



Holiday Deadlines:

Dec. 27 issue: Ads/articles due by 10 a.m. on Dec. 20

The Timberjay office will be closed Dec. 23- Jan. 3

No paper will be published on Jan. 3.

Check out all the holiday greeting ads inside, plus more coming in the Dec. 27 paper

the TIMBERJAY



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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\$1.50

PUBLIC ART

Ely photographer's images in major exhibits

"Portraits of Indigenous Authors and Artists" now appearing at state Capitol gallery

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Photographer John Ratzloff is having a moment. The 77-year-old Ely resident recently wrapped up a year-long exhibition of his photography in the prestigious Arts@MSP program at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, where over 30 million travelers had the opportunity to see the images he created with help from his

vintage Hasselblad.

Now, his work is part of a new exhibit at the Minnesota Capitol building, which opened earlier this month. Sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society, the show "Portraits of Indigenous Authors and Artists," is a collection of fine art photographs. This project started over 30 years ago when "Ratzloff was invited to photograph the life and natural beauty of the White Earth Nation," according to the histor-

ical society. Although Ratzloff took many of the show's photos in the 1990s, he's never stopped taking pictures of people in the region's tribes. "This project wasn't just a show-up, take a picture, and go away thing. You could say that this show is the very best of 30 years of work."

Ratzloff's work at the White Earth Nation led to deep and lasting friendships with many tribe members. "I fell in love with the Anishinaabe people,

Right: John Ratzloff recently spoke to the Timberjay about his work behind the camera.

photo by C. Clark

their humor, their generosity, their creativity, their resilience," Ratzloff told the *Timberjay*.

"Portraits of Indigenous Authors and Artists" will run through June 30 at the Capitol's Third Floor Exhibit Gallery,

See...RATZLOFF pg. 10



"Who is this scary guy and why am I in his lap," is what Niik Goodwin seems to be trying to communicate during a recent visit with Santa Claus during the Embarrass Ice Candle festivities held last Saturday. photo by J. Summit

HONORS

McDonald tapped for top county leadership award

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

REGIONAL — Fourth District County Commissioner Paul McDonald, of Ely, is this year's recipient of the prestigious President's Award from the Association of Minnesota Counties, or AMC.

Every year in December, the outgoing president of that organization honors an individual for exemplary leadership in public service. This year's 2024 president, Cass County Commissioner Neal Gaalswyk, said he picked McDonald for his years of dedicated service and his exemplary leadership in county government.



Paul McDonald

Impressive service

Commissioner McDonald has served on numerous AMC committees and task forces, including the National Association of Counties Public Lands

See...AWARD pg. 10

HELPING ANIMALS IN NEED

Donating locally can maximize your impact

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — We've all seen the heartrending appeals on the television this time of year from groups of all kinds hoping to turn your sympathy into their next financial contribution.

Groups like the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or the Humane Society of the United States, routinely air hard-to-watch clips of

abandoned or neglected dogs and cats shivering and alone.

Such appeals have been remarkably effective for such organizations, which have seen donations jump sharply since they began regularly airing such commercials. It's a reflection of the fact that most Americans hate to see animals suffering and many will quickly open their wallets when confronted with such images.

See...DONATIONS pg. 9

Right: Basil, a neutered husky mix, just arrived at Contented Critters in Ely and is now available for adoption. You can make a difference by opening your home to an abandoned pet.

photo courtesy Contented Critters



MINING

Trump victory boosts copper-nickel prospects

But new mines likely to face legal challenges

by ANA RADELAT & AVA KIAN
MINNPOST

REGIONAL — Minnesota's mining industry is looking forward to president-elect Donald Trump's inauguration next month, which will usher in a reversal of policies that will allow Twin Metals to renew efforts to mine copper, nickel and other precious minerals in what opponents call environmentally sensitive land.

For years, Twin Metals has strived to locate its mine on federal land in the Superior National Forest. But it had to mothball its plans after the Biden

administration — citing environmental concerns — canceled its leases and put a 20-year moratorium on underground mining in the forest, which is a watershed for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Trump has vowed to reverse the Superior National Forest moratorium as a priority after he's sworn in, which he can do under his executive authority.

Earlier this year, Twin Metals also conducted exploratory drilling southwest of the federal site on state land.

See...MINING pg. 9



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Community notices

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango annual live nativity on Friday, Dec. 20

ANGORA- St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango will once again be putting on a beautiful enactment of the Christmas story featuring Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, shepherds, wise men, and animals provided by Cook's Country Connection. This live nativity play will be performed on Friday, Dec. 20 and Pastor Dan Kerr will read the Christmas story as the star of Bethlehem shines above. Performances will take place at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. with refreshments in the church following each performance. The church is located at 9808 Hwy. 22, Angora. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Tickets on sale now for Stages of the Range Players annual New Year's mystery dinner theater in Virginia

VIRGINIA- Stages of the Range Players will present their 23rd annual mystery dinner theater, "Molly Howard is No More," on Dec. 30 and 31 at Iron Trail Motors Event Center in Virginia. Under the direction of Mary Lou Conaway, this year's cast includes actors from Virginia, Tower, and Iron who are busy learning their parts.

In the play, Molly Howard, played by Kelsey Cooke, has been murdered and her ghost now roams the halls of her estate. 'Who killed her?' is the question of the night. Did the butler, portrayed by Karel Winkelaar, do it? Hannah Buysse, as the maid? Or, maybe, it was Sam Papin, as the husband! It could even possibly be one of their friends, played by Tavia Melhus and Cade Gornick?

An eccentric psychic, played by Nina Kampf, is added to the mix of characters with the hope that the dead will speak. Experience a ghost story like none you have ever seen before! Everyone is in mourning and everyone is a suspect. The audience will have the opportunity to guess who the culprit is.

Event Center doors open at 5:30 p.m. and a cash bar will be open. Show starts promptly at 6 p.m. The dinner is catered by Kunnari's and features three entrees for you to select from, all deliciously prepared to the high quality standards held by this locally-owned restaurant. Make your dinner choice and reserve your seat as you purchase your tickets.

All tickets must be reserved before Dec. 24. Sorry, walk-up tickets are not available for this performance. Tickets are \$75 and available now at www.tinyurl.com/3cas7bp2.

Upcoming dates and deadlines for UWNEMN activities and funding

Dec. 17: Last chance to register for United Way of Northeastern Minnesota's United for Veterans Retreat (Jan.17-19 at Grand Ely Lodge) with guaranteed room availability. Local veterans and service members are invited to attend individually, with a significant other, or with their families. Learn more/register at www.unitedwaynemn.org/ufv-retreat or call 218-215-2424.

Save the date for Virgie Hegg annual meeting in June



COOK- Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners will be holding their annual meeting on Tuesday, June 3 at 6 p.m. at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Cook. We invite you to attend as we roll out a new name: Virgie Hegg Hospice Foundation, a new logo, a simplified patient request process, and will share a vision for the future. We work to serve hospice patients and their families with last wishes, needs not covered by insurance, gas cards, as well as many other types of requests over the years. After a lot of discussion, the current board is excited to announce some new changes coming to this important organization. The focus of Virgie Hegg Hospice will always be to assist hospice eligible patients and provide scholarships to high school and college students pursuing degrees in the medical field. As we work to adjust our bylaws, set goals, and commit to putting nearly 100-percent of our fundraisers back into the community, we invite you to follow us on Facebook, look for an updated website and further news releases as we move through a time of transition. During this transition phase, VHHP and VHHF will be the same. Thank you for support and confidence over the years. We look forward to a new face with the same commitment to hospice eligible patients and their families.

EMBARRASS

Quilt raffle raises \$5,000 for Embarrass Fire Department

EMBARRASS- The Embarrass Region Volunteer Fire Department's quilt raffle fundraiser was a success as \$5,000 was raised by ticket sales, with 100 percent of the proceeds going to the ERVFD fire department. The drawing was held at the conclusion of the beautiful ice candle ceremony hosted by Embarrass Township on Saturday, Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. Assistant fire chief Eric Garman drew the winning tickets.

The first place winner of the full traditional postage stamp quilt was Rick Schroeder of Babbitt. The second place winner of the twin modern fireman-themed quilt was Olivia Brookshire of Hoyt Lakes. The third place winner of the crib-size modern "love you to the moon and back" was Ingelore Nolan of Hoyt Lakes. Top institutional ticket sellers were the ERVFD members themselves and Nelmark Museum and Gift Shop. Top community seller teams were Beth Rolfson and Jill Waisanen being the top sellers. Tied for second and third top sellers were the Toni Theel and Codi Forsman team and the Rebecca and Nathan Warwas family team. Quilts were donated by the Embarrass quilting group, Embarrass Sew-She-O-Lites, hosted and supported by Embarrass Township. Thank you to everyone who purchased raffle tickets to support the ERVFD.



Top: Shireen Lee sold the few remaining raffle tickets for the quilt raffle before the winners of the three quilts were drawn. Above: This group of merry elves served sloppy joes and lots of other treats to all the visitors who stopped by the town hall on Saturday. Left: Over 1,000 ice candles were lit throughout the Embarrass Cemetery on Saturday. The candles were made by Roger Davies and Jeff Poppema, who also helped place and light them for the evening celebration. photos by J. Summit



INTERESTED IN ACTING?

Stages of the Range Players announce auditions for "As She Likes It"

VIRGINIA- Auditions for Stages of the Range Players upcoming production of "As She Likes It" will be held on Jan. 3 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and Jan.4 from 2-4 p.m. at Natural Harvest Food Coop, 732 Fourth St. N, Virginia. For this play, the group is seeking female actors of varying ages and experience. The play will be directed by Jack Gritzmacher. Email s.r.p.theater@gmail.com for more information.

"As She Likes It" is an anthology of short plays that features women

from Shakespeare's canon. The characters step outside of the male-dominated context of their original works, sometimes into another time and place. These familiar women from classic stories may have had muted voices in Shakespeare's plays, but in this play, they take center stage to discuss the choices they have made and navigate the power structures that have controlled their lives. This anthology offers great roles for women, opportunities for thoughtful scene study, educational

exploration and a larger conversation about how these women's stories resonate in our current era.

Stages of the Range Players is a community theater group whose mission is to bring live theater to unusual stages and to underserved communities on the Mesabi Iron Range

Performances of "As She Likes It" will be Feb. 14, 15, 16, 21, 22 and 23 in Virginia.

HEALTH CARE

Same-day ultrasounds now available at the Cook Hospital

COOK- Cook Hospital is excited to announce that our Medical Imaging Department has increased our ultrasound exam availability to include more exam times. At Cook Hospital, we recognize the need our community has due to the shortage of trained ultrasound technologists in the area. This has impacted the entire health care field around us by creating de-

lays in scheduling ultrasound exams. In response to this need, we now have general and vascular ultrasound services available most weekdays. The general ultrasounds include exams like abdomen, thyroid, pelvic, soft tissue, pregnancies, etc. The vascular Ultrasounds include exams like carotids, DVT (deep vein thrombosis), aorta screenings, and vessel flow rates. Our

expanded hours will allow for faster exam performance, which will lead to faster results. This will aid our community in receiving improved health care by ensuring the ordering provider has the information they need faster. This new schedule will be the ongoing expectation at Cook Hospital for the better care of the community.

We Wish You The Merriest! from Fortune Bay Resort Casino



Winning Artist • Bessie Chavez
Grade 4

ENJOY A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR from Greenwood Township



Artist • Delilah Littlewolf
GRADE 4

Santa Wishes You A Merry Christmas! from The Marjo Motel



Winning Artist • Levi Rahkola
Grade 4

Have A Safe & Jovial Holiday from North Star Credit Union



Artist • Ayva Anderson
Grade 4

Make Great Christmas Memories from Ryan's Rustic Railings



Winning Artist • Rune Hodge
Grade 3

Wishing You A Warm, Cozy Christmas from Vermilion Park Inn



Winning Artist • Kai'Lee Moyer
Grade 3

ELY

Ely Council approves electric vehicle fast charger system

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- The city council here, on Tuesday, approved a proposal from ZEF Energy to install a type-three fast-charging hub for electric vehicles at the Ely trailhead facility currently under construction. Type-three chargers are the fastest chargers for EVs, taking less than 30 minutes to charge a vehicle, and this will be the first one of its kind north of the Virginia area.

The company won't install the charging hub, which will include two fast-charging stations and two slower-charging connections, until May at the earliest. The city is currently pursuing federal grants to cover the \$55,500 cost to install the hub.

"If this project is approved now, it will be installed in May. That's about as fast as we can make it happen," said Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski. "What we're seeing in the summer



Far left: Mayor Heidi Omerza with outgoing city council member Paul Kess, who was recognized for his 22 years of service.



Left: Mayor Heidi Omerza with outgoing city council member Ryan Callen, who was recognized for his eight years of service to Ely. photos by C. Clark

is there has been a considerable increase in EVs. We will make money back on the usage (of the charging hub)," which users will pay to use.

Farewells

The city council and Mayor Heidi Omerza made note of the fact that Tuesday's meeting was the final one for council members Paul Kess and Ryan Callen,

both of whom received a plaque in honor of their service.

Omerza praised Callen's eight-year performance on the council, saying: "Although quiet, when Ryan has something to say, it's very important to listen because we all know that he has powerful insights."

As for Kess, who has

served on the city council for 22 years, Omerza praised his leadership. "What are we going to do without Paul? There's probably no one tougher on the budget committee but he always has a gentle grace about him. He always has the perfect line to say and the right questions to ask. We are going to miss you."

In other business, the council:

► Approved the proposal from Ely Custom Theaters for surveillance, security, and access controls for the Ely trailhead facility, but not without a question from Kess on the lack of competing bids. Langowski replied that the project was bid locally because of service is-

sues. "On projects like this," he explained, "we prefer to hire locally because when we have a vendor coming out of Minneapolis providing this, it doesn't work for us when it comes to service." Langowski also mentioned that the systems the firm would provide would be the same as the other security and surveillance systems the city already uses.

