't want to go fishing that day, but he made me," Vändersøl said. "We fished all day. I remember that after we went fishing we put the fish in the floats, you know, because they're like storage."

Vändersøl paused to smile, then said, "And after that, I remember my dad wanted us to bring the darned fish back after the crash."

For Steen, his fishing trip with his buddy Tom Carlstrom was a coup of sorts.

"Tom was a good friend of mine, but he was not an outdoors guy," Steen said. "He didn't hunt, fish, trap, nothing. I said, 'Tom, I'm going to take you to an interior lake that's absolutely full of fish. You'll never see anybody back there, it'll be just you and me. You're going to catch a hundred bass. You're going to have a blast.'"

The pair used more conventional modes of travel for the trek, taking Steen's 19-foot Lund Fisherman boat to the Locator Lake Trail Head, then hiking to the lake where they picked up a canoe Steen had rented for the day. The two had paddled to War Club Lake, where they tossed out their lines.

"We were both casting and catching bass and having a great time and I heard you guys land," Steen said to Vändersøl. "I didn't think anything of it because that happened from time to time."

The crash

Steen and Carlstrom were still catching bass when Delano Skeim and his daughter got in their plane to leave Loiten Lake.

"I remember hearing him throttle up," Steen said. "There was no breeze, it was hot and dead calm. That's not what pilots like. They like a nice breeze and a little chop on the water, anything that breaks the friction a little bit, and you get more lift from a little breeze."

Moments later, both fishing trips were done.

"I expected to hear that little throttle back up over top when you can tell he lifted off and cleared the lake," Steen said. "Suddenly I heard that whack, whack, whack, whack, whack, just a horrendous sound. Immediately I knew what had happened."

Vändersøl recalled her experience during the

takeoff attempt.

"The plane was so loud that you'd have to talk through your headsets," she said. "I just remember him screaming 'Jenny!' and we turned to miss a really big tree, and then we landed in the trees and he said get out. The plane wasn't on fire, thank goodness, but the radio didn't work. And it's Voyageurs National Park, right? So, at ten years old, I'm thinking like when are we going to get out of here? I was running around and I didn't see anyone. I was afraid we weren't going to be found."

Meanwhile, Steen and Carlstrom were racing to find them. They paddled to the east end of War Club Lake, made the portage to Quill Lake and paddled mightily again to reach the Loiten Lake portage, and they quickly spied the crashed plane as they ran down the trail.

"It must have taken us a half hour to get there," Steen said, talking to Vändersøl. "I remember as we're walking up there and your dad was saying, 'We're alright, we're alright.' I remember him saying he just couldn't get the lift. And then I saw you, a little girl, my Jennifer's age. 'I was so glad to see you,' Vändersøl said. "It was my angel."

After Vändersøl's father took some pictures, the quartet hiked down the trail to the canoe and made their way back to Locator Lake and the two-mile walk to Steen's boat. From there, it was a relatively quick trip back to Sandy Point Resort, where Vändersøl's adventure began. After another picture with her rescuers holding her stringer of fish, they parted ways. Vändersøl never learned their names that day and wouldn't for many years to come.

Reconnecting

In the years following the crash, her family never talked much about the incident, Vändersøl said.

"The funny thing is my dad when he died in 2007, we never really talked about it. I mean, he was just like it's one of those things like, it happened, and it's not like you forget about it, but you think you have all the time in the world with your parents and so we didn't really chat much. I didn't fill in the gaps. I didn't know who these two people in this picture were."

It would take another ten years before Vändersøl decided to make the effort to find the answer.

"I had this one photo (of the crash) after my dad passed away," she said.



While visiting at the Steen's residence, Jennifer Vändersøl looks at an old photo of Glenda and Lloyd Steen's young son wearing the red hat Vändersøl gave to Steen on the day she was rescued. photo by D. Colburn

"It was 2017, my daughter was 17 and my two boys were already in college, so I was getting ready to be an empty nester, and I think you just have time to think about things when your kids leave. This was a major moment in my life and I didn't even know who rescued me, and I never even got to thank who rescued me."

So Vändersøl turned to social media. She posted the photo along with some others her sister had found and a copy of what appears to be the only brief newspaper account of the crash to Facebook. The post was shared almost 300 times, and with many Minnesota family and friends, it wasn't long before Vändersøl had names and then a connection with Steen's daughter, Jennifer. Steen and Vändersøl talked on the phone, but the chat was somehow incomplete.

"The phone conversation was great, but, well, we never really talked about it (the crash and rescue)," Vändersøl said. "I wanted to meet him in person. I've been meaning to come back here, but then my daughter graduated, then COVID hit, and I just haven't been back."

But a family reunion here in Minnesota this

past weekend provided the perfect opportunity for Vändersøl to make the trip serve another important purpose.

The meeting

Perhaps a good indicator of how well the meeting with Vändersøl and the Steens went could be seen in the center of the kitchen table, a large plate of chocolate-chip cookies that went untouched for well over an hour, as it appeared sharing stories absolutely took precedence over satisfying one's sweet tooth.

It became clear that the years had taken their toll on many details of the incident. When Vändersøl asked Steen what he remembered about her father, for example, he had little to say beyond his description of the crash scene.

"Your dad was very appreciative and thankful, I do remember that," Steen said.

The two also had gifts for each other. Steen gave Vändersøl one of his last remaining copies of "Border Warden," a biography about Steen filled with stories about his days as a game warden that's now out of print. When handing it to Vändersøl, Steen asked her to promise to tell him someday what her favorite story is.

"I can't wait to read it," she said. "To answer your question about the favorite story? I already know it's this one. After I read the book, I will tell you my second favorite, though."

Vändersøl's gift to Steen was a framed copy of the picture her father took at the crash site with Steen, Carlstrom, and the happily rescued Vändersøl. The exchange sparked a lively conversation about the red hat Vändersøl was wearing, as she had given it to Steen later that day as a thank you. It was something the Steens went looking for before Vändersøl's visit. "Glenda said, 'You know, I think I might still have that red hat,' Steen said. "So yesterday and today, she looked for it in our attic in the garage. Even this morning, we went and looked in the attic up in our garage, because she thought she might have kept it. We couldn't find it."

But the Steen's had photographic proof the hat had been in their possession, a picture of their son as a young boy wearing it. Steen also said the condition of the plane was much worse than he remembered it.

"You could have died," he said to Vändersøl.

During the conversa-

tion, Steen appeared to gain a deeper understanding of just how important the word rescue is to Vändersøl's experience of the event. For her, the crash and prospect of being stranded in the wilderness were traumatic; for Steen, who discovered two survivors from what he thought would be a fatal crash, it was a happy outcome to a bad situation that didn't end up rising to the same level in his mind as some of the more tragic and difficult rescues he'd been involved in over the years.

"It was a joyous occasion," he said. "The Lord put me there for a reason. I never forgot about it, but in the scheme of life it didn't rise to the occasion like some of the ones that were horrendously terrible outcomes."

