



Winter finches... See /2B

Inside:
Bois Forte Chair retires... See /3
Charges in hit and run... See /1B
Winter sports updates... See /1B

the TIMBERJAY



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THE FUTURE OF STEEL

U.S. Steel to challenge Biden over Nippon sale

Company also files suit against USW president, Cleveland-Cliffs for efforts to scuttle deal

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
 Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Uncertainty over the future of two of the Iron Range’s largest taconite facilities continued this week after U.S. Steel filed a federal lawsuit to overturn President Biden’s decision to block the proposed sale of the storied American company to Japan-based Nippon Steel.

Biden announced on Jan. 3

that he was exercising his authority as president to halt the sale out of national security concerns. “A strong domestically owned and operated steel industry represents an essential national security priority and is critical for resilient supply chains,” stated Biden in a prepared press release.

Biden’s decision had strong backing from the United Steelworker’s union as well as Cleveland-Cliffs, U.S. Steel’s

leading competitor in the domestic steel industry. U.S. Steel had earlier rejected a proposed \$7 billion buyout offer from Cliffs before accepting a \$15 billion, all-cash offer from Nippon.

Cliffs CEO Lourenco Goncalves, along with Steelworker’s union president David McCall, had been outspoken in their opposition to the bid from Nippon and both Cliffs and the union now face separate lawsuits filed by U.S. Steel and

Right: The future of U.S. Steel’s taconite operations on the Iron Range remain uncertain given the ongoing legal and political battle over the buyout offer proposed by Nippon Steel.

file photo

Nippon for a “coordinated series of anticompetitive and racketeering activities” in an effort to block the deal.

See...LAWSUITS pg. 9



THE ARTS IN ELY

Shakespeare on LOVE

Great Nordic Shakespeare Festival debuts this weekend with ‘Romeo and Juliet’

by CATIE CLARK
 Ely Editor

ELY- The Northern Lakes Arts Association’s Great Nordic Shakespeare Festival opens on Friday, Jan. 10 with “Romeo and Juliet” at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater.

NLAA Executive Artistic Director Ian Francis Lah described the production as, “A fresh, 75-minute adaptation of Shakespeare’s greatest tragedy ... perfect for newcomers and longtime fans alike.”

Like most modern perfor-

mances, the NLAA version by Lah uses a trimmed-down script of the three-hour play, like the current Broadway and Chicago adaptations. The NLAA version cuts many long speeches and tangential scenes, like Romeo’s slaying of Count Paris, while keeping all the major plot beats like the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt and the famous balcony scene. In adapting the script, Lah told the *Timberjay* that he wanted “to highlight key scenes while preserving Shakespeare’s

See...FESTIVAL pg. 10



Top: Members of the cast of NLAA’s upcoming staging of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ act out Friar Laurence’s monologue scene, performed by Noah Warner, during a recent plain clothes rehearsal.

Above: Romeo, played by Toby Davis, supports Mercutio, played by Eric Frederickson, after Mercutio is stabbed. photos by C. Clark

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Former Cook HRA director may face new charges

by DAVID COLBURN
 Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Former Cook Housing and Rehabilitation Authority Executive Director Reed Erickson is facing possible additional charges in his court fight over allegations that he improperly bilked the CHRA out of nearly \$19,000 for improperly claimed vacation and sick time compensation.

Erickson was originally charged in February 2024 with felony embezzlement of public funds after an internal investigation and external audit revealed evidence that he had paid himself for 515 hours of vacation and sick time to which he

was not entitled when he left the agency, a monetary amount of \$18,982.90. CHRA policy allowed only for reimbursement of a maximum of 240 hours of accrued vacation time to be reimbursed. According to the original complaint, in a written response to the agency Erickson indicated that his total accrued vacation time was 456 hours, with a total payout of \$16,808.15. Erickson denied being paid for any sick time on his final check.

On Dec. 27, Assistant St. Louis County Attorney Aaron Welch filed a motion in district court seeking to add two additional counts

See...CHARGES pg. 9

MINING

USFS reiterates its opposition to planned Twin Metals mine

Dec. 18 letter comes in response to ongoing litigation over canceled leases

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
 Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The U.S. Forest Service has, once again, staked out its firm opposition to the proposed Twin Metals mine near Ely.

The federal agency’s latest statement on the matter comes in a Dec. 18 letter issued in response to ongoing litigation surrounding federal leases once held by Twin Metals and its parent company, the Chilean mining giant Antofagasta.

The D.C. Court of Appeals in Washington will hear oral arguments on Monday, Jan. 13, as Twin Metals hopes to reverse a lower court ruling that rejected their claim that the leases be renewed.

Among several arguments, Twin Metals claims that the Bureau of Land Management, or BLM, erred when it issued its most recent cancellation of two Twin Metals leases because it failed to consult with the

See...USFS pg. 9



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Community notices

Solar Energy (Part 2) at the Ely Climate Group on Tuesday, Jan. 14

ELY- The Ely Climate Group invites you to their meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 4 p.m. at the Ely Field Naturalists Resource Center above the Ely NAPA store. This month we will hear from Hudson Kingston about the costs and benefits of solar on your home and the way the grid operates as our energy generation changes. This program will also be available by zoom; you can find the link at elyminnesota.com/elyclimate.

History Happy Hour on Jan. 15 in Ely

ELY- This month, History Happy Hour will focus on travel to Ely: how it changed from walking or boating to riding a train and eventually driving. How did immigrants to the area get here before train tracks were put down? How long did it take to get from St. Paul to Lake Vermilion before the train?

Join us Wednesday, Jan. 15 from 5 – 5:30 p.m. for another opportunity to dig into Ely Area history while enjoying a tasty meal or beverage at the Boathouse Brewpub Lookout Lounge, which is open from 4:30 - 6 p.m. for full service.

This program is supported by the Boathouse Brewpub, Dorothy Molter Museum, Boundary Waters Connect, Ely Folk School and Ely Heritage Preservation Commission.

Arrowhead Library System's Bookmobile will be off the road January 6 - 15

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Library System (ALS) Bookmobile will be off the road Monday, Jan. 6 to Wednesday, Jan.15 for vehicle repairs. All Bookmobile items currently checked out to patrons will be renewed for three weeks from their appointed day.

For further information on the Bookmobile or Mail-A-Book services, contact the Arrowhead Library System, 5528 Emerald Ave., Mt. Iron, or at 218-741-3840. You can see us on Facebook or go directly to our web page at alslib.info/bookmobile/.

Register now for Power of the Purse

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.

UWNEMN's free babysitter trainings return this winter for students 11 and older

REGIONAL – United Way of Northeastern Minnesota (UWNEMN) has opened registration for no-cost babysitter trainings this winter.

The next trainings are scheduled for Jan. 20 and Feb. 17 at UWNEMN's building in Chisholm. All trainings take place from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and are led by American Red Cross certified instructor, Mountain Iron Public Library Director and Events Coordinator, Anna Amundson. United Way offered a class earlier this month in International Falls.

Lunch and snacks are provided, but transportation must be provided by a parent or caregiver. Following each training, participants will receive a certification of knowledge and skills necessary to safely and responsibly care for children and infants (CPR training included).

To participate, students must be 11 years or older and must live in UWNEMN's service area (Iron Range, Koochiching County, or Lake of the Woods County).

This is the third year UWNEMN has organized these American Red Cross trainings.

"These trainings are making a real difference, both for the students who are building leadership and safety skills and for the families across the region in need of additional childcare options," said UWNEMN Community Impact Director Crystal Royer. "We understand our region and knew in order to make the biggest impact we'd need to bring the training outside our building and into the communities we serve."

Upcoming trainings are made possible through UWNEMN's Bright Beginnings initiative, with support from the Northland Foundation and the State of Minnesota.

There is a limit of 10 students per training; a wait list will be started as trainings fill. To learn more or register, visit: www.unitedwaynemn.org/babysitter

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EMBARRASS Timber Hall Cold Spot Festivaali on Saturday, Jan. 18

EMBARRASS- The Embarrass Fair Association is hosting the Cold Spot Festivaali on Saturday, Jan. 18 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Timber Hall and the Embarrass Ice Rink. Stop by for fun winter activities, boot throwing, a chili cook-off (freewill offering), children's activities and more. There will be sledding, broomball, and ice skating at the rink. The event is free.

Upcoming events in February include the monthly pancake breakfast on Saturday, Feb. 1 from 8 – 11 a.m., and the Puxatony Puzzle Competition on Sunday, Feb. 2 at 1 p.m. Pre-registration is required by Jan. 24 by contacting Sue at 218-750-2718. Cost is \$10 per person or \$40/team of four. Teams



Stop by Timber Hall on Jan. 18 for outdoor and indoor winter fun. Sign up soon for the puzzle competition on Sunday, Feb. 2. Teams of four will compete to finish a 500-piece puzzle the fastest. Teams are given the same puzzle to complete. file photos

More information about these events can be found at www.embarrassfa.org. The Embarrass Region Fair Association's annual meeting will be held on Feb. 13.

Longtime Eagles Nest Official Richard Floyd retiring



EAGLES NEST- Current Eagles Nest Supervisor Richard Floyd is retiring after 25 years of serving on the Eagles Nest Township Board. Much of Rich's time on the Board was as town chair. Rich served as the road supervisor overseeing the maintenance of town roads. The Board and residents are very appreciative of his hard work, dedication and many accomplishments.

Pictured from left: Supervisor Kurt Soderberg, Supervisor Richard Floyd, Supervisor Jackie Monahan-Junek, and Supervisor David Chiabotti. submitted

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Lake Country Power seeks applicants for Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

COHASSETT – The cooperative is seeking high school sophomores and juniors to apply for an opportunity to be selected as their representative on this year's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Most students may

not visit Washington, D.C. during their high school years, but at least one lucky student will be sponsored by Lake Country Power to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in D.C. for a week in June.

