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The **TIMBERJAY**



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THE TOURISM ECONOMY

Despite slow start, the season finished strong

by **SETH ROESER**
Staff Writer

REGIONAL- The region's summer tourism season seems to have mostly recovered from a slow start this year, as cool and cloudy conditions in May and torrential rain in mid-June kept visitors away for a time.

"The rain certainly didn't help, and it kind of felt like winter followed us into summer," said Eva Sebesta, executive director of the Ely Chamber of Commerce.

Right: The McKinley Park Campground has had a busy second half of the summer.

photo by M. Helmberger

Sunnier and warmer weather in July and August certainly helped businesses recover from a series of early-season challenges.

The city of Tower's Hoodoo Point Campground, for example, saw significant damage from ice this spring. High

See...**TOURISM** pg. 9



SILVER RAPIDS

Lake County board denies EAW petition

by **CATIE CLARK**
Ely Editor

TWO HARBORS- The Lake County Board of Commissioners, on Tuesday, denied a petition signed by hundreds of area residents seeking more environmental review of the proposed redevelopment of Silver Rapids Lodge. The Lake County Planning Commission voted to recommend that the county board decline the petition at a separate meeting held Aug. 19.

The county board did listen to a ten-minute comment by area resident Russ Hart, who encouraged the commissioners to grant the petition because he believed the environmental issues were too complex to dismiss out of hand. Hart, and the other signatories of the petition were seeking the completion of an environmental assessment worksheet, or EAW.

"I'm a PhD chemist, and I would not want to try to assess the effects of this (project) on water or the air around it. I would want some academic help

See...**SILVER RAPIDS** pg. 10

EMS

Study group to explore SafeTech proposal

by **CATIE CLARK**
Ely Editor

ELY- For the first time since Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital unveiled its ambulance study, all the region's EMS stakeholders came together to talk about next steps, if any, on Tuesday evening in Ely. An hour and a half later, very few questions had solid answers, but the Ely City Council resolved to form a study group to look in greater detail into the study's recommendation for a regional ambulance system run by the hospital.

The meeting in Ely was officially a council study session but they invited representatives from the cities of Winton, Tower, and Babbitt, along with Morse and Fall Lake townships, the hospital, and the Ely, Tower, and Babbitt ambulance services.

Two topics came up repeatedly during the meeting. The first was about ambulance transfers from Ely to other hospitals. The other was about the fate of the ambulance services' capital assets if the hospital took over ambulance services. Currently the facilities and ambulances affected are the property of the cities of Tower and Babbitt and

See...**PROPOSAL** pg. 9



TIMBERJAY INVESTIGATION

Data shows investment made Hwy. 169 safer

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

REGIONAL- Over the past 15 years, the Minnesota Department of Transportation has spent just over \$23 million on safety improvements along the Hwy. 169 corridor from Ely to the intersection with Hwy. 53, just north of Virginia.

Those improvements, funded mostly by federal dollars with some state matching funds and largely directed by the Hwy. 169 Safety Improvement Task Force, have included everything from major realignments of the highway to added turn lanes, intersection lighting, wider shoulders, rumble stripes, and a variety of traffic controls near the crash-prone Y Store intersection.

Based on crash report data from before and after the initiative, obtained by the *Timberjay*, the impact of some

Above: Vehicles traveled this week along the Eagles Nest realignment of Hwy. 169.

Right: A car turns onto Cty. Rd. 77 at the Y Store intersection. Despite a number of safety improvements, the intersection remains a hazardous one.

photos by M. Helmberger

of those changes has been uncertain, while other changes appear to have led to a significant reduction in crashes.

Across the entire 45-mile stretch of highway, law enforcement reported an average of 40 crashes of all kinds annually from 2005-2011, a period just before MnDOT implemented many of the safety improvements along the corridor. In the five years since the majority of the improvements were completed



(2019-2023), the same stretch of highway experienced an average of 34 crashes per year, a 15-percent reduction in crashes.

Crashes involving suspected injury, however, appear largely unchanged since the improvements. According to MnDOT's crash data, the

corridor saw an average of five suspected injury crashes, both serious and minor, between 2005-2011, the period prior to most of the safety improvements along the corridor. That average declined slightly, to 4.8 injury crashes per year from

See...**HWY. 169** pg. 9



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Community notices



Avryl Chamberlin was crowned Little Miss Embarrass at a ceremony on Aug. 23. Katie Larson won first runner-up along with Miss Congeniality. Pictured (from left) Brynna Cook, Maci Horn, Avryl Chamberlin, Katie Larson, and Ava Erickson. photo by J. Summit

Ladies and Knights of Kaleva to meet Sept. 12 at Kaleva Hall

VIRGINIA- The Ladies of Kaleva Soinnuttaren Tupa 32 and the Knights will be meeting Thursday Sept. 12, at Kaleva Hall at 6 p.m. This will be the group's first meeting of the fall and they are hoping for a good turnout.

Two area banks, Entrepreneur Fund to be recognized by the Small Business Administration

MINNEAPOLIS - The U.S. Small Business Administration's Minnesota District will honor 10 lenders throughout the state for their commitment to helping small businesses succeed at the Minnesota Small Business Lenders Conference on Sept. 12, including two banks and one other lender with offices in our area: Frandsen Bank and Trust, US Bank, and the Entrepreneur Fund, who are all being honored for having the highest participation in the SBA-backed loan program.

The awards are based on each lender's number of SBA-guaranteed approved loans in Minnesota from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

"SBA lenders play a vital role in helping small businesses across the state start, grow, and expand," shared SBA Minnesota District Director, Brian McDonald. "Small businesses have the option of a number of local lenders who administer SBA loans ranging from \$500 - \$5 million, meaning there is a lender for all stages of their entrepreneurial journey. We are thrilled to celebrate these lenders who are funding businesses that employ, inspire, and provide vital goods and services to Minnesotans."

The SBA's ability to help small businesses access capital is tied to the country's lending institutions and its partners' ability and willingness to loan money. The SBA doesn't lend the money directly to entrepreneurs to start or grow a business but sets the guidelines for loans made by its partners (lenders, community development organizations and micro-lending institutions). The SBA guarantees that these loans will be repaid, which eliminates some of the risk to the lending partners.

Rock Ridge Community Education and CHAIR present Disney's Frozen JR.

VIRGINIA- Cultures, Humanities, and Arts on the Iron Range (CHAIR), formerly known as the Lyric Center for the Arts, and Rock Ridge Public Schools Community Education are jointly presenting a youth theatre education program featuring Disney's Frozen JR. this fall.

The program is open to all students second through sixth grade regardless of school. Info sessions and role placement will take place at 4 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 5 and Friday, Sept. 6 at the brand-new North Star Elementary School in Virginia.

Students will rehearse for eleven weeks after school, and the program will culminate with performances at Rock Ridge High School Performing Arts Center Nov. 21-24.

ELY FESTIVAL

30th Annual Harvest Moon Festival to run Sept. 6-8

ELY- With temperatures getting cooler and the leaves changing, it must mean the 30th Annual Harvest Moon Festival is approaching. This year's festival features 100 booths filled with artists, crafters, and makers, along with the Forging Community doing live blacksmithing demos. Festival hours are Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6 - 7, from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Sunday, Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. in Whiteside Park.

The festival features many long-time favorites, including Burly Babe, Smokey Photo, Waters Edge Art, and Leather Eagle Customs. Some new vendors are Anja Parenteau Pottery, White Pine Artworks, B Friendly, and Rabuck Handmade Knives & Leather. These are just a few of the new and returning vendors. Plan to spend the day and visit them all.

The food court features Curbside Crepes, Becky's Oriental, SB Concessions, and many other favorites. It has delicious offerings, including two new area trucks: Rose Cottage Baking Co. from Cook, with its wonderful baked goods, and Grilled Cheese Galore from Gilbert, with amazing grilled cheese everyone will love. Of course, the Kiwanis are in the Pavilion, dishing out delicious pie, coffee, ice cream, and other treats.



"Ely's Harvest Moon Festival has been selected as one of the top 20 fall festivals. The public can help by scanning the QR codes around the park and voting. 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, Sept. 7 at 5 p.m., and awards are announced on Sunday morning," said Kristen Switajewski, festival coordinator.

The festival map and vendor list will be available online at Ely.org on the events page after Aug. 30.

Shop Harvest Days

Harvest Days starts on Thursday, Sept. 5, and runs through Sunday, Sept. 8, in the storefront businesses. It begins a day ahead of the festival, so visiting vendors can have time to shop. There are sales, special events, and featured products as part of Harvest Days. We will have a map with participating stores available starting on Aug. 30, at Ely.org/events on our website, on the Harvest Moon Festival page.

LAKE VERMILION



Antique and Classic Boat Show set for Sept. 1

COOK- The 32nd annual Lake Vermilion Antique and Classic Boat Show will be held on Sunday, Sept. 1 from noon to 4 p.m. and will be hosted by the Landing Restaurant and Moosebirds on Vermilion Dr. in Cook.

The Vermilion Lake Association is once again an honorary sponsor. Their presence at the show allows the Association to display and edu-

cate the public of its achievements, goals and plans for the future. Visit with them at their booth to learn how to become a lake steward and prevent Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) spread.

This event is open to the public and we encourage everyone to come see the beautiful boats and chat with the owners. Vote for your favorite boat then kick-back and enjoy a

Landing's burger, a beverage, walk down the street for an ice cream treat at Moosebirds and then stay for the awards presentation at 4 p.m.

Anyone interested in displaying their antique or classic boat, whether it's wood, fiberglass, handmade or homemade, in the water or land display, please contact Sandy Jackson at lakevermilionboatshow@aol.com.

EMBARRASS

Community Night Out set for Sunday, Sept. 8

EMBARRASS- Sisu Heritage of Embarrass is celebrating their annual Community Night Out on Sunday, Sept. 8 from 4-6:30 p.m. at the historic Seitaniemi Homestead. Come for a free outdoor concert and a tour of the restored housebarn at this family-friendly event. Music will be provided by Bill Maxwell and Cowboy Angel Blue. Bring your own blanket or lawn chair. Chili, cornbread, pie and coffee will be available.

This concert is hosted by Sisu Heritage, Inc. and generously sponsored by Embarrass-Vermillion Credit Union, Dirty Dog Manufacturing, C&C Winger Construction, Lakehead Constructors and Trapline Convenience



Store. Freewill donations are gladly accepted. Proceeds go to Sisu's restoration projects in Embarrass and

the surrounding area. The Seitaniemi Homestead is located on Comest Road in Waasa, between Embarrass and Babbitt. Watch

for signs on Hwy 21. Call 218-984-3012 or visit sisuheritage.org for more information.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Big building for some rather big trucks

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

St. Louis County shows off new maintenance facility for Tower and Embarrass

KUGLER TWP- The new St. Louis County maintenance facility garage in Kugler Township looks huge from the outside, but the inside seems even larger and it showcases the county's commitment to keeping the 182 miles of county roads in the Tower/Embarrass district safe for travel year-round.

At an open house on Aug. 26, many community members took time to tour the facility, ask questions, and talk with the county employees who take care of roads in all weather conditions.

Chad Skelton, fleet and property manager for the county, was on hand to talk about the new facility, state-of-the-art road equipment, and a commitment to cut costs and be mindful of the environmental impacts of their work, especially the use of road salt.

The county has mostly switched to using a brine solution to prevent icing on roads.

"We are trying to reduce our use of salt as much as possible," said Skelton. "We are spending two million dollars a year on salt." He noted that the brine solution uses less salt than direct application of salt granules and starts reducing ice of roadways immediately, and can be effective at a wider range of cold temperatures.

The brine solution is created at a county facility in Ely, and the new Kugler garage can store enough to last through about three major snow events.

The brand new 425 horse-power snowplow on display, one of two recently purchased by the county, has a two-way plow, heated headlight lenses, three video cameras with displays in the cab, and also high-tech add-ons which allow the driver to see the real time temperature of both the air and the blacktop surface. Friction sensors will be added to the plow blade cutting edge, which will tell the driver how slippery the roadway is. The truck even tracks how many miles are on the plow's cutting blade, so they can be replaced when needed.

"They can adjust their spread rate in real time," Skelton said.

There is also onboard data



Above left: A young visitor checks out the St. Louis County map, showing the coverage area for the maintenance department.



Above right: Chad Skelton showed off the newest plow truck in the county's fleet.



Right: Kyle Parker, who works at the garage, showed his daughter Lorayne some of the big trucks that he drives.



Far right: Troy Zupancich was ready to start driving.
photos by J. Summit

analysis, which adjusts the application of the brine solution based on data from previous snow events.

The new truck is actually a prototype and took two years to build, Skelton said. It can hold enough brine and granular material to last a full shift, which means less time wasted getting refilled at the garage. In addition, the new garage is large enough to fit all the plow trucks inside, without having to remove the plow itself, which was not the case at the previous facilities in Tower and Embarrass. This will give maintenance staff

an additional two hours a day on the road, if needed.

The new facility will also have a truck wash installed sometime in the next year, so trucks can get washed each time they reenter the garage.

"So, we won't be parking dirty trucks inside," Skelton said.

The new truck cost about \$330,000 and Skelton said it is one of the most tech-savvy plow trucks anywhere in the nation. Skelton expects the truck to last at least 12 years. He said the county buys about 10 new plow trucks a year.

"We have about 3,000 miles

of roads to plow," said public works director Jim Foldersi, "and 116 plow routes."

The county has also upgraded other dump trucks that have removable bodies, so they can be used for multiple types of road needs. This new county facility will house eight dump trucks and two graders, enough to cover the seven plow routes. Nine employees are based out of the building, which covers 299 square miles with 88 miles of gravel roads and 94 miles of paved roads.

This is one of three new buildings recently constructed at a cost of \$34 million. Each

new facility includes a main building, storage buildings, salt/sand domes, brine storage system, fuel system, truck wash and paved driving and laydown areas that all support efficient cost-effective operations. The buildings in Kugler, Culver, and Makinen were constructed with energy efficiency, ease of maintenance, and longevity in mind. They replace five smaller garages in Tower, Embarrass, Brookston, Brimson and the Town of White that had outlived their usefulness due to age, lack of space, or both.

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OPINION

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Editorial

It's about freedom

Democrats and Republicans have very different concepts of liberty

Back in 2010, then-Texas Gov. Rick Perry was interviewed on NPR's Morning Edition to tout a new book. Ho hum, you might think, but Perry had a memorable comment that highlights the growing distinction between Democrats and Republicans in the age of Donald Trump.

Perry was asked about the difference between his state and California and, dripping with southern sarcasm, noted that California had gay marriage and legal marijuana, neither of which was allowed in the Lone Star state at the time.

“In Texas,” said Perry, “we still believe in freedom.”

It's doubtful that Perry recognized the irony in his words. But he, perhaps inadvertently, hit on a theme that has taken hold in the current race for the White House.

At last week's Democratic convention, the idea of freedom became a central pillar of any number of speeches, but was perhaps best expressed by our own governor, Tim Walz, when he said in Minnesota we respect the personal choices our neighbors make. “And even if we wouldn't make the same choice ourselves, we've got a golden rule, ‘Mind your own damn business.’”

We suspect to most Americans, freedom is about the right to make our own personal choices as we each exercise our constitutional right to pursue happiness, whatever that means for each of us. That means having the right to choose who we love, who we marry, or whether we prefer a beer or a joint at the end of the day. It's the freedom to read what we want, and to make our own health care decisions. It's a recognition that what makes each of us happy is different and that when it comes to our personal liberties — essentially our right to be left alone — we should expect that as long as we're not bothering others, we should be free to do as we please.

It is more complicated than that, of course. There are times when the need for public safety puts limits on our actions. Governments have always been allowed to regulate citizens when they can show a “compelling state interest,” which is the standard long set by the courts.

For years, when Republicans have talked about freedom, they mostly meant deregulation of business. Indeed, that's exactly what Rick Perry stated in that 2010 interview. The GOP has long represented the most polluting industries in America and the party's elected officials have fought for years to loosen regulations, such as those that protect air and water quality, consumer and work-

force safety, or help victims of corporate greed and excess.

To the GOP, freedom doesn't apply to “we the people.” It means the right of corporations, or the owners of capital, to do as they please, including paying little or no taxes on the profits they make off the rest of us. Yet Trump and his supporters are going even further, seeking to undermine our personal freedoms by undermining the rule of law. Trump's promise to politicize the Justice Department, federal agencies, and the federal judiciary itself, would undermine the concept of fair justice, and leave Americans subject to arbitrary government power, largely at the whim of the president.

Trump often talks of using the military to crush political protest and he's done more than talk about it. Who can forget the deployment of troops near the White House in 2020, to tear-gas peaceful protesters who were cleared out to make way for one of the most bizarre presidential photo ops in American history — Trump, holding up a Bible outside of St. John's Church.

Trump's action that day demonstrated, more clearly than anything, his disdain for the freedom of fellow Americans and for his oath to faithfully execute the U.S. Constitution, including our First Amendment right of peaceful assembly. His authoritarian mindset put his desire to play to his Christian fundamentalist base above the rights of others to live as free citizens.