The former warden with a reputation for being "hard-nosed" turned out to be a real softie, Vändersøl said, and their emotions were on full display as their reunion wrapped up. Both agreed that there was divine intervention that led their paths to cross 37 years ago, and they promised to continue the path moving forward.

After the reunion, there was much to process, and Vändersøl said that she realized that the meeting wasn't just about having a chance to say thank you, something she shared in an email with Steen.

"No one close to me knew much about the crash," she said. "Even my stepdad said he never saw that picture and thought we had just missed a runway or something. I don't know if my dad minimized the story out of ego, guilt or fear - I'll never know. It was a major story and experience in my life that I held and processed alone. So in addition to thanking you for the rescue, I equally thank you for the opportunity to talk about the crash and fill in some details. This was healing for me and provided some closure to a traumatic experience."

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CLINIC...Continued from page 1

systems, was largely ruined and will have to be replaced.

"Two weeks ago, I would have said we'd be up and running within two weeks," Harvey said. "Now, I don't even want to say a date. By mid-August, or early August, we could possibly have three or four chairs up and running and patients being seen. Maybe that's an aggressive timeline, I don't know. We thought we could get by with some rolling carts, but the problem is that you have suction that comes up through the floor that you have to have connected to cabinets that are fixed, and we're going to have to replace a lot of that, and that takes time. You have to order it, they have to manufacture it and bring it, and that's probably a month out for a lot of that."

Harvey was glad to report that no one from the clinic has been laid off, as they've been spread around to other clinics for the time being.

But they did have to turn away two University of Minnesota dental students who were scheduled to work in the clinic for three weeks, beginning next Monday.

"That was a punch in the gut, because that is such a vital part of our service working with the university," Harvey said.

He was hopeful that they might be able to bring the students in after the clinic is back up and running, but that could be difficult depending on the timing related to the start of fall semester classes, he said. But the flood was a double-blow in that regard to Scenic Rivers, as the student internships are a key component of their recruitment efforts to bring additional dentists to the area.

Funding repairs
While the general public may see health care as an industry flush with cash, that's not the case for community health care centers like Scenic Rivers, Harvey said.

"We get a fairly significant grant from the federal government to support us because we're a federally qualified health center," Harvey said. "Thank God for that, because if we didn't have that funding, we would not exist, and that's a fact. We serve a community of underserved, low-income uninsured or underinsured folks, so we bear a significant burden of that cost. That's why we're a nonprofit organization. And we struggle like any other business."
And while some similar community health care organizations get additional support from affiliated foundations and endowments, that's not the case for Scenic Rivers, Harvey said. A community fundraising program of some sort is likely in the future, Harvey said, but the current focus is on getting the dental clinic back in operation.

"We're limited on what we can use our insurance for," Harvey said. "We have some flood insurance, but it only covers the building, it doesn't cover contents. We're reaching out to various organizations like the Delta Dental



Left: Extensive wall and floor damage at Scenic Rivers Dental Clinic will be covered by flood insurance, but costly medical equipment and other contents of the building will not.

photo courtesy Scenic Rivers

," he said. "People are very understanding, and our patients have been understanding. They're disappointed because we're not open and they have to reschedule appointments, but they've been patient. We're greatly appreciative of everything from the community and we are going to do what we can to get back up and running as quickly as possible. I'm confident that when we get through this we're going to be better off, we're going to have better equipment, we're going to have a nicer facility, and everything is going to be in pretty good shape. It's just going to take some time."

to GoFundMe, but one of the fastest growing crowdfunding sites today. Spotfund also has a 4.8 rating out of five possible stars from Trustpilot, a consumer-driven company review site. The response thus far has been lukewarm, but Harvey hopes that when people understand the need more donations may come in.

Harvey said he's gratified by the response from the Cook community.

"It's just been fantas-

For dental clinic status updates, see the Scenic Rivers Health Services page on Facebook. To make a donation to the Spotfund campaign, go to <http://spotfund/23w3hsc>.

Foundation, an organization called Direct Relief, and we'll certainly consider anything we can get from the state of Minnesota and FEMA and the federal government. We're also

looking at the IRRRB and we're going to talk to them about the possibility of helping us fund some of that cost."

And like some other businesses and individu-

als affected by the flood, Scenic Rivers has launched a crowdfunding campaign for people to donate to the cause. The campaign is set up on Spotfund, a slightly less familiar alternative

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RECOGNITION

Ely to be featured on PBS North's "Great Gardening"

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Ely has some new television personalities, but they aren't talking. Given that they're a bunch of vegetables, they didn't have much to say when the *Timberjay* dropped by for an interview.

The produce of the community garden at the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic on Miners Drive will be the featured guests in a segment of "Great Gardening," the only gardening show on PBS North Channel

8 out of Duluth. The channel describes "Great Gardening" as "the Northland's only TV show that's focused on the unique joys and challenges of gardening in Zone 3 and 4." Every episode features local gardening success stories, today's trends, and questions and answers with their panel of experts.

"The 'Great Gardening' show put out a call for gardens for their fall season," said Ely-based Master Gardener Sally Koski. "We submitted and they contacted us."

"A. J. Larson from "Great

Gardening" visited Ely earlier this month to film the community garden for the show," Koski said. "We don't know when the segment on the garden will air. We'll let you know as soon as we find out ourselves."

A garden in progress

In fall 2022, a group of University of Minnesota master gardeners started a community giving garden on city property next to the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic in Ely. One of the obligations for master gardeners is volunteer

work in their communities, and maintaining and expanding the garden is currently the volunteer project for six local master gardeners, according to Koski.

The gardeners cleared and prepped the site for planting in fall 2022. In 2023, they planted for the first time with the goal of providing fresh produce for the veterans visiting the VA clinic.

The garden would not have been possible without the collaboration of the city, Koski said. "The city assisted with clearing the space, delivering mulch, and keeping the water barrels filled

when there wasn't enough rainwater." The city also donated provided concrete planters, formerly used on Chapman St.

"The city of Ely has been great to work with," Koski added.

The garden's first full year was a success. "We had more produce than the veterans could use," Koski said.

This year, the master gardeners have expanded, adding more unused concrete planters from the city, adding fruit trees, and laying out a nature walk to

See GARDEN...pg. 4B



A FINAL RESTING PLACE

Cemetery upkeep now a family affair

For nearly half a century, John Zaitz has maintained Lakeview Cemetery with pride

by SETH ROESER
Staff Writer

TOWER- Starting in the morning and working as long as the sun will allow, members of the Zaitz family work as Lakeview Cemetery's primary caretakers. It's a role stretching back to May of 1977 when Chicago-born John Zaitz applied to be the cemetery's sexton supervisor. Initially a way to supplement his income during a miner's strike, caring for the final resting place for thousands of people has become a point of purpose in John's life and he has no plans of quitting any time soon. Now a grandfather of six, Zaitz has enlisted his family to help him care for the cemetery's rolling hills and thousands of gravesites.

"I'm still doing this, and I enjoy doing this," John Zaitz said. "It's a tough job at times because I've had to bury close friends, family, and even young children. And that's always been tough. But I don't want to say I get satisfaction out of it, it's just more of a good feeling that I'm able to help families."