The application deadline is Feb. 10, and all applicants must have parents or legal guardians who are active co-op members – meaning they currently receive electric service from Lake Country Power. Over 1,900 student delegates from all over the country go on the Youth Tour in Washington,

D.C. each year, including at least 40 students from Minnesota. Students visit with their congressional representatives, tour some of the most famous museums in the world and make memories and friends that will last a lifetime. Students also learn about the electric cooperative business model and American history.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has been a traditional and favored opportunity among high school students since 1957, when it was established by the National Rural Electric Cooper-

ative Association (NRECA).

Students will find the application form online and more information about this outstanding opportunity at www.lakecountrypower.coop/youth-tour. Have questions? Students can contact Lake Country Power at 800-421-9959, extension 7152, and ask for Tami Zaun. School counselors have been informed about this opportunity and can be a local resource as well.

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Minnesota North College & Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Program Fair

Join Minnesota North College & Bois Forte Band of Chippewa for a program fair! Explore many hands-on activities and interact with faculty from all six Minnesota North Campuses! Lunch will be provided for attendees.

Transportation is provided by Big Woods Transit. Pick-up will be at the Vermilion Wellness Center in Tower, MN and at Zups in Cook, MN. Transportation spots are limited. Reserve by calling 1-888-757-1540!

Friday, January 24, 2025
11-1:00PM
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TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Chavers steps away from Bois Forte chair position

by MELISSA OLSON
Minnesota Public Radio News

NETT LAKE- Bois Forte Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers, who had started her third term in office this past July, announced last week that she is retiring from the office to care for her mental health.

Chavers said she made her decision to step away from the position in early December after she hit a deer with her car – the fourth deer she had hit since last spring.

It was then, Chavers said, she told her son, “I’m done. I’ve had it.”

The following day was the band’s Christmas party, and Chavers said she couldn’t bring herself to leave her house.

“I’m a people person. I like hugging and talking and being happy, and I didn’t want to go anywhere,” Chavers said.

The recent incident with the deer came after a prolonged period of stress personally and professionally. Chavers has served as a legal



Cathy Chavers

guardian for an ailing sibling. She said she’s also worked to support a family member in recovery from substance abuse.

Chavers said as a teenager she watched her mother struggle with mental health challenges. She said she wanted to be up front with her

family.

After the holiday, she started to talk with them about retiring from elected leadership. She said it was a difficult, but necessary decision.

“It’s like leaving your family ... you have got the band that has depended on you, and it’s difficult to say goodbye, but it is not goodbye. I am still here. I’m an elder, I’m a band member. I live here but ... I need to do something else,” Chavers said.

She said her family members supported her. She announced her decision to Bois Forte tribal members last Thursday, and she said they also expressed their support.

“I’ve been getting a lot of contacts from people saying, ‘We’re glad you did that,’ because I’ve always preached, make sure you take care of yourself, because no one will take care of you, but I never followed my own advice,” Chavers said.

Chavers will remain in office through the end of January to allow for a transition period. Her term as chair would have expired in 2028.

Some question still exists about the exact procedures necessary to fill the position once it becomes vacant, according to District 1 Bois Forte Tribal Council Representative Shane Drift, who will serve as the interim tribal chair until a new chair is chosen, according to a Bois Forte press release.

As a member nation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, MCT regulations dictate the Bois Forte election process. Drift said that the band is seeking clarification of certain provisions for special elections before outlining their next steps.

Chavers said she is proud of her work at Bois Forte, especially her work that helped to restore more than 28,000 acres of land to tribal ownership in 2022.

She said she shares those accomplishments with fellow Bois Forte leaders and staff. She also points to the use of federal funding to make much needed updates and improvements to buildings and roads on the reservation.

“It’s been a very positive and delightful thing to see,” Chavers

said.

She said she has enjoyed building relationships between tribal nations and local, state, and federal governments.

“You have to build those relationships and partnerships and educate. Everything is educate, educate, educate,” Chavers said.

Chavers said she intends to keep on working, but she wants to find a position that will allow her to “switch gears.”

“Gonna jump into a vehicle, and head down a different path,” Chavers said.

Chavers said she’s looking forward to going to her grandchildren’s hockey and basketball games. She is the grandmother of eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

She also said she is also planning on taking some time for herself, “I’m looking forward to a little free time.”

Listen to MPR at 92.5FM in Virginia/Hibbing and 89.3FM in Ely

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

Longtime conservation district board member Gary Rantala retires

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

REGIONAL- After 21 years of helping guide the North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District, Gary Rantala is retiring after opting not to seek re-election to the position he has held for more than two decades.

Rantala is proud of the time he spent on the board, helping area residents keep area watersheds clean.

“Honestly, it was a board I really enjoyed being part of,” he said. “Our watersheds are probably the cleanest in the United States.”

Throughout his tenure as a District Supervisor, Gary worked to promote soil and water conservation initiatives while also supporting educational programs that empowered local youth to engage with and protect their natural surroundings, according to his colleagues.

“Gary’s commitment to both environmental education and conservation has left a lasting legacy in our community,” said Peggy Pearson, who chairs the district board. “His leadership, vision, and passion, for our natural resources have made a significant impact on the

district, and his dedication will be greatly missed.”

Rantala’s work extended beyond policy and leadership. He frequently served as a judge for the area Envirothon, a SWCD-sponsored competition for high school students with hands-on-learning opportunities for students, helping them develop a lifelong respect for the environment. He also served as a judge for 4-H projects at the county fair, gave greenhouse tours to 4-H students, and helped 4-H club members with horticulture-related projects.

A lifelong educator and passionate environmental advocate, Gary has played a key role in shaping conservation efforts in the region. Formerly a teacher at Cherry High School, Rantala’s 30-plus year career teaching business, science, and math highlighted his deep commitment to environmental protection and his desire to instill the importance of natural resource conservation in young people.

Rantala said one of the most important lessons he learned as a teacher and educator was to respect the knowledge gained by those actually doing the tasks you are teaching about, both in the classroom



Pictured from left: Chuck Bainter (District Supervisor), Peggy Pearson (District Supervisor and Board Chair), Gary Rantala (District Supervisor and Vice Chair), Anita Provinzino (District Administrator), and Mark Peterson (District Supervisor). submitted photo

and in the wider world.

He was guided by that lesson in his business as well. Rantala, along with his wife Sharon, owned and operated GR Greenhouse in Embarrass for 42 years.

“I learned more from my cus-

tomers at the greenhouse than I did from textbooks,” he said. “My students taught me to try something new every day,” he said, “and one of the most important lessons I got while learning to be a teacher was being told to remember that you do



Gary Rantala judging exhibits at the Embarrass Fair. file photo

not know a damn thing until to try to grow that crop yourself.”

The North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District’s mission is to preserve the natural resources of the region through education, conservation programs, and community engagement. By promoting sustainable practices and environmental awareness, the district plays a vital role in maintaining the health of local soil, water, and wildlife resources.

Learn more about the service at <https://www.nslswcd.org/>.

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OPINION

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

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

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Editorial

An honest president

Jimmy Carter was one of the few recent presidents willing to challenge Americans

Upon the death of the 39th American president on Dec. 29, we thought it worthwhile to revisit some of the thoughts expressed by Jimmy Carter in his farewell address given on Jan. 14, 1981.

While his term in the White House coincided with a tumultuous period around the world, much of it beyond his control or influence, Carter was one of the only presidents in memory who regularly spoke plainly and honestly to the American people about difficult issues — and his farewell address was in keeping with that tradition. In his address, he spoke of common threats and common interests that all of humanity faces, and the important role that citizens can play in a democracy.

Here are excerpts of the late president's address in his own words:

“Tonight, I would like first to say a few words about this most special office, the Presidency of the United States. This is at once the most powerful office in the world and among the most severely constrained by law and custom. The President is given a broad responsibility to lead but cannot do so without the support and consent of the people, expressed formally through the Congress and informally in many ways through a whole range of public and private institutions. This is as it should be.

“Within our system of government every American has a right and a duty to help shape the future course of the United States. Thoughtful criticism and close scrutiny of all government officials by the press and the public are an important part of our democratic society. Now, as in the past, only the understanding and involvement of the people through full and open debate can help to avoid serious mistakes and assure the continued dignity and safety of the nation...

“Today, as people have become ever more doubtful of the ability of the government to deal with our problems, we are increasingly drawn to single-issue groups and special interest organizations to ensure that whatever else happens, our own personal views and our own private interests are protected. This is a disturbing factor in American political life. It tends to distort our purposes, because the national interest is not always the sum of all our single or special interests. We are all Americans together, and we must not forget that the common good is our common interest and our individual responsibility.”

Carter, as he often did, tried to offer inspiration by appealing to our common humanity. While

he warned about the continuing dangers posed by nuclear weapons, he noted that the technology that made it possible to deliver nuclear warheads across the globe, had also sent humans peacefully into space.

“From that perspective,” he said, “we see our Earth as it really is — a small and fragile and beautiful blue globe, the only home we have. We see no barriers of race or religion or country. We see the essential unity of our species and our planet. And with faith and common sense, that bright vision will ultimately prevail.

“Another major challenge, therefore, is to protect the quality of this world within which we live. The shadows that fall across the future are cast not only by the kinds of weapons we've built, but by the kind of world we will either nourish or neglect. There are real and growing dangers to our simple and our most precious possessions: the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land which sustains us. The rapid depletion of irreplaceable minerals, the erosion of topsoil, the destruction of beauty, the blight of pollution, the demands of increasing billions of people, all combine to create problems which are easy to observe and predict, but difficult to resolve. If we do not act, the world of the year 2000 will be much less able to sustain life than it is now.”