The vote to approve the bid from Ely Custom Theaters passed 5-1, with Kess

See ELY...pg. 5

MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE

Skraba welcomes new dynamics of a tied House

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Continuing to hash out the details of how the Minnesota House will operate in the upcoming session with a 67-67 split, DFL speaker-designate Melissa Hortman and Republican speaker-designate Lisa Demuth last week released their list of committee assignments, and second-term District 3A Rep. Roger Skraba has landed a spot as vice-chair of the Legacy Finance Committee.

Skraba told the *Timberjay* this week that he believes that assignment, along with assignments to the Capital Investment, Housing Finance and Policy, and Transportation Finance and Policy committees, will put him in a good position to advocate for the interests of the district and rural Minnesota.

Skraba said he believes that the power-sharing arrangement could



be a good thing.

"It makes us work together and I think that's good," Skraba said. "Maybe the Democrats will see how poorly they've treated us the last two years. I hope that when we do work together, we can share each other's values and get some good legislation. I'm happy we're in a tie. It's better than being in the minority. I think we can work together when you take the temptation of

power away. We should have been working together before, but they had all the power and didn't share it. They took everything and now here we are \$5 billion short in two years, so we've got to work together to solve that problem."

Skraba said he was disappointed that he wasn't re-appointed to the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy committee because of its close connection with North Country issues, but that he'll be able to pursue most of his agenda through his other assignments.

Skraba was on the Legacy Finance committee in the last session and is looking forward to his elevated role as vice-chair this time around. The committee is responsible for overseeing funding that protects drinking water sources; protects, enhances, and restores wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat; preserves arts and cultural heritage;

supports parks and trails; and protects, enhances, and restores lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater.

"The best part is that I don't have to ask for any money for it," Skraba said. "Three-eighths of a cent on all taxable sales is where the legacy money comes from, so our job is to spend the money. I think it's going to be good - we have a good group on legacy."

Skraba said there are a number of issues he'd like to see the transportation committee take on, and he spoke about one in particular affecting businesses, snowmobiling, and ATVs.

"I want to tackle trail connectors where snowmobile or ATV trails hit state highways that you can't go down," he said. "We're going to find a way to change that statute so that if your restaurant is a quarter mile away from the trail that they'll be able to use the right-of-way to get to your business. We're going to work together to

help that business rather than say that you've got to build two miles of trail around to get to it. People know where the cars are, and I don't think they want to mingle with the traffic. If we could give them a corridor to go from where the trail hits the state highway to businesses, we could work together to get a safe trail. I think a club needs to request it. I'm happy I'm on transportation so I can help shepherd this through the process."

Skraba also plans to be an outspoken advocate on the housing committee for resources to address serious shortages across the district.

"This is the one I think northern Minnesota needs the most help on," Skraba said. "Last time I voted on a couple of bills with the promise that some of that money was going to come up north because it seems that the money always needs

See SKRABA...pg. 5

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OPINION

“CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW...ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS;”

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

Editorial

Robber Barons, redux

History shows the need for regulation to protect citizens from corporate greed

Back in April, we wrote here about Alden Capital, the greedy hedge fund behind the intentional destruction of countless viable and valuable newspapers around the country. Just last month, we wrote about the skyrocketing number of data centers being built around the country and how they consume previously unimaginable amounts of electricity and water, undermining our efforts to address climate change.

Over the years, we've written repeatedly about how our profit-based health care system is failing Americans, both in terms of its high cost as well as its poor outcomes.

All of these things have a common ingredient in that they represent the failings of capitalism, revealing once again the magical thinking behind the notion of the invisible hand. Market mechanisms are remarkably effective at motivating individual human action and innovation and in many cases markets can, in the immortal words of General Electric, bring good things to life.

But the idea that the private actions of hundreds of millions of individuals will somehow lead to the largest benefit to society, is akin to believing that if you give computer keyboards to enough chimpanzees, they will eventually recreate the sonnets of Shakespeare.

Some have argued that a purely free market can work magic, but that's irrelevant since a truly free market exists only in fairy tales. Adam Smith's free market was theoretical at best and assumed that every consumer was fully informed and that the costs to society from things like pollution, monopoly power, and simple graft, didn't exist.

For a time, back in late 1800s, we did experience what was known as laissez-faire capitalism in this country, and the result was a nation in which large industrialists controlled vast wealth and used their economic power to leverage political power. They kept most Americans in a state of poverty through the suppression of unions and wages. Their factories endangered their workers and poisoned the neighborhoods where their workers lived, while they lived in splendid isolation in their gilded mansions. Think Ebenezer Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol," before he sees the ghosts.

In rural areas, the industrialists kept farmers in chains as well by controlling the cost of shipping, to plunder the wealth created by the nation's agricultural sector.

Eventually, the American people had seen enough, and they sent leaders to Washington, D.C. to enact regulations to improve product and worker safety, reduce pollution, and levy income taxes to begin to redistribute the vast

wealth accumulated by the Robber Barons, to public uses.

Americans had seen the reality of unfettered capitalism, and it was an ugly sight, indeed.

We recognized, at least for much of a century, that only regulated markets, along with a government safety net like Social Security, could allow for the operation of market mechanisms in a way that benefitted society, or at least mitigated capitalism's worst effects.

Over time, of course, Americans forget. Washington, by the late 1970s, saw a renewed push for deregulation, under the guise of making the economy more efficient. Under President Reagan, Washington deregulated the banking industry among others, and we quickly experienced the Savings and Loan crisis, as nearly a third of thrift institutions went under due to their own greed. Washington tightened the rules for a time, but soon banks were lobbying again for a freer hand. In 1999, they succeeded in repealing the 1933 Glass-Steagall Act, an FDR-era law which had maintained the banking industry as a stable, reliable, and consistently profitable industry for nearly 70 years. Its repeal allowed banks to invest in dangerous derivatives and operate like hedge funds, something regulators warned would lead to trouble. Just seven years later, the big banks had nearly destroyed themselves, again due to capitalist excess. In 2008, the industry collapsed, costing millions of Americans their homes and retirement savings, while those who created the crisis skated off scot-free, with bonuses to boot.

And yet it seems we never learn. Here we are, barely 15 years later with a new administration ready to take a meat ax to banking regulations and promising to fire three-quarters of the workforce at the country's regulatory agencies. The only ones to be spared will be the political appointees, whose goal will be to render their agencies utterly ineffectual.

We already know the result. Banks will be unleashed from the rules put in place in the wake of the collapse and the American people will pay, within just a matter of years, for the coming cleanup. Our air and water will pay the price for the gutting of environmental protections. More workers will be injured as agencies like OSHA become little more than the walking dead. Organizing unions will become more difficult. Monopoly power will be allowed to grow, along with its inevitable corruption.

As George Santayana famously said, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." America has some difficult lessons ahead.



Letters from Readers

Editor's note: A formatting error last week mistakenly omitted the letter writers name on the letter titled "Biden pardons shows Democrat elitism." The letter came from Mike Banovetz from Winton.

AI and customer service don't match

Recently, I sent a Christmas package to a relative in another state. Usually, I have no issues with my faithful local courteous postal workers and I am always given a tracking number and toll-free access to follow the item as it is delivered down the line.

This day, however, there was a replacement employee in the office and she apparently typed in the wrong delivery address. I found out that in this day and age, mail is scanned and the number printed on the postage charge at the upper right hand of the package is where the package is sent. Never mind the hand printed address I put on it. Human reading of an address is obsolete.

"To err is human, but to really screw things up, it takes AI and a computer."

Fortunately, our regular postmistress came to the rescue and stated, "Even if it comes back here, I will just put the correct information on it and it will get sent to the correct address with no extra charge." Real customer service is rare, and our local lady pulled through. I hope she really has a nice holiday season.

However, I can only imagine how things will turn out when many services adapt to total AI and computer automation. Robots delivering mail to my house, tripping over and ruining my front garden, or breaking a window. Auto-drive postal, Fed-Ex/UPS vehicles ripping up my front lawn. Going to the local P.O. or Fed-Ex or UPS office and having to talk into a drive-through radio and deal with another AI entity with a scratchy delivery. Or maybe a large cargo-capacity delivery drone crashing into my house.

The technological possibilities are endless.

**Mark Roalson
Hoyt Lakes**

Trump plans to start a war, a tariff tax war

President-elect Trump has stated that he will impose a tariff on all foreign goods coming into the United States. The U.S. currently has trade agreements with 20 countries and, additionally, is a member of the World Trade Organization that, along with 165 other countries, covers 98 percent of world trade. Most goods imported in the U.S. are free of duty. More than 50 percent of world trade uses the U.S. dollar for trade payments.

If Trump actually implements this policy, it will contribute to his political demise. Import countries will protest by establishing their own tariffs on American imports to their nations and look to other countries to meet their needs. China has threatened to curtail all imports from the U.S. which amounted to \$758 billion in 2023.

China is one of the largest export markets for U.S. goods and services. The exports include oil products, iron ore, and soybeans. More importantly, China has indicated that it will stop its exports to the U.S. with no exceptions for exports of key minerals like cobalt, lithium, manganese, magnalium, germanium, and antimony plus ten other critical minerals that are used in manufacturing of semiconductors, military equipment, solar panels, fiber optics and many other essential products.

Another example of pain that China can produce is by halting imports from American farmers, which could bankrupt a large number of them. If the U.S. decides to subsidize the soy farmers' losses, it will just add to the need for more domestic tax revenue due to the blanket, indiscriminate use of tariffs.

Trump, in his rhetoric, indicated that China should not only pay a tariff on their exports to the

U.S., but a much higher tariff to the U.S., 60 percent, compared to the 20 percent tariff for other nations.

Currently, China holds \$774.6 billion in U.S. treasuries. If China becomes "unhappy" with the Trump administration singling it out for substantially higher tariff rates, it might retaliate by selling a half trillion dollars of its U.S. treasuries.

This action would result in lowering of the price of treasuries and a rise in interest rates on treasuries issued. In another words, it would be more expensive for the U.S. to sell additional necessary bonds, to pay for our continuous deficit financing.

Trump's threatened actions remind me of Greek mythology's opening of Pandora's box, meaning that the start of a tariff tax war will cause many unforeseen problems, but we do know that it will definitely cause high inflation for Americans.

**Gerry Snyder
Ely**



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. We want to know what you think!

COMMENTARY

I beg your pardon, Mr. Biden

If Joe Biden wanted to end his one-term presidency on a bang rather than a lame-duck whimper, he's sure found a way to do it by using the imperial power of his pen to give justice a swift kick in the pants.

Of course, he started with the pardon he repeatedly said he'd never give, the pardon of his son, Hunter Biden, the first time



DAVID COLBURN

in history a U.S. president has absolved his son of crimes. Hunter lied on a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives form about his drug use when he purchased a handgun, and of evading payment of \$1.4 million in taxes from 2016 to 2020.

He also precluded potential future charges being brought against Hunter by pardoning

him for any federal violations he may have committed since 2014.

Biden was being presidential when he said he would stay out of it and said he would not grant a pardon to his son. He was being fatherly when he reversed course and did it. Sorry, Mr. Biden, but we didn't elect you to be Dad-in-Chief. We elected you to be Commander-in-Chief.

In his statement pardoning Hunter, Biden gave full credence to those who have been clamoring that the Justice Department has been po-

liticized, even weaponized, particularly against president-elect Donald Trump. Criticism has come from both sides of the aisle, and only two out of ten Americans polled about it support the pardon. That leaves 80 percent opposed, and in electoral terms that's a massive landslide and mandate for reform. As an editorial in the *Economist* put it, "The president's reversal is understandable, humane, and wrong."

When Trump moves to pardon those convicted of crimes for the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, what leg do

Democrats have left to stand on now that the president's son has been pardoned by the president himself for crimes that were proven beyond a reasonable doubt because the prosecutions, as Biden said, singled Hunter out for political purposes? Those on the right have been claiming the exact same thing about Jan. 6.

And Biden's pardon of the gun-related charge is a big Bronx cheer at the efforts of his own Justice Department. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Oklahoma, for exam-

ple, has touted their aggressive approach to pursuing those who lie in connection with gun purchases, making numerous convictions.

Ah, but Biden muddied the waters even more when he commuted the sentences of nearly 1,500 people convicted of federal crimes, primarily targeting those offenders who would receive lighter sentences under the law now than when they were convicted. Again, the move came under criticism

See **PARDON...**pg. 5

Commentary

Blue Christmas: How to get through holiday pain

I once made up my mind to get a divorce on Christmas morning. My alcoholic husband had not come home. It wasn't the first time and Christmas wasn't his holiday, but this was my Christmas morning. It wasn't what I deserved and it wasn't what my little girl deserved.



JEAN GENDREAU

Another Christmas, my heart hurt so badly I could barely go outside.

My new baby had died. I had his blanket but he was gone. I didn't want to live because it hurt too much. And Christmas — every image of Mary holding baby Jesus — made every cell of my body shriek with pain.

When your heart is broken, Christmas can really hurt. It's easy to drown in the hype. Sometimes it feels impossible to swim against the tsunami of "should's" and "if only's."

Here's how to survive a blue Christmas.

The first step is to see the media hype for what it is: lies told by advertisers. Every advertisement wants to sell you an emotional image because that's how the companies make money. They don't know you personally and they don't care

about who you are. But they know that manipulating people's dreams increases sales. Images of happy families and romantic couples sell products but do not tell any truth about real families or real couples.

So shut out the false images. Turn off your TV. If you watch old movies, remember that the movie producers needed to make money

too. You can sing "White Christmas" all you want, but in the real world, snow is cold and needs to be shoveled.

Next, try taking your mind past the Christmas season. January is real so go there. Make concrete plans to start new things in January. If your heart is broken, try experimenting with online dating in January, just to see how it feels. Maybe you'll learn something new. Is there a hobby you've always wanted to try? Sign up for a class in January, and do it now.

Family dysfunction is a third source of Christmas pain. Even if we only see our family once a year, Christmas really rubs our noses in the yuck. Not only do we get all the old patterns shoved in our face, but myths about so-called happy fami-

lies make everybody crazy.

One way to handle this is the "I can do it for a few days" technique. If it makes your mother happy that you go to church with her, you can try doing it, telling yourself that it's only one day a year. As you sit in church, you can plan amazing and creative January rewards for yourself.

But what if sitting with your belittling, criticizing father makes you feel hopeless and crazy? There are good people who do not go home for Christmas.

Maybe you need to find other family. Not blood family, but people who support you and care for you. And you need to talk to a therapist. Many family patterns destroy individuals with their cruelty. A therapist's job is to support you while you learn how to love yourself better.

Just because it's family does not mean it is good. Just because someone says they love you does not mean they know how to love you in the best way.

Finally, what if someone you love has died? There's no quick fix. Turning off the TV and making new plans won't touch that pain.

Think instead about love itself. The love that person had for you still exists because love itself never ends. Yes, it's easier when

they have their arms around you in physical form. But real love is an unseen, eternal thing. Once there is love, that connection lasts forever. You still have that and you always will. If you sit quietly and close your eyes, you can still feel the love.

Buddhists teach that after death the family or loved ones should send thoughts of encouragement and love to the dead person. The idea is that the one who has died can then feel that it's OK to move on into another level of existence.

Try sitting quietly and sending your loved one a message of encouragement and gratitude. Even if your loved one died in pain, you can feel gratitude that the pain has ended and that your loved one is free and at peace. It doesn't bring them back, but it might help you see today in a new way. And if there is just no relief from your grief, then see a therapist. The death of a loved one can feel like trying to carry 1000 pounds. You don't have to carry it alone. Grief therapists exist to help you carry the weight.

In the end, Christmas — like life — is about light in the darkness. I've been in despair. What I know for sure is that, if I get help and keep breathing, the year turns. It happens slowly, but the light comes back. Not in the way I want-

ed, maybe. After all, my marriage was really over. My dead baby was really gone. But eventually something changed because things always change. I had three more perfect, exquisite babies. Eventually I found a partner who cherished me as I really was.

And so sit with me now in the darkness. I know your despair. Life is sometimes cruel. Families hurt us and loved ones abandon us. And no matter how much we love someone, bodies stop working and people die. I know that darkness. It seems that the light will never come back.

Here, take my hand. Breathe with me. Let yourself open to the things you have never imagined. The darkness around us is complete and that is OK.

Darkness is the source of all birth. Darkness is the womb of hope. The year always turns, the sun always rises. Breathe slowly with me. Be gentle to yourself. Wrap yourself in kindness like grandma's quilt and wait. I know something that you don't know. The love inside you is a seed and your only job is to wait for the sun.

Christmas matters because it is the darkest time of the year. Our job is to trust that change happens. Sit with me. I promise you that the light will come again.

ELY...Continued from page 3

voting against it. "I'm not against the proposal. I'm voting against it for the sake of financial due process," Kess explained. Councilman Al Forsman was absent.

- Approved sending the newly elected city council members to attend the League of Minnesota Cities Elected Leaders Institute Foundation program and incumbent city council members to attend the Elected Leaders Institute Advanced program.

- Approved nominating Ely to the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission to pursue funding of phase one and two environmental reviews at the old city garage.

- Approved reserving the \$1,500 received as donations in 2024 for work on the Workman paintings at Ely Memorial High School for use in 2025.

- Approved entering into an agreement

with the Minnesota Digital Library to add online digital access to Ely's oral histories projects including the recently completed graduates' oral histories video.

- Approved the second reading of the two ordinances on regulating cannabis businesses in Ely with the changes approved at the Dec. 3 city council meeting.

- Approved a first reading of a new cannabis and cannabinoid ordinance prohibiting the use of these products in public places and on public property within the city. The city scheduled a public hearing on the proposed ordinance for Jan. 7 at 5:15 p.m.

- Accepted the resignation of Morgan Sauls from the park and recreation board.

- Received the report that Abby Dare is the new chair of the park and recreation board.

SKRABA...Continued from page 3

to stay south. If we're going to get these jobs up here, we're going to get Pulsar and we're going to get copper-nickel mining and we're going to increase iron mining, we need more housing. How do we get more money for housing up here in greater Minnesota? That's going to be a challenge, but I'll be a voice to remind people to spread some of this love throughout the state."

Skraba said he would also like to see companies invest in housing for employees when they're given large incentives to develop

operations in the region.

Skraba and his Republican colleagues remain hopeful that two lawsuits contesting the elections of two DFL representatives will eventually lead to Republican control of the House, but if that happens Skraba doesn't want it to be a contentious legislative session.

"If we're in the majority, if the lawsuits work out, I hope that the members that want to retaliate for the way we've been treated the last two years don't win out," Skraba said. "No one wins when you get even. I would

much rather just put our heads down and go to work. That's the message I'm trying to get through to people — let's just do what we're supposed to do down here, period."

Skraba encourages area residents to contact him if they have any legislative questions, concerns, or ideas. He can be reached by phone at 651-296-2190. He can also be contacted via email at rep.roger.skraba@house.mn.gov.

PARDON...Cont. from page 4

from both sides, with Sen. Amy Klobuchar telling CBS News that the entire presidential pardoning process "cries out for reform because otherwise you undermine the justice system."

Klobuchar went on to say, "I have no doubt there were some righteous pardons in this group," and I agree with that. But I also agree with another statement she made, "But there were a number that I think make no sense at all."

Using a template of conditions for qualifying for clemency instead of individually reviewing each case on its merits led to some outrageous instances of criminals being let out of the sentences thoughtfully and justifiably imposed on them. A sampling includes:

- Duluth head shop owner Jim Carlson, who was found guilty in 2013 of 51 of 55 felony counts for selling synthetic drugs, an amount experts said was enough to create a public health crisis in the city. Carlson's 17-1/2-year sentence would have

kept him incarcerated until 2030, but now he'll be out of prison next week, albeit under supervised release. St. Louis County Sheriff Gordon Ramsey decried the decision on social media: "The decision to commute the sentence is concerning and frustrating, given the damage caused by Carlson's actions. It contributed to the spread of addiction, increased crime and hurt the safety of our neighborhoods. Local businesses bore the brunt of the disorder that stemmed from his illegal activity. Accountability is a cornerstone of justice, and leniency in cases like this sends the wrong message to those who exploit our communities for personal gain."

- Former Pennsylvania "kids for cash" judge Michael Conahan, who funneled juveniles to for-profit detention centers in exchange for more than \$2 million in kickbacks. Juveniles sentenced to those institutions were often given the maximum sentence possible to ensure the owners a steady revenue stream. One

juvenile committed suicide.

"I do feel strongly that President Biden got it absolutely wrong and created a lot of pain here in northeastern Pennsylvania," said Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro. Conahan "deserves to be behind bars, not walking as a free man," Shapiro said.

- Former Dixon, Ill. comptroller Rita Crudwell, who was convicted in 2013 and sentenced to 20 years in prison for stealing \$54 million from the town of 15,000 people in the largest municipal embezzlement scheme in U.S. history. Crudwell would have been released in 2029, but instead walks free in 2024.

To be clear, the sentences of these three were commuted — they were not pardoned of their crimes. Any restrictions that apply to felons post-incarceration will apply to them. But this boneheaded decision process has again ended up undercutting the principle of accountability in the justice system, a principle already warped and stretched woefully thin

by racial disparities in convictions and sentencing, and one that routinely lets drunk drivers, drug users, domestic abusers, white-collar criminals and more off the hook with handslap plea bargains and minimal jail time.

I'll end with a confession. When it comes to the Pledge of Allegiance, I no longer recite the phrase, "and justice for all" because I don't believe it to be true. I don't see justice for all when I look at how justice is meted out for the well-connected, for those who can afford the best attorneys instead of overburdened public defenders, and for those who commit offenses for which we collectively seem to turn a blind eye to as serious crimes anymore. Justice for some, but not for all. Our justice system needs a complete overhaul from top to bottom — the great and likely impossible challenge is finding the will and the resources to do it.



the TIMBERJAY

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Stay Warm And Merry!
from Lakes Gas

Winning Artist • Brooklyn Gabrielson
Grade 2

Joy To The World
from Cook Building Center

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Grade 5

Week of Dec. 23

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 bulding. Next food shelf day is Jan. 21.
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



TSHS weekly winner
TOWER- The winner of the \$100 cash prize for Week 14 is Carol Dyhr of Tower and Tucson, Ariz.

History Tidbit: According to the Nov. 8, 1901 issue of *The Tower News*, the Wm McKinley monument will be dedicated at a special outdoor celebration starting at the Tower Junction. As was written in the paper, "The patriotic citizens of Ely will come in a body to assist in the dedication and a parade consisting of the following will walk through Tower: Platoon of mounted police, Ely City Band, Ely Fire Company, Tower Fire Company, Ely Finnish Temperance Band, Ely Finnish Temperance Society, Austrian Band of Ely, Sucker Point Indian Band, Austrian Society of Soudan, Soudan Finnish Band, Soudan Finnish Temperance Society, and the Maccabees of Tower."

Correction
The *Timberjay* incorrectly reported the amount the township pays for videotaping/streaming of the township meetings. The cost is \$145 per month, not \$290 per month. The *Timberjay* had gotten this information from the claim sheets for two previous months, but these bills were for two months of service.

Bookmobile stops
REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesdays in 2025: Jan. 15; Feb. 5 & 26; March 19; April 9 & 30; May 21; June 11; July 2 & 23; Aug. 13; Sept. 3 & 24; Oct. 15, Nov. 5 & 26; Dec. 17.

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.

Get Informed!
Get the Timberjay!

TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY



Tower-Soudan Elementary Timberjay card contest winners

TOWER- The *Timberjay* would like to thank all of the Tower-Soudan Elementary students who participated in this year's holiday card contest. We received many wonderful drawings this year, and special kudos to our fourth graders, this was the hardest class to judge! Winners each receive a cash prize, and all the winning drawings, plus many others,

will be used for holiday greeting ads for area businesses in the Dec. 20 and 27 papers.
Winners are listed in order, first, second, and third
Kindergarten: Parker Salmela, Emma Purkat, Otto Gornick and Ada Flatten (tie)
First: Theo Flood, Hux Broten, Sadie Snyder

Second: Amelie Zak, Azalya Deegan, Ari Banks
Third: Neiko Stellmach, Boone Broten, Kai'lee Moyer and Brayden Purkat (tie)
Fourth: Shelby Troop and Millie McGuire (tie), Emmett Flood and Zaija Schroeder (tie), Levi Rahkola and Bessie Chavez (tie)
Fifth: Silas Snyder, Nash Lenci,

Kaleelah Chosa
Sixth: Clementine O'Brien, Harley Banks, Shenzee Chavez.
Pictured above are this year's winning artists. Not pictured are Clementine O'Brien, Shelby Troop, and Sadie Snyder.

VERMILION COUNTRY SCHOOL AND TOWER FOOD SHELF



Eleven students from Vermilion Country School spent the afternoon on Tuesday volunteering at the Tower Food Shelf. "They were amazing," said food shelf director Kate Smith. Students helped stock the shelves for the busy December food shelf distribution day, as well as sort and arrange gift items and gently-used holiday decorations that had been donated and were available for families to take home with them. The students are planning on volunteering again. Tower-Soudan Elementary students are hosting a food drive for the food shelf this month. submitted photo

PUBLIC SERVICE

Filings for township government opening soon

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

REGIONAL- For townships that elect officials in March, filings for open supervisor and treasurer seats open Dec. 31 and close on Tuesday, Jan. 14.

And for one area township, there will be two big seats to fill, as longtime supervisor/chairman Tim Tomsich and longtime treasurer Jorgine Gornick are both set to retire. Tomsich, who has served on the town board since 1980, did attempt to retire in 2022, but ended up back on the Breitung Town Board. This time, according to those who work with him, he is serious about retiring. Gornick served as the township's assessor (now a responsibility of St. Louis County) and as treasurer for almost as many years as Tomsich, with 30 years under her belt at her upcoming retirement date in March. "It's been the best job I've ever had," Gornick said.

"We are looking to get people interested in doing these jobs," said clerk Amber Zak.

Township officials are paid a monthly salary, set each year by the town board.

The treasurer's job in Breitung requires 12 hours a week in the township office. Currently, the township office is open Tuesday through Thursday, with the clerk and treasurer splitting the hours, though some overlap of their time is required because some of the financial duties require coordination between the clerk and treasurer.

Whether the treasurer works morning or afternoon hours can be flexible, said clerk Amber Zak. Gornick is also willing to work on training in the new treasurer, and the Minnesota Association of Township has training classes for new treasurers, as well as new town board members.

A township treasurer is normally an elected position, unless a township has voted to change to an appointed/hired clerk and treasurer, which is what you usually find in a city government. And while anyone can run for treasurer, a candidate with a background in bookkeeping or finances is a good fit for the position. Township treasurers receive and take charge of all money belonging to the township, and pay it out as required when directed by the town board. They are in charge of a

township's financial recordkeeping books, and must keep an updated accounting of township funds, and prepare for the annual board of audit. And while a treasurer is not a voting member of the town board, they usually attend town board meetings to provide information and answer any financial questions. The treasurer term lasts for two years.

Breitung has a three-person board with terms lasting three years, so each year, one supervisor seat is up for grabs (though occasionally there is an additional vacancy to fill in the case someone leaves their seat mid-term).

Township supervisors are in charge of all town affairs not designated to other officers by law. They set policies and ordinances, award contracts, develop budgets, and oversee employees and township departments (maintenance, fire, police, recreation). Supervisors do not keep official office hours, but are expected to attend township meetings, and should expect regular calls from township residents. Zak estimated the job takes about 10 hours a month, but can be more depending on how involved a supervisor chooses to be in overseeing township de-

partments. Supervisors tend to volunteer their time in township areas that match their personal expertise and experience. Tomsich, who had a background in business and finance, tended to oversee township grant applications and the township's budget and financials, for example. While supervisor Matt Tichel, who also manages the joint Breitung-Tower water and wastewater systems, as well as being a firefighter and EMT, takes the lead on issues relating to those departments. Supervisor Erin Peitso, the newest member on the board, has been the point person on recreation issues, both at the campground and township recreational facilities.

Anyone wishing to learn more about the open seats can contact the township office at 218-753-6020.

Other townships

Greenwood and Vermilion Lake townships also have elections in March, for supervisor and treasurer seats. Greenwood will also be asking voters to approve a measure to change the elected clerk and treasurer positions to appointed positions, that would be hired by the town board.

AROUND TOWN



Top: Partygoers chowing down on homemade apple pastries and hot cocoa at the Ely Folk School's bonfire and party on Semer's Beach last Saturday. **Center left:** After last year's dog sled rides at the Ely Folk School's beach party were canceled due to bad ice, it was happy to see their return this year.

photos by C. Clark



Center Right: Emery Smith (red stocking cap) and her mother Carissa filling out their ballots for the people's choice award in the gingerbread house contest at Babbitt's Santa Hayride and Bazaar last Saturday.

Bottom Left: Jim Carroll, of Embarrass, attends to a customer buying one of his handpainted fish lures at Babbitt's Santa Hayride and Bazaar. photos by C. Clark

In Brief

Tuesday Group schedule

ELY – Hosted by Boundary Waters Connect, the Tuesday Group community educational luncheon 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.

The Tuesday Group is now on its winter holiday hiatus until January.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2024



flocked trees, unplowed walks
sky dumped snow, each flake
unique

a true northern winter

Libraries

Ely library

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

Babbitt library

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

Phone: 218-827-3345

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous
OPEN AA - 7:30

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

AA FRIDAYS - 7 p.m.
Fridays, First Presbyterian Church, 262 E. Harvey St., Ely.

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

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

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

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

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

CO-DEPENDENTS'
12-step support group, 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays, hosted by Well Being Development, Ely. *This meeting is suspended temporarily while Well Being Development's Northern Lights Clubhouse moves to its new home.*

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.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Free Movie Night

ELY- The all-time Christmas classic "It's a Wonderful Life" is coming to Ely's Historic State Theater on Monday, Dec. 23 at 7 p.m. The event is free, thanks to Ely Family Dental. You still need to book a seat at movies.elystatetheater.org.

Christmas Potluck

ELY- Nowhere to go for Christmas dinner? Come to the Christmas Community Potluck on Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 1 p.m. at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan St. Come alone or bring friends, visitors, and family, and bring your favorite food or beverage to share. Coffee and tea provided. Registration not required, but knowing you're coming helps us plan; email an RSVP to bfrth88@gmail.com or text 218-365-7578.

Call of the Wild

Poetry Night

ELY- The next Call of the Wild Poetry Reading will be on Thursday, Jan. 2, from 5-6 p.m., at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan St. The theme for January will be "Between Ice and Ember," to examine the duality of winter, exploring the balance between the harsh cold and the warmth of human resilience. Bring one or more poems to read, written by yourself or by others, or just come and listen.

Braver Angels

ELY- The Ely chapter of the Braver Angels Alliance will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 7, at 6 p.m., at the Ely Senior Center. This session will focus on Braver Angels discussion skills and methods. Braver Angels is a national organization consisting of people from both

sides of the political divide. The aim of the alliance is to restore civility to both local and national political discourse. All are welcome to attend.

Romeo and Juliet

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association's Great Nordic Shakespeare Festival opens on Friday, Jan. 10 with "Romeo and Juliet." The Bard's immortal play of star-crossed lovers will have evening performances at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 10, 11, 24, and 25 and two 2 p.m. matinees on Jan. 12 and 26. Get tickets at northernlakesarts.org/tickets. This is a Dark Sky Festival activity.

Save the Boundary Waters Party

ELY- Save the Boundary Waters will hold its New Year's Party for its volunteers and supporters on Monday, Jan. 13, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Ely Folk School, 209 E. Sheridan St.

"Join or Die"

ELY- Boundary Waters Connect and the Ely Folk School are hosting a free community movie night on Tuesday, Jan. 14, starting at 6 p.m. at Ely's Historic State Theater. The film is the documentary "Join or Die," which explores the half-century story of America's civic unraveling through the journey of legendary social scientist Robert Putnam. The event sponsors will host an open discussion following the film. Book tickets at movies.elystatetheater.org

Woodworking Class

ELY- Ely Continuing Education will hold a woodworking class at the ISD 696 woodshop on the public schools campus starting on Wednesday, January 15.

The classes will be every Wednesday from 6-9 p.m. through April 2. Cost is \$80.

Ely Public Library

ELY- The library will be closed Dec. 24-25, Dec. 31, Jan. 1, and Jan. 20.

The library will hold an online Kahoot trivia game starting on Thursday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m. through Monday, Dec. 23 at 8 a.m. on the following Christmas novels: "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, "The Night Before Christmas" by Clement Clarke Moore, and "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" by Barbara Robinson. Participants must preregister for the Kahoot so the library can email the link for the game.

The Get Crafty Group for all ages will meet on Friday, Dec. 27, from 1-2 p.m. for a winter craft station session where participants can try as many craft projects as look interesting.

The library board will not meet on Jan. 1 when the library will be closed. The meeting has been moved to Wednesday, Jan. 8, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

The library will hold an online Kahoot trivia game starting on Thursday, Jan. 2, at 3 p.m. through Tuesday, Dec. 7 at 8 a.m. on books 6-8 of the "Babysitter's Club Little Sister" series by Ann Martin. Participants must preregister for the Kahoot so the library can email the link for the game.

The library will hold a jigsaw puzzle swap on Friday, Jan. 3, from 4-5 p.m. Puzzles to swap must have all their pieces. Bring in a puzzle you've grown tired of playing and swap it for one you've not done before. No dumping please. Plan to take home puzzles if you

bring puzzles in.

On Tuesday, Jan. 7, from 10:30-11:30 a.m., the library will host Singer-Songwriter Dennis Warner in concert.

The library will have astronomy science stations set up on Friday, Jan. 10, from 3-5 p.m. Visitors of all ages are welcome to visit the stations open house-style for hands-on astronomy-related activities. This is a Dark Sky Festival activity.

The Friends of the Library Book Club will meet on Monday, Jan. 13 from 3-4 p.m. The book for discussion is "Marcel's Letters" by Carolyn Porter.

The monthly Friends of the Library board meeting will be on Tuesday, Jan. 14, from 1-2 p.m.

The library will hold an online Kahoot trivia game starting on Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 3 p.m. through Wednesday, Dec. 22 at 8 a.m. on Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass." Participants must preregister for the Kahoot so the library can email the link for the game.

The Curiosity Cohort group for adults will hold an introduction to roleplaying games on Thursday, Jan. 16, from 6-8 p.m. Learn about roleplaying games, particularly Dungeons and Dragons. This introduction is meant for people who have never played the game before and might be looking to see if it's something that they would enjoy. It is also for family members who are wondering what their child, significant other, or relation is talking about and would like an introduction to how it works. Please register in advance so the library has

enough supplies for everyone.

The Library Scientist group for all ages will learn about ways to write with invisible ink on Thursday, Jan. 23 from 3-4 p.m. Please register in advance for this activity so the library has enough supplies for everyone.

The library will hold a Harry Potter event on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 1-4 p.m., which will include sorting into houses for the breakout box and other activities. This event is for adults and teens grade nine and higher. Please register in advance so the library has enough supplies for everyone.

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

Babbitt Public Library

BABBITT- The book club will meet on Monday, Jan. 6, at 2 p.m. The book for discussion will be "The Giver of Stars" by Jojo Moyes.

Preschool story time is every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. All library events are at the Babbitt Public Library, 71 South Dr., unless otherwise noted.

Ely graduates

MANKATO- Minnesota State University, Mankato held its fall commencement on Dec. 14. Two Elyites were among those who graduated from their programs. Heather Holthaus completed a Bachelor of Science in nursing. Kayci Zorman-Muhvich completed a graduate certificate in reading.

LITTLE GRIZZLIES SING IN THE SEASON



Concert draws full house crowd

There literally wasn't an empty spot in the parking lot last week, with people parking and walking in from the access road, when North Woods School elementary students, under the direction of music educator Lorenda Daugherty, performed their annual holiday concert.

Above: Performing a song about reindeer are, back row, from left, Chester Talberg, Joe Schrecengost, Everett Crain; middle row, Charlotte Pascuzzi, Lucy Norup; and front row, Lilly Pogachnik and Zada Gaskell.



Lilly Pogachnik, Charlotte Pascuzzi, and Everett Crain proudly show off the tassels at the end of their recorders, awards learned for successful completion of learning activities.



Joselyn Pascuzzi, Elizabeth Trip, and Vera Bryson demonstrate their ability for musical multitasking by singing and playing ukuleles.

photos by D. Colburn

COLORING CONTEST WINNERS AT NORTH WOODS



First Grade: 1st - Rhett Julkowski, 2nd - Kiki Clark, 3rd - Grayson Sandberg.



Second Grade: 1st - Addie Holter, 2nd - Brooklyn Gabrielson, 3rd - Logan Frazer.



Third Grade: 1st - Peyton Schuster (not pictured), 2nd - Vivian Villebrun, 3rd (tie) - Rune Hodge, Savannah Kinler.



Fourth Grade: 1st - Everett Crain, 2nd (tie) - Kallen Williams, Kensie Herdman, 3rd - Uno Ruuska



Fifth Grade: 1st - Alethia Hodge, 2nd - Hudson Sheffer, 3rd - William Lafave.



Sixth Grade: 1st - Stella Plimi, 2nd - Leah Las, 3rd - Luke Pretti (not pictured).



Kindergarten: 1st - Sidney Gabrielson, 2nd - Bjorn Flores-Leander. 3rd - Layne Mankus.

Timberjay announces winners of annual holiday coloring contest

The contest buzz fills the room, Markers flash with hues that bloom. Each artwork brings the season near, A masterpiece of Yuletide cheer.

FIELD TWP - The North Woods Elementary students pictured here were all winners in the annual Timberjay holiday coloring contest. Entries were judged by Timberjay staff, who had a terrible time choosing one talented artist over another. Creativity rated as high or higher than technical expertise, although there was an abundance of both in the entries.



Baumgartner is North Woods spelling bee champion

FIELD TWP- On Tuesday, eight intrepid North Woods Elementary students became a part of history as participants in the local qualifying round for the 100th anniversary edition of the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

It took only five rounds for North Woods eighth-grader Olivia Baumgartner to emerge as the new spelling bee champion. Half of the competitors got tripped up in the first round, as they wrestled with words large and small, common and obscure. Ashley Paakkonen was the word pronouncer and procedural facilitator, while Paige Stanislawski and Crystal Poppler served as judges, and Jill Stark was the recorder. As the competition entered the final down, Baumgartner had just one opponent, Michaela Brunner, left to contend with. When Brunner fumbled her word, all Baumgartner had to do to seal the win was to spell "monotone" correctly, which she did. Baumgartner will advance to the Minnesota Service Cooperatives Regional Spelling Bee in Virginia.

ORR LIONS CHARITABLE BLESSINGS



Orr Lion Sandy Bushnell holds up a check for \$4,476.66 representing the amount that the Orr Lions Club has donated to the food shelf this year, much needed assistance during another year of...



The Orr Lions club donated 22 boxes of food to needy area families. Pictured are Wendy Laakkonen, Sandy Bushnell, Heather Fealey, and Tom Kennebeck, who packed the boxes and delivered...

DONATIONS...Continued from page 1

But do the contributions that pour into such organizations this time of year provide the relief to abandoned animals that those many generous contributors expect?

While these large national organizations do have their missions, mostly focused on larger policy changes around animal welfare, when it comes to caring for abandoned animals in need, that's the role most often played by local organizations in communities across the country, and those facilities rarely see a penny from the contributions made to

large national organizations.

What's more, many larger national organizations spend much more on overhead, executive compensation, and fundraising than most small entities, which are often run primarily by volunteers.

Groups like Contented Critters in Ely or the Mesabi Humane Society in Virginia, which operate shelters that serve abandoned pets here in the North County, don't receive any funds when animal-lovers contribute to a national organization. Contented Critters relies

mostly on donations to cover the cost of caring for abandoned animals, including paying the wages of their small paid staff, most of whom are students at the Vermilion college vet tech program. "It's a great experience for them and we feel very lucky to have them," said Hailey Myre, director at Contented Critters.

Both Contented Critters and Mesabi Humane Society are what is known as "no-kill" shelters, which means they don't euthanize otherwise healthy animals based on time limits or space. While some

shelters in larger cities are sometimes forced to euthanize animals that aren't readily adopted, Myre said those places provide the same caring environment for animals but are sometimes overwhelmed with the numbers of abandoned pets. "Truthfully, they have a tougher job, and it can't be easy," Myre said. "This is why spaying and neutering is so important."

In a season of giving, it's understandable that people want to help with financial contributions to animal welfare. But rather than

sending your money to a national organization, where your dollars will likely have little impact, keeping your money close to home will help your local community address this ongoing problem. So, the next time you see those sad eyes looking hopefully at you from the television screen, rather than calling the number at the bottom, consider picking up the phone to make a contribution to your Contented Critters or the Mesabi Humane Society. You can contribute to Contented Critters through their website

at www.contentedcrittersmn.org/donate or through Venmo at ContentedCrittersMN or by sending a check to Contented Critters, PO Box 298, Ely, MN 55731.

The Mesabi Humane Society lists several ways to contribute on their website at <https://mesabihumanesociety.org/donate>. You can also send a check to: The Mesabi Humane Society, 2305 Southern Dr., Virginia, MN 55792.

MINING...Continued from page 1

It's not only Twin Metals that is expected to benefit from a change of administration; other mining projects in the state are likely to benefit, too.

In 2017, the last time Trump was in the White House, he signed an executive order directing agencies to identify critical minerals essential for national security and the economy. The order also encouraged reducing permitting delays for mining projects involving these minerals.

And the next Congress is expected to be far friendlier than the current one when it comes to the concerns of mining interests. For instance, legislation proposed by Rep. Pete Stauber, R-8th District, and other lawmakers that would streamline federal permitting and make it harder to halt or slow the development of new mines in court now has a better chance of becoming law.

That legislation was never considered by the Democratic-controlled U.S. Senate and was always vulnerable to a Biden veto threat. But Republicans wrested control of the chamber from Democrats in November's elections, the GOP maintained its majority in the U.S. House and Trump is expected to back legislation that helps U.S. mineral production.

"Because of the balance

in the House and the Senate, we're going to be playing a lot of defense," predicted Ingrid Lyons, executive director of Save the Boundary Waters, one of the many environmental and conservation groups that have battled sulfide ore mining on the Iron Range.

Twin Metals spokeswoman Kathy Graul declined to be specific about her company's plans but provided a statement that said "we are committed to advancing our project in a bipartisan manner to ensure Americans can benefit from the much-needed copper, nickel and cobalt resources that are abundant in northeast Minnesota."

Julie Lucas, executive director of the trade organization Minnesota Mining, was more blunt. "The company is ready to go whenever they have the opportunity to go again," she said of Twin Metals, a subsidiary of the Chilean mining company Antofagasta.

Saying there is no safe way to mine for copper, environmentalists, including a group called Save the Boundary Waters, have tried to derail the Twin Metals proposed mine for nearly 10 years and say they are ready to renew their efforts in court.

"The protections that were put in place by the Biden administration went through a formal process by which

public comments were taken and a science-based determination made from that," said Chris Knopf, the executive director of Friends of the Boundary Waters. "And so if the Trump administration were to haphazardly and quickly undo that work, we would challenge that."

Lawsuits 'a fact of life'

Meanwhile, NewRange Copper Nickel, a joint venture of PolyMet Mining and Teck Resources, is hoping to get their \$1 billion open pit mine near Babbitt back on track. The proposed mine, which had been issued all of its major permits as of 2018, has been beset by a series of legal setbacks that ultimately stripped PolyMet—now owned entirely by Swiss-based commodities trader Glencore—of most of its key permits.

The project will again need both federal and state permits to move forward and its federal permit from the Army Corps of Engineers has been revoked because of concerns over the mine's potential impact on downstream water quality.

But the prospect of a more mining-friendly administration could help the mine advance.

NewRange spokesman Bruce Richardson said his company will reapply for a Clean Water Act "Section 404" wetlands permit. "We

have every intention to do that," he said.

Knopf said he fears the Trump administration will reissue the permit for that project, which the Army Corps of Engineers had ruled would violate water quality standards.

Richardson also said he hoped a key state license that has been stalled will move forward. Called a "permit to mine," it was put on hold when a state administrative law judge recommended that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources not reissue the permit originally given to PolyMet because of concerns over tailings storage. Richardson said the company is modifying its plans to address those concerns and the DNR said that is why the permit is on hold until next August.

"The scope of potential changes could have a direct impact on specific issues under consideration in the contested case hearing process," DNR spokeswoman Gail Nosek said in an email. "DNR's final decision-maker ordered the stay to prevent significant expenditure of time and resources in the contested case process for a project design that may become moot if the company seeks to modify its project in ways that would require a permit amendment and/or additional environmen-

tal review."

While it's difficult to predict how the conflict between the state's mining interests and environmental advocates will play out, the change in the direction of political winds are certain to reignite debate and court battles.

"Lawsuits are a fact of life if you want to build a mine," said NewRange's Richardson.

The shift toward the GOP in the state House (which is now evenly divided between DFL and Republican lawmakers) also makes it tougher for environmental allies to win approval of legislation that would impede state permitting of mines.

While the state has a law prohibiting mining in the

Boundary Waters, some legislators have sought to expand that to its headwaters, an effort that failed and now seems further out of reach.

Lucas, the Mining Minnesota official, said she understood the concerns of those who are fiercely opposed to mining for critical minerals in Minnesota because of fears of pollution of the Boundary Waters and other waters and land.

"They are not bad people for being scared," she said. "They are just scared."

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Grade 2

Christmas Is A Magical Time!
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Grade 6

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from Vermilion Classic Boatworks




Artist • Karmina Chosa
GRADE 2

Keep The Reindeer Off The Roof!
from Vermillion Roofing



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GRADE 1

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from City of Tower



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GRADE 5

Enjoy A Winter Wonderland
from Rolando Noyes Construction



Artist • Mark Rettke
GRADE 6

STATE GOVERNMENT

State's cannabis licensing timeline shifts amid legal woes

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL - Minnesota's planned recreational cannabis market launch is facing new delays after a preapproval lottery for social equity licenses was scrapped by a court order and shifted to a standard licensing cycle for all applicants next year, the Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management announced.

The OCM had intended to hold a lottery on Tuesday, Dec. 2 with the goal of giving social equity applicants a head start to open operations early in 2025 and ahead of standard license applicants who would have been licensed later in the year. Officials now tentatively plan to conduct a licensing lottery between May and June that will involve both groups, pushing the expected market launch beyond mid-

2025 and eliminating the early advantage some social equity applicants might have enjoyed.

Court-ordered halt

The change follows a Ramsey County District Court order that halted the planned social equity lottery because of lawsuits filed by people whose applications for the license lottery were rejected. At least eight legal challeng-

es have been filed with the Minnesota Court of Appeals alleging the OCM improperly rejected applicants or failed to follow state law.

The key lawsuit that triggered the delay was from applicants that the OCM alleges were using multiple submissions to gain unfair advantages. The court's move forced the OCM to reconsider its approach.

"This was certainly not

an outcome that we were hoping would materialize," OCM Interim Director Charlene Briner said during a virtual press conference last Wednesday. "We know that today's path forward does not provide a perfect solution, but I'm hoping that applicants will take some comfort in seeing that there is a clear path forward."

Griner noted that while the cannabis legislation per-

mitted a preapproval process and an early social equity lottery, they were not specifically required, giving the OCM the leeway it needed to make changes.

Changing the process

Originally, the preapproval process was meant to give historically disadvantaged applicants a head start. Now both social equity and

See...CANNABIS pg. 11

RATZLOFF...Continued from page 1

which is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission to the Capitol and the gallery is free. The Minnesota Historical Society will hold a catered reception for Ratzloff in honor of his exhibit on May 14.

Ratzloff's work was competitively vetted for display at the Third Floor Exhibit Gallery. Artists are selected by the Capitol Art Exhibit Advisory Committee and then must be approved by the State Capitol Preservation Commission. Preference is given to artists currently living in Minnesota or who were living in the state at the time the art was created.

At the conclusion of his Capitol exhibit, the 17 photographs on display will join others that Ratzloff has taken of Indigenous people at a new museum in Pine Point on the White Earth Reservation.

Ratzloff's early years

Ratzloff was born in Austin, Minn. and attended St. Cloud State University. "It

was during the Vietnam War and I had a student deferment to go to school. I took 36 credits and flunked them all trying to stay in school as long as possible." One of the classes he flunked, Ratzloff noted with humor, was photography.

Ratzloff did graduate and was eventually drafted, but flunked the physical. After that, Ratzloff worked for a photo album company in St. Cloud for many years and then transitioned to working in photo preservation and album creation with archival-grade materials.

"It was I while I was still doing that that I sold my first photo," said Ratzloff, recalling it was a sunset scene. Much of Ratzloff's early work was nature-based, although his dedication to social justice and anti-war causes soon took his photography in different directions. His interest in taking portraits of advocates for peace eventually paved the way for his invitation to the White Earth Nation in the 1990s.

Moving to Ely was a

Right: A slow exposure captures the movement of a dancing family on the White Earth Reservation.

photo by J. Ratzloff

logical step for Ratzloff. "I paddled with the same partner in the Boundary Waters and Quetico for 25 years. He was patient with me because I always brought my Hasselblad and tripod. It's a slow camera. It takes time to set up the shots."

Ratzloff came to Ely to become the Artist in Residence at the Steger Wilderness Center and he still maintains strong ties there.

Ongoing work

Even in retirement, Ratzloff is still drawn to capturing incidents and people who embody social justice themes. After the murder of George Floyd, for example, Ratzloff grabbed his camera and spent several days after the riots in Minneapolis taking photos of the street art that spontaneously appeared in the city. He had an exhibition of some of those photos last



August at the Ely Folk School.

Ratzloff has another Ely-based show in the works called "Portraits of Indifference," sponsored by the Northern

Lakes Arts Association and supported by a grant from the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust. The show is tentatively scheduled for

display at the Community Hub on a date to be announced in 2025.

AWARD...Continued from page 1

Steering Committee, where he served as the Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee vice chair. He was recently selected to participate in the latter organization's "Reaching Rural Initiative," which is focused on substance abuse and opioid use prevention strategies in rural areas.

Last year, McDonald co-chaired AMC's workgroup on Tax Forfeiture and was a constant presence at the Capitol working to garner support for legislation that brought Minnesota's law into compliance with the Supreme Court's *Tyler v. Hennepin County* verdict. Most importantly, he was instrumental in setting aside \$109 million to ensure that Minnesota counties did not bear the cost of the lawsuits spawned by the ruling.

"Paul is a strategic thinker, moving through his role as commissioner with a game plan and a thorough knowledge of important rules and regulations," Gaalswyk said. "It's likely something he learned as a renowned athlete,



Commissioner McDonald (center) along with his wife Tracy and outgoing AMC President Neal Gaalswyk just after receiving the award. submitted photo

coach, and official and we're lucky to have him gracing our membership with his skills and attention, making us stronger together as a team."

Reaction

The recipients of this award are kept secret, but the AMC notifies the recipient's family ahead of time to give them the opportunity to be on hand to surprise the recipient at

the awards ceremony. It is certain that McDonald was surprised.

"I was sitting at the awards luncheon," McDonald told the *Timberjay*, "and I was shocked when I realized (Gaalswyk) was talking about me. (I am the first ever from St. Louis County to receive this award. We have a great board and it is very enjoyable to help the residents of the best county in Minnesota ... I am truly humbled to receive this prestigious award."

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Chronic domestic abuser appeals most recent conviction

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

BOIS FORTE – A Bois Forte man with a history of domestic assault charges has filed an appeal of his most recent conviction to the U.S. Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mark Allen Isham, 61, was sentenced to 70 months in federal prison in mid-November after his conviction on one count of assault resulting in serious bodily injury and another count of assault resulting in substantial bodily injury, stemming from a domestic abuse incident that occurred in March, 2023 in the Vermilion sector of the Bois Forte Reservation. He was found not guilty of a third charge of assault with a dangerous weapon.

It was the latest incident

in a series of abuse cases involving Isham and the same woman, identified in court records as CRK, committed over the past 20 years.

Isham was first convicted of assaulting his girlfriend in California in 1997, according to a court document that did not identify that victim. His first conviction for misdemeanor domestic assault involving CRK was in Bois Forte Criminal Court in 2004, followed by a conviction for domestic assault in St. Louis County District Court in 2005. He had subsequent misdemeanor assault convictions in the Bois Forte court in 2008 and 2010. In 2014, this time in federal court, Isham



Mark Allen Isham

was convicted of domestic assault by a habitual offender and given a two-year prison term.

Current case

According to a release from the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's office and various court documents, beginning on or about March 13, 2023, Isham repeatedly and violently assaulted CRK after he had picked her up from a Virginia treatment center and brought her to his home on the reservation. The physical assault escalated on Mar. 19, 2023, when Isham became angry and started punching CRK with a closed fist. Isham kept his victim trapped inside the house for days without access to her wheelchair.

On March 24, 2023, CRK managed to call 911 while Isham was outside chopping firewood. A Bois Forte Police officer and St. Louis County Sheriff's deputy arrived at Isham's home shortly afterwards. Isham initially denied the victim was inside, prompting CRK to call out to make her presence known. Injuries observed by the officers included a split lip, black eye, and bruising on her arms, legs, and head. An ambulance was called to transport the victim to a local hospital. CRK's injuries required surgery to repair a broken jaw resulting from the violent assault.

While awaiting trial, Isham was charged with witness tampering for allegedly trying to influence CRK's testimony. According to statements from an FBI agent

investigating the allegation, Isham contacted CRK by phone repeatedly over a period of four months to either convince her not to testify or to influence her testimony in a manner favorable to Isham's case. He reportedly told CRK that he had "served enough (prison) time for bullshit like this." U.S. Magistrate Judge Leo Brisbois found probable cause to move ahead with the witness tampering charge, but it was later dismissed at the request of the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Isham's sentence of 70 months in prison was significantly more than the 41 months defense attorney Aaron Morrison argued was "sufficient, but not greater than necessary" in a presentencing filing. The sentencing order from U.S. District Court Judge Katherine Menendez

gave no specific rationale for the sentence, although it can be assumed that the sentence is in line with applicable sentencing guidelines. Upon release, Isham will serve three years of supervised release, during which time he has been ordered to not to consume alcohol, to participate in substance abuse and domestic violence rehabilitation programs, have no contact with CRK without prior consent from a probation officer, and submit to reasonable searches.

Isham's attorney filed an appeal of the case with the Eighth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals on Nov. 24, but no proposed grounds for the appeal were available. In a subsequent filing, it was noted that Isham was, at that time, being held at the Sherburne County Jail in Elk River.

CANNABIS...Continued from page 10

general applicants will enter a system that will allot the licenses reserved for social equity applicants and then for general applicants in lotteries that could possibly be held on the same day or within days of each other. The 648 social equity applicants who previously qualified will be moved into the new round without losing their status but will face additional competition under the new system. Griner said the OCM will be reaching out to rejected social equity applicants to ask for more information or clarify information with the possibility that they could be added back into the lottery. New applications will also be accepted.

Under the revised plan, applicants for uncapped license categories will advance without a lottery. For license types with more applicants than permits, social equity hopefuls will enter a lottery first. Those not selected can try again in the general lottery. Applicants who decide

to opt out and abandon the licensing process can request a refund of their fee. The agency will start verifying social equity applicants Jan. 15 and open applications to both social equity and general categories Feb. 18. This will not involve the preapproval process initially used for verifications for social equity lottery applicants, a process that resulted in nearly two-thirds of applications being declined.

Timeline

The change ensures that the cannabis market will not launch before mid-2025. Earlier plans counted on some preapproved social equity licensees to begin cultivation sooner, ensuring product availability on opening day. Without that head start, all businesses will prepare simultaneously, which could slow supply growth. However, some industry experts have said that the amount of product produced ahead of time by

social equity cultivators would not have been sufficient to fulfill initial market demand and that the impact on the overall market would be small.

Reactions

Supporters of the pre-approval approach say it would have helped those most harmed by cannabis prohibition secure financing, locations and permits before the market opened. Now, social equity applicants face starting at the same time as

others, potentially making it harder to gain traction.

The Minnesota People of Color and Indigenous Caucus expressed disappointment, noting that the law's intent was to give priority to communities harmed by marijuana enforcement. The caucus vowed to keep equity provisions central in future cannabis policy.

"These social equity provisions were providing priority access to the burgeoning cannabis market," the caucus

said in a press release. "It is unfortunate that recent events have cast a shadow on this well-intentioned effort."

Two architects of the cannabis legislation, Sen. Lindsey Port, DFL-Burnsville, and Rep. Zack Stephenson, DFL-Coon Rapids, said a handful of bad actors undermined the preapproval process.

"It was foundational that those who were most harmed by prohibition get a first shot at building Minnesota's legal

cannabis industry," they said in a joint statement. "It is frustrating those who did not follow the rules have disrupted that commitment."

Despite setbacks, OCM officials say the core social equity goals remain. Social equity applicants will still receive some preferences, such as license set asides and access to grants intended to foster economic opportunity.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.
10	0				11	-9				12	-5				27	20				30	22			
YTD Total	27.86	18.1"			YTD Total	27.20	14.5"			YTD Total	27.99	21.2"			YTD Total	NA	16.0"			YTD Total	30.70	19.5"		

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TOWER-SOUDAN AREA SINGERS

A 30-member choir of singers from Tower-Soudan and the surrounding area performed their annual holiday concert in Tower on Dec. 15. The choir is led by Rolf Anderson. The afternoon concert also included a performance by the Mattson Family (below right), who have roots in the Tower area. Below: Rolf Anderson directing the choir. Right: Paul Herring was one of a few kazoo players adding in some humor during "Kris Kringle's Kazoos," which included an appearance by Santa Claus. Far right: Soloist Harley Banks sang "I Wonder as I Wonder." photos by J. Summit



GREENWOOD

Lack of communication apparent at Greenwood special meeting

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP. The ongoing lack of communication between township officials here, prompted a brief special board meeting on Tuesday, but it's unclear whether the problem will go away any time soon. Tuesday's special meeting lasted less than 10 minutes but would likely have been unnecessary with better communication, in this instance a phone call between the board chair and the fire chief.

An expired Emergency Medical Responder, or EMR, certificate was one of two items on the agenda, which had been called by board chair Lois Roskoski and Craig Gilbert.

Roskoski noted that fire chief Jeff Maus had provided her with the information she had requested about the certifications for the township's EMR personnel prior to the special meeting, including a list of all the fire department's EMRs and their certifications. This information is all available online since the state oversees EMR certification.

"I didn't know I could go on the website and get this information. I am learning," she said.

"Two of them had expired certifications," Roskoski said, "one was renewed as of yesterday." This leaves one township EMR without

the required certification.

She said the township attorney told her there was a huge liability to have an EMR going on a call with an expired certification, although she offered no suggestion that anyone with an expired certificate was doing so.

According to Maus, he has been aware of the situation and was working with the individual responder to get the required training scheduled. "We knew this EMR's certification had lapsed," Maus said during a phone conversation with the *Timberjay* following the meeting. "He hasn't been going on calls."

Maus, who has been unable to attend meetings recently during his recovery from hip surgery, said that no one from the board had called him to ask about the issue.

"It was all pretty easy stuff to resolve," he said.

Maus also noted that the state board that oversees emergency responders (EMSRB) calls these certifications "lapsed," not expired, and that EMRs have up to four years to update their training before they are considered expired.

Even so, EMRs are not permitted to respond to emergency calls if their certifications have lapsed, Maus said, and he had spoken to the EMR in question, and they were working to schedule the class time. EMRs are required to complete 16

hours of continuing education classes every two years to maintain their certification.

In their only other item of business, the board approved a motion allowing up to eight of the township's EMRs to attend a three-day conference in Duluth next month. The board had earlier agreed to send five members to the event.

Maus had told the board five members were interested, and the cost would be around \$5,400 for the registration, hotel rooms, and travel costs.

The board passed a motion to allow three more EMRs to attend, if desired, but during discussion it was determined that only five EMRs total are interested in attending, so it will ensure that EMRs will be available to respond to any medical calls during the conference.

The department gener-

ally averages only one EMR call a week during the winter months, according to Maus.

In an email Maus sent to Roskoski prior to the meeting, which Maus had requested to be read to the board, Maus also discussed the fire department's standard operating guidelines (SOGs), but Roskoski said they would not discuss this information because it was not on the agenda. In the email, Maus confirmed that the version of the SOGs currently in place was approved by the board in April 2021, which was prior to his assuming the chief role in September 2022. Maus had forwarded this version of the SOGs, with notations about possible changes that need to be approved by the board, to the clerk on Nov. 9, but apparently this information was not shared as part of the meeting packet in November or December, he said.

Instead, at their regular December meeting, the board voted to hire Hibbing Fire Chief Erik Jankila, to update both of these policies, at a cost not to exceed \$2,000. At that meeting, board member

Paul Skubic had complained that the township was having to spend money to get the work done when the board had asked Maus to recommend the revisions.



SPORTS

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GIRLS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies falter vs. Two Harbors

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The North Woods girls basketball team fumbled away a chance for a home win last Thursday in a 52-38 loss to Two Harbors.

Both teams have struggled against tough competition this season, but the contest shaped up as one between evenly matched teams, and that's how it played

out for the most part.

Tatum Barto put the Grizzlies on the board first when she was fouled on an acrobatic baseline shot for a deuce and converted the free throw for a 3-0 lead. Shots by Sierra Schuster and Zoey Burckhardt kept North Woods ahead, and a driving score by Barto gave the Grizzlies their biggest edge of the night at 9-5. After falling behind in the slugfest, Corra Brodeen put North

Woods back ahead at 17-16 with just under seven minutes left in the half.

But then, the wheels started falling off. Over the next five minutes the Grizzlies committed eight turnovers and scored just one point on a Schuster free throw as the Agates took a 28-18 lead. The Grizzlies cut into that by four in the final minute of the half, but the Agates got those points back in the final 17 seconds before the

Right: The Grizzlies' Zoey Burckhardt scrambles for a loose ball during this week's contest with Two Harbors.

photo by D. Colburn

half to take a 32-22 lead into the locker room.

Needing a strong start to the second half to chip away at the lead, the Grizzlies instead saw themselves falling farther behind.

See NW GIRLS..pg. 2B



GIRLS BASKETBALL

Hot and cold week for the Timberwolves

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY — It was the definition of a romp for the Ely girls basketball squad here on Tuesday as the Wolves pummeled the hapless Vikings 88-16 to improve their season's record to 4-3. Four Ely players hit double digits on the night, led by Lydia Schultz, with 23 points, including two treys. Zoe Mackenzie was red hot from beyond the arc as she connected on five of eight attempts from three-point range as she notched 17 points. Audrey Kallberg notched her second double-double of the week with 14 points and ten rebounds while adding six assists to set the pace. Amelia Penke added 12 points while Maija Mattson added seven and Gretta Lowe added six.

Tuesday's romp was a contrast to their much tougher contest against Chisholm on Monday, as the Wolves fell to the Bluestreaks 63-50. While the Wolves shot 39 percent from three-point range on Tuesday, playing in Chisholm on Monday, they shot an ice-cold eight percent, although they managed a more respectable 46 percent from two-point range. Senior Clare Thomas led scoring for Ely with 13 points, including the Wolves' only trey on the night. Kallberg notched a double-double with ten points and 13 rebounds. Schultz and Penke each added eight points, while Mattson tallied seven.

The Wolves were set to travel to Cherry on Friday, their final game before the winter break. The Wolves will host the Hoops for Hope Tournament Dec. 26-27.

HOCKEY

Penalties foil Ely comeback

Fall to 1-4 in 6-2 loss to Lake of the Woods

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

BAUDETTE — A string of third period penalties proved costly here on Saturday as the Timberwolves gave up three straight short-handed goals to fall 6-2 to Lake of the Woods.

It was a tight contest through the first two periods. The Bears grabbed the lead late in the first period, but Ely's senior forward Garrett Rohr lit the lamp at the 5:35 mark of the second — with an assist from Jayden Zemke — to knot the game at one. The Bears edged

See HOCKEY...pg. 2B



BOYS BASKETBALL

Wolves playing tough

Improve to 5-0 on the season after routs of Cook County, Mesabi East

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY — When it comes to boys basketball, Ely is beginning to look like one of this season's Section 7A powerhouses, with a stubborn defense and an explosive offense led in recent games by senior Caid Chittum, who poured in a combined 74 points over the past two games.

Playing at home on Tuesday,

Chittum led offensively with 33 points as the Wolves manhandled Cook County 92-63 to improve to 5-0 on the season. The game's 29-point margin made it the closest game for the Wolves so far this season, reflecting just how dominant their play has been in the early going.

"We jumped out to a 55-31 halftime lead and continued to play well in the second half," said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald.

The Wolves looked machine-

like at times, particularly from the charity stripe, where they connected on an astonishing 28 of 31 attempts, helping to pad their margin. "That was nice since we were only shooting 60 percent of those on the season so far," said McDonald.

Junior Jack Davies and Drew Johnson both had notable performances on the night. Davies scored 25 points and six assists, while Johnson added 15 points, 13 boards, and five assists for a

Above: Ely's Caid Chittum dribbles into the paint while under pressure from a Mesabi East defender. Chittum scored a game-high 41 points on the night.

photo by F. Zobitz

double-double. Chittum notched ten boards on the night for his own double-double.

Playing last Friday at Aurora,

See WOLVES...pg. 2B

North Woods overwhelmed in losses

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- A North Woods boys basketball team that was sharp and tough as nails in rolling over their first opponents of the season was rattled and ineffective in consecutive losses to Moose Lake/Willow River and Northland this past week.

On Fri., Dec. 6, the Grizzlies walloped Carlton/Wrenshall 80-48. Six days later they got a taste of their own medicine with an 80-48 drubbing by the Rebels of ML/WR.

The Grizzlies were never in this one, falling behind 11-0 before Talen

Right: North Woods' Aiden Hartway and August Peltier put a hard press on a Northland player.

photo by D. Colburn

Jarshaw got North Woods on the board with a driving jumper. August Peltier scored the Grizzlies' second bucket of the game on an assist from Louie Panichi, interrupting another Rebels run to make the score 19-4. The taller, more athletic Rebels completely dominated from beginning to end, leading 38-22 at the half and outscoring the Grizzlies 42-26 after the break.

See GRIZZLIES...pg. 2B



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NORDIC SKIING

Ely boys perform up to top billing in state poll

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

PROCTOR — A pre-season poll of Minnesota cross-country ski coaches ranked the Ely boys Nordic team as the fifth strongest in the state. In their season-opening meet held Dec.

10 in Proctor, the Wolves showed the coaches weren't far off the mark as they gave second-ranked Duluth East all they could handle, finishing three skiers in the top six in a competitive field of 46 racers. Duluth East took the top three spots, but Ely senior Dylan Durkin finished

in fourth with a time of 11:53. Sophomore Aksel Skustad was right behind in fifth with a time of 12:02, while senior Eli Olson took sixth with a time of 12:08. Ely junior Otto Devine finished 11th with a time of 12:53 and senior Milo McClelland finished 16th in 13:04.

Duluth East took the meet as a team with 484 points, with Ely close behind with 465 points, far ahead of third-place finishing Cloquet-Esko-Carlton with 415 points.

The Ely girls squad faced a tougher road in a three-way competition with Duluth East and Duluth Marshall. Senior

Anna Dunn was the top Ely finisher, in 16th place in a time of 15:05, while senior Anna Larson finished 23rd in a time of 16:35.

The Wolves were set to compete in Grand Rapids on Thursday, after the *Timberjay's* weekly deadline. Look for coverage in the *Timberjay's*

Dec. 27 edition if results are available as of the newspaper's early holiday deadline. The Wolves will be off over the holidays and return to action in January.

GRIZZLIES...Continued from page 1B

ML/WR controlled the paint, notching a 44-20 scoring edge inside the lane and beating the Grizzlies on the boards 43-34. The previously sure-handed Grizzlies coughed up the ball 26 times, leading to 31 Rebels points. The Grizzlies made just 32 percent of the shots they hoisted up, and only 37.5 percent of their free throws. Panichi was the only North Woods player to score in double digits with 15.

Returning home to take on the Northland Eagles last Friday, it looked in the first half as if the Grizzlies had escaped the doldrums of Thursday's loss. Shots by Panichi and Trajen Barto and

a pair of hoops by Kalvyn Benner got the Grizzlies off to an 8-2 start, and consecutive treys by Panichi and Jarshaw put the Grizzlies comfortably ahead at 26-12. But chinks in the Grizzlies' armor began to show as the Eagles played even through the rest of the half, going into the break trailing 45-33.

With a solid 12-point lead, few fans in the gym anticipated the Grizzlies' collapse in the second half. Northland immediately scored on a deuce and a trey to trim the lead to 45-38, but a Panichi three-ball restored the 12-point advantage at 54-42 with about 14 minutes remaining.

Then suddenly, as quick

as a hiccup, the Grizzlies' mojo completely vanished. The Eagles stunned the home team with a 16-0 run over the next six minutes to take a 58-54 lead. A solitary free throw by Jarshaw at the 7:52 mark was an empty answer to an unrelenting Northland onslaught that shot them to a 69-55 lead with four minutes to go. Benner finally broke the Grizzlies' astonishing 11-minute drought from the floor with a bucket at the 3:29 mark. But the bucket was too little, too late, as the confident Eagles kept the Grizzlies at bay, completing the 24-point turnaround for the 77-62 win.

Two big factors in the Eagles' shocking turnaround

were turnovers and free throws. North Woods turned the ball over 29 times, 11 more than Northland, and the Eagles turned those miscues into 24 points. Making a concerted effort to work the ball low and draw fouls, the Eagles went to the free throw line 34 times, making 22, while North Woods had only 10 charity shots, dropping seven.

If there was a bright spot to be found in the Grizzlies' performance, it was in scoring distribution. The Grizzlies' attack was more balanced this game, with Panichi leading the way with 17, Aidan Hartway scoring 12, and Peltier and Jarshaw notching 10 each.

Grizzlies Head Coach

Andrew Jugovich was clearly frustrated after the team's collapse against Northland.

"What happened from the first few games that we had?" Jugovich said. "This team is not the same. What they don't do is communicate. We have to go back to the drawing board and figure it all out. These boys have proven that they're capable. But in the end, they have to figure out what their identity is on the court. We need our senior leaders, all five of them who were on the court tonight, to step up. We're 3-2, but we won't be above .500 for long if this keeps up."

Two Harbors

Getting out of town to Two Harbors on Tuesday appears

to have been the recipe to get the Grizzlies back on track, as they crushed the Agates 78-47 to get back in the win column. North Woods did what good teams do — beat the teams they should beat, and Two Harbors was clearly undermanned from the start. North Woods bolted to an early 14-6 lead and kept on rolling into halftime, 38-22. More importantly, the Grizzlies didn't let up with the 16-point lead, winning the second half 40-25.

Jarshaw topped the scoring chart with 22 points, Panichi popped in 18, Andrew Hartway came off the bench to score 11, and Benner had 10.

NW GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

North Woods got only a deuce by Isabelle Koch and a trey by Nevada Gauthier in the first six minutes of the period as the Agates went up by 15, 42-27. As it was at the outset, the

teams battled evenly the rest of the way as the Grizzlies were unable to mount a comeback and lost 52-38.

The Grizzlies turned the ball over 34 times, and

Grizzlies Head Coach Liz Cheney was quick to say after the game that this was an area of concern.

"We just talked about this — passing and court awareness

are the two biggest things that we need to be working on right now," Cheney said. "We're missing some chemistry, too, and that's a big thing. That will come the more we play."

Barto was the only Grizzlies' player in double-figures with 15, which included going five-for-five at the free throw line.

The Grizzlies had one

game on the schedule heading into the holiday break, a Friday home context against Cook County. Game time is at 4:45 p.m.

HOCKEY...Continued from page 1B

ahead with a goal later in the second, but Ely sophomore forward Owen Marolt evened it up to start the third, with an assist from Jace Huntbatch and Rhett Johnson.

Three minutes later, the

Bears turned the tables with an even strength goal to take a 3-2 lead. From there, it was all downhill for Ely as the Wolves spent much of the rest of the period shorthanded. Jace Huntbatch and the

Bears' Braden Johnson spent two minutes each in the box at the 5:44 mark, but Hunter Halbakken joined Huntbatch at 7:09 on a slashing charge. Owen Marolt sat for two minutes at the 12:56 mark

for cross-checking and Stig Majerus hit the box at 14:44 for cross-checking.

The Bears took full advantage, adding three power play goals to put the Wolves to bed.

It was a mismatch from

the start as the Bears pounded Ely goalie Lewey Powell with 55 shots on goal to just 22 for Ely. The loss drops Ely's record in the young season to 1-4.

The Wolves were set to

host Greenway on Thursday and travel to Wadena on Saturday before hosting their annual holiday tournament, set for Dec. 26-28.

WOLVES...Continued from page 1B

Chittum had a huge night as he poured in 41 points to lead the Wolves to a 82-50 rout over the Giants. Chittum helped Ely

jump to a quick 15-4 lead in the early going before Mesabi East got its footing and kept pace with the Wolves for the

rest of the half.

But the Wolves, who led 42-32 coming out of the break, finished the job by outpacing

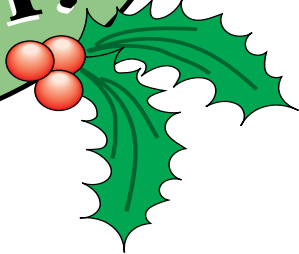
the Giants 40-18 the rest of the way. Junior point guard Jack Davies added several assists and 18 points on the

night, while seven other Ely players put additional points on the board.

The Wolves are set to

host their holiday tournament Dec. 27-28 and will return to regular action on Friday, Jan. 3, hosting North Woods.

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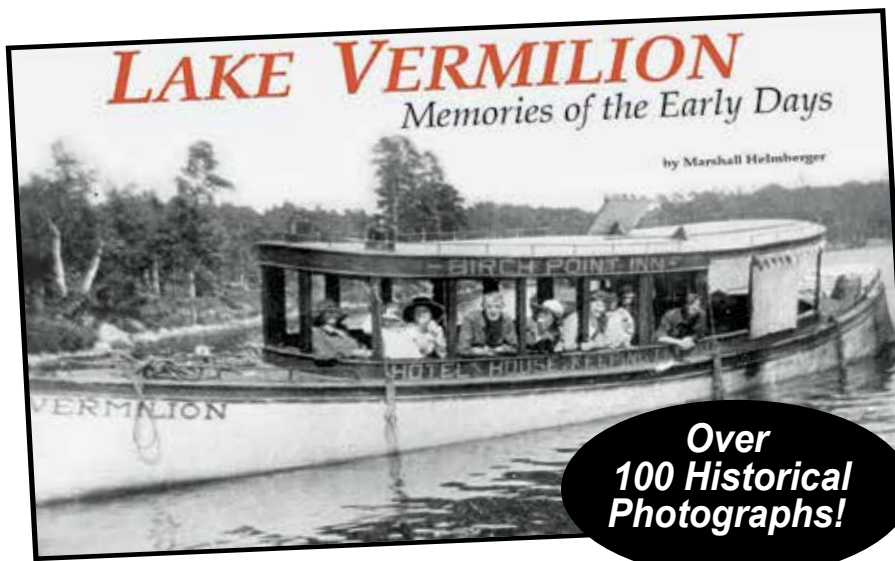
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CANINE CLASS

Nonprofit club hit with over \$25,000 in cleanup costs from water damage

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

Iron Range Dog Training Club seeking donations to help, insurance will not cover costs

VIRGINIA- When volunteers with the Iron Range Dog Training Club got together last August for a bi-monthly cleaning of their training center, they got a costly surprise. As they folded the rubber matting covering the floors back to do their regular maintenance, they found water and mold underneath. After further inspection, they found mold in the drywall.

“We stopped cleaning and got out of the building,” said club president Lisa Anderson, of Tower, “and contacted ServiceMaster to get the space professionally cleaned.”

But this was just the start of the struggle for the nonprofit club, which rents space at the Uptown Mall (formerly the Thunderbird Mall) in Virginia.

The club’s insurance company sent a claims specialist, who initially determined the water was coming from a faulty roof repair. Later inspections found the water was coming from a pipe, inside the wall, which was leaking.

The club’s insurance refused the claim for the cleaning costs and the damage to the mats, which were not repairable because the mold had infiltrated the porous surface. The insurer noted that since the club was merely a tenant, the responsibility for damages rest with the building’s owner. The bill for cleaning and removal of the mold topped \$15,000. The damaged mats were valued at \$10,000.

The club then approached management at the mall, which is owned by a large national chain.

“The mall’s ownership said the damage was due to a lack of reasonable upkeep and maintenance by the club,” said Anderson, although it’s not clear how regular upkeep could have prevented damage from a leaking pipe inside a wall. The club had an informal conversation with an attorney, who told them “we have



Above: The club paid to have the leaking water pipe inside a wall of the large single room space they lease. Left: Mold damage in the drywall was present throughout their leased space. submitted photos



Above: A dog learns how to navigate an agility obstacle during a class at the club. Left: Club president Lisa Anderson doing scent training with one of her award-winning German Shepherd’s Karma. submitted photos

a case,” but also said the cost of winning a judgment in court would be extremely costly. The *Timberjay* contacted mall management for comment, but did not receive a response prior to deadline.

The club has been renting the indoor space in the mall for 16 years, which has offered a safe spot to teach dogs, and their owners, general obedience and more advanced skills.

The club’s only income comes from class fees, and the club had to cancel fall classes due to the damage. The club is still paying \$1,200 a month rent to the mall, along with utility costs, and its reserves are nearly exhausted.

“We are struggling right now,” said Anderson. “Our club is a nonprofit. None of our instructors are paid, and none of our board members are paid.”

The club members are hoping to rebuild their reserves with donations from the public, especially from those whose dogs have benefited from the professional classes offered over the years, or those interested in attending future sessions.

The mall started letting the club use another smaller, currently vacant, space next to their location for classes starting last month. The club spent \$3,000 on mats to use in this space, and a new series of winter classes will be

gin in January.

The next session for puppy classes will begin sometime in January 2025. Classes cost \$110 for an eight-week session (nine including the pet owner orientation class). Contact club secretary/treasurer Patty Stanaway at 218-749-4335 to get more information.

Iron Range Dog Training Club

The club, which was formed over 50 years ago, offers training classes for general obedience, agility, rally, scent training, and more. Classes are offered on an ongoing basis and are taught by experienced volunteers. Classes work to create a better relationship between

the dog and their owner, along with teaching owners to understand why dogs behave the way they do, and how to advance behavior modification using positive, reward-based methods.

The club also sponsors competitions in agility and scent work. Before that, the group worked out of a rental space in Mt. Iron, as well as the old Miner’s Memorial building.

Hundreds of dogs and their owners complete classes every year, Anderson said.

“The Puppy 1, Puppy 2, and Beginner Obedience are the most popular for people wanting a well-mannered family pet,” she said. “We

also offer classes for people who want their dogs to participate in dog sports, like rally, obedience, agility, and scent work.”

Local vet and club vice-president Sandra Tuominen taught classes for 4-H members for years but had to stop when her vet practice became too busy. She still teaches a number of the core classes for the club.

Anderson teaches some of the puppy and beginning obedience courses. She also offers private sessions with reactive and aggressive dogs. She breeds and shows German Shepherds, who also compete in agility/rally and nose work competitions.

You can help

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Briefs

Tower man hit by skidding truck while standing on snowy, icy roadside

TOWER— A 62-year-old Tower man is lucky to be alive after he was struck by

an F-250 pickup that skidded in icy conditions on Hwy. 169 shortly before dusk on Monday. The individual, Michael James Blaede, was standing outside his Jeep Wrangler on the northbound side of the highway about two miles west of Tower at

the time of the accident.

When a southbound vehicle braked unexpectedly near Blaede’s vehicle, the F-250 behind it, driven by Catherine Helm-Clark, of Ely, went into a skid and struck Blaede, pinning him between the vehicles. Both

vehicles were reported to have received some damage in the collision.

The incident blocked traffic in both directions for about 45 minutes on Hwy. 169 as emergency officials worked to treat Blaede and clear away the vehicles in-

involved. The Tower Ambulance transported Blaede to Essentia Health in Virginia where he was reported to have received some painful but non-life-threatening injuries.

The Tower Ambulance, the Tower, Vermilion Lake,

and Virginia fire departments, St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office, and the State Patrol all responded to the scene.

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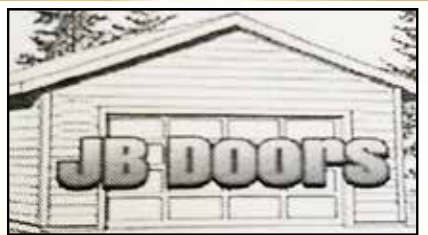
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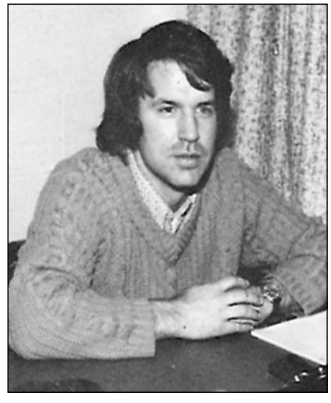
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612 13th St. S., Virginia 218-741-1515 545 E. Sheridan St., Ely 218-365-5256

Obituaries and Death Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE



Thomas J. Oyster
 Thomas J. Oyster, 84, of Markesan, Wis., passed away on Monday, Dec. 16, 2024, at his home. Per his wishes, no funeral service will be held. Interment will take place at Hillside Cemetery in Ripon, Wis. Arrangements are with Butzin-Marchant Funeral Home of Ripon.
 Tom was born on Jan. 5, 1940, in Green Bay, Wis., the son of

George W. Jr. and Margaret M. Jordan Oyster. He graduated from high school in Green Bay and went on to Ripon College for his undergraduate studies, eventually earning his master's degree in science at Purdue University.
 He started his teaching career in Menasha, Wis., before spending most of his career as a chemistry professor at Ripon College.
 In addition to his profound teaching career, Tom accomplished many other things in life. He also earned a computer science degree and developed computer systems and software for Green Lake and for Princeton High School, where he was the coordinator of computer activities. He worked in the computer science program at Ripon College, as well as at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn. Tom was also a commercial pilot, flying businessmen around the Green Lake area. He was an avid

ice-boater and enjoyed skiing and hiking in Colorado. Tom was an accomplished woodworker, often working on projects with his Amish friends in the area. In his spare time, he listened to classical music, spent time with his dogs throughout the years, and enjoyed a good happy hour with his many friends.
 Tom is survived by his dog, Colt; and many good friends.
 He was preceded in death by his parents, George Jr. and Margaret Oyster; sister, Nancy Oyster; and aunt, Leone Oyster.
Walter B. Moe
 Walter Bertram Moe, 89, of Lake Vermilion, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024, in the hospital. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Arrangements are with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

Irene Ritsche
 Irene Dahlquist Ritsche, 93, of Babbitt, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 14, 2024. A graveside service was held on Tuesday, Dec. 17 at the Argo Cemetery. A family celebration of life will be held at a later date. Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.
 She is survived by her daughters, Jan (Bill) Gutekunst and Sharon (Erick) Gresly; grandchildren, Joe (Stephane) Sullivan, Robin (Ryan) Egan, Erik (Caitlin) Gutekunst, Sara (fiance Scott) Gutekunst, Kirstin (Aaron) Magnuson and Ryan Nephew; many great-grandchildren; and niece, Barbara (Ron) Bunnell.

Notice of Election
MORCOM TOWNSHIP
 State of Minnesota, County of St. Louis

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that we will hold a township election on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at the Bear River School.

Offices open for election:
1 Supervisor, 3 year term
1 Treasurer, 2 year term

Filing period opens on Tuesday, December 31, 2024, and closes on Tuesday, January 14, 2025.

Contact Sasha Lehto at 218-969-5812 to make an appointment to file. Open office hours will be held from 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 12059 Hwy. 22, Cook, MN 55723 (Bear River Community Center/School) for filing as well.

Sasha Lehto, Town Clerk, 218-969-5812, morcomtownship@gmail.com

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 20 & 27, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

Vermilion Lake Township
Notice of Filings

Filings for the following offices will open on Tuesday, December 31, 2024 and close on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Supervisor 3-year term
 Treasurer. . . . 2-year term

Filing fee: \$2.00

Candidates: File Affidavit of Candidacy by appointment only at the clerk's office at the town hall. The clerk's office will be open the last day of filing from 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
 Call the town hall at 218-749-2902 with any questions and leave a message.

Election will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Frank Zobitz, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 20 & 27, 2024

FIELD TOWNSHIP
FILING NOTICE

Affidavits of candidacy may be filed with the Field Town Clerk at 9998 East Lind Rd., Angora from Tuesday, December 31, 2024, through Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 5 p.m. for the offices of:

1 Supervisor - 3-year term
 1 Treasurer- 2-year term

Filing Fee \$2.00.

Please call the clerk to make an appointment to file your application, 218-780-7012. The clerk's office will be also open Jan. 14 from 1-5 p.m. for filing.

Pat Chapman, Clerk, Field Township

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 20, 2024

Super Crossword

Answers

ALPHABET	ELLS	UTAHANS	
SUPINELY	GOOP	KINETIC	
PAPAH	EMINGWAY	UNEARTH	
SUPT	ON	ETHEL TITO	
TAR	GON	HOTELCHAIN	
HAS	FIG	NIN PALEO	
OSCAR	MADISON	SEASHORE	
OHARE	BUS STOP	STYLED	
PERISH	CHASTISE	ADELE	
SHED	NOVEMBER	RRAIN	
PEST	ROSA	SUBS	ANTS
ECHO	SOUNDING	SABU	
COAT	GLAMOURS	ILLBET	
ANGLES	RELIANT	AIRTO	
NOSE	SOUT	TANGODANCING	
INDIA	PAPER	AFC SHU	
CAEN	TENET	URL	LAMB
AMENDER	CHARLIE	HUNNAM	
MEDIATE	HALO	SAOPAULO	
ESSENCE	ABLE	PHONETIC	

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP
2025 CANDIDATE FILING NOTICE

Affidavits of Candidacy may be filed with the Town Clerk's office during regular office hours at the Greenwood Town Hall from December 31, 2024, through January 14, 2025. These are the first date and last date to file.

Office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9am to 1pm. Greenwood Township office will extend the hours for filing on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, to 9am to 5pm.

The filing fee is \$2.00.

The March 11, 2025, election will be for the following positions:
 Supervisor 4 - 3- year term, currently held by Rick Stoehr
 Treasurer - 2-year term, currently held by Jeff Maus

The following question will be on the March ballot, worded as follows:
"Shall Option B, providing for the appointment of the Clerk and Treasurer by the Town Board, be adopted for the government of Greenwood Township?"

The successful candidate for the Town Treasurer position shall take office only if Option B is abandoned at the election.

Debby Spicer, Clerk, Greenwood Township

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 13, 20 & 27, 2024 and Jan. 10, 2025

CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR
 is **LONGFELLOW**

One letter stands for another. In this sample, **A** is used for the three L's, **X** for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.

UPA VIEQ FIUAYACUFIX
 SICGAYC SYA UPVCA UPSU
 BACUYVQ UPA OHACUFVIC.
 - CHCSI CVIUSX

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SNOWFLAKES
 solution

CryptoQuip
 answer

It appears as though this staged satire has already commenced. I guess I'm late to the parody.

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

WORD SPIRAL

F		L
H		
S		B

Fill in the missing letters to reveal the nine-letter word that starts at one of the four corners and moves clockwise around the perimeter before ending in the center.

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WORD LADDERS

Can you go from WATER to LOWER in 6 words?
 Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

WATER

LOWER

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- Nuisance
- Emmy winner Alan
- Blond shade
- Actor Epps
- -do-well
- Female rabbit
- Biscuit type
- Poetic tribute
- Big bargains
- Himalayan land
- Baseball's Cobb
- Meager
- Boxing arbiters
- Hasten
- Flintstones' pet
- Capote nickname
- Very long time
- Itinerary word
- Long tale
- Boring routine
- Superman's alias
- Alphabetized list
- Yours truly
- Lauder of cosmetics
- Tyke
- Marseilles monarch
- Relating to the intellect
- Calendar abbr.
- Sandwich treat
- Exploits
- Away from WSW
- Canine cry
- Section
- "Lion" star
- Patel
- Stadium
- Like some parents
- Fizzy drink
- Cad
- Devious
- Conclusion
- Crazy Horse, for one
- Seed holders
- Send forth
- Stuffing herb
- Goodies
- Picnic interlopers
- Maui memento
- French diarist
- Anais
- Feedbag tidbit
- Hydrocarbon suffix
- Didn't lag
- Shill
- French pronoun
- Sea eagle
- Any time now
- L-Q bridge
- Tower city
- Always
- Try out
- Raw rock
- Solidify

DOWN

- 1 Seed holders
- 2 Send forth
- 3 Stuffing herb
- 4 Goodies
- 5 Picnic interlopers
- 6 Maui memento
- 7 "Lion" star
- 8 Stadium
- 9 Like some parents
- 10 Fizzy drink
- 11 Cad
- 16 Devious
- 20 Conclusion
- 22 Crazy Horse, for one
- 23 Penny
- 24 ACLU concerns
- 25 Time line period
- 26 Escapee
- 27 Roll call reply
- 29 French diarist
- 30 Feedbag tidbit
- 35 Hydrocarbon suffix
- 37 Didn't lag
- 39 Shill
- 40 French pronoun
- 41 Sea eagle
- 42 Any time now
- 43 L-Q bridge
- 44 Tower city
- 45 Always
- 46 Try out
- 49 Raw rock
- 50 Solidify

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GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	+		-		=	8		
-		+		+				
	+		-		=	7		
÷		+		×				
	+		×		=	32		
=		=		=				
1		16		72				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
 ★★★ GO FIGURE!

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SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SNOWFLAKES
 by Japheth Light

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦
 ♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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Super Crossword CLEAR COMMUNICATION

ACROSS

1 NATO has a special one for spelling out words over the radio
 9 Architectural wings
 13 Provo people
 20 In a lying, faceup position
 21 Sticky stuff
 22 Kind of energy
 23 Moniker for novelist Ernest
 25 Dig up
 26 Apt. overseer
 27 Yoko of music and art
 28 Singer Waters
 30 Puente of mambo
 31 Road coater
 34 Weed B- —
 36 Marriott, e.g.
 39 Doesn't lack
 42 Often-dried fruit
 44 Diarist Anaïs
 46 "Caveman diet"
 47 Messy roommate on "The Odd Couple"
 51 Dune locale
 56 Chicago hub

57 Dot on some transit maps
 59 Gave a coin
 60 Suffer ruin
 62 Admonish
 65 "Hello" singer
 66 Cast off skin
 68 1992 Guns N' Roses hit
 70 Extermination target
 73 Civil rights icon Parks
 76 Hoagies
 77 Extermination targets
 78 Method of measuring ocean depth
 83 Boy actor in 1937's "Elephant Boy"
 85 Raccoon kin
 86 Alluring attributes
 89 "No doubt!"
 93 Trig topics
 95 Dependent
 97 — -ground missile
 98 Barely beats
 101 Doing certain ballroom moves
 103 Spanish bar appetizers
 105 Born, to Luc
 106 Plant pouch
 107 — Zedong

108 Very thin material for book pages
 113 Steelers' gp.
 115 Mu — pork
 117 Normandy city
 118 Doctrine
 120 Internet ID
 122 Symbol of innocence
 126 One revising something
 129 Portrayer of Jax Teller on "Sons of Anarchy"
 133 Act as arbiter
 134 Symbol of innocence
 135 Brazil's largest city
 136 Soul
 137 Amply skilled
 138 Apt word spelled out by the first letters of eight answers in this puzzle

5 Le Duc — (1992-97 president of Vietnam)
 6 Nectar lover
 7 Sailors' saint
 8 Knotting up
 9 Ovum
 10 Actor Rob
 11 Averse (to)
 12 Whale's half-rise out of the water
 13 Island guitar
 14 "Sn" element
 15 Suffix with prop-
 16 Shrubland
 17 Sunny lobbies
 18 Mafia's Frank
 19 "Danke —"
 24 Around 12 p.m.
 29 Greek H's
 32 In a new way
 33 Backboard attachment
 35 Sentra maker
 37 Grasslands
 38 Actor sharing top billing
 39 Backboard attachment
 40 Tennis' Arthur
 41 Injury vestige
 43 Yak it up
 45 "That's false!"
 48 Pupil of Plato

49 French noble
 50 Rule for homework time, perhaps
 52 Operated by water under pressure
 53 Brand of fat substitute
 54 Ignited anew
 55 Blissful sites
 58 Bakery buys
 61 Hoagie
 63 Coll. in Dallas
 64 Wanes
 67 Football's Flutie
 69 Hollywood's Morales
 70 Praline bit
 71 Cut-rate, in adspeak
 72 Thick carpets
 74 Show filmed at 30 Rock
 75 Hebrew month
 79 Daytime nap
 80 "How — Your Mother"
 81 Pitcher Ryan
 82 African nation whose capital is Bamako
 84 Boil briefly
 87 Very angry
 88 — -Caps

90 Hat edge
 91 Italian peak
 92 African nation whose capital is Lomé
 94 Lava or Dial
 96 NFL scores
 99 Stymied
 100 Sticky stuff
 102 Some small batteries
 104 Japanese green tea
 108 "Veni," translated
 109 Monikers
 110 Skillful feats
 111 Navel type
 112 Fixed-up building
 114 Brittle
 116 Arm bones
 119 Like giraffes
 121 Emmy winner Remini
 123 "Sometimes you feel like —"
 124 African nation whose capital is Conakry
 125 Coll. hotshot
 127 Football's Marino
 128 Lister's abbr.
 130 Caviar source
 131 "Yoo- —!"
 132 1995-2006 TV channel

DOWN

1 Deadly vipers
 2 Island feast
 3 Musical mark for "extremely softly"
 4 "Drive South" singer John

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20									21					22							
23									24					25							
26							27				28		29				30				
				31	32	33		34		35		36				37	38				
39	40	41		42		43		44		45		46									
47			48					49			50		51				52	53	54	55	
56							57					58			59						
60					61		62					63	64		65						
				66			67			68						69					
70	71	72			73		74	75				76					77				
78					79					80	81	82			83		84				
85							86						87	88		89			90	91	92
93						94				95					96		97				
98							99	100			101				102						
108	109	110	111							112		113		114		115		116			
117							118					119		120		121		122	123	124	125
126					127	128				129			130			131	132				
133										134					135						
136										137					138						

King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Go Figure! answers

6 + 9 - 7 = 8
 - + + +
 5 + 4 - 2 = 7
 + + x
 1 + 3 x 8 = 32
 = = =
 1 16 72

Word Spiral Answer

BASHFULLY

CryptoQuote answer

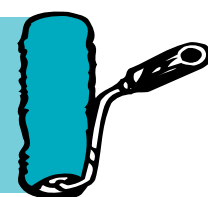
The only interesting answers are those that destroy the questions.
 - Susan Sontag

Weekly SUDOKU Answer

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



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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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Merry Christmas, Enjoy The New Year!
from Aronson Boatworks

Winning Artist • Amelie Zak
Grade 2

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town!
from Vermilion Land Office

Winning Artist • Zaija Schroeder
Grade 4

Christmas Is A Wonderous Time!
from **COMO GAS**

Winning Artist • Azalya Deegan
Grade 2

Have A Holly, Jolly Christmas
from Tip Top Chimney

Artist • Payton Edwards
Grade 3

Deck the Halls & Enjoy the Holidays!
from Tower-Soudan Agency

Winning Artist • Sadie Snyder
Grade 1

Season's Greetings!
from Broten Construction

Winning Artist • Hux Broten
Grade 1

Have A Very Happy Christmas!
from BIC Realty

Winning Artist • William Lafave
Grade 5

Enjoy Favorite Christmas Treats
from Waschke Family Chevrolet-Cook

Winning Artist • Grayson Sandberg
Grade 1

Winning Artist • Boone Broten
Grade 3