The members of the Zaitz family mow, pick up branches, replace flags, bury urns and caskets, and gen-



erally maintain Lakeview Cemetery's more than 4,000 headstones. John estimates the cemetery has around eight football fields worth of grass to cut and says he and his family spend nearly 40 hours a week in the summer months on Lakeview's upkeep, often finishing their mowing just as the sun sets.

Working as a miner for Reserve Mining Company in Babbitt in 1977, John looked for additional income during a six-month workers strike.

Top: John Zaitz takes a break from his daily chores at the cemetery in Tower.

Above: Ethan (foreground) and Joey Zaitz wind through the headstones during a recent mowing at the Lakeview Cemetery. photos by S. Roeser

He applied for Lakeview's Sexton Supervisor position but didn't fully know what the job would entail.

"I said, 'Well, I'll take the supervisor job, but what is a sexton?'" he recalls.

After the now-late Lakeview Cemetery Secretary Treasurer Bob Olsen informed

Zaitz that a sexton is in charge of funerals and burials, Zaitz was initially hesitant to accept the job.

"'Nope, no way. Nuh-uh,'" John recalled saying. But upon being told it would only be a temporary position,

See...ZAITZ pg. 4B

ANNIVERSARIES

Twenty years behind the bar



Friends and regulars turn out to toast Mickey Ferguson

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Twenty years ago, when Mickey (Bristol) Ferguson first slid a drink across the bar at the newly-opened Good Ol' Days Bar and Grill, smoking was still permitted and the local cops were "very lenient," she recalls. Much has changed since, but Mickey remains a familiar face and a booming voice of authority to Good Ol' Days regulars.

Many of them turned out recently to mark Mickey's 20 years of service at the popular bar and grill, which gave her the opportunity to reminisce about her years of serving up beers and burgers to customers from every walk of life.

She had been working down the street as a server at Benchwarmers when friends Randy and Carol Semo hired her to help on the renovation crew for the building they had just purchased, with plans to open a 1950s-themed restaurant and bar.

"I was staining, painting, and helping get it all set up," she said.

Once open, Good Ol' Days proved a hit and it drew in a lively and mostly congenial crowd. "There seemed to be fewer fights and less stress than there is now," she said, noting the evening shift often got a bit wild. To

See FERGUSON...pg. 4B

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Outdoors

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LAKE VERMILION

Loon count results mixed

More adults sighted, but high water may have reduced chick numbers

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

LAKE VERMILION — Exceptionally high water levels stemming from the June 18 rain-storm may have contributed to a decline in the number of loon chicks sighted by volunteers here during the 2024 loon count. The count, which has been undertaken annually since the mid-1980s, is one of the longest-running loon counts in the state. The count, held July 8 this year, is overseen by the Vermilion Lake Association.

This year's total of 61 counters sighted 193 loons, a slight increase

over last year's total and the same result as two years ago. At the same time, however, the number of chicks sighted declined from 29 last year to just 13 in the most recent count, one of the lowest numbers in years.

A total of 64 loons, including six chicks, were sighted on the lake's west end, while spotters found 129 loons, including seven chicks on the east end.

Wildlife surveys are inherently "noisy," which means considerable variability is to be expected, even with a stable population. That's one reason that wildlife researchers emphasize the importance of multi-year trends over year-to-year

variation.

Count organizer Claire Zweig noted that some volunteer counters had reported seeing loon pairs near their residences all spring but only spotted one adult on the morning of the count. That prompted speculation that the other adult might be sitting on a new nest. Loons will frequently re-nest, if the first nest of the season proves unsuccessful. Loons, which cannot walk on land, typically nest right at the water's edge. That makes them vulnerable to flooding when water levels rise suddenly, as occurred in the wake

See **LOONS...** pg. 3B



Don Eisenhauer, a Vermilion Lake Association volunteer points out a loon during the July 8 count. Spotters sighted a total of 193 loons.

submitted photo



LIFE ON THE FARMSTEAD

The complaint department

The arrival of the Cornish crosses leaves the hens in a tizzy

The complaining started immediately, which was exactly what I was expecting. If there's one thing I've learned in the past year of raising chickens, it's that they don't suffer in silence.

Hens are talkative but I can't say that I normally understand the meaning of their various clucks and trills. It was their tone this past Saturday that expressed their horror as I moved 14 Cornish cross chicks, now a month old, from their brooder to the full-size coop with the adult hens.

My 11 laying hens—five barred rocks and six Rhode Island reds—had seen this movie before.

But this was the first batch of meat chickens for us since last fall, so my poor girls could have been excused for having assumed they would never again have to share their home with these obnoxious, food-obsessed creatures.

Cornish cross chickens are a testament to what can be accomplished through intensive breeding, in this case, a chicken that goes from hatching to a 6-7-pound bird ready to butcher in just eight weeks. Unlike other chickens these ones don't show much initiative or curiosity. They mostly lay around until feeding time, at which point they literally launch themselves at the feeder in a frenzy that reminds me of a school of feeding piranha. They gorge themselves, then plop onto their sides and grow, practically before your eyes.

They're cute when they arrive in the mail, usually two days after hatching. Within a week, they're feathering out and growing noticeably plumper and uglier and the pace of all that just seems to acceler-



Top: Several of the laying hens look on in disgust at the Cornish cross chicks that were recently moved from their brooder to the main coop.

Above: The ugly, food-obsessed Cornish cross chickens arrange themselves around their feeder, frantically devouring their food.

photos by M. Helmberger

ate as the weeks drag on. This particular batch will spend about five weeks in the coop before it's time for butchering. By then, they'll be four times the size they are today and five times as obnoxious. The butchering comes as a relief.

Of course, my hens don't necessarily know the plan. All they know is that those awful birds are back and they aren't happy about it.

Fortunately, they don't have to interact with them, at least for now. The coop is large enough that I can fence off one section for the newcomers. They'll stay there for a couple weeks until they outgrow the space, at which point I'll roll up the fencing and give them all free rein in the coop and the adjacent outdoor run for the remaining three weeks.

But even having to be near the Cornish crosses seems to be too much for the hens to bear, as if these remarkably efficient meat machines give other chickens a bad name. One of the reds seemed so upset

she went out to the run and started digging furiously. "I'm getting the heck out of here," she seemed to be saying.

The other hens just looked at me. One let out a loud and pathetic "braaaacckk!" in protest of the indignity. I felt for them... until I remembered they'd still be around next month to enjoy the luxury of their coop by themselves while the Cornish beasts were sitting in the freezer. When it comes to the typical life of a chicken, these girls really have nothing to complain about. Yet if history is any guide, that won't stop them.



MARSHALL HELMBERGER

Wildflower Watch



This week's featured flower
MARSH SKULLCAP

The **Marsh Skullcap**, *Scutellaria garlericulata*, is fairly common but often overlooked. It prefers wet feet and often grows amidst other dense vegetation.