“But there is no reason for despair. Acknowledging the physical realities of our planet does not mean a dismal future of endless sacrifice. In fact, acknowledging these realities is the first step in dealing with them. We can meet the resource problems of the world — water, food, minerals, farmlands, forests, overpopulation, pollution if we tackle them with courage and foresight.”

It can be hard to believe that while Carter's words were uttered nearly 44 years ago, his warnings proved prescient as we continue to live in fear of nuclear weapons, and the global environmental challenges we face have grown more dire in those ensuing years. While Carter's presidency was generally viewed as a mediocre one, he went on to engage in the most far-reaching and meaningful post-presidency of anyone in living memory. And he serves as a reminder of a time when the dishonesty and self-dealing that permeates our politics today took a holiday. Jimmy Carter was an honest man, motivated by faith and a tireless desire to serve others. If only we had such leaders today.



Letters from Readers

The oligarchy runs the show

Bezos, Murdoch, Musk, Zuckerberg are among the top one percent who own more global wealth than the bottom 95 percent. Oligarchs own the global economy (U.S. included) and now seek to own and control our political system, enabling government wealthfare — the most powerful on the planet, spending more on military might than all other industrialized nations combined.

James Carville is credited with saying, “It’s the economy, stupid!” Slightly revised, more specifically, “It’s the economic system, stupid!” Originally, economic systems were designed to serve communal needs and wants. Over time, means of production fell into the hands of individual capitalists competing with one another. Economic advantage allowed one to devour the other, inevitably becoming a global monopoly.

Blaming China, immigrants, workers, environmentalists or government regulation is classic scapegoating. Individual CEOs, corporate boards and oligarchs are the real targets for what has gone deeply wrong in American society. The only thing natural about economics are resources; all else involve individual decision-makers in an economic system hijacked by those private interests benefiting most.

Inequality and human deprivation are traceable to the same forces that brought us white supremacy and privilege, slavery and exploitation of workers, land grabbing and destruction of Indigenous culture, poverty and climate disruption. Over 80 percent of all corporate shares are owned by less than 10 percent of the shareholders. One share equals one vote, a million shares equal a million votes enabling a billionaire oligarchy.

Corporatocracy, run by a billionaire oligarchy, dominates political and economic life through capture of major institutions, including government itself. Corporate giants in ravenous pursuit exploit, extract and squander resources, leaving planetary destruction and externalizing costs at public expense in its wake. Denial, scapegoating, burying truth and false narratives keep alive the American Dream, but as George Carlin observed, “you have to be asleep to believe it.”

**Harold Honkola
Stillwater**

Let's get serious about a joint ambulance service

I believe that we are missing out on a very viable opportunity that has been put forth by the EBCH/SafeTechSolutions plan that would upgrade our individual ambulance services in Ely, Babbitt and Tower area to Advanced Life Support and go a long way toward making them sustainable.

I am disappointed that our State Sen. Grant Hauschild, who was a leader on the 2024 Legislative EMS Task Force, hasn't picked up and meaningfully worked on this plan. This plan truly “puts the patient first,” which is the standard goal. Importantly, because the Ely Hospital is a Critical Care Hospital, and due to the distances between the three cities, it would receive 101 percent payment from ambulance runs that are billed to Medicare, as opposed to the present 40 percent rate of return. That is a big deal because most of the runs in our area are billed to Medicare. I hope some of the other politicians, local and state, will pick up on this. How about it, folks? Our region can build a model of the future.

I do not believe that the “sprint medic” plan, covering only 60 hours of every 168-hour week,

for our area is a viable long-term solution. When the current money from the Legislature runs out, where will more come from? It provides no Advanced Life Support ambulance vehicles, which are certainly needed if we are to take advantage of the benefits of the current move toward telemedicine in fully equipped ambulances that are staffed with paramedics.

I fully understand that there are parochial issues at play here. That's not good. It makes some leaders skittish. At present, we are fortunate to have received some one-time emergency money from the state for each ambulance service. I don't expect the Legislature to do that every year. In fact, the state budget is looking pretty tight. I also don't believe that Sen. Hauschild's suggestion for taxes on cell phones and on insurance companies to pay for rural ambulance service, his lure being that the metro would be the pay source, will have much of a chance getting through the Legislature when it convenes on Jan. 14.

In the real world, I believe that a combination of the EBCH ownership of the three services, along with the creation of an “EMS Medical Services Special Taxing District,” per Minn. Statute 144F.01, will lead us to a modern, sustainable ambulance service in this three-city region. One important benefit of an EMS tax district is that it would give us local input and local control.

I'd appreciate it if Sen. Hauschild and at least some of the other leaders could get together with EBCH/SafeTechSolutions and flesh out this plan, keeping in mind that “the patient comes first” and that there should be nothing to fear in trying. There's much more to be said about this, but this is a start.

**Lee Peterson
Greenwood Township**

COMMENTARY

My year in review...the 2024 highlights edition

I am just wrapping up our annual holiday break at the *Timberjay* and it's the start of another new year. Personally, the past nine months since my last column have been full of highs, with very few lows, and in my brother's words, “We still have to live!” So, let's focus on some of the high points.



**SCARLET
STONE**

I organized a successful Tower-Soudan city-wide garage sale with input from friends. There was great participation, so I plan to make it an annual event provided there continues to be community interest. Mid-June

brought me an opportunity to again perform in the annual Lake Vermilion Cultural Center (LVCC) Midsummer Gala, that Janice Kimes of the Twin Cities has written and directed for over a de-

cade. It was Jan's final show and a musical tribute to past years. I performed the Ode to St. Urho wearing a large grasshopper hat I'd created and a costume of green and purple with a banner across my chest that read St. Urho Rocks. I also participated in the choir, which is made up of local singers and others from the metro area. I am now in my third year functioning as the Administrative Assistant for the LVCC. I do the office management, data entry, and create the newsletters, in addition to grant-writing. It is a job that has introduced me to many people in the area as the LVCC is now

offering concerts, lectures and more in the former St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

On Oct. 18, my son Keaton Chapman and his decade-long love, Ashley Hiller of Ely, got married near the water's edge in Shawnee Mission Park in Kansas City, a favorite destination of the couple and home to my brother Paul Johnson and his wife Carolyn (“sis”), who is an extraordinary party-planner. Details including hand-crafted decorations, color-coordinated florals, table runners, and a pumpkin spice tiered wedding cake were handled with glee across the miles via group

chat on social media. I flew down several days before the wedding to assist with preparations and to have more time with my family.

The soon-to-be newlyweds traveled south with the Hillers in their two cars and had an overnight stop in Winona where they picked up Ashley's brother Zack. Upon arriving in Kansas City with a bit of white-knuckle driving, they checked into the Truitt Boutique Hotel where they had reserved rooms. Built in 1916, the brick colonial revival home features a beautiful grand staircase with a lovely banister that forms a curl at the bottom. It proved

to be the perfect setting for a historic-style afternoon portrait of Ashley following the wedding. Later that evening, everyone met for a wonderful groom's dinner at the 801 Chophouse. The entrées and side dishes were divine, featuring top cuts of beef and special sauces. Following dinner, each of us took turns standing up to offer our personal sentiments to the couple. Our newly combined families, and the culmination of a decade of life experiences already shared, created a tremendously meaningful moment that we

See **REVIEW**...pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Mining industry record shows plenty to fear

The Dec. 20, 2024 *Timberjay* article, "Trump Victory Boosts Copper-Nickel

Prospects," contains a quote that says about mining critics: "They are just scared."

This continues a practice of mining promoters that depicts environmental defenders as driven by emotion and ignorance when in fact they

are motivated by courage and science.

Any serious analysis of mining in Minnesota leads to the observation that an exploration rig is a complicated rotary machine dedicated to the discovery of government

subsidies and gullible investors. Our low-grade iron and copper-nickel ore bodies provide ample evidence.

Our Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency promote

respectable polluting when they should be cleaning up past failures to regulate. Our assets are shipped out of state while our liabilities accumulate in abandoned pits, tailings ponds, and ground water.

We're not scared. We're just reacting logically to an industry that has a record of failure.

**Bob Tammen
Soudan**

REVIEW...Cont. from page 4

will remember for a lifetime.

Keaton and Ashley chose to hold their ceremony on a Friday at 10 a.m. as it would guarantee a quieter setting at the park. It was a perfect crisp, blue-sky day with colored leaves still on the branches, creating the perfect backdrop for their wedding. Guests included mainly close family, including Ashley's grandmother Mary Springborg of the Twin Cities, who watched via Messenger video recorded by Zack Hiller. Special friends from Grand Rapids, Dr. Kim Haycraft-Schmutter and her husband Mike Schmutter were also in attendance, hav-

ing flown down days prior to be part of the wedding party. Musicians included a guitarist who is a friend of the Johnsons and Rory McKee, the tall red-haired Scottish bagpiper from the Kansas City St. Andrews Pipes and Drums. This colorful detail came about one day last summer. While planning music, Keaton jokingly suggested a bagpiper and that's all it took for me and I had sis book one... "ah the pipes!"

The wedding party was dressed to "the nines" in gowns and suits in colors chosen from a selected palette. Keaton, Joe, and Mike were fitted at a wedding shop

in muted spruce green attire with ties in dark burgundy/cream plaid. Keaton, of Scottish heritage, opted for a bow tie with a few initial grumbles arising from his intended that gave way once he put it on for the wedding...it was a dashing touch.