That same disdain for protestors extends to many other citizens who don't conform to the right's preferred version of a true American because of race, gender, religion, beliefs, or national origin. When Trump talks of making America great again, he's talking about returning to an era when true freedom in America was largely reserved for white Christian men. Trump's MAGA movement is, in part, a backlash to the progress we have made to extend those same freedoms to those who were excluded from America's promise in the past.

What we saw at last week's Democratic convention was America's tremendous diversity on full display, all culminating in the nomination of a Black and Indian woman for an office that would have been inconceivable in the America to which Donald Trump hopes to return us all. For all those who have fought for their own hard-earned inclusion in the promise of America, it's easy to understand why Democrats say: “We're not going back.”

AS THE YEAR BEGINS, MORE SCHOOLS ARE BANNING CELLPHONES



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Letters from Readers

Trump's defeat is key to rebuilding the GOP

I was astonished to see prominent Republicans, and even Stephanie Grisham, who was a senior adviser for the Trump campaign, speaking at the Democratic National Convention. I was so surprised I took notes.

Olivia Troye, former White House security advisor for Trump, resigned four years ago. She said, “At that time the few adults in the room” either had resigned or were fired.

Former Lt. Governor of Georgia, Geoff Duncan, said, “I am a Republican and I am here as an American.” “If you vote for Kamala Harris in November, you are not a Democrat. You're a patriot,” he said.

Republican Mayor John Giles, of Mesa, Ariz., a lifelong Republican, said the GOP “has been kidnapped by extremists and has developed into a cult.” “My hero, John McCain, promised to put country over party.” “John McCain is gone,” he said, “and we don't owe a damn thing to what's been left behind.”

Former 12-year Republican U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger said, “You never thought you'd see me here, did you? I've learned something about the Democratic Party. The Democrats are as patriotic as us. They love this country as much as we do.” Then he explained why he felt that way. “We must put country first.” “Whatever policies we disagree on pale in comparison with those fundamental matters of principle, of decency and of fidelity to this nation.” “Vote for our bedrock values and vote for Kamala Harris.”

Senior staffers Kayleigh McEnany and Stephanie Grisham said much the same thing, as did other Republicans.

Although I am a political

liberal, I have always been personally and financially conservative. We need a two-party system in this country, even if I don't agree in general with Republican policies.

It seems that some people have figured out that the only way to get the real Republican Party back is to vote for Kamala Harris this time, and defeat Donald Trump and Project 2025. Then they can start rebuilding. And I say, “Good for them!” I can hardly wait to see John McCain Republicans back in Congress.

**Kate Furness
Ely**

Oil provides many things that benefit us all

After reading the Aug. 6, *Timberjay* opinion page, I found that I had similar desires as the two grandparents from Cook, who loved their 10 grandchildren and wanted the grandchildren to successfully raise their own children. My own experiences, however, have given me a different life perspective. (BTW, grandma has been deceased since 1998). I have heard about Project 2025, but I don't have the couple's same worry.

In 1969, I was required to take organic chemistry at the University of Minnesota. We students were reminded by Professor Bourque's tough exams that real scientists dare not flunk Organic Chemistry 101 and 102; or else, they should find another career.

Professor Bourque taught us that refineries distill crude oil and produce organic compounds that are building blocks of compounds which make everyone's life better. Dr. Bourque told us that from organic compounds we get petroleum jelly from heavy paraffins, methane and propane gases for home heating, isopropyl

alcohol from propane. (FYI, isopropanol is used by nurses to sterilize your arm before a blood-draw and by the homeowner to prevent the spread of COVID). Alfred Nobel invented TNT (2,4,6 tri-nitro toluene) from volatile (but carcinogenic) benzene.

I was the Grand Rapids DNR Area Fisheries Supervisor during the 1991 Enbridge Pipeline oil spill on the Prairie River. Then, my three pre-teen children had already been trapping otter, mink, and muskrat, harvesting wild rice, and catching walleye, redhorse, and small mouth bass within a few hundred yards downstream of the spill.

I was familiar with established protocols involving chemical spills and knew that they fall within the purview of the Pollution Control Agency. DNR's hydrological and biological purview requires PCA's consideration. Our agency placed walleye eggs downstream of the spill-site and determined impacts to mussels.

**David G. Holmbeck
Grand Rapids**

Vote your beliefs

It's that time again — to vote for our next president. I know this is widely known as democratic country, but the Democratic party is no longer the party it used to be. We must STOP voting for a party because I/my parents always voted that way. We must NOT vote for or vote for someone based on “I don't like that candidate”. We must begin to take our responsibility and find out what is in each of the party platforms and then vote for the candidate whose platform most closely aligns with our beliefs. VOTE WISELY — VOTE YOUR BELIEFS!

**Marilyn Mueller
Greenwood Township**

COMMENTARY

Silver Rapids project: disdain and disinformation

At Tuesday's meeting of the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the county's Director of Environmental Services, Christine McCarthy, made a salient point, stating, “purpose of an environmental assessment worksheet is to identify whether an



**CATIE
CLARK**

environmental impact statement is necessary.”

McCarthy's statement is an example of what is both right and wrong with how Lake County has handled the two controversial zoning applications in my not-so-humble opinion. This is actually an area in which I have

considerable experience.

Up until the 2010s, when my knees refused to spend any more 12-to-24-hour days at the side of drill rigs, I spent three decades as a professional earth scientist with expertise in groundwater investigation, igneous-hosted aquifers and petroleum reservoirs, and borehole geophysics. I have authored many peer-reviewed science and engineering publications. I managed a Superfund site

in my misspent youth and developed data on three other Superfund projects used in court cases and binding records of decision. I even spent a few years raping and pillaging the earth and stealing from widows and orphans on behalf of oil companies, but I'm not proud of that, so let's move on.

EAW purpose

With that out of the way, let's get back to what McCarthy said on

Tuesday. Yes, she is correct that EAWs are indeed used to determine the need for a much more in-depth EIS.

But EAWs serve other purposes according to the Environmental Quality Board's own guidance. Besides determining EIS needs, an EAW also “provides permit information, informs the public about the project, and helps identify ways to protect the environment. The EAW is not meant to ap-

prove or deny a project, but instead act as a source of information to guide other approvals and permitting decisions.”

Lake County did not acknowledge these other purposes for an EAW during these recent meetings.

It was Julie Blackburn, an environmental expert for the developers, who initially made the claim about the purpose

See **PROJECT...** pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Tariffs will increase inflation and hurt our economy

Throughout our world, there are wide differences in temperatures, topographic features, minerals, water, wildlife, and populations that result in uneven allocation of resources distributed on our planet. As a consequence, pockets of civilization are developed around these differing locations of resources.

Since the beginning of mankind, people have been exchanging some of their resources to others for resources that they do not have. These exchanges are called trading.

The U.S. has an abundance and variety of resources. It does not, however, have domestic access to certain natural minerals or types of manufactured products that can be made more efficiently by others.

Trump plans to add tariffs to foreign imported products. This tax on imports will be, of course, added to the cost that the consumer will have to pay contributing an increase in overall inflation.

These import levy actions assuredly will be countered by foreign countries' restrictions on American exports to their countries. This action will reduce American companies' foreign sales which in turn will require

cut backs in costs for domestic companies, including personnel. In essence, Trump would create what is known as a "trade war."

The war is likely to eliminate our research and development product patent protection plus copyrights on music, art, and literature.

The election of Trump would represent real danger not only to our economy, but also to our well-being. Lack of, or diminished, trade relationships can have unwanted repercussions in addressing worldwide problems such as climate change, global health issues, military confrontations, and humanity's economic vitality.

**Gerry Snyder
Ely**

Those who live in glass houses

Minnesota Senator David Hahn thinks farm boy Tim Walz never worked the private sector. I can't help but wonder what he'd say about Congressman Pete Stauber. Same deal, living on public wages.

David Hahn obfuscates the truth. My mother would have told Hahn, sweep your own floor first.

**Jeff Wilfahrt
Ely**

Traffic estimate was highly questionable

In his report to the Lake County Planning and Zoning Commission, Lake County Highway Engineer Jason DiPlazza wrote:

"Forty-nine (49) rental units and a restaurant/bar will create significant increases to traffic entering and exiting onto Kawishiwi Trail. The developer should provide an ITE Trip Generation-based projection of [how] much additional traffic is anticipated."

Such a projection was presented at the Aug. 19 meeting of the Commission by an "expert" hired by the developers who concluded that the expanded resort would increase traffic on the Kawishiwi Trail by only eight percent. THIS IS CLEARLY INACCURATE AND FAILS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF MANY FACTORS.

The expert projected a very small increase from current levels in daily traffic as a result of the expansion. This analysis was done quite recently, and as a long-time neighbor of the resort who passes the resort daily, I know that during recent months, activity at the resort has been very low. This is clearly evident to anyone passing by the resort because, for example, only a few of the

21 RV/tent sites visible from the road were occupied when the analysis was done. And the traffic observed by the developers' expert was at a time when the resort was well below its current summer capacity of about 210 guests, possibly only 100 guests onsite.

I don't know what information was given to the developers' expert about the recent occupancy at the resort or the size of the planned expansion. However, the developers have finally acknowledged that the 49 new cabins will be three bed/three bath cabins having sleeping capacity for eight, meaning that, at full capacity, including the other units on the resort, more than 400 persons could reside at the facility year-round. If the developers' expert had this information, it is inconceivable that he/she would have concluded that only a minor increase in traffic would occur. Add to this the traffic to and from the new on-site restaurant.

What this all means is that the traffic from the expanded resort at full capacity could be four times larger than during the study period, and this would suggest a 133 percent increase in Kawishiwi Trail traffic compared to the study period.

The developers' expert likely also didn't know that quarter-share owners will have one week a month, meaning

that almost the entire resort will turnover every week, most likely on Sundays. So, we can anticipate as many as 100 cars exiting and 100 cars entering the resort, many with boat trailers, on summer Sundays. Imagine what that will mean during the peak summer season when residency by seasonal homeowners living across the bridge from Silver Rapids is also at a peak.

Traffic on Kawishiwi Trail will also increase throughout the year. Whereas traffic to and from the resort in the past has been minor outside the peak summer months because only 17 units at the resort are suitable for cold weather, the expanded facility will have 61 units suitable for year-round living. So, it is reasonable to expect a lot more traffic throughout the year on Kawishiwi Trail.

Contrary to the conclusion of the developers' expert, the expanded resort would cause a significant increase in traffic on the Kawishiwi Trail, and this should mandate a more thorough and accurate analysis. It is also one more reason to challenge the scale of this massive project.

**Charles Marsden
Fall Lake Township**

We welcome your letters

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

We ask that letters be limited to 300 words.

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

Letters are a great way to offer your input to the *Timberjay's* editorial page.

PROJECT...Cont. from page 4

Carthy repeated at this Tuesday's county board meeting.

Seeming disdain

I'll be honest that I was less than pleased with Blackburn's presentation because she missed something I considered important. She stated, with what appeared to me to be disdain for the environmental amateurs, that the residents who submitted the petition did not provide any evidence to support their case that an EAW should be mandatory.

Blackburn overlooked that the petitioners believed they had evidence provided by the initial Lake County's environmental services staff report on Silver Rapids.

This report was handed out at the July 18 public hearing. It stated the staff felt an EAW was probably necessary based on the resort's original preliminary plat and conditional use permit applications. Added to this is the lack of details on the amended Silver Rapids zoning applications. No one outside of the developers, their experts, the planning commission, and Lake County's staff have seen the amended applications. Nor do I know anyone who has seen any of the reports that the developers have given Lake County on its wastewater, stormwater runoff mitigation, or groundwater. This is another example of how area residents have been cut out of the county's zoning and land use approval process.

The application process should be more transparent than this. I spent many years living in Idaho, and I find it appalling that that ultra-regressive and conservative state's land use processes have far better public outreach and involvement than blue-tinted

Minnesota. Pounding on comparative studies of state laws gets boring fast, but I will opine that if this had been the resort communities of Sun Valley, Coeur d'Alene, or Jackson Hole, places where I have reported on land use applications like Silver Rapids, the application process would have started with a public meeting by the developers to present the project to the public with one to two months minimum lead time before a public hearing. I miss that feature of reporting on Idaho real estate and land use.

I can hear someone out there, maybe a civil servant, pointing out that I should have used the public information request to obtain the reports submitted by the developers. I can hear my reply, too, that a big news outlet can afford the potential cost and time to evaluate that material. While the *Timberjay* has me on the staff as the resident nerd, most small newspapers don't. For good or ill, based on what I observed of Lake County's staff, I decided to trust their real expertise to evaluate those reports.

What could be better

Lake County could have taken a few minutes out of the eight hours of Silver Rapids meetings to simply explain things to the public, like providing a summary of how the zoning application process works, explaining when public comments are appropriate and when they are not, or discussing why granting the applications with conditions could cover all the needed environmental assessment the public would like.

Such a move could have built trust and confidence that the county was adequately protect-

ing its residents' interests. The actions of planning commissioner Matt Unzeitig and assistant environmental services director Tanya Feldkamp were evidence that the people on the commission and the county's staff were sensitive and concerned over the issues that concern this area's residents.

The comment by one of the county commissioners at the meeting on Tuesday, that the petition was solely a delaying tactic, was dismissive and disdainful of the hundreds of people who are sincerely concerned about the health of the Boundary Waters and the surface waters like Farm Lake that feed their water into one of the last pristine wildernesses in the lower 48 states. It's a lousy for a local elected official to diss his own voters.

As far as the developers are concerned, I have found them to be personable and reasonable businesspeople when talking to them directly. The F. I. Salter real estate firm which leads the development effort, is an old established Duluth company and has developed some well-respected projects in the Arrowhead region.

Here's where the problem lies: the developers' refusal or inability to engage directly with the resort's neighbors looks short-sighted and discouraging to me. If the developers had bothered to spend a few extra dollars to design a public relations campaign, they could have made friends with some or maybe even most of the area's locals. Instead, their stonewalling any contact with residents while at Lake County meetings has made them hundreds of opponents.

Ben Franklin was right when he said an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Or maybe, in this case, it should be a pound of CURE, the rural advocacy nonprofit that managed the petition for an EAW.

What's next

The Lake County Planning Commission will next consider the Silver Rapids applications next week at its Sept. 5 meeting. It will be interesting to see if the commission will put its money where its mouth is to put some conditions on the resort's application that will have real teeth regarding what I consider the deep issues:

water supply, stormwater runoff, traffic impacts on Kawishiwi Trail, pedestrian safety, boat safety at the rapids, the setback from the bluffs for the timeshare cabins, and degradation of the shoreline from the addition of the new docks and boat traffic.

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the **TIMBERJAY**

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Week of Sept. 2

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 Sept. 17.

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

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

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

Road construction now underway in Soudan

SOUDAN- Area residents should be aware of multiple road construction projects now underway in Soudan. Work is being done on Church St., First Ave., and Stuntz Bay Rd. Streets will be passable, but motorists should expect delays; if at all possible, avoid construction and take other routes.

Paula Barnes celebration of life set for Friday, Aug. 30 in Tower

TOWER- Paula Barnes, who passed away at age 68 on Aug. 10 after a four-year battle with cancer, didn't want a funeral. According to her family, she wanted a celebration of life and lots of pie (she always wanted dessert first). So, Friday Aug. 30 at 3 p.m. the family will be holding a short service at the Evangelical Free Church in Embarrass. Following the service, there will be a Celebration of Life at the Lamppa Civic Center in Tower at 4 p.m., with pie served. Afterward there will be a silent auction to help with unforeseen expenses. All are welcome. Let's come together and celebrate this amazing woman who touched so many lives. Please spread the word around and her family looks forward to seeing you all there.

Bookmobile stops

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesdays: Sept. 11, Oct. 2 and 23, Nov. 13, and Dec. 4. Stops include: Britt (Sand Lake Storage): 9 - 9:30 a.m.; Bois Forte (Boys & Girls Club): 11 - 11:30 a.m.; Greenwood (Town Hall): 12 - 1 p.m.; Soudan (Post Office area): 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.; Tower (Civic Center): 3:45 - 4:30 p.m.; and Embarrass (Hwy 135 & Hwy 21): 5 - 6 p.m.

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



Almost ready for back to school; first day is Sept. 3



Above: Students and families got to make connections with organizations that provide student support at the school. Right: Seija Snyder tries out one of the new rocker-style chairs in the first-grade room. Below right: Leona Broten checked out the toys in the preschool room. Left: Estella Linn gave her mom Sophia some play food from the kindergarten "kitchen."

photos by J. Summit



TOWER- Tower-Soudan Elementary held their open house on Aug. 27. Families were invited to stop by and meet the teachers and tour classrooms. There are some surprises for returning students, including new desks and rocker chairs in some of the classrooms. Teachers were all excited to meet their returning and new students, and all shared highlights from their summer breaks.

If parents/guardians have not already completed the online reg-

istration, they are asked to complete the forms as soon as possible. If they are having trouble, please contact the school. School supply lists can be found on the school website at www.towersoudanschool.net (click on parent resources).