It is best distinguished by its tubular, blue-to-violet blossoms, which grow on short stems from the leaf axils. The narrow, pointed leaves are opposite, seemingly without a stem. These are members of the mint family, so the square stem is another good field mark of this species.

MANAGEMENT

Forest service issues LaCroix Project decision

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The Superior National Forest has published a draft decision notice that will impact future forest management efforts across a large portion of the LaCroix ranger district. Known as the LaCroix Landscape Project, the plan, if approved in its current form, will guide future actions across that portion of the LaCroix district located generally west of the Vermilion River.

It's a portion of the forest that is heavily interspersed with non-federal ownership, including state, county, and industry-owned lands. That portion of the forest is included within the Arrowhead Landscape Collaborative, a multi-agency effort that is taking an "all-lands" approach to forest management planning across half a million acres, which includes much of far northern St. Louis County.

Sunny Lucas, LaCroix district ranger, is proposing to implement alternative 2 as described in the draft decision notice, which describes a variety of harvesting, prescribed burning, fuel reduction, and reforestation efforts that are intended to better align the forest with the objectives laid out in the 2004 forest plan revision.

According to the public notice,

See **LACROIX...** pg. 3B

SUNSET SHOWER



A sunshower during a recent sunset turned the world near Lost Lake a remarkable orange for a few brief moments.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Trout Lake truck portage concession up for renewal

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TROUTLAKE—The U.S. Forest Service is now accepting proposals for the operation of the motorized portage concession here. The portage, which was severely damaged in the June 18 storm, has since been rebuilt and is back in operation under the current concessionaire, who is completing his current ten-year term.

The forest service typically seeks proposals for the concession once every ten years. Those selected for the special use permit can operate for a five-year term with the option for a second five-year term.

The concession has been run by Lonnie Johnson for the past nine and a half years. His permit expires at the end of 2024.

The motorized portage facilitates the transfer of boats between Lake Vermilion and Trout Lake, which is located within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

A description of the portage and the operation is included in a prospectus that is available on the Superior National Forest's webpage, or by contacting Tim Engrav at 218-666-0025 or timothy.engrav@

usda.gov.

Applicants must submit the required processing fee and business plan evaluation fee with their application. The selected applicant may be responsible for the costs of preparing and issuing the permit. Additionally, the selected applicant will be required to undergo a Financial Ability Determination, or FAD, unless the Forest Service has conducted such an analysis for the applicant within the past year and no changes are necessary to bring it up to date.

All applications must be submitted via paper and received by the Superior National Forest no later than 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 12, 2024. Mail complete proposals to:

Attn: Sunny Lucas,
LaCroix District Ranger
LaCroix District
320 N Hwy 53
Cook, MN 55723

The district office is open from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday for in-person delivery of proposals.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

| Friday | | | | | Saturday | | | | | Sunday | | | | | Monday | | | | | Tuesday | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|-------|-----|-----------|----|----|-------|-----|-----------|----|----|-------|-----|-----------|----|----|-------|-----|-----------|----|----|-------|-----|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 81 57 | | | | | 82 57 | | | | | 82 57 | | | | | 81 57 | | | | | 79 57 | | | | |
| 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. |
| 07/08 | na | 44 | 0.50 | | 07/08 | 75 | 51 | 0.57 | | 07/08 | 72 | 57 | 0.74 | | 07/08 | 79 | 59 | 0.74 | | 07/08 | 72 | 54 | 0.40 | |
| 07/09 | 72 | 50 | 0.06 | | 07/09 | 77 | 49 | 0.02 | | 07/09 | 81 | 57 | 0.02 | | 07/09 | 81 | 52 | 0.03 | | 07/09 | 74 | 53 | 0.48 | |
| 07/10 | 71 | 48 | 0.06 | | 07/10 | 81 | 50 | 0.06 | | 07/10 | 82 | 57 | 0.00 | | 07/10 | 81 | 55 | 0.00 | | 07/10 | 81 | 55 | 0.00 | |
| 07/11 | 67 | 47 | 0.00 | | 07/11 | 80 | 52 | 0.00 | | 07/11 | 79 | 55 | 0.00 | | 07/11 | 82 | 57 | 0.00 | | 07/11 | 81 | 51 | 0.00 | |
| 07/12 | 72 | 54 | 0.00 | | 07/12 | 83 | 54 | 0.00 | | 07/12 | 84 | 56 | 0.00 | | 07/12 | 84 | 63 | 0.00 | | 07/12 | 82 | 60 | 0.00 | |
| 07/13 | na | 57 | 0.09 | | 07/13 | 86 | 60 | 0.00 | | 07/13 | 86 | 62 | 0.00 | | 07/13 | 81 | 63 | 0.00 | | 07/13 | 85 | 61 | 0.00 | |
| 07/14 | 81 | 62 | 1.11 | | 07/14 | 85 | 59 | 0.00 | | 07/14 | 85 | 62 | 0.67 | | 07/14 | 81 | 59 | 0.00 | | 07/14 | 81 | 60 | 0.27 | |
| YTD Total | | | 19.01 | | YTD Total | | | 20.66 | | YTD Total | | | 21.24 | | YTD Total | | | NA | | YTD Total | | | 21.56 | |

LACROIX...Continued from page 2B

which includes a finding of no significant environmental impact, the plan is based on a landscape ecosystem concept, with objectives for vegetation composition, age, tree species diversity, and management indicator habitats. According to the decision, the LaCroix Landscape Project proposes a balanced approach of active management practices and natural processes and aims to increase efficiency and effectiveness in project planning, including compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

The project will include management activities within potentially thousands of acres of designated old growth stands, although the plan calls for thinning, fuel reduction, and prescribed fire, while maintaining the existing canopy within those areas.

The implementation cycle for the plan includes five-year cycles of vegetation management, with opportunities for public participation and comment.

The Draft Decision Notice and other LaCroix Landscape Project

documents are available at www.fs.usda.gov/projects/superior/land-management/projects and select the LaCroix Landscape Project. The draft decision notice provides more information on how the proposed decision meets the purpose and need along with information on the pre-decisional objection period.

Anyone with questions on the LaCroix Landscape Project, please contact Mike Johnson, environmental coordinator, at michael.w.johnson@usda.gov.

LOONS...Continued from page 2B

of the June storm.

Lake Vermilion has long been home to the largest documented loon population on any lake in Minnesota. It's 365 islands and

hundreds of miles of shoreline, much of it undeveloped, provides exceptional nesting habitat for loons. Loons are good indicators of water quality because they need clean,

clear water to catch food. They are also sensitive to disturbances such as lakeshore development and contaminants like mercury and lead in their environment.

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FLOODING ASSISTANCE

United Way has funds to help flood victims

CHISHOLM - As communities across the state continue to clean up and repair from June's flooding, United Way of Northeastern Minnesota (UWNEMN) is offering financial support to households in its service area to assist as they recover from the disaster.

Impacted residents can request up to \$1,500 to be applied to flood related bills, replace damaged appliances, or purchase building materials. An application is required, and individuals must be able to provide proof of residence

at the time of flooding, verification of flood damage, and a demonstration of need.

Local suppliers who have committed to working with the program to date include: Cook Building Center, Keenan's TV and Appliance Center, Menards, Perpich TV, and Pohaki Lumber.

"So many of our neighbors have been absolutely devastated by the damage to their homes and are dealing with the aftermath," said UWNEMN Community Impact Director Crystal Royer. "We hope it brings

some solace to know that the entire region is uniting to support them."

UWNEMN's 2024 Flood Recovery fund application release comes after weeks of communication with local residents; city, county, and state leaders; and American Red Cross.

"As soon as flooding started, we sprang to action to do what we do best - fill gaps to meet critical needs," said UWNEMN Executive Director Erin Shay. "As members of our team were cleaning out their own basements, others began delivering supplies."

"At the same time, we were coordinating with those affected and others taking action to determine what the biggest gap to fill would be," Shay said. "The feedback was resounding; the highest unmet need is financial assistance. Many impacted residents do not have adequate insurance coverage for their damages."

Spurred by a \$10,000 grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation Disaster Relief Fund, UWNEMN set a goal of raising \$100,000 to be able to provide meaningful

gifts to as many impacted residents as possible.

To date, more than \$60,000 has been raised thanks to additional support from the Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, Twin Metals, Pohaki Lumber, Park State Bank, Range Association of Realtors, and Z'up North Realty. UWNEMN will continue to raise funds while they distribute them to affected residents.

"We did not want to wait to reach our full goal before releasing assistance

because we know people need help now," Royer said.

To apply for UWNEMN's 2024 Flood Recovery funding - or to donate to support the fund - visit www.unitedwaynemn.org/floodhelp. To request a paper application, call 218-215-2420 or email crystal@unitedwaynemn.org.

Donations can also be mailed directly to 608 East Drive, Chisholm, MN 55719. Donors are requested to specify their donation is for flood recovery.

ZAITZ..Continued from page 1B

he relented.

"And lo and behold, here I am 47 years later, still doing it."

Being sexton supervisor of a small-town cemetery comes with its challenges, as John learned quickly.

"When I first took over this job, it was really hard because I got to know everybody so well," Zaitz said. "You know, one day you're talking to him in the street, and the next day you hear 'Oh, so-and-so passed away.' 'But I was just talking to him!' Back then it bothered me but now, it still bothers me but not like it used to. It's a job and somebody's got to do it."

Growing up in a Chicago flat with his mother, John credits his work ethic to his grandmother. When his mother was at work, John's grandma Rose imparted her strict values onto him.

"My relationship to my grandmother was probably the best thing that could have happened to me back then," Zaitz said. "She was my everything back then, she was the world to me."

Zaitz said his mother and grandmother's kind and caring demeanors inspire him to try to be the same way.

"They were caring, very caring people, and they'd give everybody the shirt off their backs," Zaitz said.

John briefly moved to Tower in 1971 and worked at the Tower Municipal Liquor Store, or "The White House," as it was called back then since it was housed on the ground floor of the white-painted city hall. But John said finding jobs was tough, and Tower locals weren't a fan of the new "packsacker" in town. He moved back to Chicago in 1971 only to return to Tower once again in 1974, when he found a job as a miner.

After mowing the grass and weed whacking around headstones for decades, Zaitz - once a complete stranger to the area - knows the layout of Lakeview Cemetery better than anyone else. It's not uncommon for people to ask Zaitz for the location of a headstone and, more

often than not, he can lead them right to it.

"Forty-seven years of cutting grass here and being around the cemetery, there's a lot of them I do remember," Zaitz said.

On June 1, Zaitz retired as a bus driver for Tower-Soudan Elementary School, a job he performed for 10 years in addition to his cemetery duties. Now, Zaitz is at Lakeview nearly every day, at least for a few minutes.

"There isn't a day that goes by that I'm not up here doing something, even by myself," Zaitz said. "Even if we're done cutting grass, I'll drive through. If I see a torn flag, because the flags get torn in the wind, I'll grab that flag and repair it. And if I can't repair it, I'll put a new one out there."

Once only displayed for Memorial Day, Zaitz felt that each veteran's headstone should have a flag all year round, a policy which he said has garnered compliments from many visitors. According to Zaitz, Lakeview has over 400 veteran headstones, some dating back to the Civil

War and at least one from the Spanish-American War.

"It's showing respect to our veterans and family members who are buried here, and it looks good," Zaitz said. "I think it just makes the cemetery look beautiful, and it gets nothing but comments, good comments."

Surveying the flags was the first job the Zaitz grandsons did for their grandfather at Lakeview. Starting them out when he felt they were ready for the work, around 13 years old, John's grandsons Jordan Haburn and Ethan, Trevor, and J.R. Zaitz - as well as their friend Owen Koivisto - started off replacing damaged flags and picking up branches. Over time, they graduated to more difficult tasks, like mowing and preparing plots for burials. It takes Zaitz and one of his grandsons about 30 minutes to dig a hole for a casket, and it takes him even less time to dig a hole for an urn.

Ethan Zaitz said his work with his grandfather helped him branch off into mowing other lawns on

the side, and he currently has about 20 clients. He also works as a welder at Lamppa Manufacturing, frequently heading to Lakeview after his 10-hour shifts to help his family with grounds maintenance. Ethan says working with John helped ease him into the idea of working at a cemetery.

"It helps it feel a bit easier, feel a bit more comfortable at work," Ethan said. "Oddly enough, now it's kind of normal. Some people would find it weird, but now it just feels like the everyday."

Just as he was close to his grandmother, John now has the opportunity to work alongside his son and grandsons to maintain the cemetery for mourners and visitors. John described his relationship with his grandkids - four boys and two girls - as being very close.

"I don't want to say I smother them, but even at their age, I always worry about them," John said. "That's the way my mom and grandma were. I always make sure they're taken care of. They're my life,

my grandkids. My family is my life, and that's the way it is."

Taking refuge from the summer sun, the Zaitz family share a cooler full of Gatorades in an old shed once used for storing the bodies of people who passed away over the wintertime. From the open garage door, John can see the plot he has set aside for himself, and while the thought of passing on fills many with uncertainty, Zaitz is confident about at least one thing.

"Someday, these guys will be digging a hole for me," Zaitz said. "And they know what to do."

Zaitz has no plans to stop caring for Lakeview anytime soon and said the cemetery has become an inseparable part of his life. To view cemetery records, visit cityoftower.com/cultural. Donations to the Tower Cemetery Association can be delivered to PO box 874 at the Tower post office.

FERGUSON..Continued from page 1B

avoid the ruckus of the night shift, she eventually moved to working the day shift, where there was more visiting and camaraderie at the bar.

Bartending means getting to listen to lots of stories, she said, and she especially enjoys stories of the older times in Tower and Soudan.

"I love the history," she said.

Sometimes she sees that history unfold in front of her. She's been witness to a few marriage proposals, and one couple came back the following year to celebrate their first anniversary at the bar. The bar also features many photos of area veterans, and often family members will find one of their relatives up on the wall, which can prompt plenty of stories from their own good ol' days.

Living and working in the small town you grew up in means many of the customers are family, friends, or neighbors.

"My family likes to come and make me wait on them," she said. Ferguson grew up in Soudan and graduated from Tower-

Soudan High School. Her parents still live in Soudan, and her siblings and son aren't too far away, either.

While Mickey isn't as young and spry as she was when she first started out behind the bar, her customers haven't gotten any younger either, and that has changed some behavior.

The older crowd is happy to be home at a reasonable hour, she said. "Nobody wants to drink too much and drive. You can't risk it. Not just the DWI, but the possibility of hurting someone."

Two years ago, new owners, Dan and Greta Burandt purchased Good Ol' Days, and Ferguson stayed on, helping with the transition.

Greta said Ferguson's "outstanding personality" is a big draw at the bar. And she truly appreciates all the help they got from her when they first took over the business two years ago, with little restaurant experience.

"She loves interacting with our customers," she said, adding they really rely on all her knowledge and experience.

"Greta and Dan are the sweetest people ever," she said. While the family-friendly bar atmosphere hasn't changed, the new owners have been doing some updates to the menu and the technology. The menu now includes more fresh foods, including hand-pattied burgers from Zup's, bakery buns, and more fresh ingredients. They have installed a new high-tech ordering system,

something that is taking her a while to get the hang of.

The most popular meals, Ferguson said, are the burgers, Reuben sandwiches, and the iconic Italian sub, a menu item that dates back to the Sportsman's Bar and Grill, owned by the Carlson family.

"This is a great place to come and eat," she said. Her personal favorites are a weekly special that includes an olive burger,

as well as the Italian wrap.

Ferguson has not only worked at Good Ol' Days, but has lived in one of the apartments upstairs since 2005, which makes for a short commute.

"Most of the time it is pretty convenient," she said. "And in the winters, when other staff can't make it in, I do feel like I have to fill in."

Her son Austin basically grew up at the bar,

and often could be found in the kitchen, helping wash dishes, or out on the floor bussing tables.

"A lot of kids grew up in here," she said.

Ferguson is not planning on retiring anytime soon. "I'm not old enough to retire," she laughed. Besides, she said, she likes the people she works with. "I really love it here," she said.

GARDEN..Continued from page 1B

connect the new daycare center at the Community Hub Building to the garden space. The gardeners plan to add more garden space, signage, education displays, a pergola, and a picnic table donated by the Ely Rotary.

The newest and most eye-catching addition to the garden in 2024 is the donation of an old canoe from Outward Bound, now set up as a planter inside

a landscaped circle. The gardeners planted it with beans, lettuce, and squash. The rest of the garden hosts tomatoes, beans, herbs, rhubarb, raspberries, celery, and peppers.

The master gardener volunteers share the produce they grow with the veterans visiting the VA Outpatient Clinic and local food shelves.



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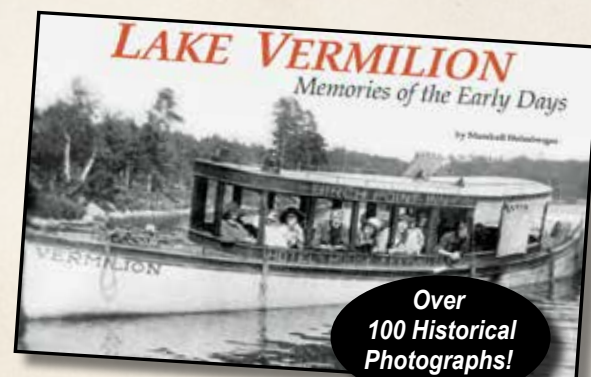
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PUBLIC NOTICES

EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP FILING NOTICE

In the November 5, 2024 General Election, Eagles Nest Township will have the following offices on the ballot:

- Sup C will be a 4-year term
Sup B will be a 4-year term
Sup E will be a 2-year term special election
Clerk will be a 4-year term

The filing period for these offices will be July 30, 2024 through August 13, 2024. Filing office hours will be on August 9, 2024 from 8 AM to 12 PM.

Any person elected to the office of supervisor or clerk must, upon assuming the office, be an eligible voter, be 21 years of age, and have maintained residence in the town for at least 30 days.

Published in the Timberjay, July 12, 19 & 26, 2024

Notice to the Voters of KUGLER TOWNSHIP

The following offices are open for election at the November 5, 2024 General Election.

Affidavits of Candidacy may be filed with the Town Clerk by calling 218-248-0606. Filings are open beginning Tuesday, July 30 and ending on Tuesday, August 13, 2024.

- One Supervisor A - (4) Four-year term
One Supervisor B - (4) Four-year term
One Clerk - (4) Four-year term

Filing fee: \$2.00

Election hours will be 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. at Kugler Town Hall, 9072 Hwy. 135, Tower, MN 55790.

Chris Suihkonen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, July 12 & 19, 2024

EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP

Notice of State Primary Election, August 13, 2024

Voters residing in Eagles Nest Township, St. Louis County will vote by mail in statewide elections as authorized by the township/city under MN Statute 204B.45.

All persons registered to vote as of June 28, 2024, in MAIL BALLOT precincts will automatically be sent a ballot at least 14 days prior to the election.

Voted ballots may be returned by mail (stamped return envelopes are included with each MAIL BALLOT packet) or in person at one of the below listed locations.

NOTE: If you live in one of the mail ballot areas and are eligible to vote but are not currently registered, you may apply to the Auditor's Office in person or by mail for ballots and registration materials.

Auditor, St. Louis County Courthouse OR Virginia Government Services Building
100 North 5th Avenue West, Room 214 Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 726-2385
FAX: (218) 725-5060

Published in the Timberjay, July 12, 19 & 26, 2024

EMPLOYMENT

Newspaper Delivery- Thursday mornings (2 PT Openings)

The Timberjay in Tower is looking for two individuals to help with newspaper distribution on Thursday mornings, approx. 4 hours starting at 9 a.m. \$15/hour plus mileage.

Call Jodi at 218-753-2950 for information or to apply.

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP CUSTODIAL SERVICES NEEDED

Greenwood Township is seeking an individual for custodial services of our Town Hall and offices. Please submit proposal to Clerk@greentownshipmn.com

Published in the Timberjay, July 19, 2024

Legal notices are online each week at timberjay.com www.mnpublicnotice.com/

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Ganges garments
6 Stern and Asimov
12 Raging rant
13 Seafood soup
14 Foolish talk
15 Guarantee
16 Faction
17 Overdue
19 Days of yore
20 Entryway
22 Bankroll
24 Billboards
27 Mooches
29 Plunks (down)
32 Wake-up calls
35 Gambling game
36 Poet Teasdale
37 Water tester
38 Tummy muscles
40 Iditarod terminus
42 Jazz lover
44 Ballet attire
46 Slightly
50 Loves to pieces
52 Cancel out
54 Some beers
55 Of France
56 Constitution writer
57 Upright

Grid for King Crossword with numbers 1-57 indicating starting positions for across and down clues.

DOWN

- 21 Kimono sash
23 Chest-beating beast
24 Canine greeting
25 Narc's org.
26 Revolutionary War battle
28 Forage for food, say
30 Ring decision
31 Away from NNW
33 High tennis shot
34 Deli meat
39 Cubic meter
41 Aerie builder
42 Young whale
43 Purim's month
45 Cold War initials
47 Body powder
48 Bickering
49 Calendar abbr.
51 Sleep acronym
53 Corn unit

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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.

- 1. Greasy dirt M _ _ _ _ _ Complain _ _ _ _ _ P _ _
2. Inspect the ledger _ _ _ _ _ T _ _ _ _ _ Of the ear _ _ _ _ _ O _ _
3. An official order _ _ _ _ _ C _ _ _ _ _ PhD or BA _ _ _ _ _ G _ _ _ _ _
4. Household duty _ _ _ _ _ E _ _ _ _ _ Musical note combo _ _ _ _ _ D _ _
5. Nun _ _ _ _ _ S _ _ _ _ _ Child care giver _ _ _ _ _ T _ _ _ _ _
6. Loner H _ _ _ _ _ Henson's frog K _ _ _ _ _
7. Eye cosmetic _ _ _ _ _ R _ _ _ _ _ Napkin fabric _ _ _ _ _ N _ _
8. Harriet Beecher _ _ _ _ _ W _ _ _ _ _ Kitchen cooker _ _ _ _ _ V _ _
9. Frolic _ _ _ _ _ A _ _ _ _ _ Royal son _ _ _ _ _ I _ _ _ _ _
10. Depart L _ _ _ _ _ Use a loom W _ _ _ _ _

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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.

Clue: N equals Y

CSZK SWNEXR SZ BZXLEXBD GD
SIJS QDGJHD CIDDK IJLD XZ
BJKJBESN SZ HZXR QZW SIEXRC.
DVD VECII!

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CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc.

NC LCE ZCLDSLW ACKQ
ZGSRNQWL EC ACKQ CBL
RWFQLSLT, DCQ EGWA BWQW
YCQL SL FLCEGWQ ESHW.
- ZGSLWPW OQCUWQY

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Super Crossword

Answers

Grid for Super Crossword with answers filled in: TWOS, UMA, BRAVA, TSKTSK, ARCS, CAN, BASIC, UNSOWN, PATRILEY, BLEAR, POTPIE, TIO, TASHA, PACORABANNE, ATPAR, TORAH, OPECTOG, PHILIPROTH, SMOGTETES, AERO, SOCK, LICE, CRO, BRANDI, PHYLICIA, RASHAD, LAP, EURO, ENOS, ABA, ISLET, SOPRANO, PIANIST, PAULRUDD, ERE, PEGGYREA, SESTINA, SLEDDOG, SOARS, ORC, OLAY, EDGE, NIT, PERNELL, ROBERTS, NOTIFY, OLE, MEAN, EDER, RORY, MEADE, PAUL, PAMELAREED, VCR, HAMM, ASCOT, CALVE, PETEROZELLE, TRIAL, OIL, ANSWER, NOISE, PRPEOPLE, LATINS, TSLLOT, HEE, FELT, EMONEY, STOPS, SEX, FRYE

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

9x9 grid for Weekly Sudoku with numbers 1-9 in some cells.

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.

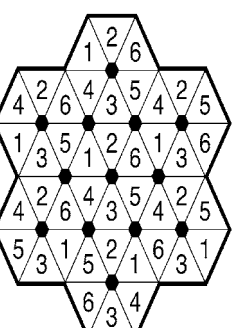
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

- Moderate
Challenging
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FEDERAL FLOOD AID

Hauschild urges action on FEMA flood relief

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

Help for homeowners, businesses still awaiting federal approval

REGIONAL- District 3 Sen. Grant Hauschild, DFL-Hermantown, pressed the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to swiftly approve disaster assistance for homeowners and businesses in northeastern Minnesota in a letter he sent the agency Monday.

"The residents and communities in the

Northland are resilient, and they've responded to this disaster by working together to help one another get back on their feet," said Sen. Hauschild. "While we're grateful for FEMA assistance for public infrastructure disaster relief, federal assistance for our homeowners and small business owners is essential to a full recovery."

June storms brought heavy rain and wind damage across wide swaths of the North Country, only to be followed by record-setting flooding that quickly inundated Cook and the surrounding region. While assessments of the damage are still ongoing, it is estimated that the final total will approach tens, if

not hundreds, of millions of dollars.

Monday's letter calling for swift federal assistance was co-signed by District 3A Rep. Roger Skraba, R-Ely.

"We are grateful for the local, state, and federal emergency response that moved in following the immediate aftermath of this disaster, but the road to recovery will be long," Hauschild said. "I urge FEMA to accede to Minnesota's request for individual disaster assistance as soon as possible."

Hauschild's letter amplified the urgency he expressed during Gov. Tim Walz's June 21 visit to view the flood damage in Cook.

"You get to a community like this, and you talk to the folks that felt this devastation firsthand, the business owners, the families with water in their basement, they're homeless - we've got folks that are literally homeless right now unable to get back into their homes," Hauschild said. "Our local communities had each other's backs, our neighbors had each other's backs, and now the state has to have the back of Cook and the communi-

ties here in northern Minnesota. That's my job. So all hands on deck, we're here to support the community of Cook."

Additional work

Hauschild's legislative assistant Jamie Hysjulien was in Cook on Tuesday at a meeting for local business owners convened by the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, and she told the assembly about additional efforts she and Hauschild have been undertaking in regards to flood relief.

"We've been working at the state and federal levels to find all available funding for both public and private entities that need some form of relief," Hysjulien said. "We're still doing research to find all of the different programs. Grant has been pushing really hard for a special (legislative) session to pass additional dollars for flood relief."

A FEMA disaster declaration for homeowner and business relief would be for flood damages across the entire state, and Hysjulien noted in her remarks that the decision is based on a formula fed by data provided by the state in its application.

Hysjulien also praised the efforts of the IRRRB in responding to the area's needs. Hauschild and Skraba are both members of the IRRRB advisory board.

State FEMA request status

On Tuesday, the *Timberjay* received additional information about the FEMA process from Department of Public Safety Public Information Officer Oliver Schuster. At the request of Gov. Tim Walz, federal, state, county, and local officials are conducting damage assessments as part of the process to help determine if the damages meet the criteria for federal individual assistance. Determinations about eligibility for disaster assistance or a declaration are not made during the assessment process, Schuster said.

Schuster encouraged residents and businesses to continue reporting damage to local officials, as damage assessment teams may not visit every property with damage. Reported damage will be used to help determine if the state meets the minimum FEMA threshold for individual assistance.

The WC Heiam Foundation in Cook is announcing their...

WC Heiam-
Medical Foundation

**ANNUAL
Fundraiser Event
Saturday, August 3**

The event will be at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade Hall. All are welcome to attend for a fabulous evening of music, dinner (catered by Boomtown), libations and silent / live auctions. Please visit their website (Heiamfoundation.org) or (heiambenefit.cbo.io) for more information and to purchase tickets/sponsorships.

This is a fabulous event to help support the Heiam's mission: *Through continued growth of the endowment, is to support programs, services and facilities that serve the medical needs of Cook Health care area residents.* To date the WC Heiam Foundation has given over \$840,000 to support the Cook Hospital.

We hope to see you at the event!

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EBCH
Ely-Bloomenson
Community Hospital



Hospital Connection
EBCH Board Opportunity

Q: How is EBCH governed?

A: EBCH is governed by a nine-member Board made up of diverse individuals from throughout our service area. The hospital's CEO reports directly to the Board, and together, they develop the long-term strategic vision of Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital (EBCH).

Q: What is the commitment to being on the EBCH Board?

A: The EBCH Board of Directors meets monthly, with information distributed prior to the meeting in a Board packet, including an agenda and action items for review. Board members participate annually in a two-day strategic planning session that is held off-campus to help facilitate open discussion. Various committees are also part of the board structure, and Directors are asked to participate in committee work. These committees include such areas as community relations, investments, and quality. Individuals are also encouraged to seek education and certification through the MN Hospital Association's Trustee program; however, this is not required. Terms for Directors run for three years, and individuals are eligible to run for three consecutive terms for a total commitment of nine years.

Q: What if I am interested in becoming an EBCH Board member?

A: We are always looking for individuals interested in learning more about becoming a board member at EBCH. To seek election to the board, you must be a "member" of the EBCH Foundation. This includes purchasing a \$100 membership. We also have our Nominating Committee work through an application process and a meet and greet with any interested individuals before the committee puts forth the names to the entire board for approval to be placed on the ballot for a vote. Votes are tabulated during the Annual Meeting in December, and results are announced that night. Terms start with the January meeting. If you are interested in learning more about becoming an EBCH board member, please contact Jodi Martin at 218-365-8739 or Mary Wognum at 218-365-8751, and they will connect you with a member of the Nominating Committee.

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.

ebch.org

328 W Conan St.
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218-365-3271

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

MT. IRON

Old time fiddle championships

MT. IRON- The 42nd annual Minnesota State Old Time Fiddle Championships will take place on Saturday, Aug. 3, at Mt. Iron's Merritt School Auditorium. The contest is open to all U.S. and Canadian fiddlers as well as all other stringed instrumentalists and the championship division is certified by the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Association.

Walk-on registration for contestants starts at 10:30 a.m. with the show starting at 1 p.m. Emily



Fiddlers of all ages will be competing in Mt. Iron on Aug. 3. submitted

LaPlant, the guitar accompanist, will be on hand to start rehearsing with folks at 10:30 a.m. The non-fiddle and twin fiddle divisions are open to all ages and all bowed and plucked stringed instruments. Contestants will each play a waltz, a hoedown, and a tune of choice, except for twin fiddlers who only need to play a tune of choice.

Rules, online pre-registration, and contact information can be found at www.mesa-bisymphonyorchestra.org/FiddleContest.

The show is open to the public for a fee of \$10. There will be \$2,000 in cash and prizes given away.

These activities are made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to appropriations from the Minnesota State Legislature's general and arts and cultural heritage funds, and in part by a grant from Minnesota State Fiddlers' Association.



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CRIME

Cop-biting man sent to prison for probation violations

REGIONAL- The Minnesota Sixth District Court sent Travis William Mattila, the man who bit an Ely cop last month, to the St. Cloud state prison on Monday for probation violations.

In a combined pre-trial, omnibus, and probation violation hearing in Virginia, Judge Andrew Peterson dismissed all the charges against Mattila from the June 18 cop-biting incident. However, Mattila's actions on that day also violated the conditions of his probation for three previous convictions, which prompted Peterson to order that Mattila serve the remainder of his time for the three convictions from 2023 and 2024.

The longest of Mattila's sentences is 21 months for felony threats of violence made against a Virginia couple on April 26, 2023. He was credited for serving 259 days of confinement, so the remainder of his time in prison for this offense is approximately 12 and a third months.

Mattila will serve his sentence for the April 2023 felony concurrently with two other lesser sentences, including an 18-month sentence for felony threats of violence made against Ely and Virginia police officers in an incident on March 29, 2023. He will again receive credit for 259 days served, making the remainder of this sentence nine and a third months.

The second sentence is for 90 days for a conviction of misdemeanor disorderly conduct from an incident on May 24, 2024, in Ely. He has already served 28 days of that sentence.



Travis Mattila

the area, Mattila allegedly committed assault while being arrested, including biting one officer on the hand. Mattila's June 18 arrest was covered in detail in the June 28 edition of the *Timberjay*.

History repeats itself

The June 18 incident is remarkable for its resemblance to Mattila's actions on March 29, 2023, which led to the felony conviction for threats of violence described above. In the March 29 incident, an Ely resident reported Mattila jumping in front of his daughter's car at the intersection of 14th Ave. and Conan St. and blocking her from driving away. Carrying and drinking a six-pack with him, Mattila then moved to the intersection of 10th and Sheridan where witnesses reported he was stopping cars, yelling obscenities, and throwing beer cans at

them.

Due to Mattila's "vulgar screaming in a public setting," Ely police officers attempted to place him in a squad car, which he resisted. Mattila's actions during his arrest and transport led to his felony conviction for threats of violence against Ely and Virginia law enforcement personnel.

The June 18 incident also parallels Mattila's arrest and subsequent conviction for a gross misdemeanor of disorderly conduct on Aug. 2, 2021. This occasion started when an Ely police officer received a report of Mattila "yelling and acting strangely," near Ninth Ave. and Conan St. The officer

also heard Mattila yelling when he arrived to speak to the reporting party. He found Mattila at his garage in the alley between White and Conan and said he wanted to speak with him, at which time Mattila fled. When stopped by the officer, he again launched into loud insults and vulgarities and physically resisted arrest.

Two and a half weeks later on Aug. 19, 2021, Mattila was once again exercising his lungs in the middle of an Ely street at 6:39 a.m., as he screamed obscenities and yelled that he had women for sale. A resident in Mattila's neighborhood reported that Mattila "was standing in the street yelling

and has been yelling since (11 p.m.) last night." The responding police officer observed Mattila had a strong odor of alcohol. In this incident, Mattila did not resist arrest, although he did verbally abuse the Ely police officer who arrested him.

The charge of disorderly conduct against Mattila for the Aug 19, 2021, incident was dropped; however, Mattila was convicted of the petty misdemeanor of possessing drug paraphernalia because he attempted to light up a pipe of marijuana during his arrest.


Cop biting incident

Mattila was arrested on June 18 for two felony counts of assault and one misdemeanor for obstructing a public roadway. After the passage of the June 18 storm, an allegedly drunk and disorderly Mattila was walking in the middle of the intersection of Seventh Ave. and Sheridan St., shouting at passing motorists. According to court documents, when the Ely Police Department asked him to leave



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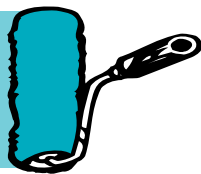
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