As one might expect, there was a delay with Keaton's suit and it was expected to arrive the morning of the wedding. We were all tense and I mentioned the possibility of him having to find a choir robe at the last minute. Luck prevailed. The morning of the wedding, sis and I were in our jammies when we heard a knock and saw

my brother dash to the door and intercept the anticipated parcel from UPS. I cheered from the kitchen in relief, while stuffing a deviled egg into my mouth as sis and I were arranging the reception platters.

Back to wardrobe details...Mike's tie was antique copper to match his wife Kim's copper satin fitted dress. The most beautiful garment was, of course, Ashley's dress. It was a Renaissance-style, off-the-shoulder gown of white tulle featuring a white leaf embroidery motif throughout, sculpted bodice, full sheer sleeves, full skirt, and long train. The

mothers both ordered dresses online with Leah Hiller choosing a deep burgundy, lace-covered dress with short lace-scalloped sleeves, a V-neck and pearl accessories. I selected a soft spruce green tiered dress with a cape off the back shoulders, faux emerald jewelry accented by an heirloom crystal necklace given to me by a close friend.

Some of us arrived at the park early in order to decorate, or "supervise" as was my role. The Hillers would arrive about 40 minutes later. Keaton waited next to the wedding tree looking across the lake with his uncle who would officiate and tell him when to turn around. When the time arrived, Ashley, and her father Joseph Hiller made their procession through the decorated pavilion to the large tree. Rory McKee, dressed in full tartan regalia, played "Skye Boat Song," a favorite of the bride's and the theme song from the television series *Outlander*. He followed the procession as Keaton waited for her and was totally mesmerized.

Dr. Paul Johnson (brother to me and uncle to Keaton) and his wife Carolyn wrote and performed the ceremony. Their son Peter Johnson did a special reading, and toward the end of the ceremony the mothers tied a handfasting cord crocheted by the bride in selected colors of soft jute interwoven with Celtic styled pewter beads. Following the exchanging of rings and the ceremony, Rory's bagpipes livened the tone of the celebratory occasion with the charming old melody of "Waltzing Matilda." Music

filled the air in the pavilion where a light picnic lunch was accompanied by mimosas. The songs of the guitarist over his speaker system were a very nice addition and brought several couples to enjoy some dancing. After the wedding, we took an afternoon siesta. Back at the Truitt, the beautiful aforementioned photo was taken of Ashley as she paused midway up the stairs looking back over her shoulder with her long dark hair flowing over her shoulders and yards of her shroudy dress trailing behind her. So stunning!

Later that day, a dinner reception with the opening of cards and gifts was held in a private room at a favorite BBQ restaurant. Following dinner many went to listen to KC jazz musicians playing original compositions at the Green Lady Lounge. A few of us over 60 decided to call it a day but watched for pics and updates on our phones from the comfort of the sofa back home as we chatted and delighted in memories of the day.

The Hiller family and close friends departed the morning after the wedding but the rest of us decided to take in another day of shopping and sightseeing before heading back north. The newlyweds are planning a honeymoon in the future.

The remainder of 2024 was a happy festive time all the way through New Year's Eve. I am so grateful for family, friends, and health.

Vote for Option B and hire qualified candidates in Greenwood

I'm writing to encourage all Greenwood voters to vote **YES for Option B** in the March 11th Township Election, and also attend the Annual Meeting that evening. What is Option B? It is a legal term for the option of appointing (interviewing and hiring) qualified candidates for the Treasurer and Clerk positions, versus voting for candidates in a popularity contest who may or may not be qualified.

We need to appoint a Clerk and Treasurer based on their qualifications, their ability to perform defined duties, and the willingness to work with all Township Officers. If and when Option B passes in March, the Treasurer's job description will immediately be written, posted, candidates interviewed, and a Treasurer hired. The person elected as Treasurer in the March election will step aside. The current Clerk will serve out her term, and the same process will occur to fill that position. They would be accountable to the Board of Supervisors for their performance and service to our Township.

If Option B unfortunately is not passed, a Treasurer will be elected and will take the position. I want to make sure the position is filled by someone capable and willing to perform the necessary duties. The person must put the township and community ahead of personal goals and agendas.

That's why I have filed to run for the open Treasurer position. I am asking for your support as both a candidate and a supporter of Option B. I believe it's time for positive change and a much brighter vision for our township's future. I look forward in the coming weeks to having more conversations about Option B, informing you of my credentials, and sharing my vision of the future.

In the meantime, **I invite every Greenwood Township voter to attend a monthly Board Meeting before the March election.** They are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month: Jan. 14 and Feb. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall.

It's important to have a clear and unbiased perspective on the current state of our local government. If you can't attend, watch the video replays available on the Township Facebook page. The upcoming March election will ask us to make important decisions. Our votes will determine how the Township will operate, who we trust to lead, and ultimately define the vision of Greenwood's future. **It's imperative for us to be well-informed voters.**

Below is a letter from Steve Fenske, the attorney from the Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT). It was published in the Greenwood Township Board minutes Feb. 9, 2021. The letter came after a failed vote on Option B in 2020. **Mr. Fenske explains the rationale for townships making the change. It also sheds light on how it might directly apply to our current township state of affairs.**

It's long and detailed – and worthy of the time to read. It may answer many of your questions.

This letter raises the issue of Option B — Appointed Clerk/Treasurer. Again, I have been told that in last year's election, some individuals suggested MAT advised against adoption of Option B.

This is not the case — MAT expressed no opinion about this matter. We were consulted about the process and details of Option B and stated this issue is left to the voters. To avoid any misstatement of information from MAT on this issue, I want to summarize the law and policy related to Option B.

Town voters have several optional forms of township government, one of which is the appointed clerk or treasurer, called Option B. Many townships have adopted Option B to make the clerk and/or the treasurer appointed — it is not rare by any means, but a majority of towns still use an elected clerk. Regardless of the options selected by other towns, the purpose of township government is to allow for local control, and Option B provides that control.

When towns adopt Option B, it is usually for one of two reasons. First, is when a town has trouble finding a clerk or treasurer from within the town. One advantage of an appointed clerk is that the person holding it no longer needs to be a resident. This gives a larger pool of people to fill the job.

The second reason is because of conflict between the board and the clerk or treasurer. The Board of Supervisors is the governing body of the town — the clerk and treasurer are not supposed to govern or 'run' the town. The duties assigned to clerks and treasurer are ministerial in nature — they are given a set of tasks to complete and they complete them. There is little to no discretion in those office. For example, a clerks' obligations to administer elections are the same in either method. The supervisors cannot interfere with those duties. Another example, the clerk holds the town's data but doesn't have ownership control over it. All data requests are supposed to be decided by the Board — not the clerk.

On the other hand, Supervisors have a lot of discretion in their duties. This is important because the clerk and treasurer should understand the limited role they play in the town. The clerk and treasurer are not supposed to work against the supervisors using their offices.

This is complicated by the fact that elected clerks and treasurers are not employees of the town so they do not "answer to" the board. If an employee took town information without board approval, for example, giving it out to people, the employee would be disciplined or dismissed. An elected officer cannot be dismissed by the board. The problem is that a person with power to interfere with the board refuses to respect the rules placed by the board, and there is no consequence other than to elect someone else, reduce the officer's pay, or adopt Option B.

The advantages of Option B are: (1) larger pool of candidates to fill the job; (2) clerk/treasurer 'answers to' the board and is less likely to cause conflict; (3) Board can review and manage the clerk/treasurer's administration of duties; and (4) duties that are not assigned to an elected clerk/treasurer by law can be made part of the job. The downside to Option B is that the voters remove their power to elect the person to the clerk or treasurer position. The voters retain the power to select town supervisors and if the choice of appointed clerk or treasurer is inappropriate, the blame may fall to the Board that hired those officers. In other words, there is still accountability to voters.

The decision of whether to adopt Option B is left to voters. Given Greenwood Township's tumultuous history and refusal of prior officers to stay in their lanes, adopting Option B would be an effective means of restoring good governance and management with the board and clerk position.

After several years of observing Greenwood Township, it is clear there are deep divisions among some people concerning the town's governance. Greenwood's voters need to choose a direction for their local government by selecting its supervisors and then selecting a clerk and treasurer who will work with the Board. Continuing to select officers that are prone to conflict has not helped the township, and has cost it a great deal of time, money, and credibility.

I hope you can see the possibilities that choosing Option B can bring to our community. The Clerk and Treasurer have very important roles. Option B has the potential to eliminate our current dysfunction, focus the Clerk and Treasurer on the deliverables of their jobs, and, most importantly, require them to work cooperatively in support of our Township Board and community

As a member of this community, I fully support voting in favor of Option B.

Paul Thompson
Greenwood Resident

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the **TIMBERJAY**



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Week of Jan. 13

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

Tower City Council- 5:30 p.m. on Jan. 13

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.

Greenwood Town Board- 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 14

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

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



TSHS weekly winners
TOWER- The winner of the Week 16 Charlemagne's 52 Club \$250 cash prize is Cindy MacDiarmid of Babbitt. And the winner of the Tower-Soudan Historical Society Week 17 Charlemagne's 52 Club \$100 cash prize is Merlin Galonski of Tower.

History Tidbit: One of the oldest, and at one time one of the busiest sections of track on the DM&IR was abandoned effective March 3, 2012, by the order of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The track included about 1.8 miles of the Tower Branch from a point just south of the Walsh Road crossing to the end of the branch, and three spur tracks. At one time the track extended to another sawmill on Hoodoo Point. Traffic over it had dwindled over the years, especially since the closing of the Soudan Mine in 1963.

The branch line was constructed in 1886 to serve the rapidly developing community of Tower shortly after the main line from Two Harbors to the Soudan mine was built in 1883-1884 to open up the Vermilion Range to mining. It ran to the shore of Lake Vermilion where sawmills and a box factory were once located. The sawmill, built in 1884, was for some time unable to meet the demands made by the growing community.

More train history: The 1910 Baldwin steam engine, 2-8-0 No. 1218, is one of the early engines used by the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad. It was able to haul 48 cars each loaded with 50 tons of ore from the Soudan Mine to Two Harbors. The engine, originally numbered 218, was later used for stockpile spotting service at the Soudan Mine and at the Pioneer Mine in Ely. This type of locomotive was common on both predecessor railroads and could be found working yards and mine spurs until the end of the steam engine era on the DM&IR.

Tower Café hosting Coffee with a Cop on Jan. 17

PUBLIC SAFETY



TOWER- Everyone is invited to stop by the Tower Café on Friday, Jan. 17 from 10 a.m. – 12 noon to visit with St. Louis County deputies, including Dep. Brock Kick, and other law enforcement officials from the area. St. Louis County Sheriff Gordon Ramsay has been invited, and will try to attend, depending on his schedule, said Dep. Kick.

The café will be serving free coffee, and visitors are free to order off the menu.

“We go into these events with no agenda,” said Dep. Kick. “We just want to sit down and have coffee and conversation. Dep. Kick said questions at other area events have been wide-ranging, and can include up-close looks inside squad cars for younger visitors.

“I am really looking forward to this event,” said Dep. Kick. “And I am excited to meet café owner Jen McDonough for the first time.”

McDonough is also excited

to host the event, and is hoping the event helps the community strengthen ties with the sheriff's department.

This is one of a series of events being held in the county and is part of a nationwide effort by law enforcement officials. The mission of Coffee with a Cop is to break down the barriers between deputies and the citizens they serve, and to allow the opportunity to ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know the deputies serving our community.

BREITUNG RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Chimpy's Skating Parties now underway in Soudan



SOUDAN- Chimpy's Skating Parties are now being held at the Soudan Skating Rink. The next events are on Saturday, Jan. 11 from 12 noon – 3 p.m. and Wednesday, Jan. 15 from 3 – 6 p.m. There will be free food– pizza, burgers, hot dogs, chips, cookies, pop, water, and, of course, ice cream floats served inside the warming shack. There are plenty of loaner skates available, and boot skaters are also welcome. Non-skaters are also invited to stop by and visit and have something to eat.

The parties are being sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Recreation Board. Adult volunteers, led by Chimpy Tuominen, prepare the food and help run the events. Anyone wishing to volunteer or help fund these events should stop by the rink, or the Breitung clerk's office, for information. Skate donations can also be dropped off at the warming shack, during open hours.

While the rink is open daily, weather-permitting, the warming shack hours are Saturdays and Sundays at noon, and Wednesday afternoons. Updated information can usually be found on the Breitung Township MN Facebook page.

Future parties on weekends and Wednesday afternoons are being planned, weather-permitting.

Above: The warming shack has shelves full of skates that can be borrowed, in sizes from young children to adult.

Left: Hot pizza, burger, and hot dogs will be served at the skating parties, plus chips, drinks, and ice cream floats. file photos



VERMILION COUNTRY SCHOOL

THANK YOU!

Students at Vermilion Country School wish to send a big thank you to the Tower Fire Department Relief Association for their generous donation of gift cards for all the students. Students also received an assortment of other gift items donated as part of the Operation Santa program.



COMMUNITY NOTICES

January bookmobile stop canceled due to vehicle repairs

REGIONAL- The Jan. 15 stop for the Arrowhead Bookmobile in the Tower area has been canceled due to vehicle repairs. Any materials taken out will be automatically renewed until the next visit on Feb. 5. The Arrowhead Bookmobile will be in the Tower-Soudan area on Wednesdays: 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.

St. Louis County Board to meet in Soudan on Jan. 14

SOUDAN- The St. Louis County Board will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at the Breitung Community Center in Soudan. The meeting starts at 10 a.m., but the public comment period begins at 9:30 a.m.

Heather Anderson named to Dean's List at UW-Superior

SUPERIOR, Wis.- The University of Wisconsin-Superior has named Heather Anderson of Soudan to the Dean's List for academic achievement during the Fall 2024 semester.

To be named to the Dean's List, students must have completed 12 degree-seeking semester credits and achieved at least a 3.50 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale).

Founded in 1893 as a teacher's college, UW-Superior has more than 50 program offerings, select online and graduate programs, competitive Division III athletics programs and research and scholarship programs that support the community and region.

Chelsea Nelmark on President's List at Minnesota State Technical Colleges

REGIONAL- Chelsea Nelmark, of Embarrass, was

named to the Minnesota State Community and Technical College Presidents List for the fall 2024 semester. Nelmark earned a diploma in Massage Therapy.

Students on the Presidents List earned a grade point average of 4.0 while completing a minimum of six college-level credits and 75% of the courses in which they enrolled for the semester.

Minnesota State Community and Technical College serves more than 10,000 students in credit and non-credit courses each year in over 70 career and liberal arts programs online and in-person at its four campuses in Detroit Lakes, Fergus Falls, Moorhead and Wadena. The college also partners with communities to provide workforce development ser-

vices and other responsive training programs to 500 businesses and thousands of annual participants.

Free community meal at Immanuel on Jan. 22

TOWER- Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower is hosting a free community meal on Wednesday, Jan. 22 from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., or until the food is gone. The meal this month is baked chicken with wild rice. Eat-in or take-outs available. All are welcome to attend.

PUBLIC WORKS

Ely water lines off to a leaky New Year



A crew from the Ely Public Works Department excavating where a brass fitting failed at the junction of the water main and a water service line in the alley behind the James Drug building, now the home to Potluck Kitchenware. photo by C. Clark

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Two water lines failed in Ely over the first weekend of the new year. Both failures were on water service lines next to where they connect to city water mains.

The first failure was discovered on Saturday when the owner of Potluck Kitchenware found water in the basement of the former James Drug building where the housewares shop is located. According to Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski, a plumber was called who determined the water was coming in from outside the basement.

When the Ely Public Works Department excavated the water main in the alley behind Potluck, they found a failed fitting on the service line going into the James Drug building. The force of the leaking water eroded the threads and the nut of the failed fitting. To replace the fitting, public works had to shut down the water main that runs in the alley between Sheridan and Chapman Streets.

"The main needed to be shut down due to the leak flowing approximately 70 gallons per minute," Langowski told the *Timberjay*.

Langowski added, "The service line was replaced with new copper between the curb stop and the corporation stop."

A corporation stop is the connecting valve that taps directly into a water main. A curb stop is downstream of the corporation stop and is the main valve that allows water to flow into a building's service line.

The line was repaired, insulated and returned to service on Monday afternoon.

The second water line failure was reported over the weekend at 120 E. Pattison. The leak was discovered when it created a growing mound of ice in the alley between James and Pattison Streets. The Ely Public Works Department was able to fix this leak on Tuesday morning.

"The leak ... was at the flare nut attaching the copper water service to the corporation stop," Langowski said. "The crew was able to shut the corporation stop off and make the repair without shutting off the water main. The flair nut was replaced, and the line was insulated at the connection and returned to service."

Ely buries its water lines eight feet to prevent freezing. Langowski said that the leaks could be related to the recent cold, but added that "incidents like this do happen pretty much randomly during the year."

Businesses affected

When public works shut down the water main behind Potluck, it cut off water to the businesses on Sheri-

dan and Chapman Streets between First and Second Avenues. Several businesses are still closed for the winter holiday break, like Potluck, which will reopen on Jan. 16. Other properties are currently vacant, like the former offices of WELY. Some, like Mitska's Market and Chapman Street Books, are on their winter schedules where they aren't open every day.

Other businesses, like Ely Family Dental and the Frandsen Bank, opened without access to city water. "We were open because we have an independent water supply for our dental units, so we don't rely on city water for dental procedures on our patients," Dr. Crystal Chopp of Ely Family Dental told the *Timberjay*. "Each dental unit has its own supply of distilled water to avoid the buildup of biofilms and the chemicals used to treat city water."

The lack of city water was an inconvenience, however, for the dental office.

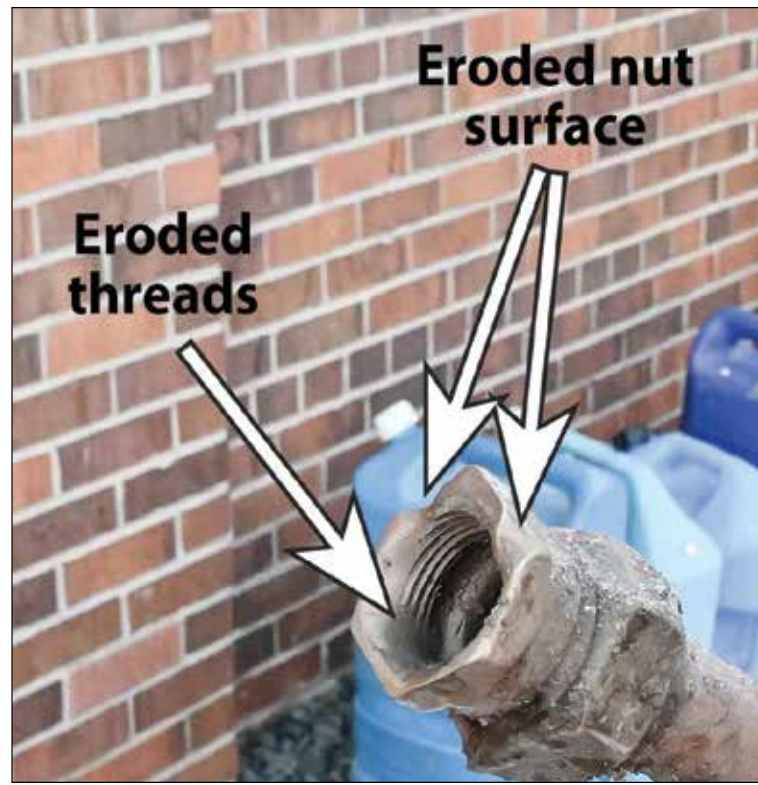
"We had to bring water in to fill the toilet tank to use the bathroom and to wash our hands," Chopp said.

Other businesses weren't so lucky. Because of the cold weather, the loss of water flow at Mitska's Market froze the pipes.

"Because it's an old building, we drip our faucets when it gets this cold out so the pipes don't freeze," said Mary Gronski, owner of Mitska's. "We're closed on Sundays and Mondays in the winter. Yesterday, we stopped in to check up on things and start sandwich preparation for Tuesday. We discovered the pipes were frozen."

The Gronskis had to thaw their pipes out using hot air, which wasn't easy because the pipes in their commercial kitchen are difficult to reach.

"I'm just glad the pipes didn't burst," Gronski said.



The failed brass fitting from the leaking water service line in the alley between Ely Family Dental and Potluck Kitchenware. The arrows show the water erosion damage on the threads and the nut on the fitting. photo by C. Clark

Dark Sky Festival this weekend

ELY- The inaugural Ely Dark Sky Festival is this weekend, with a full slate of events filling both Friday and Saturday, plus three bonus events on Sunday through Tuesday next week, like the University of Minnesota-Duluth Traveling Plane-

tarium show on Monday evening at the Ely Public Schools Campus.

A complete schedule and event registration information are available on the festival's website at ely.darkskyfest.org.



Elyite collegiate honors

MADISON, WIS.- The University of Wisconsin-Madison has named Elyite Rachel Coughlin to the College of Letters and Science dean's list for the fall semester.

Students on the Dean's List must complete a minimum of 12 graded degree credits in that semester with a GPA of 3.6 or better.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Solar Power

ELY- The Ely Climate Group will discuss solar power for homes on Tuesday, Jan. 14, at 4 p.m. at the Ely Field Naturalists Resource Center, 41 E. Chapman St., above the NAPA store. This is the second of two meetings on solar energy. This month, we will have a discussion led by Hudson Kingston who has had solar at his home for several years and has recently installed more panels. The meeting will cover costs and savings, timescales, estimates, and more.

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 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 after the film. Book tickets at movies.elystatetheater.org

Woodworking Class

ELY- The Ely Continuing Education woodworking class at the ISD 696 woodshop, 600 E. Harvey St., will start Wednesday, Jan. 15. The classes will be every Wednesday from 6-9 p.m. through April 2. Cost is \$80.

Live Benefit Concert

ELY- The Duluth jam band, the Salty dogs, will be at the Boathouse, 47 E. Sheridan St., on Friday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m. for a live concert to benefit the Sage Foundation, a nonprofit that serves students at the Vermilion Campus of Minnesota North College. The foundation is asking for a \$15 cash or check donation at the door.

Ely Public Library

ELY- The library will be closed on Jan. 20.

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 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, Jan. 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 before to see if they would enjoy it. It is also for family members 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 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 its annual Harry Potter event on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 1-4 p.m., including sorting into houses for the breakout box and other activities. This event is for adults and teens grades nine and higher. Please register in advance for this event.

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 library's "Snow better time to read" adult winter reading program began this week and runs through March 3. Register for the program at the library. Then, read two books to earn an entry for prizes. The more books you read, the more entries you will earn for the prize drawing.

The library will host internationally acclaimed singer-songwriter Dennis Warner in concert on Monday, Jan. 27, from 3-4 p.m.

The book club will meet on Monday, Feb. 3, at 2 p.m. The book for discussion will be "Happy Place" by Emily Henry.

Preschool storytime 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.

Upcoming Tuesday Group speakers:

►Jan. 14: Updates from the Ely Chapter of the North Country Trail Association

►Jan. 21: Dylan Kelly, Director of Climate Programs at Ampact

►Jan. 28: Arts, Culture, & the Ely Economy with the Ely Cultural Alliance

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2025



cold seeping inside the house, the jacket, thin hat
not brutal, yet chilled

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
CO-DEPENDENTS' 12-step support group, 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays, hosted by Well Being Development, Ely. *This meeting is suspended temporarily.*

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.

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

A NEW YEAR OF CREATIVE ARTS IN COOK

Fabric arts of multiple artists featured at NWFA

Works of Rolando and Round Robin Quilt Group on display through Jan. 31

COOK- A double exhibit, "Piecing it Together" at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook features the fabric art collages of Ely artist Cecilia Rolando and the NWFA Arts Round Robin Quilt group. The exhibit runs through Saturday, Jan. 31.

Rolando, now retired, has sufficient time to spend creating and teaching. She is motivated to make art with the materials available and by her interest in composition. Besides using paint, computer apps, beads, and other mediums, she is fascinated by piecing fabric into wall hangings. Although she admires the work of quilters, because of a lack of patience and exactness she is unable to follow the discipline formal quilting requires. Therefore, she has adapted her love

for sewing and fabrics into the fabric collages on display at NWFA. The show will feature 25-30 wall hangings and bags. She exhibited a number of these pieces previously in a show in Dinkytown last year. Other creations on exhibit are in private collections.

Also on display are quilts by the Round Robin Quilt group – those who do have the patience and exactness required for collaborative quilt construction. Each participant starts a quilt top which is then passed on to the others in the group who add an additional row, square or border to the quilt. The resulting quilt is always a surprise at completion. The quilters in this group include Vickie Lange, JoAnn Anderson, Cheryl Harelstad, Barb Schmidt, and Alberta

Whitenack.

There will be a reception this Saturday, Jan. 11 from noon to 2 p.m. at the NWFA Gallery at 210 S River St. in Cook. The exhibit can be viewed during regular open hours at the gallery are from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

NWFA is a nonprofit membership arts organization established about 13 years ago with the goal of inspiring, nurturing and celebrating the arts in the region of Cook. This volunteer-managed gallery sponsors music concerts, offers space for artists to exhibit, sell, teach, learn and celebrate all creative arts.

For more information about NWFA, visit their page on Facebook.

These pictures show samples of the many kinds of fabric arts on display at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery in Cook during the month of January. submitted photos



HALFTIME FUN AT NORTH WOODS



North Woods students enjoy halftime activities during Tuesday night's boys game against Fond du Lac. Above: From left, Emarie Gibson, Ella Kruse, Zoey Burckhardt, Addison Burckhardt, and Isabelle Koch pause from cheering on their fellow students taking three-pointers in the ninth-grade class Pop Shot fundraiser, where a dollar buys a chance to win a bottle of pop. Left: Gage Aune shows classic shooting form while launching a try. Right: Peyton Swanson gives the ball a mighty heave that sailed off the mark.

photos by D. Colburn

Sheriff's Office gives ice safety tips after side by side breaks through on Kab Lake

KABETOGAMA- A 64-year-old Kabetogama man avoided serious injury when his tracked side by side broke through the ice on Kabetogama Lake on Monday, Dec. 30.

St. Louis County Sheriff's deputies and Kabetogama area first responders were notified at about 6:30 p.m. that a utility task vehicle (UTV) pulling a fish house had broken through the ice. The man was navigating across a pressure ridge when the ice gave way without warning.

The man was partially submerged while inside of the UTV but was able to escape through the removable windshield and on to stable

ice. The driver was ultimately picked up by rescue personnel and brought to shore where he was evaluated by International Falls Ambulance service for exposure and other minor injuries. He was released to family.

The Sheriff's Office would like to remind the public that the recent mild temperatures and rainfall have affected the area ice conditions.

Some helpful tips to enjoy a safe winter season on the ice include:

- ▶Don't go alone, take a cell phone with you if available, and make sure someone knows where you are and when you're to return.
- ▶Don't travel on lakes

in areas you're not familiar with, don't travel at night or during reduced visibility.

▶Avoid inlets, outlets, pressure ridges, or narrows that may have current under it that can thin the ice.

▶Carry some basic safety gear, to include ice picks, life jacket / float coat, and a length of rope.

Truck runs into tractor on Hwy 1, leaves one with life-threatening injuries

FIELD TWP- A 23-year-old Ogilvie man suffered life-threatening injuries on Dec. 28 when the pickup truck he was riding in collided with a tractor crossing Hwy. 1 in Field Township, east of Carpenter Road near milepost 232.

Hunter James McCormick was a passenger in a 2006 GMC Sierra pickup truck driven by Noah Douglas Whal, 24, of East Bethel,

when the eastbound truck struck a 1982 John Deere 6230 tractor driven by James Enzmann, 79, of Cook, as it crossed the highway at about 8:40 a.m.

McCormick, who reportedly was not wearing a seat belt, suffered life-threatening injuries and was transported to Essentia-St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. No additional information on McCormick's condition was

available.

Whal and another passenger in the truck, Hunter Spain, 17, of Embarrass, had only minor injuries and were not transported to a medical facility. Enzmann was not injured.

The Minnesota State Patrol and St. Louis County Sheriff's Office responded to the accident.

COOK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Cook library promotes winter reading program

COOK- There's no better time than winter to stay cozy inside with a good book, and the winter reading program running now through March 31 at Cook Public Library is your gateway to new adventures in the comfort of your own home. Adults and teens can pick up a Winter Reading Challenge card at the library and receive prizes for the number of books read. Read all 12 books and receive an entry for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to a local business. Turn in your challenge card by March 31 for prizes. Preschool and elementary children will find a "Snow Better Time to Read Activity Booklet and Bingo Card" waiting for them at the library. Complete the Bingo card on the inside cover of the activity book

and it in to the library by March 31 to receive a prize. The Cook Public Library Winter Reading Program is sponsored by the Friends of the Cook Public Library with support from the Arrowhead Library System.

Winter hours

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.

A small selection of books, DVDs and audio books are available, as are printing, copying, faxing services and Wi-Fi.

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

Cook's Big Chill

January 18, 2025
Noon - 6 PM

Cook Community Center - Doug Johnson Recreation Center

Open Skating Noon - 4 PM
Broomball/Boot Hockey 4 - 6 PM

\$5 per participant

Contact Ryan Manick 218-750-4211

Cribbage Tournament 2-4PM
\$20 Per team
- Register Early!

Contact Matt Lange 218-780-5140

Ice Cream Sundae Bar

Chili - Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

Hot Chocolate Bar - Movie

Indoor/Outdoor Games - Coloring

Cookie Decorating - Card Stamping

Frozen Activities for Children

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X-92575-25-019

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CITY OF ELY

Three Ely cannabis edibles dealers found in violation

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- Three of ten Ely businesses licensed to sell THC-infused cannabinoid edibles failed to pass muster last month when they sold products to an underage buyer as part of an Ely Police Department compliance check.

The Ely City Council learned about the violations of the city's ordinance at Tuesday night's meeting. In compliance with edible cannabinoid products ordinance passed last year, the Ely Police Department conducted compliance checks on Dec. 20. Three businesses allegedly sold edible cannabinoid products to the police department's underage buyer: Stinky Pete's, Ely Liquor, and Mike's Liquor.

According to Ely's ordinances, any licensed business that sells to an underage buyer will be fined \$300, the employee that made the illegal sale will be fined an additional \$500, and the business will receive a three-day suspension

Anderson retires after 44 years with the city



Bob Anderson is retiring after 44 years of service as a city of Ely building engineer. photo by C. Clark

of its license. As part of the due process to impose the fines and suspensions, the businesses allegedly in violation of the ordinance can appear at a public hearing before the city council. The council scheduled the hearing for Jan. 21.

Anderson retires

The council honored

former building engineer Bob Anderson on Tuesday, who retired on Jan. 5 after working for the city for over four decades. Anderson was given a plaque commemorating his long service to Ely at the beginning of the meeting.

Mayor Heidi Omerza spoke about Anderson's contribution to the city.

"As I look at the dates when Bob Anderson started, we were joking earlier that he must have been two or ten, when child labor laws must have not been in existence, because he's been a city employee for 44 years and 22 days," Omerza said.

"I remember really relying on him, especially when we were looking at the building for the community center and trying to decide what would be our next step," Omerza continued. "I shudder to think how many times we asked him, 'Bob, what do we need to do? How can we make this building more efficient?' We also relied on him at the school district.

The whole community relied on his expertise for almost every single building that had a boiler system in it. He was the go-to person when it came to boilers. He helped us with the revenue building, the housing and redevelopment authority, and the schools. He was a dedicated employee and he will be truly missed."

In other business, the council:

► Swore in Mayor Heidi Omerza for a second term and swore in Jerome Debeltz, Emily Roose, and John Lahtonen as city council members.

► Approved moving forward with the paperwork for phase two of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's program for a direct current fast-charging station of electric vehicles at the Ely Trailhead Building currently under construction on the west side of the city.

The charging hub will be capable of fully charging an EV in approximately a half hour. Ely Clerk-Treasurer

Harold Langowski remarked that the city intends to charge for the service at a rate in keeping with other fast-charging stations in the region.

► Approved soliciting sealed bids for the city's newspaper for legal announcements for 2025.

► Approved a subdivision of the properties at 143 E. Harvey St. and 15 S. Second Avenue E., which are both in a C1 commercial zoning district.

► Approved creating a tab on the city's website for park and recreation information.

► Approved moving park and recreation board meetings to the second Wednesday of the month at 5 p.m.

► Appointed Jill Swanson to the park and recreation board as the Ely Community Resource representative.

► Approved a conditional job offer for the open police officer position to Ashlan Barthorpe, pending passing a background investigation, psychological exam, and medical exam.

► Approved the hire of Nils Dereme as a part-time

police officer, pending passing a background investigation, psychological exam, and medical exam. The vote was 6-1, with John Lahtonen in opposition. Lahtonen objected because he felt Ely didn't need three part-time officers in its roster when one of those was the police chief in Babbitt who only served a handful of shifts in 2024.

► Approved an agreement with the Ely Veterinary Clinic for animal pound services for \$3,000.

► Approved the second reading of the new cannabis and cannabinoid ordinance prohibiting the use of these products in public places and on public property after conducting a public hearing. No one testified at the hearing.

► Approved Mark Zupc for a new term on the housing and redevelopment authority, which will expire on Dec. 31, 2027.

► Approved Frandsen Bank and Trust, Highland Bank, and the 4M Fund as official city depositories for 2025.

HELIUM EXPLORATION

Pulsar begins new year with work on a second well

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

BABBITT- Pulsar Helium issued an update on its drilling activities on Monday, including news that they have started work on a second well.

The Canadian helium exploration company started new drilling activities early in December along the Dunka River Road southeast of Babbitt. The firm hired Capstar Drilling of Casper, Wyo. to deepen its first well, Jetstream No. 1, as reported

in the Dec. 13 edition of the *Timberjay*.

Pulsar announced that the drill pad for their second well, Jetstream No. 2, is now complete and the installation of its conductor casing should be finished by Wednesday, Jan. 8. A conductor casing is designed to protect shallow groundwater resources from exploration and production activities in the well.

Jetstream No. 2 is what is known as a step out well. During an exploration campaign, step out wells are

those drilled in an area where a resource is suspected but not yet physically confirmed. Jetstream No. 2 is around two miles west of the firm's first well site, along a westward-trending seismic anomaly associated with the helium resource found at Jetstream No. 1.

Deepening existing well

Pulsar originally estimated deepening Jetstream No.1 would be completed before the Christmas holidays. According to the revised

drilling schedule, extending the well depth should be completed by this weekend.

The well was originally completed to a depth of 2,200 feet last year, designed to intersect a helium-enriched zone discovered by a rock coring rig exploring for copper and nickel in 2011. Pulsar is deepening the well to fully penetrate the geophysical anomaly associated with the helium resource.

As soon as the new well depth is reached, Pulsar will acquire additional "wireline"

data in the deepened well. During a wireline survey, logging technicians run geophysical instruments on a cable through a well boring to measure the physical properties of the rocks hosting a suspected or known commodity like helium. The Capstone drill rig will then relocate to the Jetstream No. 2 location.

In Monday's announcement, Thomas Abraham-James, CEO of Pulsar, remarked, "Deepening of the Jetstream No.1 well has commenced and is progress-

ing extremely well. The assessment of the full height of the previously discovered high helium concentration reservoir is a key stage in progressing (the project). Previous drill data obtained in February 2024 indicated that we only reached the top of the reservoir and that it may extend for a further 1,640 feet."

LAWSUITS...Continued from page 1

As part of its proposed acquisition of U.S. Steel, Nippon had promised to invest \$2.7 billion in improvements to U.S. Steel facilities, including an upgrade of its blast furnace operations in Gary, Ind., and Mon Valley, Pennsylvania. Those operations are the primary users of taconite pellets from U.S. Steel's Minntac and Keetac mines located on the Iron Range, so the promised investment could have helped guarantee a viable market for taconite pellets well into the future.

U.S. Steel has argued that without Nippon's investment,

it would be forced to shift production away from its aging blast furnace operations in favor of cheaper electric arc furnaces, which can utilize scrap iron as well as direct reduced iron, or DRI, to produce steel.

U.S. Steel has already made moves in that direction. The company announced in 2022 that it would develop a \$150 million DRI upgrade at its Keetac plant in Keewatin, an investment that would give the company the ability to serve a greater variety of customers. That new facility, which was expected to create about 33 new jobs, began

operation in 2024, adding to the Iron Range's still somewhat-limited DRI capacity. The vast majority of the region's production is still shipped out as taconite pellets, a now 70-year-old product developed in the 1950s.

Allegations abound

U.S. Steel President David Burritt reacted angrily to President Biden's decision to block the Nippon deal, calling it "shameful and corrupt" in a statement issued shortly after the announcement by the White House. "He gave a political paycheck to a union boss out of touch with his members while harming

our company's future, our workers, and our national security. He insulted Japan, a vital economic and national security ally, and put American competitiveness at risk," Burritt continued.

According to a joint statement issued by U.S. Steel and Nippon, the two lawsuits filed by the companies in the D.C. circuit court will establish that:

► President Biden ignored the rule of law to gain favor with several unions that opposed the sale.

► That Biden's undue influence on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS,

prevented a good faith review of the proposed sale, depriving the companies of their rightful opportunity for fair consideration. In the end, CFIUS failed to reach a consensus recommendation regarding the sale.

► That Cleveland-Cliffs, in collusion with the leadership of the Steelworkers, sought to prevent the closure of the sale to Nippon or any sale to any company other than Cliffs.

U.S. Steel cited President Biden's opposition to the deal from shortly after its inception, noting that Biden had announced his opposition to

the deal even before CFIUS began its formal review. According to the companies, the Steelworkers union endorsed Biden less than a week after his announced opposition to the deal.

While Biden is set to leave office in less than two weeks, it's not clear that incoming President Donald Trump will take a different position. Throughout the campaign, Trump repeated his own opposition to the deal and its proposed foreign ownership of a major U.S. steel producer.

CHARGES...Continued from page 1

against Erickson - felony theft and misdemeanor public employee misconduct for filing false documents. If the extra charges are approved by a judge and Erickson is convicted of all three charges, he would face possible maximum sentences of 10 years imprisonment and \$20,000 in fines for both the embezzlement and theft charges, and one year and

\$3,000 for the misdemeanor misconduct charge.

The county attorney's office also sought to bolster its prosecution of Erickson by petitioning the court for permission to bring a past complaint against Erickson into the record for trial. According to a 2013 ruling in the Minnesota Court of Appeals, Erickson had been dismissed from a job with the

Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) over allegations that he had filed falsified expense reports claiming he had worked when he had not, claimed expenses that were not legitimately due to him, used a state rental car for personal purposes, caused the state to pay green fees at a golf course while he was attending conferences on state business,

and obtained per diem meal reimbursement for meals that were included in the cost of lodging packages. DEED denied Erickson's claim for unemployment compensation after being fired, and he was appealing an unemployment law judge's decision upholding DEED's denial.

The appellate court found that the unemployment law judge had sufficient cause

to rule in DEED's favor and affirmed that decision. While Minnesota law prohibits the introduction of the case in order to prove any assertions about Erickson's character, a judge has the discretion to allow it if the evidence can help to establish "motive, opportunity, intent, preparation, plan, knowledge, identity, or absence of mistake or accident." Prosecutors assert

that the appellate case provides evidence that Erickson has previously made false claims to inflate his pay, as is alleged in the current case.

It is anticipated that rulings on the addition of additional charges and the admission of additional evidence will be ruled upon at the outset of Erickson's jury trial, which begins next week.

USFS...Continued from page 1

U.S. Forest Service. Under federal law, the forest service has the right of consent for any mining proposals on the Superior National Forest. The forest service had previously exercised its veto of the Twin Metals proposal back in 2016, which led to the non-renewal of the leases in the waning days of the Obama administration. The forest service has never reversed that decision.

In response to Twin Metals' claim, the BLM argued that it had sufficient authority to cancel the leases without bringing the matter to the forest service. Even so, at the request of the BLM, the forest service submitted a three-page letter that once again spelled out the reasons behind the agency's opposi-

tion to the mine as well as its rationale for its 2023 application for a 20-year mineral withdrawal affecting 225,000 acres of the Superior National Forest, including the area once covered by the leases.

"The record for the 2016 lease consent determination and 2023 withdrawal application demonstrate that development of these mineral resources presented an unacceptable, inherent risk of serious and irreparable harm to the BWCAW natural resources," states the Dec. 18 letter, signed by Regional Forester Antoine Dixon. "It has been thoroughly documented that the proposed mineral leasing is not a compatible use within the watershed in such proximity to the wilderness and that the forest service's withholding

of consent to the issuance of leases...would be inconsistent with the record."

Dixon continued: "Mineral leasing could cause changes to terrestrial or aquatic habitat function due to surface destruction, noise/light/air pollution, and modification of streams, lakes, or wetlands... Changes to water quality could potentially result in adverse changes to the biological integrity of aquatic communities and to sensitive species. This in turn could adversely affect the wilderness character of the BWCAW, public use and enjoyment of water and aquatic resources, and the ability of tribes to exercise treaty rights."

Dixon cited the previous record of decision, which raised concern about the

ability of any mining company to guarantee long-term containment of toxic discharges, noting that "hardrock mining would likely produce waste rock that would require management for centuries or in perpetuity."

Back and forth litigation

Monday's oral arguments will mark the latest skirmish in a nearly decade-long legal battle over the federal mineral leases. This latest go-round is an appeal by Twin Metals of a late 2023 ruling by U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper, who found that the court lacked jurisdiction to address Twin Metals' claims that the federal government had failed to abide by lease terms established with the International Nickel Co., or INCO, when the leases were

originally issued in 1966. Twin Metals gained control of the leases more than 15 years ago through a series of strategic ventures.

However, Judge Cooper found that the company's claims amount to a contract dispute with the federal government, which are not subject to review on the kind of procedural grounds that Twin Metals is alleging under the Administrative Procedures Act. Instead, the judge found that Twin Metals' performance can only be addressed by the U.S. Court of Claims, which has the authority to award potential damages.

The leases, originally canceled by the Obama administration back in 2016, have been the subject of litigation

ever since. Twin Metals filed suit originally, hoping to reverse the cancellation of the leases, which the company has proposed to use for an underground copper-nickel mine about ten miles south of Ely. When the first Trump administration reinstated the leases, opponents of the proposed mine filed suit, but that case was eventually rendered moot when the Biden administration reversed the Trump administration's decision and rescinded the leases. While Trump has promised to restore the leases once he takes office again later this month, the forest service's continued opposition to renewal of the leases, which continued throughout the first Trump administration, could still prove to be a major legal hurdle.

Obituaries and Death Notices

**Thomas J. Martin**

Thomas Joseph Martin, 68, longtime resident of Embarrass, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 28, 2024, at Essentia Health St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth after a courageous battle with cancer. A memorial service will take place at a later date. Please check the Embarrass Fire Department website for details. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

Tom was born on Oct. 20, 1956, to Earl and Pauline Martin in Chicago, Ill. He grew up on the southwest side of Chicago. Tom was a master of many trades, working on vintage cars, skilled in construction, remodeling and repairing anything mechanical. His artistic side included photography, usually focusing on nature. He mastered the art of pointillism, which is the drawing style of using tiny distinct dots to create an image. He used this style to create a series of nature artwork.

Tom was a true adventurer, bicycling throughout Illinois. His adventurous streak led him to Embarrass, where he settled into a log cabin. In Embarrass, he continued his passion for dog sledding, equipping himself with a full dog sled team. Tom also raised llamas. Tom joined the Embarrass Region Volunteer Fire Department where he enjoyed serving the community. He eventually became the Fire Chief, a position he was very proud to hold.

Tom is survived by his mother, Pauline; brother, Ken (Rita); sister, Sandy (Al); and three nephews.

Pat Schmid

Pat Schmid, 77, of Soudan, died on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025, at Essentia Health St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. Arrangements are pending with Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

Dennis V. Hilmas Jr.

Dennis V. Hilmas Jr., 57, of Tower, passed away on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025, at St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth. A memorial service was held on Wednesday, Jan. 8 at Bauman-Cron Funeral Home Chapel in Virginia. Memorials are preferred and may be directed to Daniel Hilmas, 1021 South 5th Ave., Virginia, MN 55792.

He is survived by his father, Dennis Hilmas Sr. of New Auburn, Wis.; sons, Daniel (Lexi) Hilmas of Virginia and Darren (Victoria) Hilmas of South Range, Wis.; five grandchildren; sister, Anita (Larry) Milbridge of Tower; nephews, Christopher Hunt and Chandler Brown; Dan and Darren's mother, Danyell Vesel; and extended family and friends.

Richard R. Klinzing

Richard R. "Dick" Klinzing, 81, longtime resident of Babbitt, died on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025, at Essentia Health St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. Arrangements are pending with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

Larry A. Kujala

Larry August Kujala, 76, of Britt, passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024, at Hibbing Hospital after a long and brave battle with CAA. A celebration of life will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook with visitation one hour before the service and a light lunch following. Memorials may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook or The Listening Point Foundation in Ely. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Jane; son, Jake; daughter, Meredith (Erin); grandchild-

dren, Emma, Claire, Paige, Mazie and Mack; brother, Clayton; sister-in-law, Ginny; nieces and nephews; and numerous cousins. He especially valued his friends since grade school, Gary, Bob, Dave, Rich and Skip.

Peter L. Pastika

Peter Lantz Pastika, 76, lifetime resident of Babbitt, went to be with the Lord on Monday, Dec. 30, 2024, with his wife Diane at his side. A celebration of life was held on Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2025, at the Babbitt Evangelical Lutheran Church. A luncheon followed. Pastor Christina Forsythe officiated. Inurnment will be at the Argo Cemetery at a later date. Arrangements were with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Diane Kay Picar Pastika; children, Kerri (Mark) Rose, Stacey Hodkeiwicz and Joe Pastika; grandchildren, Mikayla (Tyler) Manthe, Julia, Joshua and Rebekah Hodkiewicz, and Anna and Erik Rose; a great-granddaughter; sisters, Susan Pastika and Jana Pastika; and brother, Tim (Lisa) Pastika.

Marsha E. Zottola

Marsha Elaine Olson Zottola, 87, of Cook, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 29, 2024. The family is grateful for the care she received in Cook at Carefree Living, Scenic Rivers Clinic and the Cook Hospital. A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the church. A reception will follow. There will be cheese. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Donations in Marsha's memory may be made to Friends of the Cook Public Library, PO Box 126, Cook, MN 55723, or Cook's Country Connection, 1953 Vermilion Dr., Cook, MN 55723, for the construction of a new public structure. Or just come up to Cook and hit the thrift store hard. Tell them Marsha sent you!

She is survived by her children, Joseph, Sarah (Michael), Josh and Theresa; grandchildren, Jessica, Amy, Jessie Anne, Sean, Josh and Sierra; numerous nieces and nephews; beloved in-laws, Ernie and Diana Zottola; and many friends and extended family.

Virginia R. Kaukola

Virginia Rae Kaukola, 90, of Edina, and formerly of Orr, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024, in Bloomington. Services will be held in the spring or summer of 2025. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Betty A. Grunwald

Betty Ann Jewett Grunwald, 84, longtime resident of Embarrass, died on Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2024, at Essentia Health Northern Pines Care Center in Aurora. A celebration of life was held on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025, at the Embarrass Town Hall. