



Wishing all our readers a safe & happy New Year!

Please note: The Timberjay office will be closed through Jan. 3. There will be no paper published on Jan. 3

# the TIMBERJAY



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

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## PUBLIC ART

# Stunning new sculpture

Three years in the process, "The Voyageurs" finally installed at Whiteside Park

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- After three years of city council meetings, public hearings, COVID-19, and a foundry fire, the 14-foot statue of "The Voyageurs" has finally found its forever home in Whiteside Park. The statue is the gift of Dr. William and Holly Rom and is dedicated to Ely's wilderness canoe guides and to the memory of Bill and Barb Rom, founders of Canoe Country Outfitters.

Standing at the pedestal for "The Voyageurs," the front of Canoe Country Outfitters on Sheridan St. is clearly visible on Sheridan St. The long-standing Ely business was founded by William Rom's parents, Bill and Barb Rom, in the 1950s.

The bronze statue arrived from the foundry in Wyoming on Wednesday last week and was lifted onto its pedestal Thursday by a city of Ely crane. William Rom was on hand along with workers from the foundry for the installation.

Right: The 14-foot-long sculpture "The Voyageurs" by renowned American sculptor Vic Payne was installed at Whiteside Park on Dec. 12. The artwork is the gift of William and Holly Rom.

photo by C. Clark

### A long time coming

"It was ten years ago. Holly and I were visiting an art gallery in Sante Fe that had a bronze sculpture of a birch

See...SCULPTURE pg. 10



## TRAGEDY

# Local mother of five killed in hit and run

FBI investigating incident, which occurred on Vermilion Reservation

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

TOWER— Tragedy has struck a Bois Forte family again as Amanda Boshey was killed in a hit-and-run accident that took place on the Vermilion Reservation shortly after 9 p.m. on Tuesday evening, Dec. 17.

Boshey, 38, a Bois Forte band member, was walking along Lake Vermilion Reservation Road near Tibbetts Trail when she was struck and killed. Tibbetts Trail is roughly a quarter of a mile west of the turnoff into Fortune Bay Resort Casino. Boshey lived on Farm Road, which is roughly one mile



Amanda Boshey in a selfie with one of her sons.

east of Fortune Bay. The FBI is heading up the investigation because it took place on the reservation. As of late last Friday, no one had come forward

See...DEATH pg. 10

## SCHOOLS

# Tower charter school finances looking good

Enrollment increases, grants, leave district with a growing budget reserve

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

TOWER— At a time when other area school districts are struggling with lower enrollment and worsening finances, the results of the annual audit at the Vermilion Country School show a school that is heading in the opposite direction.

The downward trend in most schools, which began with the outbreak of the

COVID-19 pandemic, has caught the attention of educators around the country. As *Education Week* reported in July, "In recent years, a convergence of trends in education and broader society have contributed to widespread enrollment losses in districts of all shapes, sizes, and locales. The topic of enrollment decline has become a fixture

See...BUDGET pg. 9



## HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Above: Tower-Soudan sixth-grader Clementine O'Brien lent some comic relief as the upper elementary students sang "Mr. Grinch."

Lower left: Members of the Ely Elementary's fourth-grade class performed during their holiday concert.

Below: North Woods Elementary studentes Kamden Ableman (back) and Benaiah Hodge. staff photos

# Songs of the SEASON



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## Community notices

### 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](http://www.tinyurl.com/3cas7bp2).

### Upcoming dates and deadlines for UWNEMN activities and funding

Jan. 6: Deadline for local high school seniors to submit their entries in United Way of Northeastern Minnesota's Youth United Contest. Up to \$10,000 in scholarships will be awarded! Learn more at [www.unitedwaynemn.org/youth-united](http://www.unitedwaynemn.org/youth-united).

Jan. 9: Deadline for local nonprofits to apply for 2025 United Way of Northeastern Minnesota funding. 2025 funding priority areas include: Youth Opportunity, Healthy Community, Community Resiliency, and Financial Security. Learn more at [www.unitedwaynemn.org/fund-distribution](http://www.unitedwaynemn.org/fund-distribution).

Jan. 17-19: United Way of Northeastern Minnesota's United for Veterans Retreat at Grand Ely Lodge. 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](http://www.unitedwaynemn.org/ufv-retreat) or call 218-215-2424. Room availability guaranteed until Dec. 17.

Jan. 30: 17th annual Power of the Purse event to benefit United Way of Northeastern Minnesota's local operation of the Imagination Library program. Get your \$50 ticket while they last to enjoy great food, play exciting games, and win high-end prizes. The theme of this year's event, presented by Cleveland-Cliffs Inc., is Night at the Movies. Learn more at [www.unitedwaynemn.org/pop](http://www.unitedwaynemn.org/pop).

## MINNESOTA DISCOVERY CENTER

### "Get to Know Your Neighbors" at MDC through March

CHISHOLM- The Minnesota Discovery Center is excited to announce the launch of its debut pop-up exhibition series, located in the museum's main hall. This new initiative will showcase smaller, curated exhibits, offering visitors a chance to explore unique cultural stories, artifacts, and histories from across Minnesota.

The first exhibit, "Get to Know Your Neighbors," is a powerful collaboration with the Bois Forte Heritage Center and Cultural Museum. It shines a spotlight on the rich cultural heritage, language, and traditions of the Ojibwe people.

The exhibit features a selection of exquisite Ojibwe artifacts, including intricate beadwork, ceremonial items, and other handcrafted pieces. Each item on display is a testament to the skill, resilience, and deep cultural connection of the Ojibwe people to the land and its resources. The exhibit tells stories of survival, strength, and the Ojibwe people's enduring influence on the state of Minnesota.

"We are truly honored to work with the Bois Forte Heritage Center and Cultural Museum on this important project," said Allyse Freeman, Museum Curator of the Minnesota Discovery Center. "By us working directly with and learning from our Indigenous partners, we can center their voices in telling their own stories about their connections to our region. It was a wonderful experience to work with them again on a project and we hope to have another in the works soon."

The "Get to Know Your Neighbors" exhibit will be on display for a limited time, offering visitors a chance to experience the powerful stories and



artistic expressions of the Ojibwe people. From the intricate designs of beadwork to the symbolic significance of ceremonial objects, each piece highlights the Ojibwe nation's enduring traditions and their connection to the land, their families, and their communities.

The Minnesota Discovery Center invites everyone to join in this cultural journey and explore the stories that

have shaped Minnesota's diverse history. It will be up through March 2025.

## FILM FESTIVAL

### "Boundary Waters" set to highlight Ely Film Festival

by CATIE CLARK

Festival passes on sale now, prices go up in January

ELY- The Ely Film Festival has announced its upcoming cinematic lineup, which includes the long-anticipated full-length feature film "Boundary Waters," filmed in the Ely area in May of last year.

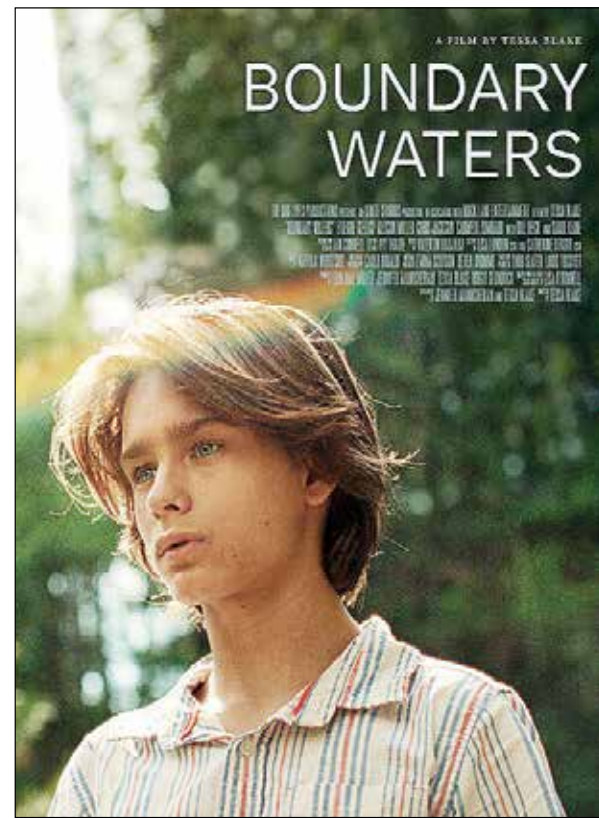
The film will be one of 108 films of varying lengths earmarked for showing during the popular festival, set for March 13-16.

"Boundary Waters" is a 98-minute coming-of-age film about a 12-year-old boy named Michael who tries to

uncover a family secret, the violent rape of his mother. The movie, told from Michael's perspective, is based on the 2015 novel "Closed Doors" by award-winning author Lisa O'Donnell.

Michael's house in the film made use of a residence on Ely's Harvey St., just uphill from the Post Office, with interior artwork by Ely artist Cecilia Rolondo. Most of the extras in the film are from the Ely area.

Jacob White, Ely Film Festival Director, told the *Timberjay* that the sale of festival passes (not individual tickets) would go live on Friday, Dec. 20, at [elystatetheater.org/ely-film-festival](http://elystatetheater.org/ely-film-festival). Individual passes are \$85 under the early-bird rate. Pass prices are set to go up on Dec. 31. Tickets for individual films are not on sale yet.





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Grade 3

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from Breitung Township

"Think outside  
of the box"



Winning Artist • Parker Salmela  
Kindergarten

### Have A Fun-Filled Holiday

from Zups-Tower



Winning Artist • Brayden Purkat  
Grade 3



BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

# Breitung honors late police chief Jim Hill

SUDAN- The Breitung Police Department declared Dec. 19, 2024, as Jim Hill Day, in honor of the long-time Breitung Police Chief who passed away earlier this year.

At the Dec. 19 town board meeting, Chief Dan Reing said he wished to honor Hill's legacy.

"He was here for over 30 years. His whole career," noted Reing. "He brought us into the modern age," said Reing.

The department officially retired Badge 136 and presented a letter of recognition to Jim's wife, Pam Hill, who attended the meeting along with members of Jim's extended family.

"Godspeed Jim," Reing said. "The department is in good hands. We will take the watch from here."

Chairman Tim Tomsich said that when Hill took over the department, it was only a part-time operation. "He started in 1980," Tomsich said. "Before Dan Reing was born!"

"We had no cars or a building. He did a great job."

Reing said November had been a relatively slow month with 59 calls. The department is working on a case of identity theft and check fraud. "A person ran up \$2,500 worth of



From left: Clara Roy, Bradley Roy, Pam Hill, Patricia Roy, Toody Roy, and Paul Roy. photo by J. Summit

check fraud," he said. "We have two adult suspects."

Reing also reminded people in Tower and Sudan to move their cars off the streets at night when there is snow. He told the town board he has issued one ticket to a

repeat offender, and that the ticket has not been paid. The department may have that vehicle towed next time, he said. He noted that in this particular case, the owner of the vehicle had been issued warnings multiple times over several years.

The board approved the 2025 police department contract with the city of Tower. The contract includes the usual increases for benefits and payroll costs, and the city did agree to cover half the cost of 500 hours of part-time staffing. The township had been paying this cost previously. The city does pay the cost of part-time staffing needed for the Fourth of July festivities. Tomsich said the township needs to look at the department's time spent in Tower versus Breitung, and possibly adjust the contract in the future. The current contract assumes time is spent equally. "But the ratio has changed," Tomsich said.

The township will pay about \$1,200 to have updated badges and patches made for the police department. With the adoption of a new state seal, departments across the state are being required to update their designs so it does not include the old state seal. The department's new design was approved by the county attorney.