The first day of school for first through sixth grade is Tuesday, Sept. 3. Kindergarten starts Thursday, Sept. 5, and PreK starts Monday, Sept. 9.

TOWER AMBULANCE SERVICE

New ambulance ready for action soon

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Members of the Tower Ambulance Commission got their first look this week at the city's newest ambulance, just delivered at a cost of \$258,000. The new rig joins the fleet's now-second newest rig, which already has over 90,000 miles on it. The city's third rig, with over 132,000 miles on it, will either be sold or donated. Any money made on a sale would be into the ambulance replacement fund, which was mostly depleted from the most recent purchase.

"This is a really nice rig," said commission member Jeff Damm.

The commission also approved a new three-year ambulance vehicle aid donation agreement, with representatives from Tower, Breitung, Kugler, Vermilion Lake, Greenwood, and Eagles Nest all voting yes. The agreement, which runs through 2026, calls for a \$25 per capita annual donation, based on 2020 census figures. In addition, Fortune Bay and Bois Forte have been making a voluntary donation to the fund each year, which totals \$10,000.

"The agreement will generate \$227,775 over the next three years," said ambulance supervisor Dena Suihkonen, which should be enough to pay for the next needed ambulance upgrade. Both rigs are now configured to get a rebuilt box on the existing chassis, which should save the service about \$100,000 over purchasing an entirely new unit. Each rig can



get rebuilt two times, Suihkonen said. Because of the lead time needed to order a rebuild, the commission will probably be looking at ordering a rebuilt box sometime soon.

The next ambulance commission meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 7.



Top: The new ambulance is almost ready to be put into service, possibly as soon as Sept 1. Above: The ambulance interior was designed to fit the needs of service members and patients. Left: Tower Ambulance Commission members got a tour of the new rig. photos by J. Summit

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Embarrass Farmers Market now underway

EMBARRASS- The Embarrass Farmers Market started in August and runs through October. The market is held at the Embarrass Visitor Center near the intersection of Hwy. 135 and Hwy 21. The market is open the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month from 3-5 p.m. There has been a variety of items each week in-

cluding, handmade bags, soaps, baked goods, jewelry, hand-woven rugs, laser-engraved items, sourdough breads, cookies, fresh produce, locally grown flower arrangements, crafts, hay, and more added each week. As we head into fall, you will find pumpkins, fall-flavored food items, and fall decorations including sweater pumpkins.

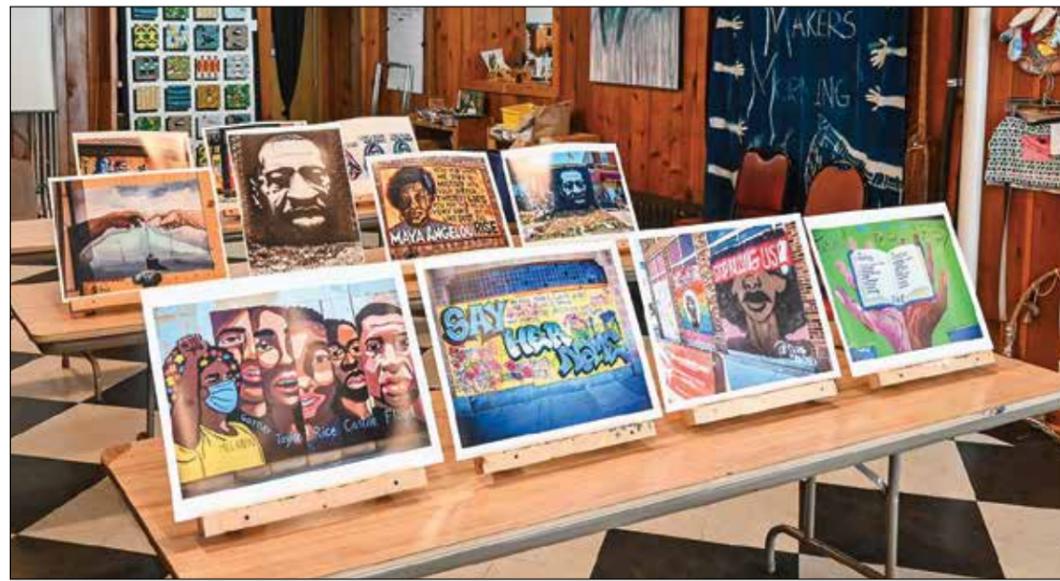
The Sectionals to perform at the LVCC on Sept. 12

TOWER- The Lake Vermilion Cultural Center will host The Sectionals at St. Mary's Hall in Tower on Thursday, Sept. 12 from 7 - 8 p.m. The Sectionals is a group of eight singers of various ages and backgrounds from around the Iron Range. While performing together in

larger ensembles the group was created around the interest of concentrated smaller vocal performance utilizing tight harmonies, jazz-inspired music, and the flexibility of performing in a wide array of venues across the state. A freewill donation will be accepted, and refreshments will be served following the concert. Invite your friends for what will be a fun evening.

RACIAL JUSTICE

George Floyd exhibition at the Ely Folk School



Above: Acclaimed Elyite photographer John Ratzloff held an exhibition of several of the photographs he took of street art immediately after the George Floyd protests in Minneapolis in June 2020.

Left: The photograph of George Floyd as a prophetic Obi-Wan Kenobi mural is one of Ratzloff's favorite photos in his exhibition on Saturday.

photos by C. Clark

Eighty photos

The eleven photos on display at the Ely Folk School are only a small portion of the pictures he took in the Uptown neighborhood and at George Floyd's murder site at 38th and Chicago in the city's Powderhorn neighborhood.

When Ratzloff returned from his Minneapolis trip, he selected 80 photographs, printed them, and then bound them in a book along with a letter he wrote regarding white privilege. He made only four copies, one of which he sent to President Biden and another to Gov. Tim Walz. He kept one for himself and gave the fourth to a friend.

Ratzloff was particularly fond of one image that portrayed Floyd as a hooded Obi-Wan Kenobi quoting the Jedi master's last words from the original "Star Wars" movie: "Strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can imagine."

Six-times the murder rate

Ratzloff's exhibition also educated people about racial disparities, especially pertaining to violence against Black women. "Before I drove down to Min-

neapolis, I had no idea so many Black women had been murdered," Ratzloff said at the exhibition, pointing at a mural memorializing murdered Black people, including Floyd. The mural included Black women who died in racially motivated killings, including Betty Gardner, who was sexually assaulted, tortured, and murdered in 1978 by four white people during a racially motivated hate crime in South Carolina.

Ratzloff said he became aware of this pattern of violence and abuse after his trip to Minneapolis. A recent Columbia University study published in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet* found that the average homicide rate for Black women was six times that of white women, with peak rates in the Northeast and Midwest. Out of the 30 states included in the study, Wisconsin was the worst offender, where Black women are 11 times more likely to be murdered than white women.

Ratzloff

In an article published by the Quetico Superior Foundation in 2018, Ratzloff gave a concise description of his life as a photographer: "Environmental and social justice activism continue to motivate my photography in Minnesota and Ontario," he stated.

Before retirement, he was the Artist in Residence at the Steger Wilderness Center and still maintains strong ties there. He also has had a long relationship with the White Earth Indian Reservation. Several of his photographs at the reservation are on display in the windows of the Ely Folk School.

He recently showed his work from the White Earth Indian Reservation in a yearlong exhibition in the prestigious Arts@MSP program at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport, where they were seen by millions of travelers. The photos in that show were taken in the 1990s with his vintage Hasselblad camera.



by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Most people in their late seventies are content to sit back and relax. But they are not Elyite John Ratzloff, one of northern Minnesota's most acclaimed photographers. Now 77, Ratzloff is perhaps best-known for his photography of the region's wilderness as well as Indigenous peoples.

But when protest erupted in 2020 in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, Ratzloff grabbed his camera and headed south to Minneapolis to capture the street art that erupted immediately after the protests surrounding Floyd's

death. He displayed a small sampling of those images, taken in early June 2020, at the Ely Folk School last Saturday. The photos are mostly of paintings on the 4-by-8-foot sheets of plywood that covered the smashed windows in the city after the riots. For street artists, they were ready canvases, temporary though they might be, and Ratzloff was determined to capture their work.

"I printed these photographs myself at my apartment in Ely, on my Epson printer using pigment-based lightfast inks. The lifetime of these prints is easily 80 years or more," Ratzloff told the *Timberjay*.

AROUND TOWN

Below: This bear cub was caught snacking on windfall apples last Saturday on E. James St. The bear cub along with one other and their mother were spotted all over Ely last week. Right: One of the USFS Beaver planes at its dock on Sunday. photos by C. Clark



COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Babbitt Public Library

BABBITT- The library board will meet from 10-11 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 3.

The Babbitt Library will have calligraphy take and create kits during September, while supplies last. Created by Silver Bay calligrapher Lynn Prouty, the kits introduce the art of calligraphy for beginners and enthusiasts, and include a workbook for practicing calligraphy, a calligraphy pen and nib, two different inks, and a bookmark for you to personalize. This free program is best suited for ages 12 and older. Younger children may need extra help from an adult.

The Friends of Library will hold an afternoon of bingo at the city of Babbitt gym, 71 South Drive, on Sept. 14 from 1-3, with one intermission. Bingo card pricing will be \$5 per card up to eight cards. Cards are cash only and must be purchased before games start. Prizes will be split between multiple winners.

Ely Public Library

ELY- The library will be closed on Monday,

Sept. 2, and on Tuesday, Sept. 10 through Friday, Sept. 13.

The spice for September is marjoram. Pick up a sample and recipes at the front desk while supplies last.

The Get Crafty group for adults will meet on Sept. 5 at 1:30 p.m. At this session, attendees will make DIY air fresheners. All materials will be supplied. Please register in advance so the library can have enough supplies for everyone.

The Friends of the Library Book Club will meet on Monday, Sept. 9, at 3 p.m. The book for discussion this month is "The Rose Code" by Kate Quinn. You do not need to be a member of Friends of the Library to attend.

The library will hold an online Kahoot trivia game on "The Housemaid" and "The Housemaid's Secret" by Frieda McFadden. The Kahoot will start at 3 p.m., Monday, Sept. 9, and end at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 17. Register in advance so the library can email the link to the game.

The Curiosity Cohort Program will meet on

Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 1:30 p.m. for a hands-on introductory session about how to do computer coding. Please preregister for this program the library has a limited number of computers for attendees to use.

Preschool Storytime is held every Friday from 10:30-11 a.m. All library events are at the Ely Public Library at 224 E. Chapman St. unless otherwise noted.

Ely's Historic State Theater

ELY- Ely's Historic State Theater, 238 E. Sheridan St., will continue its free live music events through the end of September. All events will start at 5:30 p.m. On Friday, Aug. 30, Ginger Bones will perform, followed by Sara Thomsen on Sept. 13, Scottie Miller on Sept. 20.

Fest du Nord

MORSE TWP- The Fest du Nord Family Music Festival will start at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 31 and at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 1 at YMCA Camp du Nord on Burnside Lake. Bring your own lawn chairs or blankets

for the Saturday and Sunday shows. Please leave pets, alcohol, tobacco, and vapes at home. Food vendors Bent Paddle beer, Wilderness Wood Fire pizza, and Buns To Go sandwiches will be set up for guests both days. Buy day or weekend passes at festduNord2024.brownpapertickets.com. Enter the code ELYROCKS for discounted passes for locals. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Portageland Music Festival

ELY- The Portageland Music Festival will arrive at Ely's Historic State Theater on Sept. 6-7. Festival passes are \$90; kids under 12 are free with a pass holder. Tickets are available at northernlakesarts.org.

On Friday, Sept. 6, the festival begins at Ely's Historic State Theater with performances by Marshmallow Chaos, the Christopher David Hanson Band, and the Mallrats and their "MTV Unplugged 90s Tribute." On Saturday, Sept. 7, the festival moves to White-side Park with a full day of live music featuring the Roe Family Singers, the

Chick-ADee-Dee-Dees, Morning Bird, Van and the Free Candies, Saltydog, and the ever-popular Duluth Transit Authority.

Ely's Got Talent

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association presentation of "Ely's Got Talent" will be on Nov. 1. The prize for this year's talent show is \$1,000. Auditions for the talent show will be on Thursday, Sept. 12 from 6-10 p.m. at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, 19 E. Camp St. Sign up for an audition slot at northernlakesarts.org/egt. There are 20 audition times available and when they are full, those still wishing to audition will be placed on a wait list.

Candidate forum

ELY- The Ely Rotary and American Association of University Women-Ely Branch will host a candidate forum for the Minnesota House seat 3A on Sept. 17 and for Ely City Council on Sept. 24. Individuals interested in submitting questions to be asked in either forum, should e-mail them to khv771@gmail.com by Aug. 30. The final determination of questions to be asked will be made by a committee.

In Brief

Tuesday Group schedule

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

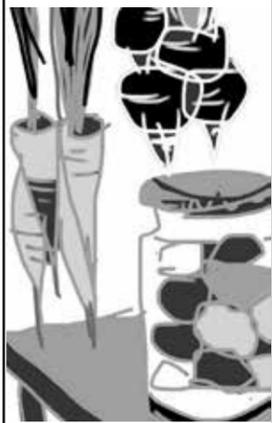
Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

► Sept. 3: The Past, Present and Future of the Boundary Waters with Aaron Kania, USFS Kawishiwi District Ranger

► Sept. 10: Built-In Supports for Executive Functioning in Small Towns with Jess Kulik

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



fall, a time to pick admiring shapes and colors garden treats flourish

Libraries

Ely library

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

Babbitt library

Monday	10 am-6 pm
Tuesday	10 am-6 pm
Wednesday	10 am-6 pm
Thursday	10 am-6 pm
Friday	closed

Phone: 218-827-3345

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous
OPEN AA - 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely.
AA FRIDAYS - 7 p.m. Fridays, First Presbyterian Church, 262 E. Harvey St., Ely.
ELY WOMEN'S OPEN AA - Monday at noon at Ledgerock Church, 1515 E. Camp St., Ely.
BABBITT AA - 7 p.m. Thursdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church.
AL-ANON - Sundays 8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely.
BABBITT AL-ANON - Thursdays, 7 p.m., at Woodland Presbyterian.
CO-DEPENDENTS' 12-step support group, 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays, Wellbeing Development, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 712 S. Central Ave., Ely.
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION GED Study materials and pre-test available. Call 218-365-3359, or 1-800-662-5711.
CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS: Babbitt: 3rd Monday of Month: 6-7:30 p.m. at Carefree Living. Ely: 4th Monday of Month: 10-11:30 a.m. at Ely-Bloomenson Hospital. Conference Room B.

TALES OF THE BIZARRE

Forget Minnesota nice, creepy takes the stage

Author enthralled community center audience with tales of paranormal activities from around the state

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Lovers of the creepy, ghoulish, and macabre in Cook didn't have to wait for Halloween this year to get their fill of frightful phenomenon, as researcher, author, and lecturer Chad Lewis entertained a good crowd at Cook Community Center with a guided tour of the paranormal in Minnesota.

For nearly 30 years, Lewis has traveled the globe researching stories of supernatural and paranormal. And while his research sometimes leads to debunking a locally-held myth, he's not as interested in uncovering absolute truths as he is in chronicling the stories that have ingrained themselves into the lore and history of communities.

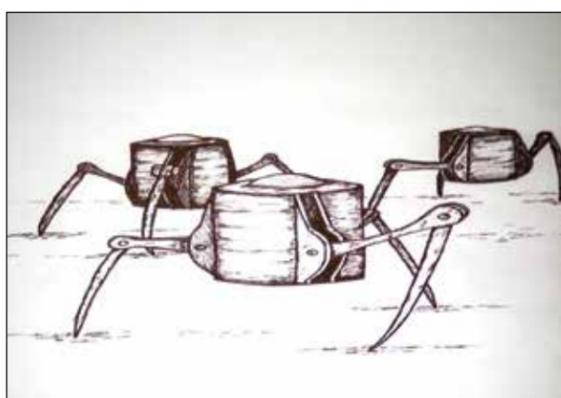
"I shifted years ago from trying to prove or disprove this to seeing it as folklore and what that means to us as a culture," Lewis said. "Why do we believe in these stories? Why do we tell these stories? I think I've been doing this so long that most of the people that started out when I did are long gone from the field, because their goal was to prove these things. And I think once you go to thousands of places and nothing really happens definitively that you could get burned out. I'm telling the stories for their uniqueness."

But Lewis is definitely not burned out in the least. He's traveled extensively in the Midwest to collect material for his many books, including "Minnesota Road Guide

to Mysterious Creatures," "Paranormal Minnesota," and guides such things as lake monsters and haunted houses in Wisconsin, Iowa, Michigan, Illinois, and South Dakota.

For his presentation in Cook, Lewis didn't stick to one particular kind of bizarre story, but rather gave attendees a glimpse into the variety of stories that have captured the curiosity of Minnesotans across the state, from the devil moose rumored to inhabit the northern forests to Pepie, the heralded monster of Lake Pepin in the south. Bolstered with slides showing pictures, drawings, and old newspaper clippings of places and phenomena, Lewis spoke with the enthusiasm of a carnival midway barker as he literally had attendees on the edges of their seats eagerly consuming each story.

Hitting perhaps closest to home was the tale of the Heritage House in Embarrass and the tale of a deranged father who supposedly caused his young son to drown. "One winter it was an extremely harsh, terrible, cold, nasty winter, and the father snapped," Lewis said. "He went crazy — you know how people get in Minnesota in the winter. When spring came along he had lost his mind. He took his young son down to the river and said, 'Jesus was able to walk on water, you should be able to walk on water as well.' And he made his young son go up into the dark churning waters where he drowned. And now the legend tells that if you sit on the bridge at night, es-



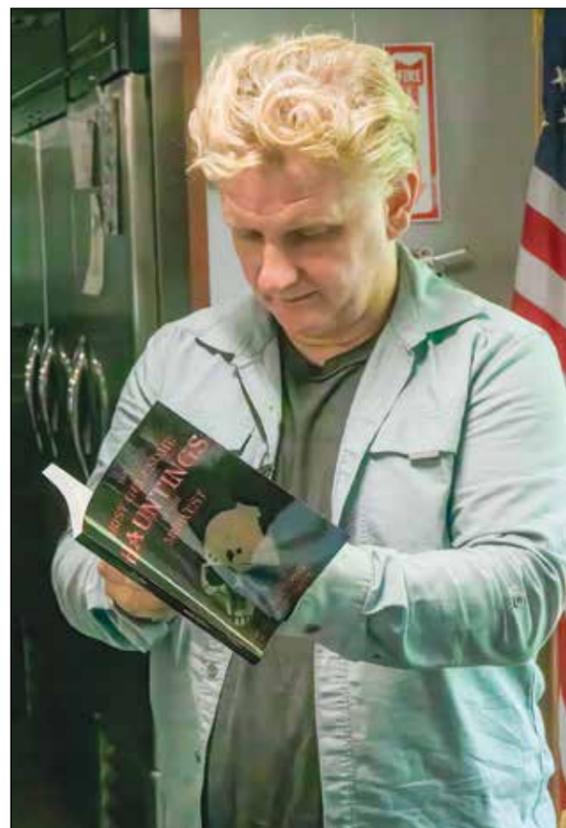
A sketch of the aliens from the reported landing of a large UFO in Long Prairie in 1965.

pecially when it's dark and quiet, you will hear the cries coming from the water of the young boy, saying things like 'Help me, I can't swim, I'm drowning, save me.' The legend is that if you're foolish enough or brave enough to go out he will pull you under and you'll spend eternity in the river with him." But the real story, it seems, was told years later by one of the boy's brothers, who wrote that not only was the father not involved in his son's drowning, he didn't even know the two of them were skipping school to go rafting, Lewis said.

"The father was not involved, but that hasn't stopped the stories of things moving on their own, people hearing others talking to them in the empty home, and weird balls of light moving through the area," Lewis said. "But I do have to tell you that when you're sitting on the bridge in the middle of nowhere at night by yourself, local livestock in the area make some very interesting noises at night." Along with stories of Big-foot sightings, gnomes,

wendigo, and haunted houses and graveyards, Lewis also gave a nod to the extraterrestrial with a description of a UFO sighting in Long Prairie in October 1965.

"This is one of my favorite stories of UFO encounters," Lewis said. "A young 19-year-old radio DJ was coming into work one day when all of a sudden he saw a giant rocket-like ship in the middle of the road. He thought it was about 40 feet high. He thought it was a UFO. And he thought, 'None of my friends are going to believe me that I've seen a UFO, I better run this thing over.' So as he got close trying to run it over, his car lost all power, the engine, the lights, the music, everything came to a stop about 20 feet away. An opening appeared on the rocket ship, and out got a bunch of little six-inch oil-can-looking creatures. They seem to be doing some maintenance on the underbelly of the craft. He couldn't see any cameras or eyes on them, but he felt like they knew he was watching them. He stood there for just a few moments, but he said it



Researcher of the strange and bizarre Chad Lewis autographs one of his many books after a presentation at Cook Community Center.

felt like an eternity."

When his story was retold in the media, Lewis said they substituted beer cans for oil cans for the description. "Only in Minnesota would you see alien beer cans," Lewis joked.

Lewis did a brisk business selling and autographing books after the presentation, and said he believes interest in the paranormal and supernatural has continued to grow over the years.

"It's always been popular — when I started presenting over 20 years ago it was popular, but nothing like it is today," he said. "I think part of it has been the media with so many TV shows and movies that

people feel more comfortable coming to something like this and knowing they're not going to be deemed weird and unusual. When I first started doing this, people would come up to me and whisper 'I've got a story to tell you' or 'I don't believe in UFOs but this is what I saw.' Now I can do a program and three or four people will raise their hand telling me their experiences in front of everyone." Lewis's appearance was sponsored by the Cook Public Library. For more information about Lewis and his books you can go to his website at www.chadlewisresearch.com.

DAN SWANSON DAY



Luke Pretti launches a bean bag toward the target. photos by D. Colburn



Jordan Herdman swings for the fences in the home run derby.

COOK- The first ever Dan Swanson Day on Saturday was a rousing success, with a good crowd throughout the day raising enough money to make repairs to the Dan Swanson field for next year's ball season, according to Friends of the Parks member Tammy Palmer.

Everett Crain won the home run derby. Nick Nurmi and Jesse Musech got 1st place in the adult bean bag tourney and Jordan Herdman and Reece Whitney took 1st in the kids bean bag tournament. Main raffle winners included Lisa Holter, first, \$300, and Denis Bouslinger, second, \$200.



Coach Dan Manick winds up to deliver a hittable pitch.



Verdella Musech looks over some of the many donated raffle baskets.

Cook-Orr Calendar

September exhibit features art of NWA members

COOK- With the monthly change of the calendar comes a change in the main exhibit at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook, and the work of NWA's Open Art group participants will take center stage.

While admission is free, patrons will get two treats for the price of one this month. The Open Art group collaborated on one creation, combining their interpretation of Vincent Van Gogh's well-known "Starry Night" painting.

Participants in the "Starry Night" collaboration are: JoAnn Anderson, Jim DeVries, Jody Feist, Linda Freeman, Cheryl Harelstad, Mel Moschler and Kathy Sorgeafrel.

Group members also have created pieces cele-

brating the city of Cook.

Open Art is offered Monday evenings in studio space organized to encourage each artist to explore their chosen art medium and to experiment with other artists.

Reception

The exhibit opens on Wednesday, Sept. 4, and a reception for the artists will be Friday, Sept. 6 from 5-7 p.m. at the gallery, with special guest Katherina Johnson. An author who grew up on a rocky farm on the Mesabi Iron Range, Johnson, from the Fond du Lac Reservation, is a teacher and writer of many books and poetry. She wrote "The Wind and The Drum," a well-known book about a girl named Tuuli who lived in the Arctic lands of the Midnight Sun where the winters are long and harsh. Johnson has a new book just coming out, "Belzi's

Blizzard." Johnson will speak at 6 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

The NWA Gallery is located at 210 S River St. The gallery's open hours, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

NWA is a nonprofit membership arts organization with the goal of inspiring, nurturing and celebrating the arts in the region of Cook. For more information send an email to nwfamn.org@gmail.com, visit the NWA website at www.nwfamn.org, or see their page on Facebook.

Final park concert of the summer will be on Sept. 4

COOK- Don't miss the final installment of Cook's Music in the Park series on Wednesday, Sept 4 when

the featured performers will be the eclectic trio, "Morningbird." The group performs popular folk and American favorites at the

gazebo in Cook City Park beginning at 5:30 p.m. Be sure to arrive early at 5 p.m. for the opening of St. Paul's (Alango) Lutheran

Church food stand with burgers, brats, and more.

In case of rain the concert will move to the Cook VFW.

TIMBER DAYS DONATION



Cook's Timber Days committee members presented a \$1,600 check to Cook Friends of the Parks recently. The funds are proceeds from the sales of raffle tickets during Timber Days. Pictured are, from left, Marty Yourczek, Carrolle Wood, Mo Fontana, Therese Cheney, Jeannie Taylor, Val Annen, Diane Brunner.

HWY. 169...Continued from page 1

2019-23, a four-percent reduction, according to data provided by MnDOT.

Another category of crashes tracked by MnDOT, known as “possible injury crashes” appears to have improved more significantly, declining from an average of 11.1 annually from 2005-2011, to 4.4 annually since 2019.

Meanwhile, crashes involving property damage-only appear to have increased slightly, from an average of 22.5 annually from 2005-2011, to 23.8 on average from 2019-2023.

The crash results, as reported here, don’t correct for changes in traffic counts, which can also impact the number of crashes. Traffic safety engineers often refer to a crash “rate,” which accounts for differences in total vehicle traffic.

Based on MnDOT data, traffic counts are down slightly in recent years compared to the period immediately prior to the safety improvements, at least along segments analyzed by the *Timberjay*. Recent counts just south of the Y Store were down about seven percent from years prior to the improvements, while traffic between Soudan and Ely were down by five percent. Based on that data, it would be reasonable to expect a similar slight decline in crashes, with or without the safety improvements.

All of these data come with a caveat. Traffic counts are really estimates rather than definitive. The traffic

counters are deployed for a 48-hour period at any one location every few years, notes Jim Miles, MnDOT’s district one traffic engineer, so they represent a snapshot in time. From those counts, MnDOT officials extrapolate based on several factors to obtain an estimate for an annual average count. Depending on the highway in question, traffic can be quite consistent, or highly seasonal in nature, which is the case with the Hwy. 169 corridor north of Virginia, where traffic counts are significantly higher in the summer.

Even crash reports are not definitive note MnDOT officials, since not all crashes result in a report. “They’re not the be all and end all,” said Miles.

Specific improvements

The effectiveness of any particular improvement, which may only affect an intersection or a thousand feet of highway is unlikely to show up clearly in a review of crash data from an entire 45-mile-long corridor. MnDOT officials, like Duane Hill, district engineer for MnDOT’s district one, which encompasses northeastern Minnesota, notes that crash data from those segments of the highway that saw the most significant improvements are a better gauge of the effectiveness of the improvements.

In some cases, the effectiveness of the change is readily apparent in the crash reports. Take the work done along the section known as 13 Hills, where

MnDOT straightened a roughly 1.5 mile stretch of highway roughly between Wahlsten Rd. and the Pike River back in 2012. According to Miles, during a ten-year stretch from 2002-2011, that segment of roadway saw a total of 49 crashes, about 60 percent involving vehicles leaving the roadway.

In the ten years since that safety project was completed, that same segment has seen just eight crashes in total, said Miles.

“It appears that was a pretty successful fix,” he said.

The benefit of other specific improvements along the corridor are less certain.

The most significant project along the corridor, the six-mile realignment of the highway in Eagles Nest Township, has yet to show the kind of reductions in crashes experienced in the 13 Hills segment, at least according to crash reports. According to Miles, in the three years prior to the realignment (2014-2016), the six-mile segment saw a total of 13 crashes, including one with a serious injury and five with minor injuries. In the three years immediately following completion of the project, Miles reports that the same segment saw 13 crashes as well, although none resulted in a serious injury and only one resulted in a minor injury.

Yet Bill Erzar, the long-time head of the now-25-year-old Hwy. 169 Safety Improvement Task

Force, said the crash reports may not capture the true impact of the realignment. He said many run-off-the-road accidents, particularly in winter, did not get reported in the past. “But I heard about them because people would call me,” he said. Erzar said the change has significantly improved safety along that stretch of highway, which used to be notorious for sharp curves, bad sight lines, and black ice in winter.

As a MnDOT engineer, Miles will continue to track the data he has available for the highway segment, imperfect as it may be. He said he prefers to have five years of crash reports for a comparison, rather than the three years he cited to the *Timberjay*. That means subsequent data should help to clarify whether the realignment provided the safety benefits that supporters see along the route.

It may be some time as well before MnDOT officials can declare a victory over one of the corridor’s most stubborn safety issues — the three-way intersection at the Y Store. “That’s been a problematic intersection for quite a lengthy period of time,” said Miles, who recently analyzed the long list of steps MnDOT has taken to address the dangers at the intersection. Those steps included additional lighting prior to 2000, followed by modifications in signage in 2004 and enhanced pavement markings for left turns in 2005. MnDOT added an offset right turn lane in

2006 and an intersection conflict warning system in 2014. “We had a run of bad crashes in the early 2000s,” recalls Miles, including fatal crashes in 2002, 2003, and 2004. “Since the 2014 improvement, we have had one serious injury crash and two injury crashes. Does that mean we’re all good? I don’t know. That intersection still concerns me,” he said, noting that the intersection saw a serious injury crash as recently as 2022.

When it comes to fatal crashes, Miles notes that the data isn’t always that useful. “The really difficult thing is that fatalities are pretty rare and pretty random,” he said. “You might not have another one at any given intersection for a hundred years.”

What’s more, Miles notes that fatal and severe injury crash rates have been on the decline for decades across the country, in part due to the many safety improvements mandated for vehicles sold in the U.S. market. “If you’re wearing a seat belt and in a newer car, you’ve got a pretty good chance,” he added.

Even so, Miles said he’s generally pleased with the results of the safety improvements along the corridor. “Generally speaking, I think the alignment is much better. “We have wider shoulders, we’ve added rumble stripes. We’ve addressed some of the worst of the winter shading. And the number of crashes has generally gone down.”

Erzar, who has been one of the strongest advocates for safety along the corridor, agrees. In addition to the Eagles Nest and 13 Hills realignments, Erzar cites the addition of 34 left or right turn lanes or bypass lanes. “We’ve also lighted 5-6 major intersections from Virginia to Winton,” he said.

And Erzar isn’t content to rest on his laurels. He said he maintains regular contact with Duane Hill to discuss further improvements. “We’re looking at the west end of Robinson Lake, where there have been some fatal crashes,” said Erzar. “It’s a very dangerous situation.”

He said they’re also discussing ways to address the curves and dip near Wolf Creek Pass. “We’re looking at raising the bottom of that dip, adding turn lanes, and cutting the hill a little bit,” he said.

But getting that work done could well prove challenging, given the current funding situation. Erzar noted that the federal gas tax hasn’t been increased since 1992 and that that’s made it more and more difficult to fund basic maintenance of federal highways, like Hwy. 169, much less address significant safety concerns. “There are chunks of the highway that aren’t even getting the mill and overlays that have been scheduled. They keep getting pushed back due to lack of funding,” he said.

PROPOSAL...Continued from page 1

the nonprofit Ely Area Ambulance Service.

The hospital’s proposal

The Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital hired the SafeTech rural EMS consultancy last summer to study the financial and organizational viability of the area’s ambulance services. SafeTech presented its findings at a public meeting on June 13, where it recommended a merger of the EMS organizations in Babbitt, Ely, and Tower into one service operated by the hospital. SafeTech’s best-case scenario for a unified EMS provider would place two advanced life support ambulances in Ely, one in Babbitt, and one in Tower. All the rigs would be actively staffed full-time.

Under a merged ambulance structure, it appears the hospital would be eligible for 101 percent cost reimbursement under the current payment rules administered by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. At the study session, Patti Banks, the CEO of EBCH, pointed out that 65 percent of all regional EMS calls are eligible for federal payments.

An ambulance service run by a critical access hospital is eligible for the higher cost reimbursement

if there is no other ambulance within 35 miles. Because of the distances between Tower, Babbitt, and Ely, the cost reimbursement provision is possible only if these three primary service area license holders combine as one organization under the umbrella of the hospital.

Transfers and capacity

Banks said part of the hospital’s motivation for the ambulance study was based on patient complaints and medical staff concerns over inadequate regional ambulance capacity to handle all the transports from Ely to other hospitals. Currently the wait time for transfers averages two to four hours and some requests go unfulfilled entirely. More than one in ten patients must drive themselves to more advanced care available in places like Duluth.

Several of the study session’s attendees weighed in about transfers and local rig capacity. “The problem is transfers,” agreed Chuck Novak, the chair of the board of directors of the nonprofit Ely Area Ambulance Service, although he questioned how the SafeTech recommendation would resolve the issue. “Four ambulances seem like a reduction in capability,” he said.

Currently, all three services operate two rigs. Ely also has a van rigged just for transfers.

Novak noted that funding has affected Ely’s ability to respond to transfer requests, commenting, “(Because of a) lack of funding, we no longer have paid staff on-call. We have to cross our fingers that enough of our qualified staff will come in to take a transport.”

Glenn Anderson, a city council member from Babbitt, concurred with that view, noting that the four-ambulance distribution would leave Babbitt uncovered when one or more of those rigs was out on a transfer, leaving gaps in coverage.

“One ambulance (for Babbitt) is not enough,” he stated.

Dena Suihkonen of Tower’s ambulance service made a similar case, using four calls in four hours from last Monday night as an example of why Tower has two ambulances rather than one.

Banks did respond to the concern over transfers and their impact on the ability of a unified system to provide better coverage.

“(Sufficient) capacity would be the hospital’s responsibility to staff and

employ. If that is the level that we are committing to, to start off with, then that is the level that we will have to achieve.” She added that because the hospital is not currently in the ambulance business, it would work with SafeTech to create “an operational model to assure that we can meet the expectation.”

Facilities and equipment

The other recurring issue that was shared by all three ambulance services was the fate of their existing facilities and rigs. Given a proposal to unify the services, all of them had questions about what would happen with those capital assets.

Given that Ely’s ambulance service just acquired a new home, Novak wanted to know:

“If the hospital takes over, what’s going to happen with our facility?”

Anderson echoed Novak’s concerns, pointing out that Babbitt’s two rigs live at Babbitt’s fire hall. He asked Banks, “Will you rent from us? Reimburse us? ... If you set up in Babbitt, what about the cost of staff quarters?”

Suihkonen from Tower’s service raised similar concerns. “We don’t have a facility in



EBCH CEO Patti Banks answers questions about the SafeTech study on Tuesday evening.

Tower and Tower doesn’t have the money to build one. What will the hospital do (to maintain a rig and staff in Tower)?”

Bank’s responded, noting that those details have not been fleshed out yet, in part because the hospital wanted to hear feedback about the initial presentation before investing more time and money in developing detailed financial and logistical models of how a unified ambulance service would work: “We do not have a plan yet because we haven’t gotten that far down that path.”

Study group

Ely council member Paul Kess noted that the hospital had been hoping and waiting for feedback from other EMS stakeholders in the region before digging deeper into costs and plans to transition to

a unified model. He also observed that other stakeholders certainly did have interest in seeing more details before they made any decisions regarding the SafeTech scenario.

“The devil is in the details and the details don’t exist yet,” Kess said.

Ely’s mayor and council members jumped on this, believing that digging deeper is a logical step in moving forward.

“If there are some of you who definitely want to move forward with this and want to help think these things through, then reach out to sign up right now before you leave (to be a part of the study group). Otherwise, we will send out an email and we will hound you (to sign up),” said Mayor Heidi Omerza.

TOURISM...Continued from page 1

water levels over the record mild winter left ice sitting much higher than usual. When high winds broke up the winter’s ice in April, it pushed floes well up onto the shore, gouging the campground’s beach and destroying benches. June’s torrential rain caused washouts and pushed lake levels up to dangerous levels, leaving a considerable amount of floating debris, mostly escaped docks, on the lake.

Lake levels have since receded, repairs have been made, and the return of more summer-like weather has brought campers in droves. The campground’s

100 sites have now been booked for weeks and are full upright through the end of the season.

“The beach is looking really nice now,” said Julie Kranz, campground manager. “And we have all new grass.”

McKinley Park Campground rentals are up this summer as well, according to McKinley Campground Manager Susie Chiabotti, and campers are currently enjoying a strong bite for walleye and bass on Vermilion.

But not everyone is coming for the fishing these days. Chiabotti said the

campground has also seen an uptick in guests taking advantage of area bicycle and ATV trails.

Dan Johnson, owner of the Paddle Inn Motel in Ely, said that his number of guests in May, July, and August were up overall compared to last year, while June was slower. Also located in Ely and new to the hospitality scene, Wende Nelson — owner of Raven’s Wing Bed and Breakfast — reported that they were “nice and busy,” with a slower start in May and the beginning of June but had steady reservations throughout July, August, and into September.

Orlyn Kringstad, owner of the Marjo Motel in Tower, reported that a slow spring, which gradually picked up until the area was hit with torrential rains on June 18. Kringstad saw an uptick in cancellations for that week but said an increase in guest walk-ins mostly made up for the lost reservations.

These reports from area businesses are largely consistent with the Ely Visitor Center’s headcounts for the season. The visitor center tallies each person who enters the building and while not a one-to-one representation of the area’s business traffic, the figures

offer insight into which months may have been more popular with tourists and can also be compared to last year’s count.

May 2024 saw a slight gain in visitors over last year, 558 to 503, while fewer visitors showed up in June as compared to 2023. But July made up for the June lull, and in a big way, as numbers skyrocketed from 1,047 visitors during the month last year to 2,512 visitors this year. August’s 2024 headcount wasn’t available at the time of publication.

While better weather helped most businesses, that’s not true in every case.

Dorothy Molter Museum executive director Jess Edberg said that while most businesses get more traffic in nicer weather, the root beer lady’s house tends to get more visitors on overcast days.

“We are actually busier when it’s raining,” Edberg said. Edberg said museum visitation has been steady but more spread out this year when compared to 2023, though June and July saw somewhat fewer visits than last year.

“July was much better weather, though the bugs were bad. When it’s hot and humid, people want to be on the lake.”

RESOURCES

Pulsar reports positive helium flow

Analysis suggests a two-thirds probability the find near Babbitt is commercially viable

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

BABBITT- Pulsar Helium, the Canadian firm exploring for the high-demand noble gas near Babbitt, has now received its first estimate of the helium hiding in the Arrowhead region's Precambrian Duluth Complex rocks — and the result is encouraging. The highest-confidence but most-conservative estimate is that there are 22.9 million standard cubic feet (MMcf) of recoverable helium in the ground. Using the U.S. Geological Survey's average 2024 price of helium of \$14 per cubic foot, the most conservative estimate of Pulsar's helium has a value of \$320.6 million. This is six times greater than the projected \$50 million cost of building a gas recovery facility in the region.

In addition, Pulsar's helium has a "chance of commerciality" of 0.65, which is the probability that Pulsar's Jetstream No.1 exploration well can produce economic amounts of the gas "in a timely manner."

Chance of commerciality calculations use a zero to one scale, so a 0.65 probability is a

better than 50 percent chance that Pulsar will see a return on their investment if the firm decides to build a gas recovery plant in the region.

The resource estimation study released last week stated: "There are no significant environmental nor logistical barriers to commercialization given its location. Therefore, given the resource base, the chance of commerciality is fairly high for an early-stage project with a value of 0.65."

Conservative estimate

The resource estimate and chance of commerciality numbers were produced with the standard techniques used by oil and gas reservoir engineers. The commerciality probability is based on the preliminary data of just one well's flow results. This is a positive result because Pulsar's geophysical data suggests the presence of a lot more helium than just the area around its Jetstream No. 1 well.

Pulsar believes that the resource evaluation it released last week reflects a "drop in the bucket" of the region's helium

resources in the ground. The definitions are used mostly by investors to evaluate where to risk their money.

Pulsar's reserves are not yet proven. Many factors go into a proven reserves estimate; one of the most important is extensive knowledge of the reservoir, and that knowledge doesn't exist yet for the helium in the Duluth Complex rocks. Pulsar is still working on characterizing the reservoir. New reservoirs that have not yet produced any profitable products are never considered proven this early in an exploration campaign.

Sproule rated Pulsar's helium as contingent. Contingent resources are estimated as those recoverable from known deposits using existing or developing technology but are not yet considered commercially proven. These resources may be prevented from becoming commercial due to technological, business, economic, political, or environmental factors.

One way to think of contingent reserves is that they are probable rather than proven.

Unpacking the verbiage

Sproule's resource estimate came dressed in the technical language that earth scientists use when talking about economic

resources in the ground. The definitions are used mostly by investors to evaluate where to risk their money.

Sproule rated Pulsar's helium as contingent. Contingent resources are estimated as those recoverable from known deposits using existing or developing technology but are not yet considered commercially proven. These resources may be prevented from becoming commercial due to technological, business, economic, political, or environmental factors.

One way to think of contingent reserves is that they are probable rather than proven.

A third category exists called prospective reserves. Prospective reserves have the lower confidence and the highest risk. Sproule provided estimates for Pulsar's contingent and prospective reserves around their leases surrounding the Jetstream No. 1 well, which Pulsar intends to deepen before the end of the year.

CO2 a bonus commodity

Pulsar's peak helium concentration was measured as over 14 percent. The bulk of the gas is carbon dioxide, and it's the frosting on Pulsar's cake, since carbon dioxide is also a commodity. Minnesota's large food production industry, the largest consumer of the gas, can't get enough of it. Instead of venting the CO2 into the atmosphere, Pulsar believes it can sell its carbon dioxide profitably in the region.

In their report to Pulsar, Sproule stated, "Due to an ongoing shortage of CO2 in the USA, with bulk CO2 purchases increasing up to \$32 per thousand cubic feet, it has the potential to be a bonus and valuable by-product of Pulsar's helium production."

SILVER RAPIDS...Continued from page 1

by some people who know what they're doing."

The board instead favored the recommendation of the planning commission and the opinions of its own in-house staff.

"I do want to remind everybody that the purpose of the EAW is to identify whether an EIS is necessary," said Christine McCarthy, the county's

director of environmental services. "Even if an EAW does not get done, that does not mean that the planning commission doesn't have the authority to put conditions on the approval to address all the concerns that are brought up."

McCarthy noted she's been working in her field since 1986 and said she's confident in her depart-

ment's ability to assess the risks associated with the project. "I have a lot of confidence in the information that we've gathered among staff and that people have sent us. We've read every single thing that's been sent to us. Just because we don't do an EAW does not mean that these issues will not be addressed as they related to the guidelines and statutes

that are currently out there."

Reaction

Supporters of the petition, which had over 400 signatures as of this week, expressed disappointment in the county board decision. "As the representative of the petitioners, I don't think the Lake County commissioners believe that the public's right to know is as important as pushing

through these permits as quickly as possible," said Hudson Kingston, an environmental lawyer with the group CURE. "Environmental law exists so we can have better projects. Circumventing that law doesn't get us better projects. It just gets what the applicant wants."

Kingston observed that the Lake County Planning Commission effectively shut down the public's input to the application process after the close of the testimony portion at the July 18 public hearing, it continued to accept the resort developers' input on the project.

"What Lake County did suggests bias. They treated the applicant as the relevant source of information but they didn't treat the public as a relevant source."

Kingston's comment may have more teeth than what can be seen on the surface. Those opposed to the denial of the petition have continued to send Lake County their commentary which the county appears not to have considered based on their silence.

For example, the developers brought a lawyer, Jesse Smith of the Hanft Fride law firm, to the Aug. 19 planning commission meeting. Smith presented a legal opinion he prepared that argued the resort project did not meet Minnesota's and Lake County's conditions for a

discretionary EAW. Smith was invited to discuss his opinion at length with the planning commission.

An opposing legal opinion by lawyer Ernest Peake of the Minneapolis law firm of Taft Stettinius & Hollister, dated Aug. 19, was sent to the planning commission last week. This opinion rebutted Smith's legal opinion and the findings of the Lake County environmental services staff that an EAW was not mandatory. This letter received no hearing, discussion, or even acknowledgment by either the planning commission on Aug. 19 or by the Lake County board on Aug. 27.

Kingston did confirm that he had spoken to area residents who were considering taking their request for an EAW to court, which is the appropriate venue to appeal the county's decision on the petition.

Lake County, not Ely

Ely Mayor Heidi Omerza commented to the *Timberjay* on her current perspective regarding the Silver Rapids issue on Tuesday, saying, "I understand people are upset, but it's not something Ely can act on. It's not our business. It's Lake County's business. I just wish people would stop calling and sending me emails telling me I'm a terrible person because of Silver Rapids."



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GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

Township missed PERA payments for some employees

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOODTWP- An Aug. 21 special town board meeting here was shorter than usual, after the agenda left off several typical items normally handled during the board's monthly meeting. The meeting was held later than usual this month after a failure to properly post the board's originally scheduled Aug. 14 special meeting forced the cancellation of the earlier meeting.

Left off the Aug. 21 agenda was public input, along with the fire chief's and supervisor's reports. The board even skipped reciting the pledge of allegiance, normally done prior to every regular meeting, because it wasn't specified on the agenda.

The board spent some time discussing the township's failure to make some PERA contributions, an oversight that was discovered by the clerk.

"Since April 2022," said Chair Lois Roskoski, "anyone participating in PERA was having money taken out of their checks, but not sent into PERA, and the township matching portion was not paid. Clerk Debby (Spicer) has been working with PERA to get this resolved. To see what interest money was lost. There will be fines."

While the employee contributions are still in an account with the township's payroll processing contractor ADP, the township's contributions were never made, and the township will owe possible penalties and interest on some of the employee accounts.

This did not apply to the fire department members' PERA payments, only salaried employees who elected to make PERA contributions.

Spicer estimated that "upwards of \$5,000 will be due to PERA."

Roskoski said the clerk has spent a number of excess hours working on this issue, and asked the board if they would approve paying her for the extra time. The board said they would wait until the issue is resolved to make the decision and asked the clerk to track the time being spent. The employees affect-

ed included two former fire department officials, two previous township officials, and three current township officials. The monthly deductions, which would be equivalent to the township match, ranged from around \$19 to \$116, but most were in the \$20 range.

Financial duties

The board spent much of the meeting outlining the financial procedures to be followed by the clerk and treasurer, to ensure that the township records are properly recorded and accounted for. Former treasurer Pam Rodgers reported on the work she had done to bring the clerk's record-keeping accounts up to date.

"The clerk's books are now in balance," Rodgers said. "Debby and I worked on this together, and we got the information we needed from Jeff (Maus)."

Rodgers said inputting the township's investment income into the CTAS accounting software brought the clerk's and treasurer's balances into check.

"All the accounts Jeff shows on his reports are in there, and they basically match."

Rodgers said the new systems being put in place for the clerk and treasurer will now be giving the town board more information.

"It's good to have two sets of eyes looking at things and make sure they are matching," she said.

A request from treasurer Jeff Maus, to regularly move interest payments from township investment CDs into their respective general fund was approved, 3-2, with supervisors Paul Skubic and Craig Gilbert voting against. This change will simplify the monthly entries needed to properly account for the monies.

While the board seemed happy with the additional information now being submitted by the clerk and the treasurer, the motion to approve the treasurers report was also approved on a split vote, with Skubic and Gilbert voting against.

A motion to approve the July payroll was approved 3-2, with Supervisors John Bassing and Rick Stoehr voting against.

The payroll had been mailed out the week prior, to comply with state rules regarding prompt payment of bills.

"Who approved the payroll?" asked Bassing. Clerk Debby Spicer said she had contacted the Minnesota Association of Townships and the township attorney, who approved the decision to send out the checks before formal board approval.

"We are all on salary,"

she said, "and the rest of the hours had been approved by the fire chief."

"Paying out is approved by the town board," Bassing stated.

Spicer said the board would have the authority to adjust any of the checks, afterwards, if needed.

A vote to approve the updated internal controls policy passed 3-2, with Bassing and Stoehr voting against. Bassing said the board had just violated

the payroll section of that policy.

Other business

In other action, the town board:

► Heard that the pickleball courts are paved and fenced. The posts and painting will be completed soon. The pickleball group held another fundraiser on Aug. 22. The group also requested that the township cut the check for the previously approved \$24,999

donation, which will be used to pay existing bills. The board said they will approve this at their next meeting, which will be held on Thursday, Sept. 12 (note change from regular meeting day).

"This group is so full of enthusiasm," said Roskoski. "This is so good for our community and looks great."



Hospital Connection

COVID-19 Immunization Boosters



Q: Is there a new COVID booster?
A: The COVID-19 vaccine helps protect you from severe disease, hospitalization, and death associated with the coronavirus. As with most vaccines, their protection decreases over time, so getting an updated vaccine gives you the best protection from the most recently circulating strains. The CDC and FDA have approved an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine for the 2024-25 season. Both Moderna and Pfizer are manufacturing these vaccines.

Q: Who should get the vaccine, and am I "up-to-date"?
A: It is recommended that everyone ages six months and older receive the new vaccine. Individuals over five years old who are not immunocompromised and have previously received the COVID-19 vaccination are considered up-to-date after receiving one dose of the 2024-25 COVID-19 vaccine. There may be different vaccination requirements for individuals under the age of four, those who have not previously gotten a vaccination or are immunocompromised. If you have questions, we recommend that you contact your Primary Care Provider to discuss a vaccination plan that is right for you.

Q: Where can I get the new COVID-19 vaccine?
A: As of August 26, 2024, the updated COVID-19 vaccine is not yet available at the Ely Community Pharmacy. Stay tuned; we will put out advertising as soon as it becomes available.

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

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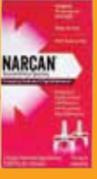
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VOLLEYBALL

Wolves go 2-0 in opening week Top Deer River and Greenway in straight sets

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

GREENWAY—Last year, the Timberwolves volleyball squad dominated Section 7. This year, it appears they're picking up where they left off with back-to-back straight set victories this week over Deer River and Greenway.

On Monday, the Wolves made

Left: Audrey Kallberg and Charlotte Hegman combine for a block during Monday's contest with Deer River.

photo by J. Greeney

short work of the Warriors, winning 25-9, 25-14, and 25-12, on the strength of a remarkably balanced attack that saw multiple kills from four different players. "The team is looking great," said Head Coach

Megan Wognum. "We are working really hard to make sure our offense is more consistent. We are also working on having a more sound defense that is willing to move and stay low."

Senior Lilli Rechichi led the way during Monday's home opener with Deer River, posting nine kills

See **ELY GIRLS**, pg. 4B



MOUNTAIN BIKING



Ely seventh-grader Beck Sponholz finished third among seventh grade girls.

submitted photo

Mountain bikers kick off the fall race season

REGIONAL—Local youth mountain bikers from Team BOREALIS kicked off the fall race season Aug. 24-25 in Alexandria. Eight high schoolers and middle schoolers from Ely made the trip to race the smooth but twisty course at Brophy Park. The team has been practicing locally at Hidden Valley since mid-July and was eager to test their fitness at their first race.

Team BOREALIS races as a part of the Minnesota Cycling Association, which organizes race events for sixth-12th graders throughout the state of Minnesota. Each race boasts a festival-like atmosphere with two days of racing each weekend, according to Team BOREALIS head coach Mark Sponholz. "At these MCA races, every weekend has almost 50 teams and 1,000 riders. This makes every race almost like a state meet in other sports, where we see the best riders from all over Minnesota come to race."

Leading Team BOREALIS in the results was Beck Sponholz, taking third place among seventh-grade girls. Also racing in middle school categories were Ava Wohlsen (29th among seventh-grade girls), Addison Kannas (14th among eighth-grade girls), Amelia Strom (15th among eighth-grade girls), and Sawyer Chick (30th among eighth-grade boys). George Sponholz took 14th in the JV2 category of high schoolers.

This was the first week of the fall race series organized by the Minnesota Cycling Association. Team BOREALIS riders will race again in two weeks at Lake Rebecca Park in Rockford.



VOLLEYBALL

Grizzlies roar

North Woods dumps Rangers in season opener

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

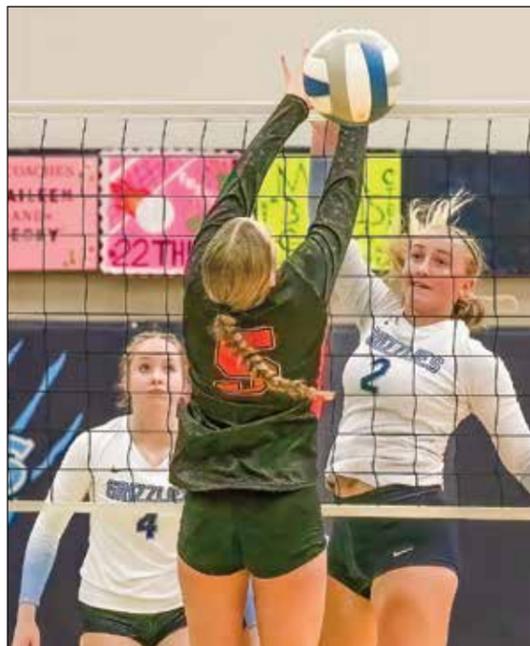
FIELDTWP- The only thing hotter than the North Woods School gym on Monday night was the Grizzlies volleyball team, which kicked off the 2024 season by thrashing the visiting Mt. Iron-Buhl Rangers 3-0 in front of a sweaty but enthusiastic crowd.

There was a constant flutter in the stands as printed rosters turned into makeshift fans to beat the heat in the sweltering gym, but the heat did nothing to slow down the Grizzlies, who breezed past MIB 25-14, 25-14, 25-15 in the head coaching debut of former North Woods assistant Kaileen Redmond, who was elevated to the position last spring after coach Kandi Olson stepped down.

Redmond came into the season with a pair of proven cannons on the corners in juniors Lauren Burnett and Izzy Pascuzzi, as well as a number of other capable hitters, but a question mark was who was going to feed them the ball as setter. The quite effective answer was

Above: Senior Mya Kinsey goes for a block against an MIB hitter.

Below: As Brittin Lappi looks on, the Grizzlies' Lauren Burnett hammers a kill past an MIB defender on Monday.



See **GRIZZLIES**, pg. 4B

ISD 2142

Board approves new cell phone policy

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

VIRGINIA- ISD 2142 St. Louis County Schools will start classes next week with a new policy restricting student access to cell phones during the instructional day.

School board members approved the policy at Tuesday's regular meeting after Superintendent Reggie Engebretson reported receiving little feedback on the issue.

"We sent it out to parents and staff and I haven't heard anything back from parents other than that survey," Engebretson said. The policy was reviewed by building principals at school staff meetings to be certain all staff are aware of the policy details, she said.

Cell phone use by students in sixth grade and under is completely prohibited during the day, while seventh through 12th graders will be allowed to use their phones during their lunch periods. Cell phones may not be used in locker rooms or rest rooms at any time.

While some districts have opted to have students place their cell phones in specially designed shelves when arriving at school, ISD 2142's policy simply requires that cell phones, earphones and other electronic devices be turned off and stored out of sight, which apparently could include a student's backpack.

Teachers will be the first line of enforcement in the classroom, instructing a student to turn off their device for a first violation. If a student is found using their device again, the teacher will collect the device for the remainder of the class period.

If a student refuses to give up the phone when directed by a teacher to do so, the student will be subject to administrative discipline

See **SCHOOLS**, pg. 4B

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Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

BEAR SEASON

Spotty natural foods should aid hunters this year

The fall hunting season gets underway Sunday with 2024 bear opener

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Bear hunters have reason for optimism when they head to their stands beginning this Sunday. Bear numbers appear to be up and natural food sources appear to be in shorter supply than last year, and that should make hunters' baits more attractive to hungry bears.

"We're seeing multiple bears on baits right now," said longtime bear guide Dennis Udovich, of Greaney. "There's a good population out

there."

Jessica Holmes, the DNR's Tower area wildlife manager, said her phone has told a similar story this summer. "It's been ringing nonstop with bear complaints," she said. Bears have been a common sight around the area this summer, even in town, where they come to raid garbage cans, bird feeders, or fruit trees. Holmes said the calls really haven't relented for weeks, likely a reflection of a lackluster natural food supply this year.

Both Udovich and Holmes

Right: Two male bears greet each other. The bear season gets underway Sept. 1.

file photo

confirm that the wild fruit crops that bears typically rely on in later summer were spotty this year, despite plentiful rain early in the season. "It was not very good for blueberries and I'm not sure why," said Udovich. "The chokecherries look pretty thin and the plums aren't looking too good

See HUNTING...pg. 3B



SELF-RELIANCE

Trekking in handmade gear

New history booklet highlights the building of the Boundary Water's longest trail

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- For most outdoors enthusiasts, the prospect of a 110-mile hike would have them headed to the nearest gear store. Not Ozzie Reif, of Ely.

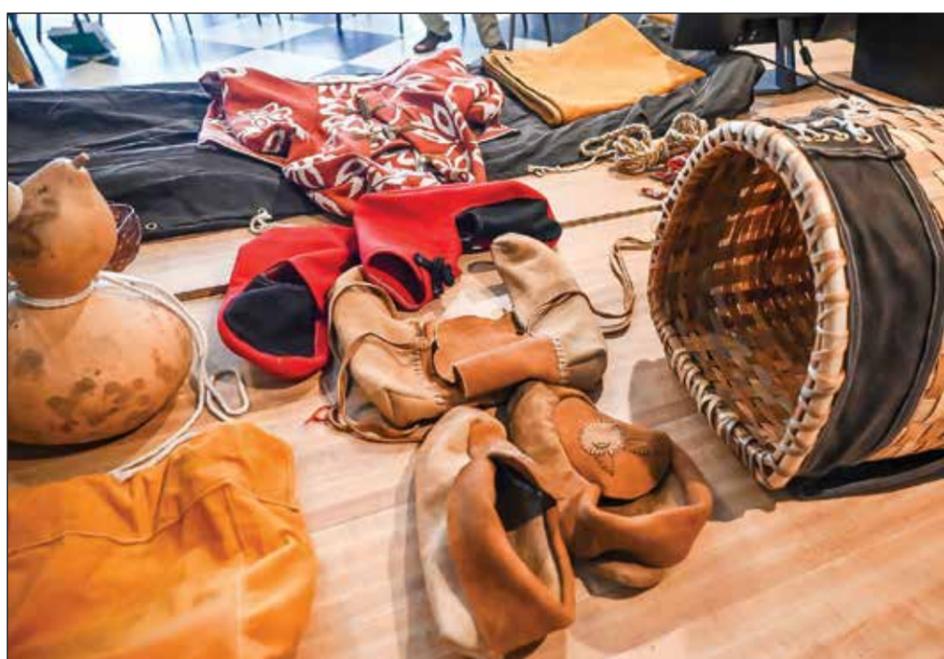
Instead, as Reif prepared for his hike from Ely to Grand Marais, he's relied on his own skills to outfit his journey, using basic materials like wool, hemp, cotton, leather, or wood. His project is part of an individual artist grant funded through the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council. He received the grant in March and has spent the five months since making the gear for his hike.

"I do have a small amount that I didn't make," Reif conceded. "I have a compass, a first aid kit, and a SPOT device." The SPOT device allows Reif to check in as he hikes and can summon help in case of trouble. He didn't make the blade on his knife but he did make its hilt and sheath. He also purchased trail guides for his route.

Reif spoke about his planned journey last week at the Ely Folk School, and left the next morning. He brought all the gear for the hike and passed it around to his audience.

Reif's pack is a basket he made from black ash wood he collected in the forest. His cooking gear is a wooden spoon he carved and a pot he smithed himself from a copper sheet. He hollowed out a gourd and lined it with beeswax to carry his water, sealing it with a basswood stopper.

"I talked to some of the



"We'll see if the soles are a mistake after starting the hike. If the shoes fail, then I'll be making birch bark sandals."

Ozzie Reif

ceramic artists in town about making a clay pot for the hike but they talked me out of it," Reif said.

Reif will use flint, steel, and charcloth to start his campfires. He made a tarp out

of waxed canvas and rope from wool. He will sleep in a waxed canvas bivy sack lined with a wool blanket.

Reif also made clothes for his hike, including socks and two pairs of shoes. Both pairs have moose leather soles and deerskin uppers. One of the pairs used a pattern for Anishinaabe moccasins. "We'll see if the soles are a mistake after starting the hike. If the shoes fail, then I'll be making birch bark sandals." He sewed the shirt, pants, anorak, and underwear for the hike. Reif has no change of clothes for the trip and admitted he may be ripe by the time he gets to Grand Marais. His ride home to Ely from Grand Marais will be bringing fresh clothes for him. "It wouldn't be a fun trip home otherwise," Reif joked.

Top: Ozzie Reif showing his hand-made hiking gear at the Ely Folk School on Monday. Reif is hiking 110 miles from Ely to Grand Marais. He plans to arrive at Grand Marais in time to give a talk this Friday, Aug. 30.

Above: A display of the homemade hiking and camping gear that Reif made for his journey.

photos by C. Clark

When his gear is packed in the basket, it weighs a surprising light 20 pounds, and 30 pounds when the food is added.

Reif began his trek at Snowbank Lake and was planning to travel along the Kekekabic Trail through the

See HANDMADE...pg. 3B

Wildflower Watch



This week's featured flower

SWAMP ASTER

When most of our summer flowers have gone to seed, it's the season of the asters and we're in the midst of it right now. As the name of this week's example suggests, you'll typically find the **Swamp Aster**, *Symphotrichum puniceum* in moist locations, such as along the edges of wet ditches, marshes, or lakeshores. It's one of our largest and showiest asters, with relatively large blossoms, running about an inch and a half across.

There are other bluish or purple asters, but this is the largest commonly found in our area and it's notable for the purple, coarsely-haired stem, which is the reason for this flower's other common name, the Purple-stemmed Aster.

IN THE GARDEN

Don't let early frost end your garden season

by MELINDA MYERS
Contributing writer

REGIONAL— No matter where you garden there never seems to be enough time to grow and enjoy all your favorite vegetables. Start preparing now to extend your growing season and continue enjoying garden fresh vegetables even after the first frost.

Some vegetables like cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kale and Brussels sprouts tolerate frost and even taste better after a slight chill. Most of these can tolerate temperatures as low as 24 to 28 degrees F.

Leeks are another vegetable that thrives in cooler temperature. Many tolerate temperatures as low as 20 degrees F. Just mound some protective mulch around the plants and continue harvesting.

Take advantage of the chilly winter temperatures to store some of your carrots, turnips and parsnips in the ground for winter. Just cover the soil with straw or evergreen boughs after it lightly freezes. Dig as needed or during a winter thaw. You will enjoy their wonderfully sweet flavor.

Those first few fall frosts are

See GARDENING...pg. 3B

GARDENING...Continued from page 2B

often followed by a week or more of mild temperatures. Protecting frost sensitive plants from the first few fall frosts is one way of extending your season. Cover the plants with old bed sheets, mattress pads, or similar items in late afternoon and remove them as soon as the temperatures climb above freezing. Keep these handy and be ready to cover whenever frost is in the forecast.

Make it easier by using floating row covers. The spun material allows air, light and water through while protecting the plants from frost. You will find different weights of row covers that provide different levels of temperature protection. Just loosely cover the plants and anchor the edges with stones, boards or garden pins. You only need to remove the fabric to harvest ripe vegetables. Otherwise, it can stay in place until the vegetables stop producing or you decide it is time to end the season.

Create a high tunnel over garden beds filled with large plants. Use hoops and row cover to allow easy access for harvesting while protecting the plants.

Don't let unripe tomatoes go to waste if you are unable or unwilling to

protect them from frost. Harvest any that are starting to show color before the killing frost and finish ripening them indoors. The bottom of the tomato should be greenish white or starting to color up. Store your green tomatoes in a cool (60 to 65 degrees) location to extend their storage life.

Spread out the tomatoes on heavy paper or wrap them individually in newspaper so the fruit do not touch each other. They'll ripen over the next few weeks. Speed up the process by moving a few tomatoes to a warm bright location a few days before they're needed. Enjoy green tomatoes fried, in relish, salsa, pies or many other ways.

And when your season ends, begin planning for next year. Enlist some of these strategies to jump start the season for an earlier harvest.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' website is www.MelindaMyers.com.



A male red crossbill picks at grit on an unpaved garage floor near Tower. Crossbills, purple finches, and a variety of sparrows have been regular users of the garage, where they come daily for their morning resupply of grit. Birds rely on grit to help them process food in their gizzards. Crossbills are relatively common in our area although their numbers fluctuate depending on the availability of pine and spruce cones, which make up the bulk of their diet.

photo by M. Helmberger

THE NEIGHBORS

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
73 53					75 48					63 42					67 47					70 48				
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.
08/19	75	52	0.00		08/19	78	45	0.00	08/19	78	54	0.00	08/19	79	48		08/19	77	46	0.00				
08/20	76	50	0.00		08/20	79	45	0.00	08/20	78	50	0.00	08/20	75	54	No	08/20	78	47	0.00				
08/21	72	53	0.00		08/21	72	49	0.00	08/21	75	50	0.00	08/21	79	54	precip	08/21	72	45	0.00				
08/22	77	54	0.00		08/22	78	48	0.00	08/22	80	54	0.00	08/22	70	55	data	08/22	78	48	0.00				
08/23	72	60	0.00		08/23	73	49	0.03	08/23	74	54	0.04	08/23	79	61	at press-	08/23	71	57	0.03				
08/24	72	61	0.00		08/24	76	49	0.00	08/24	75	54	0.00	08/24	82	64	time	08/24	77	60	0.00				
08/25	82	59	0.00		08/25	82	63	0.00	08/25	82	61	0.00	08/25	84	63		08/25	81	60	0.00				
YTD Total			22.09		YTD Total			23.08	YTD Total			23.44	YTD Total			NA	YTD Total			24.49				

HUNTING...Continued from page 2B — in many spots.”

On the plus side, Udovich said there does seem to be a decent crop of hazelnuts this year, including the American hazelnuts, which are larger than beaked hazelnuts and more abundant in the western part of the county.

Udovich said he's pleased to see that bear numbers appear to have recovered somewhat from relatively low numbers experienced several years ago. Lower permit numbers in the state's quota zone may have helped in that recovery. Statewide, the

DNR issued 4,030 permits this year within the quota zone, which covers roughly the northeastern half of the state. In the Arrowhead, the DNR issued 325 tags within permit area 25, which covers the eastern half of Koochiching and the northern third of St. Louis County, outside the Boundary Waters wilderness. Another 100 tags were issued in permit area 24, which covers much of central St. Louis County south of Hwy. 1, including the Mesabi Iron Range.

Look for early results from this year's bear season in the Sept. 13 issue of the *Timberjay*.

This year's bear season runs from Sept. 1-Oct. 13.

HANDMADE...Continued from page 2B

Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. "It was super easy to get a permit for the trail," Reif explained. He will connect with the Border Route Trail and then take the Gunflint Trail into Grand Marais. All the segments of Reif's route are part of the North Country National Scenic Trail.

"I get a patch for completing

one hundred miles!" Reif gushed.

Reif is a familiar face around Ely, especially with the outdoor enthusiasts. He is the owner of the Ely Mitten Project and the president of the Ely Chapter of the North Country Trail Association.

Reif was set to give two more talks about his hike and his unique gear. The first was scheduled for

Saturday, Aug. 24, at the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center, located 55 miles up the Gunflint Trail, otherwise known as Cook County Hwy. 12.

The second talk is set for Friday, Aug. 30, at 7:30 p.m., at the North House Folk School Blue Building in Grand Marais.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

COVID surges as new boosters roll out

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A significant surge in COVID-19 infections sweeping across the nation this summer has not left Minnesota and the North Country untouched, as data indicates rising hospitalizations in the state for the past two and a half months.

While far below the highest peaks of the pandemic, the continually evolving COVID virus has created conditions the Centers for Disease Control has termed "particularly severe" in terms of hospitalizations and deaths across the country, especially in the southern U.S.

The most reliable form of testing for COVID levels is viral load in wastewater, as only about one-third of hospitals currently report case data after the reporting requirement was dropped in May.

CDC data suggests that viral levels detected in wastewater across the country are currently higher than they were at this time last year, with a "high" or "very high" level of COVID-19 present in nearly every state, including Minnesota.

The closest wastewater testing point to the North Country is the Central Iron Range Sanitary Sewer District treatment plant in Chisholm, where COVID viral loads hit their highest level of the year, 6,904 copies of the virus per liter, on Aug. 21, surpassing the previous high set last February. Across the prior two weeks, the viral load jumped 83 percent, and it's up almost 500 percent since June 30.

Health experts suggest the summer surge has been driven by a number of different variables, including increased travel, extreme hot weather driving people indoors, the emergence of new COVID variants, and a decline in overall immunity due an increasing number of people reaching six months since their last booster or infection.

The ongoing surge is particularly concerning for vulnerable populations, including individuals over 65, those with preexisting conditions such as heart or lung disease, and people who are immunocompromised. As the virus spreads widely, these groups are at higher risk of severe illness, despite the protection offered by vaccines and antiviral treatments.

New booster

Updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna targeting the KP.2 variant were approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Aug. 22 and are now available at pharmacies and health clinics. The new booster is expected to provide protection against the most-prevalent current variants, including KP.2.3, KP.3 and KP.3.1.1, as well as LB.1, although the boosters have not been specifically tested against those. A third option from Novavax, targeting an earlier strain called JN.1, is expected to be approved soon. The CDC recommends that everyone aged 6 months and older receive the updated vaccine.

However, it's unlikely that the new boosters will be any better received than past ones. As of this past May, nine months past the rollout of the previous booster update, only 22.5 percent of adults, or one in five, had reported receiving that booster. Research has shown that booster effectiveness wears off significantly in four to six months, although there is still some elevated level of protection from getting seriously

ill or dying.

In a podcast last week, Dr. Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, warned about misinformation that has been circulating regarding the 2023-24 boosters that have been administered this summer. Osterholm said that inaccurate claims have been made about the boosters being recalled or having expired. Those who have been vaccinated prior to the release of the updated booster this week should not be worried about the bogus claims, he said.

Paying for shots

One consideration working against the booster effort is that the CDC's Bridge Access Program that provided free COVID vaccinations comes to an end on Sunday. The program has ensured access to boosters for those living without medical insurance, and uninsured people will now have to pay out of pocket or find an alternative source to cover the cost. It's likely that boosters will remain free for those who have health insurance - covered individuals should check with their providers for

information specific to their plan.

However, last week the Biden administration announced that free COVID tests will be available again. Households will be able to order four free tests through the Covidtests.gov website once it launches again in late September. The tests will be mailed directly to people's homes.

A new normal

While health experts continue to debate whether COVID is still a pandemic or is now endemic, it's clear that Osterholm believes COVID is here to stay. "What we're seeing now is, I believe, the COVID of our future," Osterholm said. "We're going to see more and more activity like this as we go forward, where it won't be necessarily one season. It may actually be big increases in cases. But, fortunately, there will be fewer, more severe cases, fewer deaths, fewer hospitalizations. It doesn't mean they're done, but there'll be fewer."

"COVID is here. It's not good, but it's not nearly as bad as it was," he continued. "And we're trying to figure out how to live with it."

GRIZZLIES...Continued from page 1B

freshman Carsyn Burnett, who demonstrated confidence and skill in both long cross-court passes and short flip sets to her teammates to key the Grizzlies' attack.

With seniors Mya Kinsey and Amber Sopoci, juniors Brynn Chosa and Brittin Lappi, and eighth-grader Tessa Burnett all factoring into the rotation, the Grizzlies were an efficient and relentless unit, demonstrating good discipline and court coverage.

After falling behind 6-2 in the opening game, the Grizzlies kicked into gear and went on a scorching 12-2 run to take a 16-8 lead. The big damage was done with Carsyn Burnett at the serve, when North Woods reeled off six consecutive



points, including a Kinsey-Sopoci double stuff of an MIB kill attempt and a

scorching kill by Pascuzzi. MIB took a 2-1 lead in the second game and had

Left: Freshman Carsyn Burnett sets the ball for a teammate during the MIB match on Monday.

photo by D. Colburn

a four-point run to keep it close, trailing 11-9, but Pascuzzi followed up a kill with a pair of service aces to give the Grizzlies some breathing room, and North Woods slowly but surely pulled away, closing out the 25-14 win with a four-point spurt with Lappi serving.

The same basic scenario played out in the third game, with MIB again taking a 2-1 advantage. This time, however, the Grizzlies wasted little time in building an insurmountable lead, manufacturing a

14-3 run to go up by 10, 15-5. A big cross-court kill by Lauren Burnett that she followed up with a serve the Rangers couldn't return gave the Grizzlies a 21-10 advantage and they coasted to the match victory with a 25-15 win.

Redmond had praise for Carsyn Burnett in filling the shoes of graduated setter Talise Goodsky.

"She learned a lot from her, and we've taken those things and she's worked with our hitters all off season and really prepared," Redmond said. "She really worked hard this year and she's earned that spot."

Redmond was pleased with the cohesiveness the Grizzlies displayed on the

court.

"It's something we've been working on a lot in practices," she said. "A lot of them play together in the off season, which significantly helps this team out. And just having those couple of older girls that have seen the varsity court for a while, having them there to be able to lead some of our younger players has really made a difference for us."

The Grizzlies were scheduled for another home match against International Falls on Thursday before going on their first road trip of the season on Tuesday at Bigfork.

ELY GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

and five digs, while sophomore Charlotte Hegman was close behind with nine kills. Sophomore Audrey Kallberg added eight kills and senior Clare Thomas tallied three kills and four

digs. Sophomore setter Gretta Lowe added 15 assists and five ace serves, while Amelia Penke posted 11 assists. Sadie Rechichi added five digs.

"All of these girls are

extremely motivated to get better," said Wognum. "They are working hard at practice and in the first two games."

Kallberg had a huge night on Tuesday to lead

the way to the 3-0 win. She racked up 15 kills, 15 blocked shots, and nine digs. Lilli Rechichi had another strong outing as well, posting nine kills and 19 digs. Gretta Lowe

posted 31 set assists along with six digs and two aces, while sophomore Lydia Schultz added 15 blocks and two kills. Sophomore Peyton Huntington added 12 digs and Thomas posted

five kills and three digs. Hegman posted five kills.

The Wolves are scheduled to host Littlefork-Big Falls on Tuesday and host Cherry on Thursday.

SCHOOLS...Continued from page 1B

for insubordination. An administrator will pick up the phone from a classroom, conference with the student and call their parent or guardian, and the phone will be returned at the end of the school day. For a second offense, the student will be sent to the office with their cell phone, and the device will be returned to a parent or guardian after a conference.

If a student is found to be using a cell phone for bullying, harassment, or academic dishonesty, their cell phone privileges may be revoked. In other business, the board:

► Approved a memorandum of understanding with the Arrowhead Head Start program.

► Approved two-year contracts with Operating Engineers Local 70 for custodians and bus drivers.

► Approved a service amendment for the Check and Connect program through St. Louis County that will extend the program another two years without any additional cost to the district.

► Approved a resolution supporting an application to the Minnesota State High School League Foundation for a grant to get additional automated exter-

nal defibrillators (AEDs).

► Approved a memorandum of understanding with Local 1406 Education Minnesota that will allow Tami Barich to serve as the Q-Comp program coordinator for eight-tenths of her assignment and as an elementary teacher at Northeast Range for two-tenths.

► Hired Sara Debruzzi as a part-time Title I teacher at NER.

► Hired Stacy Palmer as a full-time Anishinaabe Language and Culture teacher at North Woods.

► Hired Kim Jirik as a part-time psychology teacher at NER/NW.

► Hired Laura Saarela as a part-time elementary teacher at NW.

► Hired Lisa Haley as a full-time Site II Secretary at NW.

► Hired Jean Kirk as a part-time paraprofessional at NER.

► Hired Tina Bryson as a full-time nutrition employee at NER.

► Hired Misty Williams as a part-time van driver at Tower-Soudan.

► Hired Drusilea Donato as a full-time social worker at NW.

► Hired Alice Hannine as a full-time Check and Connect mentor at NW.

► Hired Alli Krekelberg and Justin Vega as lifeguards at NER on an as-needed basis.

► Hired Cindy Macdiarmid as a substitute nutrition employee at NER.

► Hired Cherie Seopa and Jennifer Burnett as assistant volleyball coaches at NW.

► Hired Jared Bangs as an assistant football coach at NW.

► Accepted resignations from NW head baseball coach RJ Kruse, NW assistant football coach Dan Reing, NW paraprofessional Andreastar Traut, NW assistant volleyball

coach Kara Baker, and NW paraprofessional Brielle Anderson. Stacy Palmer and Alice Hannine also submitted resignations in order to accept the positions listed above.



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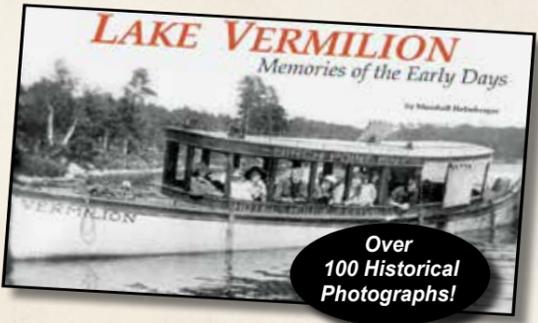
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Obituaries and Death Notices

Todd Scholz

Todd Allan 'TS' Scholz, 55, of Ely, passed away suddenly and unexpectedly at St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth on Aug. 16, 2024. A Celebration of Life will be held on Aug. 31 at 1 p.m. at the Longbranch in Winton. Lineup for a procession to the celebration of life will begin at the Ely Old City Garage between 2nd Avenue and West Pattison Street at noon and will depart at 12:30 p.m.

A benefit account has been set up for Jaymes and Shanna Scholz at the Ely Area Credit Union, 2 E Chapman St., Ely, for immediate, final, and medical expenses. Family arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home.

He is survived by his wife Shanna and son Jaymes, parents Thomas and Betty Scholz, sister Tracy (David Goetz), mother and father-in-law Sheldon and Ruthanne (James) Fenske, Amanda and David Protelsch, Casey and Lexy Fenske, nephews Josh, Hollace, and Rudy along with aunts, uncles, and cousins.

David 'Rocky' Kosir

David "Rocky" Kosir, of Embarrass, passed away from cancer on Aug. 15, 2024.

His wishes were to have a private burial at the Ely Cemetery at a later date. Arrangements are

with the Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

Jane F. Vukelich

Jane F. Vukelich, 76, of Babbitt, passed away peacefully on Aug. 19, 2024, at Babbitt Carefree Living. A funeral mass was held at St. Pius X in Babbitt on Saturday, Aug. 24, 2024 at 11 a.m. with a visitation held one hour before. Burial will be held and a later date. Arrangements are with Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

Jane is survived by her husband David, daughter Tammy Perushek of Iron, and a son Robert (Becky) Vukelich, of Kenyon, a sister, Cathy (Brian) Coombe of Ely, brother-in-law Mike (Patty) Vukelich of N.C., sister-in-laws Gloria Paavola of Calif., Liz (Danny) Thoren and Susie (John Puzel) Brinatte of Ely. Grandchildren Bryce, Bryan and Brandon Perushek, Zach and Kyle Vukelich, along with many nieces and nephews.

Joseph Gonier

Joseph Delano Gonier, 83, passed away on Saturday, Aug. 24, 2024.

A wake will be held on Friday, Aug. 30, 2024, starting at 5 p.m. at the Bois Forte Government and Services Center. The Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, Aug. 31, 2024 at 10 a.m., also at the Bois Forte Government and Services Center.

PUBLIC NOTICE

**CITY OF TOWER, MINNESOTA
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of financial information concerning the City of Tower to interested citizens. The complete financial statements may be examined at the City Hall, 602 Main Street, Tower, MN 55790. Questions about this report should be directed to Clerk/Treasurer Michael Schultz at clerk.treasurer@cityoftower.com or 218-753-4070.

**Revenues and Expenditures for General Operations
(Governmental Funds)**

	Total 2023	Total 2022	Percent Increase (Decrease)
REVENUES			
Taxes	\$ 430,243	\$ 417,572	3.03%
Licenses and permits	30,562	11,153	174.02%
Intergovernmental	1,421,134	987,396	43.93%
Charges for services	199,508	145,309	37.30%
Fines	676	963	-29.80%
Gifts and contributions	48,522	43,568	11.37%
Interest	32,095	34,994	-8.28%
Miscellaneous	17,749	26,804	-33.78%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 2,180,489	\$ 1,667,759	30.74%
Per Capita	564.16	431.50	30.74%
EXPENDITURES			
Current			
General government	\$ 368,271	\$ 343,205	7.30%
Public safety	115,671	94,702	22.14%
Streets	427,813	229,143	86.70%
Sanitation	58,145	-	0.00%
Culture and recreation	100,550	42,845	134.68%
Economic development	121,505	104,992	15.73%
Airport	142,016	146,323	-2.94%
Miscellaneous	2,274	2,296	-0.96%
Debt Service			
Principal	422,252	141,523	198.36%
Interest and other charges	38,627	29,096	32.76%
Capital Outlay			
Economic/Community Development	660,614	464,968	42.08%
Airport		160,190	
Streets	189,166	68,046	178.00%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 2,646,904	\$ 1,827,329	44.85%
Per Capita	684.84	472.79	44.85%
TOTAL LONG-TERM INDEBTEDNESS			
	\$ 3,273,059	\$ 3,056,310	7.09%
Per Capita	846.85	790.77	7.09%
ALL FUND BALANCE - DECEMBER 31			
	\$ 561,894	\$ 1,348,805	-58.34%
Per Capita	145.38	348.98	-58.34%

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 30, 2024

**CITY OF TOWER STATEMENT OF NET POSITION
PROPRIETARY FUNDS -SUNDAY, DEC. 31, 2023**

	Water	Sewer	Hoodoo	Ambulance	Air Fuel	Totals
ASSETS						
CURRENT ASSETS						
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 12,576	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,576
Accounts receivable	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 82,608	\$ -	\$ 82,608
Due from other funds	\$ 28,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,600
Inventories	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 32,637	\$ 32,637
Restricted assets	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Cash	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 196,408	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 196,408
Accounts receivable	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200,395	\$ -	\$ 200,395
Loans receivable	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,845	\$ -	\$ 46,845
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$ 41,176	\$ -	\$ 196,408	\$ 329,848	\$ 32,637	\$ 600,069
NONCURRENT ASSETS						
Capital assets						
Construction in progress	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,045	\$ -	\$ 16,045
Infrastructure	\$ 627,340	\$ 1,098,096	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,725,436
Buildings	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,640	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,640
Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 657,330	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 657,330
Machinery and equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 78,941	\$ 544,296	\$ 55,229	\$ 678,466
Less accumulated depreciation	\$ (168,953)	\$ (357,895)	\$ (218,741)	\$ (338,934)	\$ (45,810)	\$ (1,130,333)
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	\$ 458,387	\$ 740,201	\$ 573,170	\$ 221,407	\$ 9,419	\$ 2,002,584
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 499,563	\$ 740,201	\$ 769,578	\$ 551,255	\$ 42,056	\$ 2,602,653
DEFERRED OUTFLOW OF RESOURCES						
Related to pensions	\$ 29,201	\$ 29,201	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 58,402
LIABILITIES						
Accounts payable	\$ -	\$ 2,017	\$ 3,217	\$ 6,028	\$ -	\$ 11,262
Salaries payable	\$ 120	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,532	\$ 13	\$ 4,665
Accrued interest payable	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,278	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,278
Due to other funds	\$ -	\$ 28,600	\$ 1,394	\$ 4,388	\$ 15,944	\$ 50,326
Customer deposits	\$ 3,274	\$ 2,879	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,153
Revenue bonds payable	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 3,394	\$ 33,496	\$ 31,889	\$ 14,948	\$ 15,957	\$ 99,684
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES						
Revenue bonds payable	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 391,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 391,000
PERA net pension liability	\$ 51,445	\$ 51,445	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 102,890
TOTAL NONCURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 51,445	\$ 51,445	\$ 391,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 493,890
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 54,839	\$ 84,941	\$ 422,889	\$ 14,948	\$ 15,957	\$ 593,574
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES						
Related to pensions	\$ 23,030	\$ 23,030	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,060
NET POSITION						
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 458,387	\$ 740,201	\$ 162,170	\$ 221,407	\$ 9,419	\$ 1,591,584
Restricted for debt service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,018	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,018
Restricted for capital projects	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 158,390	\$ 263,285	\$ -	\$ 421,675

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 30, 2024

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History Talk • 5:30 PM
by Linda LeGarde Grover
"Indian Boarding Schools in the United States: The Vermilion Lake Indian School"
\$5 Admission for the History Talk

Membership Meeting • 6:15 PM
Members will vote on an amendment to the bylaws, elect directors, and hear a brief report on 2024 Society accomplishments

Dinner • 6:30 PM
"Special Italian Buffet Cuisine"
- Caesar Salad and Breadsticks
- Beef or Cheese Ravioli with Red Sauce
- Chicken and Broccoli with White Sauce
-Dessert
Catered by Chef Marko Stefanich and Pam Abrahamson
\$25 Includes History Talk

Advance dinner reservations are required by September 3
Please call or text 218-750-0193 or 715-558-5391
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Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 23 & 30, 2024

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8/30

POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Head Softball Coach

Ely Public Schools is looking for a Head Softball Coach for the 2025 spring season. Background check required.

Qualifications include:

- Bachelor's Degree;
- Coaching licensure or ability to obtain (certification required to be an MSHSL head coach prior to the start of the 2024-2025 season);
- Previous coaching experience preferred;
- Must be available for several practices/games per week from March to June, including some weekends and during school break periods.

Desired skills include:

- Provide effective leadership for the program, including development of practice and participation plans and oversight of assistant coaches.
- Demonstrate knowledge in all aspects of the sport and convey knowledge at an appropriate level to the athletes involved, running well organized and effective practices.
- Work effectively with other programs and personnel, including effective communication with players, parents, administrators, faculty and school staff and the media.
- Work in support of the department's and school's mission.
- Represent the school in a positive manner among alumni, supporters and external agencies.
- Maintain compliance with MSHSL requirements.
- Manage budget effectively and manage administrative affairs in a timely fashion.
- Enforce and model proper standards of sportsmanship.

Application available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us
A complete application must include the following:

- District Application
- Resume
- Copy of credentials declaring appropriate License (per M.S. 122A.22)

Mail materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email lwestrick@ely.k12.mn.us

Stipend: \$4,280

Application review begins: Sept. 16, 2024; open until filled.

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2024

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. Two routes, one to Ely/Babbitt (72 miles roundtrip), and the other to Cook/Orr (90 miles roundtrip). Job duties include helping organize papers for the post office and newsstand sales, and then dropping them at area post offices and newsstand locations. Mileage paid at 50¢ per mile on top of hourly wage. The Timberjay does have a vehicle available if you do not have a reliable car. Job starts in mid-to-late August. Must be reliable. Our longtime helpers are moving out-of-state!

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

Super Crossword

Answers

M	I	L	K	F	A	T	M	A	N	D	O	L	I	N	S	W	A	B	
U	S	E	C	A	R	E	O	N	P	A	R	O	L	E	T	R	I	O	
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9/20

VAN DRIVER



Vermilion Country has an immediate opening for a part-time van driver, with the option for more hours in school for a qualified candidate. Van route is a morning trip to Nett Lake and back. Starting salary is \$20 per hour.

**Call 218-248-2485 or email
info@vermilioncountry.org**

POSITION OPENING

Ely Public Schools Assistant Softball Coach

Ely Public Schools is looking for an Assistant Softball Coach for the 2025 spring season. Background check required.

Qualifications include:

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

Desired skills include:

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

Application available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us
A complete application must include the following:

- District Application
- Resume

Mail materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email lwestrick@ely.k12.mn.us
Stipend: \$2,996
Application review begins: September 16, 2024; open until filled.

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2024

ELY PUBLIC SCHOOLS POSITION OPENING Bus Driver

Ely Public School District is looking for a Bus Driver for the 2024-2025 school year. We are an EC - Grade 12 district, seeking an energetic, self-starting, personable, and highly motivated individual. Background check required.

Required Qualifications:

- Minnesota Class B driver's license
- Minnesota School Bus Endorsement
- Minnesota Passenger Bus Endorsement
- Must have good driving record
- Pre-employment drug test required

Benefits include:

- Paid sick leave, personal days and vacation
- Health and life insurance
- Flexible spending account
- PERA retirement

Application available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us
A complete application must include the following:

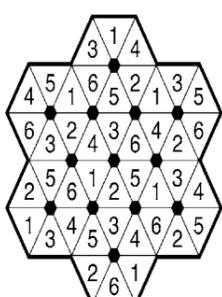
- District Non-Licensed Application
- Resume
- College Transcripts
- 2 letters of recommendation

Return materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email lwestrick@ely.12.mn.us

Starting Rate of Pay: \$22.56/hour
Hours: 3-4 hours/day, Student contact days
Deadline to apply: September, 10, 2024; open until filled.

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2024

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at timberjay.com and at
<https://www.mnpublicnotice.com/>**



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answer

It's not the daily increase but daily decrease. Hack away at the unessential.
- Bruce Lee

PUBLIC NOTICES

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS BOIS FORTE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES – PHASE 1 – DEMOLITION ONLY VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA

The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians will receive sealed bids for the "BOIS FORTE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES – PHASE 1: DEMOLITION ONLY", until 10:00 a.m., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 2024, at the office of DSGW Architects, ATTN: Carlie Kemp, 417 2nd Street South, Virginia, Minnesota, at which time all Bids will be publicly opened, read aloud and tabled. Tribal Council to act on this item at a future council meeting.

All bids must be sealed and clearly marked, "BID FOR: BOIS FORTE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES – PHASE 1: DEMOLITION ONLY", along with bidder's name, and must be accompanied by a certified check or bidder's bond in the amount of five percent (5%) of the net base bid amount, payable to the order of Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians, as warranty that the successful bidder will enter into a contract and furnish the usual Bonds (Performance Bond and Labor and Material Payment Bond) as required by the Specifications within ten (10) days after Notice of Award of Contract.

Bid Documents (plans and specifications) will be available electronically beginning August 15th, 2024. Free access to the plans & specifications may be obtained by contacting DSGW Architects, Inc., (218) 727-2626. Bid Documents may also be examined at the builder's exchanges of: Minnesota Builders Exchange, Construct Connect, and Dodge Data & Analytics. Pre-printed plans and specifications will not be provided.

No Bidder shall modify, withdraw or cancel their Bid or any part thereof for sixty (60) days after the date designated for the receipt of bids. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any irregularities and informalities therein and to award the Contract to other than the lowest bidder, if in their discretion the interest of the project will be best served thereby.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 27th, 2024 at the project site.

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 23 & 30, 2024

King Crossword

ACROSS

- Costa —
- Crib cry
- Gal. fractions
- Colorado resort
- Russian river
- Motor City labor org.
- Alike (Fr.)
- Eyelid woe
- Lycrist Gershwin
- Santa's run-way
- Sly chuckle
- Per person
- British verb ending
- Right angle
- Exaggerated pride
- Affliction
- Look of disdain
- Edition
- Agreed silently
- Goddess of wisdom
- Half of bi-
- Mont. neighbor
- Army transport
- Cagers' gp.
- Till bills
- Internet address
- Eye drop

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

- Bryant of hoops fame
- Three, in Rome
- Saharan
- Japanese noodle
- Computer key
- Pixels
- Cooped (up)
- DOWN
- KOA patron
- Shakespeare villain
- Pisa farewell
- Super-motivated
- Urges dogs on snow
- Museo display
- Chaos
- Ginger —
- Witticism
- Poi base
- Trade
- #1 Elvis Presley song
- Ambulance sound
- Non-clergy
- QVC alternative
- Popular card game
- Nap site
- Enzyme suffix
- Press for payment
- Verily
- Moolah
- Prizes
- Burlap fiber
- Messes up
- Power co. supply
- Lure
- Central point
- Black, in verse
- Dispatched
- Smidgen

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦♦ Moderate ♦♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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EMBARRASS FAIR

Mutton busting rodeo kids take a turn in the arena

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

EMBARRASS - Think of bull riding, but with kids just about old enough for kindergarten. Oh, and sheep instead of bulls. No saddles, no special equipment except for a full-coverage helmet, plus at least a few hopefully cooperative sheep. It's called mutton busting, and it was one of the new events at the Embarrass Region Fair this year.

Sixteen brave young rodeo fans signed up for the event. The only requirement was that they weighed less than 60 pounds. Riders were matched with sheep that ranged in size from medium to large.

While the kids mostly followed instructions, that was not the case with the sheep, which came from a local farm near Tower. While no one got bit, the sheep didn't always cooperate. While most rodeo fans are used to seeing bulls explode from their pens when the door swings open, the sheep were a bit more, well... sheepish. That is until organizers tried herding the sheep back into their pens — that's when things



Above: Rodeo clown Maija Peterson urges the sheep to keep moving, but the rider is unable to hang on. Above right: Lydia Grass has a short but determined ride on her sheep. Left: Jordan Nelson helps his son Taavi onto the sheep before it got released into the arena.
photos by J. Summit

got a little wild at times.

The event was organized by several families active in the Northwoods Saddle Club, and some of the families involved had

tried out the "sport" at other rodeos or the St. Louis County Fair. Getting the event to run smoothly was a bit trickier than the organizers had expected but, in

the end, everything went smoothly, the kids all had fun, and the event did attract a lot of spectators.

Lydia Grass had never ridden a sheep before,



but she had plenty of farm experience on her grandparents' farm in Cherry. A 4-H Cloverbud member, she showed a lamb at the county fair and won the "cute award," as she called the showmanship award. Her strategy, she said, was just to hold on really tight with her arms and legs, though when it was her turn out in the arena, she was holding on tight but ended up on a sheep who wanted to shake her off as soon as possible.

There were eight sheep, and each got to test out two young riders. The trickiest part was getting the rider situated, either facing forward or facing backwards, on the sheep, and then hoping the sheep would start running once the fence was opened. Jordan Nelson, who had two young children, Tuli and Taavi, competing, was the wrangler, getting kids firmly situated before other volunteers opened the gate. Teenager Maija Peterson was the rodeo clown, running alongside the sheep and making sure that once a child fell off,

the sheep wouldn't hurt the child, a job she handled with flair. None of the riders was hurt during the competition, though most did get pretty dusty.

While those who chose to hang on backwards had longer rides, most of the children opted to face forward, which seemed less scary. There were no tears from those brave enough to mount the sheep, though one youngster, who seemed reluctant to start with, marched into the arena and then promptly changed his mind. Luckily there were more young rodeo riders on a waiting list, so all who wanted to participate got a chance.

Hollace Fenske, 6, of Ely, was the top rider; Daniel Radtke, 9, of Hoyt Lakes, was second; and Annukka Palo, 6, of Elk River, was third. All three had times close to 8 seconds. All the participants received a gift bag, and the top three riders, those who held on the longest, won cash prizes. Entrants each paid \$10 for their spot.

EMBARRASS

Fair featured new events, old favorites, and lots of fun

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

EMBARRASS- As a reporter, I've never had to worry that my notes might be eaten, but this year at the Embarrass Region Fair, a baby kid goat did just that as I was down on my knees trying to snap a photograph at the petting zoo exhibit from Cook's Country Connection. One rather adorable little girl, whose name begins with "Z" has the rest of her name missing, as that part of the page ended up down the gullet of that inquisitive little goat.

The baby goats, baby pigs, alpaca, and more were getting plenty of attention from young families and even some adults all day on Sunday. Country Connection's Lois Pajari was having a wonderful time answering questions, and she was even trying to find new homes for some of the baby kids, who had been born this summer at her farm. The adopt-a-pet event set for Saturday had to be canceled, due to illness at the participating animal shelter.

This year's fair featured plenty of new events, and fair favorites also posted close to record-breaking attendance, with 670 adults buying admission to the T. Morsching Memorial Mud Run, and 680 adults buying admission to the demolition derby.

This year's demo derby featured a special "grudge match" at the end of the formal competition. About a half dozen of the 14 derby participants were able to get their vehicles back in action in the pit. Over \$1,600 in prize money was raised in honor of longtime derby participant (and often winner) Todd Scholz, who had recently passed away. Todd's son, Jaymes, was finally old enough to race in the event himself, and the younger Scholz came in second in the final match of the day, and also tied for first place in the grudge match, using a car belonging to a family friend when he couldn't get his own car running again.

Next year, organizers are planning to make the grudge match a regular part of the competition, in honor of Todd.

Paid attendance both days was over 2,200 people, which didn't count the vendors and fair volunteers, which probably added another 350 to these totals. Another 500 or more attended the Friday evening events. The fair added additional parking spaces this year, but during busy times, cars were still backed up onto Hwy. 21 waiting to enter the fairgrounds.

A total of 101 cars were part of the car show on Sunday, up from 88

last year. On Saturday, the first-ever chess tournament attracted a small but dedicated crew, as did the jigsaw puzzle contest. The pie-eating contest drew quite a crowd. Bingo on both days provided a shady spot to sit and have some fun. The horse show on Sunday featured several new games for horses and their riders. Young cowboys and cowgirls got a chance to try out their rodeo skills in the mutton busting competition on Friday afternoon.

The exhibit hall had a wide selection of garden vegetables, flowers, baked goods, arts and crafts, canned goods, and youth exhibits. There was a nine-pound cabbage this year, and some impressive looking celery, green beans, and tomatoes, but no giant zucchinis.

The annual parade had enough floats and entries to last over half an hour. Kids lined up on the sides of the road and went home with impressive candy hauls. I was given the honor of being named parade grand marshal riding in a shiny new souped-up hot pink Jeep from Waschke's, and had a great time and saw lots of friends along the route.

Crafters and vendors reported good sales, and those selling cold and icy eats did especially well during the warm weather. The longest lines appeared to be for the cold lemonade and shaved ice, which both hit the spot in the 80-plus degrees afternoon sun. There were all the favorite fair foods on the grounds, egg rolls, gyros, kettle corn, mini-donuts, barbecue, and much more.

Fair board chair Carissa Smith said there was plenty to be excited about, though the fair board was still tabulating total attendance and volunteer hours.

"We are reviewing all the comments we received," Smith said. "And we will keep adapting."



Pictured clockwise from above: Ariya Lerfeld, visiting from Portland, Ore., enjoys a corndog. Kinsley Schumaker, of Mt. Iron, puckers up as she finishes her lemonade. Cold drinks were especially popular in the hot sun. The car show featured just over 100 classic cars. The mud run drew a huge crowd this year. Benny and Bode Burgess fed grass to the baby kids at the petting zoo. Kelayna Vittori, of Hibbing, was dressed for the celebration as she started in on her corndog. photos by J. Summit



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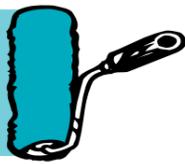
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PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT
PROBATE DIVISION
Court File No.69VI-PR-24-135

NOTICE AND ORDER OF
HEARING ON PETITION FOR
SUMMARY ASSIGNMENT
OR DISTRIBUTION AND FOR
FORMAL PROBATE OF WILL
NOTICE TO CREDITORS—NON
EXEMPT ESTATE

Estate of
David Arnold Crockett,
aka David A. Crockett, aka David
Crockett, Decedent

Notice is given that a petition
has been filed requesting that
the Estate assets be summarily
assigned.

The Petition requests the probate
of an instrument purporting to be
the Decedent's last Will dated
February 14, 2017, and any codicil
to the Will dated September
19, 2018, and separate writings
under Minn. Stat. § 524.2-513
("Will").

The Petition also requests
the appointment of Steven J.
Crockett, whose address is 503
11th St. S., Virginia, MN, 55792
as Personal Representative of the
estate in an unsupervised
administration. If proper and no
objections are filed or raised, the
Personal Representative will be
appointed with full power to
administer the Estate, including
the power to collect all assets, to
pay all legal debts, claims, taxes
and expenses, to sell real and
personal property, and to do all
necessary acts for the Estate.

Any objections to the petition
must be filed with the Court prior
to or raised at the hearing. If proper,
and if no objections or claims
are filed or raised, the Court may
issue a decree distributing or
assigning the Estate's assets.

It is Ordered and Notice is now
given that the Petition will be
heard on September 16, 2024,
at 9:30 a.m. by this Court at 300
S. 5th Ave., Virginia, Minnesota.

*This hearing will be held remotely
via Zoom Technology.

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

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

BY THE COURT
Michelle Anderson
Judge of District Court
Jennifer Miller, Court
Administrator
Chelsea Opdahl, Deputy

Published in the Timberjay, Aug.
23 & 30, 2024