The board also approved hiring a new part-time officer, Ashlan Barthorpe, contingent on passing background checks. Barthorpe is a full-time officer in the Babbitt Police Department.

Reing asked the board to start thinking about replacing the Ford SUV squad car, which is a 2017 with 92,000 miles. He estimated the cost at around \$50,000, on the state bid price, plus a few thousand to have lights, electronics, and decals installed. The lead time to get a new vehicle generally has been between six and 12 months, Reing said.

The township has \$42,000 in the squad replacement account and then would also have proceeds from the sale of the used vehicle.

Reing said the squad is in good shape. He said he will get the board estimates of its trade-in value, along with the cost of a new vehicle.

The department also got permission to apply for a grant for a side-by-side that would be used by the police and fire department. While the grant would cover the cost of the UTV, the township would need to purchase about \$12,000 of accessories.

"With the new ATV campground coming in," Reing said, "it would be nice to have this for access to the trails. We will be seeing more calls out on the trails."

See BREITUNG, pg. 5

ELY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Library windows to be featured on WDIO news on December 31

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- WDIO channel ten from Duluth was at the the Ely Public Library on Friday, Dec. 20, to film a piece on the library's new stained-glass windows.

The library recently added two new pieces to the stained-glass collection that occupies its clerestory windows. The stained-glass windows depict events of Ely's history and culture. The new wolf window was installed in August and the walleye window was installed in October.

"WDIO wanted to do a piece on the windows after the last window was put in but their schedule got pushed back," Heinrich told the *Timberjay*.

Some of the stained-glass artists were also on hand for the TV station's visit. WDIO co-anchor Baihly Warfield conducted the interview of Heinrich and the assembled artists.

Warfield told the *Timberjay* that the piece on the library's stained glass is tentatively scheduled to air on the 4:30 p.m. news on Dec. 31.



WDIO anchor Baihly Warfield (right) interviewed Ely Public Library Director Rachel Heinrich on Friday, Dec. 20, as camera operator Kyle Aune filmed the TV station's piece on the library's recent additions to its stained glass windows photo by C. Clark.

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# A LOOK BACK AT 2024

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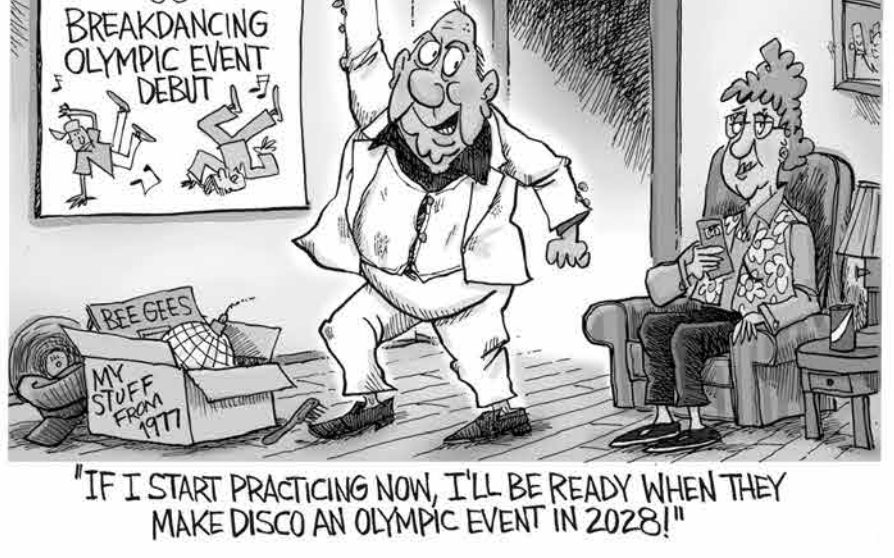
NON-ELECTION CARTOONS DRAWN BY JOE HELLER

WE ALL COULD USE A BREAK!

AS THE YEAR BEGINS, MORE SCHOOLS ARE BANNING CELLPHONES



BREAKDANCING OLYMPIC EVENT DEBUT



'TIKTOK IS SINISTER AND NEEDS TO BE SOLD, OR WE WILL BAN IT.' - U.S. CONGRESS





Commentary

# The real cause of the drone invasion?

Despite its status as a small local news outlet, the *Timberjay* is well known in Minnesota for the quality of its investigative reporting. As such, in response to reader concerns, we have looked into an issue of grave concern to all Minnesotans, namely the drone crisis in New Jersey. Over the last two months, hundreds of thousands of New Jersey-



**CATIE CLARK**

ified as an attraction for unwanted drones,” said Dr. Linsey Luftkopf, Professor of Geodemography at Minnehonkhonk State College. “First, New Jersey is the densest populated state in the Union. The answer may be right there — more people means more drones. The so-called drone invasion

can be easily explained because the state with the highest population density should also have the highest drone density. When someone finally noticed, it set off a panic.

“There are alternative explanations equally as likely,” Luftkopf told the *Timberjay*. “For example, Statistician Henriette de Tete-Vide at Sans Souci Institute has made an excellent correlation with a regression coefficient of 0.98 between drone sightings and the areas where the most automobiles are stolen in New Jersey. New Jersey has the highest auto theft rate in the Western hemisphere, so this is a compelling avenue of inquiry for explaining the drones.

“De Tete-Vide has crafted a robust and elegant set of spatial statistics; however, I’m afraid that de Tete-Vide’s results are an embarrassing case of correlation does not equal causation. De Tete-Vide overlooked the simple impossibility of her hypothesis. Earthling

technology for building drones is not advanced enough to silently steal all those cars. Only one group can make drones that can silently and swiftly steal autos weighting thousands of pounds, and that’s the aliens. Yes, it’s plausible, but it’s not probable. Think about it! The aliens have no need for our primitive gravity-bound cars and trucks. They have UFOs, which drive better, go faster, defy gravity, and look cool. No, our alien visitors have no motivation to steal our junk.

“A more plausible correlation is the one suggested by Maurice Kaufmann at NMBY,” Luftkopf explained. He said the competing theories are currently in the peer-review process. “New Jersey has the highest density of shopping malls in the world. Frankly, this hypothesis is not as strong as the others because the correlation depends on data from Philadelphia. But Philadelphia is across the river in Pennsylvania, and it’s just not scientifically valid to use data that’s crossed the Delaware.

“The hypothesis that appears most promising is based on a correlation with a regression coefficient almost as good as de Tete-Vide’s,” Luftkopf enthused. “Aufstossen at the Hoboken Institute just presented this result at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco on Dec. 13. He has shown a strong relationship between the number of drone sightings and the density of diners.

New Jersey has the highest density of diners in the country, so this data not only has statistical rigor but also satisfies Occum’s Razor as the most straightforward and logical explanation.

“Aufstossen’s hypothesis is currently being tested by researchers exploring promising lines of inquiry. For example, Moukowsky at Carnegie is currently gathering data on whether aliens prefer to eat at diners. Mori at Yale is looking into whether the density of diners correlates to other physical phenomena that might be masking the real reason for the drone invasion. For example, one of the things she’s looking at is the possible relationship between diners and the restaurants serving take-out sushi because, according to secret government studies, we all know that aliens are especially fond of California rolls. Of course, because this is real science done by real experts, the news media will continue to report on it incorrectly, which furthers the denigration of science and education on the national level.”

Given that these and other theories are already the subject of academic study, with results already being published in peer-reviewed journals, the *Timberjay* asked Luftkopf if he had an opinion on why this information isn’t widely known.

“There’s a whole separate pile of problems with the reporting of science,” Luftkopf replied. “I at-

tend the AGU meeting in San Francisco every year, and it’s mobbed by stupid journalists who have never even bothered to memorize the periodic table. Can you imagine? I’ve spoken to many of these so-called science writers, and not a single one has ever demonstrated basic scientific knowledge, like identifying the two stable isotopes of bromine.

“So, these ignorant journalists show up, and, of course, they report on the least important but most sensationalized research. That means essential findings like Aufstossen’s correlation of diners with drones get overlooked. At the same time, some Luddite reporter writes another story on how the Yellowstone super volcano is going to explode, wipe out all the billionaire homes in Jackson Hole, and reverse global warming.

“It’s the press that’s the problem,” Luftkopf concluded. “They are more concerned with writing click-bait headlines and sensationalized stories than investigating real news. The panic all this bad journalism causes is part of the well-documented phenomenon of mass hysteria and the psychology of crowd delusion. Seriously, the media haven’t gotten anything right ever since Louis Pasteur invented the cotton gin.”

## BREITUNG...Continued from page 3

### Other business

In other business, the board:

- Noted that water/sewer rates will be rising for Soudan residents. The exact amount will be set at the Soudan Water Commission meeting in late December.

- Heard that the township will be meeting with IR-RRR to discuss any changes needed in next year’s infrastructure project due to the lack of CDBG funding.

- Heard that planning continues on the loop trail

project. The route has been mostly finalized, and the FAA has approved the section that will be outside of the airport fence area. The township and city are still working on grant possibilities for the local match portion, which is estimated to be between \$60,000 and \$70,000, split between the two communities.

- Is still working on final paperwork for the township’s application to FEMA to cover flood-related costs. The township needs to set up a federal Sam.gov account to

receive the funding and has run into some difficulties because the township has gone by several iterations of its name, i.e. Breitung Township, Town of Breitung, Township of Breitung, over the years. Clerk Amber Zak is working on resolving the issue but told the board that the process has been complicated. “They are very, very particular,” she said.

- Passed a resolution to formally set up a township water department and to hire Jorgine Gornick as account manager at a salary

of \$900/month, from January through March. At that point, they will have a better idea of the time required for the job and may adjust the salary. Gornick is currently township treasurer but is retiring from that job effective at the end of March. She has told the township she would continue as the water account manager after she leaves her treasurer spot.

- The board reviewed township account balances and will decide next month if they need to transfer funds between any accounts. The

township receives the second half of its tax levy in December. Overall, township revenue is a little higher than its disbursements, though some accounts are showing deficits. They also discussed updating the equipment replacement plan.

- Supervisor Matt Tichel discussed the reasons the wastewater board was canceling the PFA loan that Breitung had applied for main sewer line improvements as part of last year’s forced main project upgrade. The wastewater board was

able to fund the \$284,500 cost from its reserves. Issues had come up because of right-of-way and easement ownership issues that hadn’t been resolved since the original easements had been issued by the DM&IR railroad, but those had expired, so the land reverted to private landowners. The easements are being reworked but weren’t ready in time for the paperwork required for the PFA loan.

### Soar To New Heights In 2025 from ReMax-The Lake Country



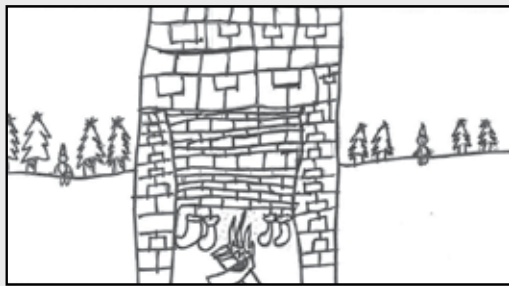
Winning Artist • Everett Crain  
Grade 4

### Enjoy The Gifts Of The Season from Park State Bank



Winning Artist • Addie Holter  
Grade 2

### Wishes For A Warm & Peaceful Holiday from Trancheff’s Cabins



Artist • Ellen Trancheff  
Grade 2

### Deck The Halls With Joy from Zup’s Grocery Store in Cook



Winning Artist • Luke Pretti  
Grade 6

### Enjoy The Gifts Of The Season from Park State Bank



Winning Artist • Addie Holter  
Grade 2

### Best Wishes To You In 2025 from Barb Hegg, Vermilion Land Office



Winning Artist • Sidney Gabrielson  
Kindergarten

*the*  
**TIMBERJAY**

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Week of Dec. 30

**Monday**  
Embarrass Al-Anon Family Group- Hope Lutheran Church, 5088 Hwy. 21, 6 p.m.

**Tuesday**  
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5 p.m. New location in the old St. James Church building. Next food shelf day is 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.



**TSHS weekly winner**  
TOWER- The winner of the \$100 cash prize for Charlemagne's 52 Club Week 15 is Brian Forsberg of Ely.

**History Tidbit:** In 1866 one of the first white settlements near Tower-Soudan was the village of Winston, established by prospectors searching for gold. The village of Winston soon boasted three saloons, a hotel and log buildings. The village was named after A.M. Winston, a land speculator from St. Paul, but when no significant deposits of gold were found, the town was abandoned.

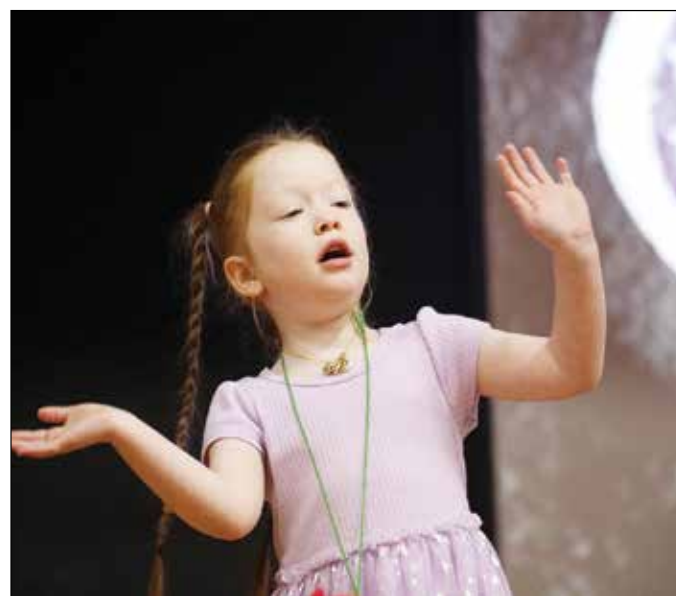
**Bookmobile stops**  
REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesdays: Jan. 15; Feb. 5 & 26; March 19; April 9 & 30. Stops include: Britt (Sand Lake Storage): 9 - 9:30 a.m.; Bois Forte (Boys & Girls Club): 11 - 11:30 a.m.; Greenwood (Town Hall): 12 - 1 p.m.; Soudan (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 go online to alslib.info.

TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY

Music for the season



Tower-Soudan Elementary held their winter concert on Dec. 19. Students sang a mix of new and old holiday favorites, plus some patriotic pieces. They also shared a song that the students sing at their monthly assembly that celebrates student achievement. Left: Draya Feather played trumpet in the Tower-Soudan-Northeast Range Elementary Band. Middle left: Students in grades one and two sang a song about candy canes. Below: Kindergarten student Estella Lynn danced as the class sang "Oh, I Love America." Bottom: Grades three through six performed a riff on "Frosty the Snowman." photos by J. Summit



Operation Santa has a lot of people to thank this year!



Once again, this was a very busy year for the Operation Santa Toy Drive, with numbers pretty similar to our record number of children served last year. This is double the number of families and children we were serving 10-15 years ago. Operation Santa started back in 1991 as a way to purchase gifts for children whose families used the Tower Area Food Shelf, and has grown along with the needs of families who use the food shelf.

But amazingly, the donations this year more than kept up with the need. We had plenty of toys for all ages, gifts cards, warm clothing, and toiletry items for every child on our list. And some extra clothing and other gift items were donated to the 55-plus students at the Vermilion Country School.

Cash donations were used to purchase additional toys and gift cards, to fill in some gaps. We also had enough to purchase small gifts for the senior citizens who use the food shelf, who all received gift bags with candy, cookies, and other small treats.

We would like to thank Lake Country Power's Operation Roundup® for their generous donation to the Tower-Soudan Civic Club. This grant was used to purchase warm items such as hats, mittens, socks, pajamas, sweatshirts, and blankets. We would also like to thank the Tower-Soudan Civic Club for their generous donations to the drive this year.

Also, thank you to the Timberjay for the use of the storage and workspace in the building.

A special thank you to all our volunteers!

- Kathy Lovgren
- Jeff Lovgren
- Corky Eloranta
- Catherine Farley
- Corrine Hill
- Julie Horihan
- Elaine McGillivray
- Mary Oman
- Karen Saarela
- Jodi Summit
- Marshall Helmberger
- Michelle Toutloff
- Sarah Flores
- Desirae, Katie, Eva, and Elsie Larson

Donations came from:

We would like to thank the following individuals, churches, and businesses for their generous donations of toys, cash, and gift cards this year: *We apologize if we missed listing anyone, as you can see, there were a LOT of donations that came in over the last four weeks!*

- Tower-Soudan Civic Club
- Wendy and Chimp Tuominen
- Vermilion Dream Quilters
- Bergetta and Mike Indihar
- Margaret Jarka
- Faye and Dan Mobilia
- Laura and Ron Alarcon
- Mary Ann and Shannon Wycoff
- Bob Berg
- Paul & Carol Knuti
- Angie Gurius
- Patrons of the Embarrass Pancake Breakfast
- Little Church of Vermilion Lake Township
- Richard and Kay Hanson
- Dennis and Elaine Passi
- Peter and Colette Johnson
- Ron and Sue Norha

- Jeremiah and Pamela Kearney
- Joan and Jeffrey Jaus
- Cliff and Jean Wagenbach
- Andy and Beth Urban
- Judy and Emmanuel Sundahl
- Faye and Nick Tekautz
- Kathy and Frank Siskar
- Paul Pishler
- Tom Mesojedec
- Michelle and Dave Toutloff
- Tower-Soudan Agency
- Mary Shedd and Steve Wilson
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church
- Lori and Steve Vukelich
- Chuck and Nancy Tekautz
- Laurie and Rolf Anderson
- Val Leciejewski
- Ellie and Dick Larmouth
- George Stefanich
- Jet Galonski
- Cindy Pettinelli
- Amy Banks
- Wayne Suoja
- Karen Saarela
- Susan Krause
- Joe and Gina Geiss
- George and Barb Peyla
- Tom King
- Jeff and Carol Maus
- Aronson Boatworks
- Annette and Paul Herring
- St. Martin's Catholic Church
- Jim and Cathy Wright
- Elaine and Peter McGillivray
- Vermilion Arch Archibald
- Laura Rosendahl
- The Lunch Bunch Ladies
- Vermilion Lumber
- Debbie Ukkola
- Steve and Kathy Bradach
- And many anonymous donations!

**Jodi Summit and Kathy Lovgren**  
Operation Santa Co-Chairs



ELY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Two Ely teams at the First Lego Robotics Challenge

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- The Ely Public Schools sent two teams to compete in the First Lego Robotics Challenge in Hermantown on Saturday, Dec. 14. This was the seventh year that ISD 696 has participated in the competition.

The participating teams had to program a Lego Spike Prime robot to solve an assigned mission. In addition, the teams were required to research and give a presentation on a real-world topic related to this year's theme, which was "submerged."

At the competition, Ely's two teams, "The Sassy Sea Otters" and "Let's Get Kraken," competed with 36 others from the region. The Sassy Sea Otters were mostly seventh graders. Their presentation was on ghost nets, ocean fishing nets that break free and float through the ocean snaring wildlife. The Let's Get Kraken team consisted entirely of fifth graders. They presented their solution to help alleviate plastics in the ocean by preventing them from getting into rivers using filters on storm drains.



ISD 696 sent two teams this year to the First Lego Robotics Challenge on Dec. 14. Standing, left-to-right: Grayson Moen, Taran Scarbrough, Liam Kurnava, Max Gregory, Ava Wohnen, Eleanor Nyquist, Owen Kurnava, Hokan Lunn, Coach Chris Hegenbarth, Coach Peter McClelland. Kneeling, left-to-right: Gordon Smith, Ari Hart, Katelyn Blaeser, Charlie Hway, Coach A. J. Ostlund. submitted photo

The First Lego Robotics regional competitions are held in December every year. The teams began working on their projects and programming skills in September, meeting twice a week plus a

few Saturdays.

The Let's Get Kraken team members were Gordon Smith, Ari Hart, Katelyn Blaeser, Charlie Hway, and Talon Fritz. The Sassy Sea Otters team members were

Eleanor Nyquist, Max Gregory, Ava Wohnen, Hoakan Lunn, Grayson Moen, Taran Scarbrough, Owen Kurnava, and Liam Kurnava.

Peter McClelland and Chris Hegenbarth coach

Ely's First Lego Robotics teams. McClelland commented on the teams' performances: "Both had nice solid performances. I'm very happy with them. We scored well."

## AROUND TOWN



Left: Ely's History Happy Hour for December held an ugly sweater competition at its presentation on the Medieval European Christmas demon Krampus. The winners were, from left-to-right: third-place Kelly Cramer with a National Lampoon Christmas shirt, first-place Jesse Olson dressed as Krampus, and second-place Anne Jackson with a Christmas bird count sweater. submitted photo

Above: The Ely Folk School made dozens of cookies for its annual cookie swap. Cookie makers John Kopp (left), Anna Heil (center), and Laurie Angell (right) show off their cookie decorating skills. photo by C. Clark

## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

### 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 northern-

lakesarts.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. 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, Jan. 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.

## 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



at the year's ending give thoughts to loving the earth

respect nature's gifts

## 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 Ledgerock Church, 1515 E. Camp St., Ely.

BABBITT AA - 7 p.m.

Thursdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church.

AL-ANON - Sundays

8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's

Catholic Church in Ely.

BABBITT AL-ANON -

Thursdays, 7 p.m., at

Woodland Presbyterian

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.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Cook City Council tackles lengthy end-of-year agenda

## Final levy approval far easier than baseball field and picnic table budget requests

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- In the final ground for outgoing Mayor Harold Johnston, the Cook City Council on Thursday handled a diverse range of issues from baseball field improvements to electric charging access and picnic tables to EMS services, and gave final approval for the 2025 city budget and tax levy increase.

The budget was an issue as Cook Friends of the Parks (FOTP) representative Tammy Palmer addressed the council about a desired safety improvement at the ball fields at the Doug Johnson Recreation Area, the installation of new caps on the top of the ballfield fences to prevent injuries to players who may collide with them when chasing hit balls.

There appeared to be miscommunication about who would pay for the improvement. While FOTP has been raising funds for sorely needed maintenance for the ball fields, there was disagreement over whether the city had said they would pay for the capping during past discussions.

That there was a belief the city would pay for the capping was confirmed by Mayor-elect Dan Manick, who coaches youth baseball and whose daughter, Mallory Manick, supervises the program.

“My daughter’s kind of in charge of the baseball program, and she came up to me all excited,” Manick said. “She was so excited that the city was going to pay for the capping.”

But the council and City Administrator Theresa Martinson indicated that they weren’t aware of any commitment of funds by the city to cover the capping costs, and there weren’t any funds in the current year’s recreation budget, or next year’s, that were allocated for the

project.

A solution discussed by Martinson and Palmer that both presented to the council for consideration at the meeting would be to reallocate unexpended salary money in the recreation budget, roughly estimated at this point at around \$10,000, to pay for the capping. In the normal budget management process, any funds left at the end of the year would be rolled over into the city’s general fund for 2025. Palmer said that reallocating the money for capping would keep money that had been intended for recreation from being lost and used for other city expenses.

Council member Ron Bushbaum expressed dismay over the lack of planning and the failure to include the request in the normal budget creation process followed by the city. A comment from a subsequent discussion about buying additional picnic tables for the park succinctly summed up his thoughts about the last-minute requests.

“Discussion should be in August,” Bushbaum said. “As a council member who’s elected by the city’s people, last minute things like this I’m hoping are coming to an end and that we are starting to plan better, and that’s going to be the goal moving forward.”

Deputy Clerk Dawn Kehoe noted that the city has a project guideline form asking for detailed information that should be filled out for funding requests like this.

“That has been given to Friends of the Parks,” she said. “I don’t know if it was you (Palmer) specifically or not, but there have been many members that have come to city hall and that has been given to them.”

Councilor Jodi Bixby said that the discussion was evidence that communication and recordkeeping of meetings and discussions with FOTP about recreation

needs to be improved.

“We need a note taker at meetings. Everyone needs to agree on how they are written and what is put in them, so then when we have conversations like this, we have documentation of what’s said at meeting,” Bixby said.

Similar themes came up during discussion of a request from Palmer that the city fund the additional cost for four picnic tables instead of the two for which all agreed \$3,000 was allocated in the budget. Palmer noted that the city would experience significant savings in shipping costs if four could be purchased at once rather than in two separate purchases, and again suggested that the unexpended salary dollars be used.

The council decided that the city should use the currently budgeted \$3,000 as originally agreed to for buying one regular table and one ADA-compliant table, and that if the fund balance allowed that two additional tables could be purchased.

During comments about the planning process, Palmer suggested that the city should consider reconstituting the former parks and recreation board, which was eliminated many years ago. A board would be accountable for having regular meetings with appropriate record keeping and more readily facilitate long-term planning needs for the community.

### EMS pilot project

Virginia Fire Department Deputy Chief Erik Jonassen spoke to the council about the Sprint Medic pilot program that Cook was selected to participate in. Under the program, the Virginia department would provide paramedics and equipment to elevate the level of care when small rural services with less qualified responders answer calls.

“We’ll send one paramedic and SUV out to cover

Orr, Bois Forte, and Cook and then another paramedic in an SUV to cover Tower’s service area,” Jonassen said. “Our hours of operation for this pilot program will be Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.”

The paramedics would come from the pool of those working for the Virginia Fire Department and would be working these shifts as overtime hours, Jonassen said. He explained that the staffing pattern for Virginia’s service is such that paramedics on regular extended-hour shifts have more days off a week, anywhere from four to six, than they do on, making the possibility that a sprint service assignment would be filled by a paramedic fatigued after a long shift extremely unlikely.

In response to a question, Jonassen noted that the sprint responders would not automatically respond to all call outs, but only to an agreed-upon list of calls where their additional skills and equipment would make a difference. For basic life support situations, a service could request a sprint unit to respond if they assess a situation and determine one would be beneficial.

The council approved a memorandum of understanding and bylaws to move Cook forward in the pilot project.

### Electric chargers

Will Tuchtentagen of ZEF Energy conferred with the council via teleconferencing to explain funding possibilities for getting electric vehicle charging stations in Cook.

He noted that Cook was a site that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) was “super interested in” due to its centralized location on Hwy 53.

“This is definitely a well-traveled corridor from Duluth to International Falls,” he said.

Cook would be eligible

to receive grant funding for a charging station that would come from Volkswagen’s Environmental Mitigation Trust that was established as a settlement for violations of emissions standard by the automaker. This source would provide \$69,500 toward the estimated total project cost of \$170,000 for a charging station that would have two fast chargers and two slow chargers.

Additional funding could come from a tax credit program and the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, Tuchtentagen noted.

Between technical difficulties and the crowded agenda, as well as the impending transition to a new council, Tuchtentagen was readily agreeable to making an expanded presentation to the council in January.

### Budget and levy

As the council has held a series of meetings since August to discuss sections of the 2025 budget in depth, there wasn’t any need for discussions and no members of the public requested to speak for the Truth in Taxation portion of the meeting.

Council members approved a three percent increase in the property tax levy that will bring in an additional \$15,463, for a total of \$530,893 coming from property taxes for a \$704,107 budget that relies on other sources of income such as government grants, service fees, and liquor store sales.

### Other business

In other business, the council:

- Gave approval to Airport Manager Doug McDuff to proceed with the necessary steps to arrange for the purchase of a new truck utilizing grant funding to replace a 19-year-old vehicle. Council members will have to authorize the actual purchase, and can back out of

the grant process at any time, McDuff said.

- Gave approval to Maintenance Supervisor Tim Lily to spend \$60,250 for a new Case skid steer and blower. Council members agreed that it was an appropriate way to use the final \$61,000 of the city’s American Rescue Plan funds which were awarded in 2022 and had certain areas the funds could be spent on.

- Approved a mutual aid agreement with the Chisholm Ambulance Service.

- Established a public hearing for Jan. 23 as part of the process for creating a city economic development authority.

- Approved the 2024 audit proposal from longtime city auditor Walker, Giroux & Hahne in the amount of \$27,000. The audit is expected to be more involved than in past years due to the increased activity created by the flood.

- Heard from Library Director Crystal Whitney that they plan to have the library open for regular hours during the winter unless circumstances arise that would make closing prudent. A new FEMA project manager has been assigned, and staff have been working to find and provide documentation to support a pre-flood valuation calculation of the library. That number will be a determining factor for what options the city may choose to receive FEMA funding. The council was hopeful in November that they would qualify for 75 percent funding of the cost to build a new library out of the flood plain.

- Agreed to let Martinson facilitate the necessary communications to prepare the city appointments list to be approved at the January meeting.

## GIVING FOR GOOD



### Cook Lions Club helps multiple causes

COOK- While Cook Lions Club members have spent the months since June working hard on flood relief efforts, there are plenty of other worthwhile endeavors deserving of support, and recently the Lions have been there for them, too. For more information about the Cook Lions Club, activities and membership information, see their page on Facebook.

Above: Cook Lions Club President Steve Kajala and member Kari Hultman recently delivered a \$2,000 donation to the Angel Fund, an organization that provides financial support to individuals in the Arrowhead region who have been diagnosed with cancer. Top right: On Dec. 5, Lions Club members delivered packages containing tie blankets for each resident of the Cook Care Center. Lower right: The club also donated \$500 to the LSS Care Closet in Virginia for the purchase of clothing and household supplies for those in need. Items at the Care Closet are available for free to all area individuals.

submitted photos



### Cook Public Library plans winter hours

COOK- The library will be open Monday – Thursday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. through the winter as long as there are no issues with the building.

The library walls are insulated but not sealed and there is no carpet. There are two entry rugs to help keep moisture off the concrete floor. The staff room, meeting room and storage room are not insulated and will not be used during the winter.

A small area of shelves is open for browsing books, DVDs and audio books. Staff are happy to help find things beyond this browsing area. Printing, copying and faxing services are available. Wi-Fi is available outside the building 24/7.

At this time, we cannot provide seating areas or use of the public bathroom due to safety concerns.

Due to our limited hours and space, we will not accept book sale donations until spring.

If you have any questions about the library, please call 218-666-2210 or email crystal.whitney@alslib.info.



**Read It  
HERE**



## SIGN OF THE TIMES

# Scam could have cost Fortune Bay \$110,000

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

**VERMILION RESERVATION-** Fortune Bay Resort Casino was apparently the target of a \$110,000 scam last month, but all of the money was recovered except \$2,000, according to a statement from the Bois Forte Tribal Council.

The Nov. 11 scam targeted a Fortune Bay employee who took \$110,000 from the vault and took it off the property, according to the statement, which does not say how or when \$108,000 of the funds were recovered. The band is reportedly trying to recover the remaining \$2,000 as well.

Fortune Bay staff immediately contacted federal and tribal law enforcement, who investigated the incident and referred the matter to the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's office for further review. The *Timberjay* attempted to

contact the U.S. Attorney's Office via email for additional information, but did not receive a response prior to press time.

To try to prevent a recurrence of such an incident, the tribal council immediately imposed strict vault controls, including requirements for recordkeeping, limitations on vault access, and restrictions on the use of vault funds. The council also approved updated policies and procedures for vault staff and has requested technical assistance from the National Indian Gaming Commission in the form of a review of vault procedures.

"The council understands the importance of securing the band's assets and will continue to monitor this issue closely," the statement concluded.

The council's statement did not provide specific details about the nature of the Bois Forte scam, but warnings about scams targeting casino

cage employees were issued last year. A July 2023 warning issued by the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) to tribal gaming operators and regulators followed quickly on the heels of a warning from the Nevada Gaming Control Board about scams targeting casino employees in Nevada and across the country. The National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) is alerting tribes, tribal gaming regulatory authorities (TGRAs), and tribal gaming operations of several nationwide impostor scams involving individuals claiming to be vendors, state, or tribal officials," the NIGC letter said. "We urge tribal officials to ensure that persons working in the tribal gaming operations, such as cage, vault or accounting staff, who have direct access to cash assets or bank accounts are made aware of the scam and know what to do in the event of such a call or other

communication."

The letter went on to describe the nature of the scams NIGC was warning tribes about, which were initiated by phone:

"During these calls, scammers attempt to collect a cash payment or facilitate a cash deposit under the pretense of a false 'emergency,' such as a past due payment, a stalled delivery of goods or services, immediate need for transfer of funds, or other pressing event that, if not immediately addressed, will result in 'dire' consequences to the operation, the tribe, or the other party. The scammer then tells the victim that the alleged dire consequences can be avoided by taking cash and transferring it to another party or entity, while they remain on the phone with the victim until the transfer or deposit is made. The transfer of the cash may take the form of a hand-delivery to an individ-

ual with whom the victim is directed to meet (usually off-site), by depositing the cash into Bitcoin deposit kiosks, or by a wire transfer of funds from one bank account to another. These are but a few examples of known cases, and scammers may attempt to use other means to get the victim to illegally transfer the cash or funds."

The Nevada board issued its warning after the Circa Hotel & Casino in downtown Las Vegas was scammed out of \$1.7 million by an imposter who convinced an employee to deliver bags of cash to two men at four separate locations on behalf of the casino's owners. A similar incident occurred in Colorado, when a Monarch Casino cage cashier received phone and text messages from men claiming to be casino management. They instructed the employee to take money needed by the casino to pay a lawyer, according to media

reports. The incident reportedly cost the Monarch \$500,000.

The scam is of heightened concern to Bois Forte after former Bois Forte Casino resort employee Jennifer Boutto was convicted in Oct. 2021 of embezzling more than \$300,000 from the hotel side of the operation. Over a period of six years, working first as a reservationist and then as front desk supervisor, Boutto issued false cash refunds against the invoices of previous Fortune Bay customers. She would then access the Fortune Bay vault to retrieve the falsely refunded amounts, according to the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office. Boutto executed the scheme 2,994 times, stealing \$315,740. Boutto was sentenced to eight months in prison followed by one year of supervised release and ordered to make full restitution of the funds.

## FEDERAL GRANT OPPORTUNITY

## USDA offers grants, loans for energy-related projects

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

**REGIONAL-** Rural small business owners and agricultural producers can decrease energy costs through energy efficiency measures and the installation of renewable energy systems with the help of the Rural Energy for America Program, or REAP.

A program of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, REAP can provide guaranteed

loan financing for up to 75 percent of project costs and grants to cover 50 percent of project costs. Examples of eligible efficiency projects include solar arrays, geothermal systems, wind turbines, or making energy-efficient upgrades to irrigation motors and grain dryers, windows, doors, refrigeration units, and lighting.

In a press release promoting the REAP program, Val

Ankeny, Clean Energy Policy Associate for the Center for Rural Affairs, noted that applying for a REAP grant or loan involves preparation and planning. Applicants should ensure they have a clear understanding of the requirements. For example, energy audits may be required for energy efficiency grants, and they can take several months to complete. Energy efficiency improvement projects most

likely to be funded will have estimated energy savings of 50 percent or greater.

Application assistance is available by contacting USDA Rural Development State Energy Coordinator Ron Omann at ron.omann@usda.gov or by calling 651-602-7796. The most reasonable timeline for developing a thorough application would target the March 31, 2025 deadline, although a prior

period for applications will end on Dec. 31.

Those eligible to apply for the REAP program include:

- ▶ Agricultural producers – those directly engaged in production of agricultural products where at least 50 percent of their gross income comes from those operations.

- ▶ Small businesses that are located in eligible rural areas that is either a private for-profit entity, a coopera-

tive, an electric utility that operates independent of direct government control and serves rural customers, or a tribal corporation or other tribal business entity that is chartered under Section 17 of the Indian Reorganization Act.

Communities in northern St. Louis County are eligible for these energy-related grants. Funding for the REAP program continues through 2027 under current law.

## BUDGET...Continued from page 1

of school board meetings and media coverage."

Locally, districts like the St. Louis County Schools, are facing significant budget shortfalls for next year due to the loss of nearly 300 students, or about 15 percent of enrollment, since 2021. The Ely school district is also facing budget woes, through a combination of declines in enrollment and the phase-out of some special COVID-era aids.

According to the Minnesota Rural Education Association, the Mt. Iron-Buhl School District is the only traditional school district in the region to have seen an enrollment increase in the post-COVID era.

Vermilion Country School, a grades 7-12 public charter school, has also bucked that trend as its enrollment has literally doubled, from an historic low of 29 students in 2021, during the height of the pandemic, to 58 this year. The jump required the charter school to apply for an increase in its authorized enrollment, which had previously been capped at 55, but now allows for up to 75 students, although school officials say they consider a student body of about 60-65 to be their sweet spot.

The school had exceeded 60 students for a time last year, but saw its numbers drop slightly this year after the school graduated 13 seniors in June, one of the largest senior classes in the school's 11-year history. The school managed to replace most of those students with incoming ones and the school has continued to pick up new enrollments since classes reopened in September. The school added two new students just this past week, according to Jodi Summit, the longtime school board chair.

### Financial impact

The burgeoning enrollment at the charter school has prompted a major turnaround

in the school's budget picture, which had tightened during the pandemic. The school district's audit was released earlier this month and it shows that while the school's expenditures have nearly doubled as they've taken on additional staff along with the new students, their revenues have increased even faster. This year, their revenues exceeded their expenditures by \$145,503. That pushed their unassigned general fund balance to more than \$200,000, or almost 16 percent of their budget. "And we're on track to get to a 20-percent fund balance real soon," said school director Sam O'Brien. "That puts us in the healthy category for a charter school," he said.

Expenditures, which had been averaging about \$700,000 annually before and during the pandemic years, jumped to \$1.367 million during the 2023-24 school year. Last year's capital spending was pushed higher as a result of a change

in accounting regulations that required the district to expense its new five-year lease with the Tower Economic Development Authority in the first year. The school also replaced some major pieces of kitchen equipment that was showing its age after a decade of use. The school uses its commercial kitchen both to prepare meals for students as well as for courses in cooking and food handling.

### New offerings attracting students

According to O'Brien, the growth in enrollment appears to be a reflection of interest in the flexible alternatives that the school is now able to offer, thanks in part to the hiring of five additional staff this year. That includes intensive special education programming for students who qualify as well as other approaches that help students who are behind in their credits towards graduation. At the same time, said O'Brien, the school is offering alternatives that give highly successful students more

educational freedom through various project-based options. That's an approach that he expects the school to expand on next year with opportunities for students to engage in longer-term projects that can be adapted to students' particular interests.

The school has also intro-

duced an alternative schedule for students who have part-time jobs, take care of relatives, or have special needs that make it hard to attend school every day. The new program allows students to complete schoolwork from home part-time, while attending school part-time or

working weekly with a teacher who visits them in their homes.

"Five years ago, we probably weren't ready to offer all this, but having financial stability really allows for multi-year planning," said O'Brien. It's also allowed the school to improve wages and benefits for teachers and staff.



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HOCKEY

# Leeson flawless in 1-0 Ely win

## Turns aside 40 shots on goal to lift Wolves past Greenway

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

ELY — Ben Leeson put on a goaltending clinic here last Thursday as he turned aside 40

**Left: Jayden Zemke looks to pass as he tries to skate around a high-sticking Greenway defender.**

photo by J. Greeney

shots on goal to help lead Ely to a 1-0 win over Greenway. It was a defensive battle from the start, broken only once, when Ely's Jayden Zemke lit the lamp at the 11:33 mark of the first period.

It was a relatively penalty-free game, as the Raiders were tagged just once in the third period. Greenway had five power-play opportunities as Jace

Huntbatch went to the box twice for Ely, once for elbowing in the first period and a second time for cross-checking. Owen Marolt, Hunter Halbakken, and Zemke faced one penalty apiece, but the Timberwolves were able to hold off the Raiders scoring push each time.

The Timberwolves managed just 16 shots on goal, but they had

the only one that counted.

The Wolves were set to head to Wadena last Saturday, Dec. 21, and will be back in town Dec. 26-28, to host the Ely holiday tournament.

They'll return to regular season action when they host Bagley on Friday, Jan. 3.

NORDIC SKIING

# Ely boys finish a strong second at Grand Rapids meet

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

GRAND RAPIDS — Ely senior Dylan Durkin and sophomore Aksel Skustad were nipping at the heels of some of the top racers in the state here on Thursday as the Ely boys Nordic squad continued

to show they're serious contenders this season, ready to give perennial powerhouse Duluth East a run for their money.

Durkin finished third overall in a field of 38 racers, with a time of 18:07. That was 12 seconds back of second-place finisher Russel Hill

and 34 second back of Mark Goettel, who is currently the Section 7's most formidable skier.

Skustad finished in a three-way tie for fourth with a time of 18:07. Senior Eli Olson and junior Otto Devine finished seventh and eighth respectively, with times of

18:44 and 19:30, leaving four Ely skiers in the top ten to Duluth East's five.

Senior Milo McClelland rounded out the top five finishers (who account for the final team finish) for Ely, crossing the line in 16th place with a time of 20:32.

That left Ely with 467

points, just 16 points back of Duluth East, which claimed first with 483 points. Cloquet-Esko-Carlson finished in third place, well back of the top dogs, with 430 points.

On the girls side, senior Anna Dunn took the top spot for Ely, finishing in 11th place with a time of 22:26, while

fellow senior Anna Larson finished 19th with a time of 24:36. With only three girls teams competing, Ely finished third with 434 points. Duluth East topped the field with 483 points.

## SCULPTURE...Continued from page 1

bark canoe with John Fremont and Kit Carson," Rom told the *Timberjay*. "We really liked it." They liked the work so much that they tracked down the sculptor, Vic Payne of Cody, Wyo., a few years later to create something similar for Ely with a theme of the Voyageurs.

"We signed the contract with the artist," Rom added. "Then we got hit by COVID-19 so the sculpture was delayed." The schedule slipped from 2022 to 2023. Finally, in June 2024, the

foundry in Cody was ready and started casting the pieces.

Then the foundry in Cody caught fire and burned to the ground.

### Fire adds further delay

"The sculpture was 90 percent done," Rom explained. "They had the head and the arms and paddles yet to go when the fire happened. They rescued the pieces of the sculpture already done, put them on a truck, and took them to the Eagle Foundry in Lander, Wyo. That foundry promised it would finish the sculpture

by last July, right? They found they had to sandblast it and use muriatic acid to clean off all the smoke and soot so that the welds would hold."

Cleaning up the fire damage was only one factor in the continuing delays. The foundry also faced a backlog, with another large work in line before "The Voyageurs."

When the sculpture came up in the queue, the work was completed quickly.

The Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust funded the construction of the sculpture's

pedestal, which was built by C&C Winger of Embarrass. Rom obtained the green granite facings for the pedestal at Laurentian Monument Granite and Stone of Virginia.

### Double donation

"The Voyageurs" is the second of two sculptures that William and Holly Rom have donated to Ely. The first was a four-foot sculpture by sculptor Ronald Bayens of canoeing legend Bill Mason. The Roms presented it to the city in 2022.

Both sculptures are at the two ends of the flower bed

island in the walkway at the northeast corner of Whiteside Park.

The Bill Mason statue has a sign next to it with a QR code. Scanning the code on a smart device will bring up a webpage with details about the statue and Bill Mason.

"We have a QR code sign made up for this sculpture," Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski told the *Timberjay*, "which will have information on it. But we'll wait for the ground to thaw before we put it up."

William Rom was raised in Ely and spends his summers here. He is the Global Distinguished Professor of Environmental Health at the New York University School of Global Public Health. He is also the Sol and Judith Bergstein Professor of Medicine and Environmental Medicine, Emeritus, at the New York University Grossman School of Medicine.

## DEATH...Continued from page 1

to claim responsibility for the accident, although that may have changed after the *Timberjay's* early holiday deadline.

Boshey was working as a laborer for Whitebird Services out of Local 1091 and had worked hard for herself and her family on her recovery from a harsh addiction and

would have been three years sober next month.

Family said that her five kids meant the world to her, even when they weren't living with her. Her oldest daughter was her best friend and was attached at the hip, doing almost everything together. She was always active and ready to "Go, go, go," with

boundless energy and a zest for life. Boshey hated just sitting around doing nothing. She always had a project in the works and still had many more ideas she wanted to pursue.

According to family members, Amanda was a Leo and loved lions because of it. Her smile was contagious, and her laugh was as well.

Shopping was her getaway — she always wanted to buy something for her family and friends even when they didn't ask for it. She was always there for family and always had some way to help. Boshey always had something goofy to say, no matter her situation.

Her hobbies included shopping, going out to do

things with family, and being involved with her recovery community.

Due to the ongoing investigation, the FBI declined to comment on this case.

A fund will be set up at the Embarrass Vermillion Credit Union ([www.evfcu.org](http://www.evfcu.org)) to help Boshey's five children with their financial needs.

If you have any information regarding this case, please call the Bois Forte Police Department at 218-757-3237.

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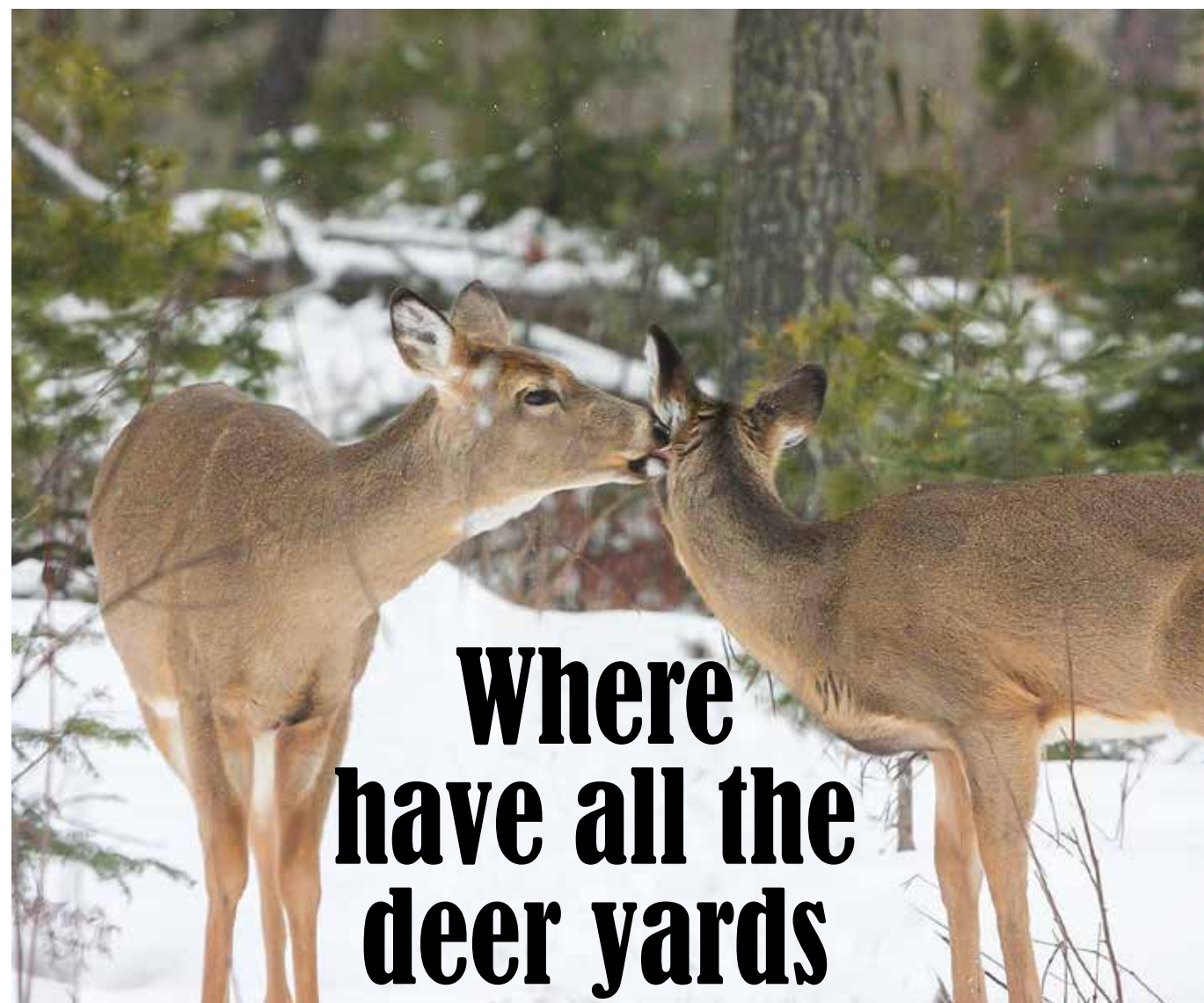




# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
Northwoods

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT



# Where have all the deer yards GONE?

*Editor's Note: This story was reprinted from Whitetales, published by the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association.*

by TOM RUSCH  
Contributing Writer

I saw the big fella cruising on a crisp November day. He was covering ground in a great hurry, grunting with every step. Then, six does and fawns came flying out of that gnarly bedding area on a knob adjacent to a fresh aspen cutover and beaver pond, not wanting anything to do with the randy fella.

“I love natural jack pine stands. They are some of the best deer habitat in northern Minnesota.”

Tom Rusch  
DNR wildlife manager, retired

I grabbed the grunt call off the hook and challenged his manhood with my own deep, guttural grunt. I'll never forget that image when the ten-point jammed on the brakes and bellowed the loudest grunt I've ever heard.

He then took a few stiff-legged steps into a small window in the timber and gave me my chance. He has adorned a wall in our home ever since. To background, I knew there was a big one in that area as he left big ruts for three years around that stand. I was not surprised, but fortunate, to finally meet up with him there.

That public land was very good to me, but, as often happens, it all ended when the old jack pine and balsam fir got logged off along with the rest of the mature timber in the area a few years later. It was a deer magnet. Deer always used



this area, year in and year out.

I love natural jack pine stands. They are some of the best deer habitat in northern Minnesota. They use it every season of the year. There is only one problem... it has almost disappeared from the landscape.

### Why do deer gravitate to natural stands of jack pine?

Jack pine regenerates naturally after wildfire and prescribed burnings. It comes back as thick as hair on a dog. Turns out Mother Nature knows how to regenerate both timber and wildlife on the same ground. The result is a diverse northern (boreal) forest that attracts a diverse menagerie of wildlife. These stands provide high quality food and cover at a fairly young age and can do so on shallow Canadian Shield soils for up to 100 years. Unfortunately, because jack pine generates less revenue than red pine (Norway

pine), it has been systematically converted to red pine plantations following harvests over the last 40 years. Red pine plantations provide poor food and marginal winter cover for deer and deer use drops off significantly, especially come fall and winter when deer seek the best cover to protect them from the elements. Over time, fire suppression and conversion of jack pine to red pine have eliminated thousands of acres of winter cover in northern Minnesota from Red Lake to Grand Marais and Detroit Lakes to Cloquet.

### What's the problem with red pine?

A red pine plantation is initially established with a heavy dose of herbicide sprayed to set back “competition” and then trees are planted to maximize tree growth (800/acre) and minimize other competing trees, shrubs, and plants that deer call “food.”

Lacking food and cover, red



Above: Good habitat leads to bigger bucks, like this one shot by the author.

Left: A large stand of old white cedar provide excellent protection for wintering deer by limiting snow depth and reducing exposure to wind.

pine plantations do not provide high quality winter cover. Red pine also does not trap snow in the canopy very well which further decreases use in deep snow winters. No food. Poor cover. Poor mobility. These make plantations death traps when the wolves come through looking for a venison supper. For big game species across North America, habitat alteration and loss are often a proven formula for population decline.

Similarly, intensive forest management has changed the winter landscape in other subtler ways. Northern forest whitetails require a balance of food sources and high quality (winter) cover available over time. Aspen, which covers 75 percent of public land in many northern counties, has been intensively harvested since the mid-1980s.

Older age aspen stands (>50 years) provide excellent winter deer habitat as the canopy begins to break up allowing balsam fir, spruce, cedar, and white pine to become established and provide cover and trap snow, making these stands highly preferred by deer

See HABITAT...pg. 2B



## WILDLIFE

# Flooding in June likely hurt loon reproduction

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Last June's record rainfall and widespread flooding appears to have sharply reduced the reproductive success of area loons. That's according to the data compiled by Sherry Abts, of Ely, who coordinates the DNR Loonwatcher program in the Ely area.

Torrential rain fell across the area on June 18, and it caused overland flooding and rising water levels on rivers and lakes, apparently swamping many loon nests.

The impact appears to have been more pronounced in areas to the west of Ely, which generally saw more rainfall from the event, with some areas around Lake Vermilion experiencing as much as nine inches of rain in a matter of several hours.

Not surprisingly, Vermilion was particularly hard hit, as the 50 nesting pairs recorded on the lake this year produced just 13 chicks, a 26 percent success rate. Abts said that compares to an average loon nesting success rate of 50 percent in the several U.S. states where loons breed.

The Vermilion River, which was home to half a dozen nesting loon pairs this year, experienced severe flooding according to Abts, and saw no new chicks recorded on the river, which flows from Lake Vermilion to Crane Lake. It was the same experience on Birch Lake, which is a reservoir of the Kawishiwi River. Of the ten nesting loon pairs on the lake, none successfully raised any young this year.

The rain appears to have impacted Burntside Lake, as well, although loons on the lake have been experiencing limited nesting success for several years. But this year, observers noted just two chicks out of the 20 territories established by loon pairs. It was the same story on Shagawa Lake, which experienced flooding as well. Ten nesting pairs managed to raise just four chicks according to Abts' data.

Generally, lakes to the east of Ely, where rainfall totals were generally less, saw better success. Ten pairs of nesting loons on Snowbank Lake, located about 20 miles east of Ely, successfully raised seven chicks, which was second only to Lake Vermilion this year.

Several other smaller lakes located north and east of Ely saw no loon reproduction, but generally only have one or two nesting pairs. A total of 13 smaller lakes in the Ely area did see some nesting success. Several saw 100 percent success, but those lakes generally only had one or two nesting pairs.

Some nesting pairs are simply better at raising young, noted Abts. “Not all parents are equal,” she said. Some are better providers or watch their young more closely

See LOONS...pg. 2B



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**HABITAT...**Continued from page 1B

when the snow piles up.

Conversely, young stands of saplings and pole timber provide poor winter cover and trap little snow and are almost impossible for deer to navigate when the snow pack exceeds 24"-30." They have to lunge to get through it. When the last of the older aspen, balsam, and jack pine is cut, the deer herd no longer has high quality winter cover options. Consequently, they are much more vulnerable to winter, starvation, and wolf predation; therefore, the herd goes into decline. The statewide deer harvest reflects this reality.

This scenario is playing out now in your hunting area and around your deer stands if you hunt in northern Minnesota. Less than 10 percent of the older forest is left standing. And, the new "rotation age," when younger stands are harvested, is now 35-40 years. Under this forest management regime, older forests will not exist on the landscape in most hunting areas. This is not a wolf issue. It is a forest management issue resulting in marginal winter cover that tips the balance in the wolf's favor during deep snow winters.

**Lake Superior snowbelt**

The boreal forest has evolved in the shadow of Lake Superior for eons. Conifer forests grow in moist environments. Our boreal forest is adapted to long, cold, snowy winters. In order to survive, white-tailed deer must also adapt. But, northeastern Minnesota is also the northern limit to the whitetails' range due to these same limitations. Moose are far and away better adapted to deep snow, limited browse, and winters that last five-to-six months. In the Arrowhead region, snow cover arrives during deer season and persists well into



**Even small pockets of balsam fir provide winter cover for deer. But declines in balsam fir as a result of spruce budworm mortality can impact winter survival for deer.**

May and sometimes June in border country.

**Quality winter cover**

But, isn't a pine tree a pine tree? Not all conifer trees provide high quality cover.

The devil is in the detail. The best conifer "stands" are white cedar, balsam fir, white spruce, and jack pine, which grow on higher, upland ground. All these trees have limitations from a foresters' perspective.

Deer are often their own worst enemy. They browse cedar, jack, and white pine to the point they deform it, stunting the trees' growth and/or killing it before it can grow out of reach. These conifers also grow more slowly than aspen and other hardwoods and generate less revenue. And, while wildlife managers might love jack pine and balsam fir, often many foresters despise them both for economic reasons.

Back in the day, when the majority of aspen being cut was 65-80 years old in

St. Louis County, foresters and wildlife managers agreed 55-60 years was a good rotation age for our short growing season.

As older aspen stands started to become scarce (~2010-2015) the rotation age for aspen was changed to 40 years statewide. No input. No discussion. It just came down from on high like a bolt of lightning.

**Can we find common ground?**

Compromise is the key, but is difficult in today's political world. Common ground can be found by managing aspen a little differently in wintering areas. Aspen that is allowed to grow to age 55-60 (65+ in wildlife management areas) can provide significantly better winter cover. Lost aspen volume is not an issue with wildlife managers as increased conifer diversity is good for most native wildlife species because it provides better habitat in the North.

"Extended" aspen rotations still provide good revenue as not all public land managers manage aspen intensively. Additionally, deer and other wildlife provide important revenue, recreation, and quality of life for northern counties. Unfortunately, with the shift in aspen management, we generally have younger forests across the north.

**Deer are survivors**

White-tailed deer have evolved in many ways to survive severe winters. For instance, they move to conifer-dominated landscapes when snow depth compromises their mobility, generally in December. Northern Minnesota has been blessed with world class deer researchers and their research for over 50 years. Decades-long radio telemetry deer studies have shown they are extremely resilient. They have evolved to seasonally migrate from summer/fall home range to winter ranges. Deer learn

migration routes and timing from their mothers. Many deer in Ontario-Minnesota border country migrate 5-20 miles to their historic winter ranges. Eight to ten inches of snow is the impetus for migration. When it is "time to move out," whether it is the legendary "Halloween Storm" of 1991 or the late un-named storm in early February of 2013, deer instinctively know it's time and migrate through the same routes there and back.

Winter cover is critically important to the herds' survival even though an unknown percentage won't be coming back. Vast areas are void of deer by early January in severe winters in the Arrowhead.

**Traditional deer yards**

Long-term deer yards throughout the Great Lakes States have many common-denominators.

➤ Large conifer-dominated landscapes offer northern white cedar, which can survive over 300 years.

➤ Excellent snow-capture qualities in the canopy results in significant "snow shadow" underneath, which lessens snow depth by a third (20" snow vs. 30" in open aspen), making travel easier.

➤ Longer-lived conifers like cedar, white pine, and hemlock.

➤ Longer cutting rotations or no harvest, i.e. state parks, WMAs, private land, national forests, wilderness areas.

➤ Deer management policies.

➤ Riparian set-back reserves, big islands. Though narrow, riparian corridors facilitate connectivity to other wintering areas.

➤ Additional contributing factors: longer rotations, planned staggered harvest regimes, selective harvest vs. clearcutting, and rolling terrain to increase spatial/

topographic diversity.

➤ A history of deep snow, higher elevation, northern latitude and Lake Superior.

**Our climate is changing**

Because Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake in the world, it has a major impact on weather in adjacent states.

Satellite measurements of ice coverage show the majority of the big lake is now ice free most winters. An open Lake Superior contributes moisture to winter storms throughout winter. Our winters are now statistically warmer, yet snowier. Major storms with heavy snowfall are becoming increasingly common. Ten of the top 12 snowiest towns in Minnesota are located in the Lake Superior snowbelt. It is not by coincidence that St. Louis, Lake, and Cook counties have the lowest deer populations in the North Country. But, in almost 40 years as a deer manager, I have never heard anyone blame Lake Superior for the demise of the northern forest deer population.

**What you can do:**

• Support mixed stands of conifer beneficial for deer versus plantations, which are biological deserts.

• Work cooperatively with neighboring landowners to increase the size of winter cover complexes over time. These complexes are beneficial to a myriad of wildlife species, people, recreation, and hunting, as well as the environment.

About the author: Tom Rusch and his wife Deb live in rural Eveleth. He recently retired from his long-time position as DNR wildlife manager in the Tower area. He has been an avid public land deer, grouse and turkey hunter since the 1970s.

**LOONS...**Continued from page 1B

to avoid losing them to predators, particularly eagles. "If the parents don't watch their chicks, even for a minute, the eagles are waiting."

The varying attentiveness of loon parents often makes the difference for chick survival, and so unpredictable events can make a huge difference. She said she had watched a very successful loon pair that had raised chicks successfully year after year on Tofte Lake. But the male was injured when a monofilament fishing line ended up wrapped around its tongue. While Abts was able to recover the loon, part of its tongue had to be amputated. While the loon continued to raise its young that season, it never reappeared the following year and no loon pair has replaced them. While a pair appeared to establish a territory in one bay of the lake this summer, Abts said a group of college students had selected the bay for regularly gathering rusty crayfish and Abts believes the constant disturbance appears to have scared the loons off, leaving the lake still without a breeding pair.

The two incidents provide a reminder of how human activities can unintentionally have significant consequences for loons.

But humans can also have a positive impact for loons. Sometimes, floating nest platforms put out by people can become used regularly by loons, providing a safer base for a nest than regular shoreline. Floating platforms typically have some ability to rise and fall with water levels, reducing the risk of a nest



**A floating loon nest platform on Lake Vermilion installed by Jake and Sarah Schmidt has proven to be a very effective way to help nesting loons, with a high rate of success.** photo courtesy S. Schmidt

being flooded.

Abts notes the success of Sarah and Jake Schmidt, of rural Tower, who installed a loon platform near their summer cabin on Lake Vermilion. It's been used regularly by a loon pair for more than a decade and the loons have had at least 90 percent success during that time. Sarah Schmidt confirmed the numbers cited by Abts and said that a canopy that they installed over the platform helps to shade the loons and provide protection from aerial predators. She noted that loons aren't quick to change their nest locations, so anyone installing a nest platform should be patient as they wait for loons to find it.

**A love of loons**

Abts has been studying loons since 1993, when she first attended a two-week EarthWatch course in Upper Michigan. Abts, who has a master's degree in education, was working as an environ-

mental educator near Atlanta at the time and the experience was a life-changer. She has since studied under some of the country's top loon researchers, through various programs she has taken part in over the years. When she retired from teaching in 2010, she moved to Ely to be in the heart of loon country. For the past seven years she has coordinated the Loon Watcher program in the Ely area, maintaining records on nearly 30 area lakes with data she gathers by herself and with the help of a cadre of volunteers.

Unlike a one-day loon count, volunteers with the

Loon Watcher program commit to observing loons on their designated lakes at least once per month through the breeding season, although Abts said she likes her volunteers to try to observe them at least twice a month, if not weekly. The observation period starts when the loons arrive, typically late April or May, and often continues into September. Abts said that gives her observers a much more accurate picture of chick survival, since chicks can die at just about any time during their first season.

Abts' enthusiasm for loons is infectious and it's

clear she not only knows a great deal about the species but has a desire to share her knowledge and her love of loons. In fact, she invites emails and even phone calls from people with questions or concerns about loons they observe. You can reach Abts at birdingabts@gmail.com or at 678-787-6957.

**Learn more:** If you'd like learn much more about loons, Abts recommends reading "Loon Lessons: Uncommon Encounters with the Great Northern Diver," by James Paruk, published by The University of Minnesota Press.

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CELEBRATE THE STARS

# The first Dark Sky Festival event is less than two week away

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- The first Ely Dark Sky Festival is almost here. With 25 events scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Jan. 10-11, it's a jam-packed weekend.

Sarah Vogl, marketing director of the Ely Area Tourism Bureau, one of the three organizations that are running the event, said the full schedule and registration information is online at [ely.org/darkskyfest](http://ely.org/darkskyfest).

A preview of events is as follows:

► Friday afternoon — Inner wild woman two-day retreat at the Internation Wolf Center, Astronomy science stations at the Ely Public Library, Painting the Aurora class with Cecilia Rolando at the Ely Folk School.

► Friday evening — Sunset tours of Listening Point by the Listening Point Foundation, Intro to Astrophotography class with Marc Rassel and Les Conrad at the Ely Folk School, Night at the Dorothy Molter Museum, Dark Sky Trivia by Ely Trivia at the Boathouse Brew Pub, NLAA's "Romeo and Juliet" at the Vermilion Fine Arts



Theater, Winter Starbathing in the Northwoods by Meadowlark Meditation on the Trezona Trail, Dark Sky Dogsledding at Wintergreen Dogsled Lodge, and a Wolf Howling Safari in the Superior National Forest by the International Wolf Center.

► Saturday afternoon — Night-time Navigation in the Wilderness at Friends of the Boundary Waters, Shakespeare Unleashed workshop by NLAA at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, Northern Lights for Newbies with Elizabeth Miller at Friends of the Boundary Waters, "Northern Nights, Starry Skies" screening at the Grand Ely Lodge, Aurora Apps — the good, the bad, and the ugly at Friends of the Boundary Waters, Astrotourism

and Light Pollution presentation by Starry Skies North at the Grand Ely Lodge.

► Saturday evening — Sunset Tours of Listening Point by Listening Point Foundation, NLAA's "Romeo and Juliet" at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater, Moonlight Kicksled Adventure on the Trezona Trail by Ely Bike and Kicksled, Snowshoe Hike on Fall Lake by Friends of the Boundary Waters, Telescope Stargazing and Constellation Stories by Arrowhead Astronomical Society at Miner's Lake boat landing.

► Bonus events — Jan. 7 Tuesday Group meeting on aurora chasing by Boundary Waters Connect at the Grand Ely Lodge, "Romeo and Juliet" matinee on Jan. 12, University of Minnesota – Duluth traveling planetarium at the Ely Public Schools on Jan. 13.

### Business tie-ins

The Ely Chamber of Commerce, another of the three organizations running the festival worked with its membership and other Ely-area businesses to offer deals for festival visitors.

"We wanted to encourage our business community to arrange the

kinds of events we saw for the production of 'Frozen' last year," said Eva Sebesta, executive director of the Ely Chamber of Commerce, "like the Arendelle-themed meals at the Grand Ely Lodge."

The chamber's aim is to encourage visitors to the Dark Sky Festival to enjoy and extend their time in the area through packages, discounts, and deals.

The chamber has been posting the packages and deals on the Ely Dark Sky Festival website. Several of the offerings include 10- to 50-percent discounts on lodging at hospitality businesses from Tower to Fall Lake.

### Dark Sky Expo

The third organization running the Dark Sky Festival is Starry Skies North. The nonprofit is a chapter of Dark Sky International, which advocates for light pollution mitigation and promotes dark sky tourism, especially in places like Ely which is on the doorstep of the Boundary Waters, currently the largest designated dark sky sanctuary in the world.

Starry Skies North is running a Dark Skies Expo at the Grand Ely Lodge on the afternoon of Saturday, Jan. 11 from 3-6 p.m.

"We realized that a lot of the larger organizations could do their own events, but that left a lot of the smaller organizations and businesses out of the picture without a way to participate," said Todd Burlet, president of Starry Skies North. "We saw we had a need to create a space for everyone to be involved, so we put together the expo ... Our purpose is to make the expo all about families and fun, and to make opportunities for smaller businesses and organizations to participate and join in the fun."

The expo will start at 3 p.m. with a free showing of the documentary "Northern Lights, Starry Skies," followed by a presentation on light pollution and astrotourism at 4 p.m.

"We will have some fun and family-oriented activities at the expo as well as some limited sales of Dark Sky Festival related items," Burdet added. "For the whole festival, we wanted to be sure we had a mix of indoor and outdoor activities and a mix of kid, family, and adult events. I think we've done a good job of that. There will be something for everyone and for all ages and weather tolerances."

## REGIONAL COOPERATION

# Ely Area Joint Powers Board mulls over EMS and housing

by CATIE CLARK  
Ely Editor

ELY- It was a Kumbaya moment of sorts here on Dec. 16 as District 3A Rep. Roger Skraba and District 3 Senator Grant Hauschild touted their across-the-aisle friendship and working relationship to the annual gathering of the Community Economic Development Joint Powers Board.

"The friendship that I've been able to make with Roger across the aisle is not just a relationship," Hauschild told the assembled state, local, and federal officials. "It's an effective friendship, because — while we don't agree on a lot — there's quite a bit that we do agree on. When it comes to the core issues, to the things that impact people's daily lives, we work together on those things."

Hauschild, a DFLer, and Skraba, a Republican, listed their legislative initiatives that have benefited the local area, including the one-time funding for EMS, capital improvements funding for facilities at ISD 696, and funding for six Arrowhead skilled nursing homes, including Boundary Waters Care Center in Ely.

### EMS funding

Not surprisingly, emergency medical services, or EMS, was a hot topic again this year as officials discussed both short-term and long-term funding solutions. Lake County Commissioner Joe Baltich, who is the new chair of the Ely Area Ambulance Service Board of Directors, offered a backhanded thanks the Legislature "for that \$290,000 that we have not gotten yet." The one-time state aid payment to EMS passed by the Legislature in 2024 will be disbursed

on Dec. 26. Baltich noted that the ambulance is in a better place financially than it was earlier in the year given the improvement in revenue flow from hiring a new billing company.

Bob Berrini, who is also on the ambulance's board, briefly recapped the lobbying effort by local officials as well as the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools to bring extra EMS funding to the region, and he singled out Ely Mayor Heidi Omerza's efforts in particular and thanked her for "the good job."

The attendees at the meeting were aware that last year's state funding was not a permanent solution for the region's EMS woes. Hauschild addressed the larger issues of paying for rural EMS. "If we're talking about a long-term funding solution for EMS," he began, "first and foremost is fixing the

federal reimbursement rate," noting that was hard to do while looking pointedly at the congressional aides in the room.

"If we're going to think of a state formula to get state funding to our EMS services," Hauschild continued, "that is sort of crashing through a wall — that is a new thing."

He noted that EMS funding has always been "philosophically a local government thing," but rural EMS suffered from "inequitable funding" as for-profit EMS in the Twin Cities make profits while local rural ambulance services lose money. "It's a total disservice to those of us that live in rural communities because it's a moral imperative that when people call 911, they get an ambulance."

Hauschild concluded, "We need to have a hard conversation about a revenue stream for EMS at

the state level."

### Housing another topic

The housing discussion revolved around Ely's failed grant proposal for its proposed 37-unit apartment complex. Ely applied to get part of the \$39 million that Minnesota allocated in 2023 for housing in "greater Minnesota," part of a bill co-authored by Sen. Hauschild and Rep. Dave Lisle-gard.

Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski noted acidly, that one project was funded in Grand Rapids, one in Grand Marais, and the rest were concentrated in "a 60-mile radius from Minneapolis-St. Paul, so it didn't hit the seven-county metro area, but it sure hit a lot of communities right on that fringe."

He said that Ely has been waiting since August to see how Ely ranked in the application's scoring,

### Enjoy Your Favorite Holiday Foods from Benchwarmer Grille



Artist • Audrey A.  
Grade 1

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Winning Artist • Uno Ruuska  
Grade 4

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Winning Artist • Seija Snyder  
Kindergarten

### Hopes For A Happy New Year from Glenmore Resort



Winning Artist • Bjorn Flores-Leander  
Kindergarten

### Good Health To You In 2025 from Scenic Rivers Health Clinic-Tower



Winning Artist • Harley Banks  
GRADE 6

### Keeping Homes Cozy For The Season from KGM Contractors



Winning Artist • Stella Pliml  
Grade 6

### Enjoy This Special Season from Oveson's Pelican Lake Resort & Inn



Winning Artist • Leah Las  
Grade 6

### Enjoy Friends & Family This Holiday from Northern Comfort Co.



Winning Artist • Kallen Williams  
Grade 4

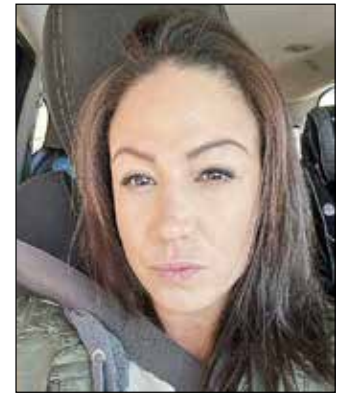
### Have A Magical 2025 from Good Ol' Days



Artist • Raven Rettke  
Grade 2



Obituaries and Death Notices



**Amanda R. Boshey**  
Amanda Rae Boshey, 38, of Tower, an amazing daughter, mother, sister and friend, died on Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024, as the result of a tragic accident that took place in Tower. The wake was held on Friday, Dec. 20 and Tribal Rites were held on Saturday, Dec. 21, both at the Vermilion Wellness Center. Vernon Adams was the Spiritual Advisor. Burial

was in the Bois Forte Vermilion Cemetery. Family services were provided by Bauman-Vermilion, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower.

Amanda was born on Aug. 13, 1986, to Kimberly (Bradley) Day and Dale Boshey Sr. She was a fierce Leo and always wanted people to know that; she loved lions because of it. She always had a joke to make and a contagious laugh to follow it. Amanda lit up every room she entered and put a smile on anyone's face. Her pride and joy was being a mother to her five children. Shopping and family outings were her getaway when she was not working. Amanda worked as a laborer for Whitebird Services and truly loved her career.

Amanda was very involved with her recovery community as she was building a beautiful sober life for herself and her family, and they all were so proud of her. Amanda had dreams of opening

her own treatment center on the Reservation one day. Amanda's best friend in the world was her sister Amber. She will be missed by many.

Amanda is survived by her parents, Dale Boshey Sr. and Kimberly (Bradley) Day; children, Annaeiah Chavez, Anastasia Chavez, Nella Goodsky, Memphis Goodsky and Kolton Clark; brothers, Aaron Boshey, Dale Boshey Jr., Elijah Chavez and Ablaza Chavez; sisters, Amber Boshey, Megan Ruzic and Jackie Adams; and maternal grandparents, Sandy (Doug) Antikainen and John (Jackie) Dahl.

She was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Raymond and Gloria Boshey; uncles, Jeff and Terrance Boshey; aunt, Joni Dahl; nephew, Tra'von Boshey; and first cousins, Jeff Boshey Jr. and Raven Boshey.

**Gwendolyn E. Huismann**  
Gwendolyn Elizabeth "Gwen" Huismann, 90, of Virginia, formerly of Orr, passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024. A service is being planned for the spring of 2025. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

**Harlan Gorecki**  
Harlan "Buck" Gorecki, 70, of Ely, passed away from health complications on Monday, Dec. 16, 2024, at his home with family by his side. A celebration of life will be held in the summer of 2025. Arrangements are with Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his wife, Melanie; children, Ronnie, Laura and Dylan; brother, Loren; and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

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

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

Super Crossword

Answers

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

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

DSS OMQQMZO VDT UL  
UMQTL JH XMP APF FYLR  
JTFM D OFMQX MQ FLSS  
D OFMQX DUMPF FYLR.  
- NDQLT USJGLT

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Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

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

1. First day of the week \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Y Ice cream parlor treat \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ E
2. Roost \_ \_ \_ \_ C \_ Australian city \_ \_ \_ \_ T \_
3. Banquet F \_ \_ \_ \_ Bread riser Y \_ \_ \_ \_
4. Pantry \_ \_ \_ \_ D \_ Bigger \_ \_ \_ \_ G \_ \_
5. Wilma's neighbor \_ \_ \_ \_ T \_ Flag maker \_ \_ \_ \_ S \_
6. Lorry \_ \_ \_ \_ C \_ Car's storage unit \_ \_ \_ \_ N \_
7. Singer Swift \_ \_ \_ Y \_ \_ Clothes maker \_ \_ \_ I \_ \_ \_
8. Pavlova's dance \_ \_ A \_ \_ \_ Pistol's projectile \_ \_ U \_ \_ \_ \_
9. Toss \_ \_ \_ \_ W Pulsate \_ \_ \_ \_ B
10. Night sky hunter \_ \_ R \_ \_ \_ Pungent bulb \_ \_ N \_ \_ \_ \_

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**Weekly SUDOKU**

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

CITY OF TOWER  
LEGAL NOTICE  
Publishing of Ordinance 820

1st Reading November 12, 2024

2nd Reading December 9, 2024

Given length of Ordinance, please review at: https://cityoftower.com/city-ordinances.

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 27, 2024

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King Crossword

**ACROSS**

- 1 Airport screening org.
- 4 Out of control
- 8 Appear ominously
- 12 Pioneering ISP
- 13 Kid's plea
- 14 "The Music Man" setting
- 15 Oafs
- 17 Daniel Craig role
- 18 "Homeland" star Danes
- 19 Devious
- 21 ER workers
- 22 Persuades
- 26 Track races
- 29 Wee dollop
- 30 Goat's plaint
- 31 Symphonic gp.
- 32 Sleep acronym
- 33 Dick Tracy's love
- 34 Consumed
- 35 Chignon
- 36 Walking sticks
- 37 Persian king
- 39 Mined-over matter
- 40 Ordinal suffix
- 41 Blue hue
- 45 Hoodlum
- 48 Defeats cleverly
- 50 Mexican money

**DOWN**

- 1 Body powder
- 2 Satan's purchase
- 3 - mater
- 4 Squirrel's stash
- 5 High points
- 6 Low digit
- 7 Big-screen airer of stadium smooches
- 8 Tripoli's land
- 9 Tic-tac-toe routine
- 10 Possess win
- 11 Irate
- 16 Wharton's "House of -"
- 20 Arcing tennis shot
- 23 Marvel superheroes
- 24 Lighten
- 25 Get lippy
- 26 Deception
- 27 Deco artist
- 28 Computer brand
- 29 Lion's home
- 32 Exit in haste
- 33 Cardio-boxing
- 35 Wager
- 36 Seals and - (soft rock duo)
- 38 Noble gas
- 39 Group of eight
- 42 Chopping tools
- 43 Jeans maker
- 44 Romanov
- 45 Transcript no.
- 46 British ref. work
- 47 Sugary suffix
- 49 Swiss canton

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# TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

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

### AUTOMOTIVE

**Langevin Auto & Truck Repair**  
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Auto Repair & Garage  
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218-749-0751

### SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ELY WOMEN'S OPEN AA MEETING- Every Monday at noon at Ledgerrock 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.

### King Crossword

Solution time: 26 mins.

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

### Even Exchange

- answers
- Sunday Sundae
  - Perch, Perth
  - Feast, Yeast
  - Larder, Larger
  - Betty, Betsy
  - Truck, Trunk
  - Taylor, Tailor
  - Ballet, Bullet
  - Throw, Throb
  - Orion, Onion

### WORD LADDER

Answer  
BLAME, BLADE, GLADE,  
GRADE, TRADE, TRACE

### CryptoQuote

answer  
All sorrows can be borne if you put them into a story or tell a story about them.  
- Karen Blixen

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**SNOWFLAKES**  
by Japheth Light

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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ♦♦

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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### FUNERAL SERVICES

**Range Funeral Home**

Virginia 741-1481 Hibbing 263-3276  
"Friends Helping Friends"

### Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

## Super Crossword

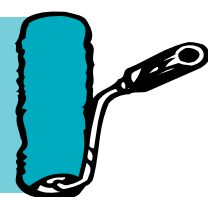
JANUARY 1 FUN

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
19							20			21				22						
23							24			25			26							
		27				28			29			30								
31	32					33					34					35	36	37		
38				39					40	41				42						
43			44			45		46	47	48			49	50						
				51	52	53			54			55								
56	57	58					59				60					61	62	63	64	
65									66				67	68						
69							70	71	72		73		74			75				
76					77	78		79		80			81	82	83					
84						85		86			87	88								
						89				90				91						
92	93	94	95						96				97			98	99	100	101	
102									103				104		105	106		107		
108						109	110			111	112	113	114					115		
							116									118				
119	120	121							122										125	126
127							128								130					
131														133						





# HOME IMPROVEMENT GUIDE



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JANUARY 1, 2

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Attorney At Law

### Real Estate

- General Questions
- Buying/Selling
- Easements
- Contract for Deed
- Property Line Problems
- Road Maintenance/Assoc.
- Litigation



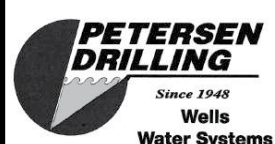
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Grade 4

## WORD LADDERS

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

BLAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TRACE

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## SEASON'S GREETINGS!

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**BEN FRANKLIN**

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**KJ's**

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Grade 3

Have Yourself A Cozy Holiday  
from Handberg's Marine



Artist • Weston Quam  
Grade 3

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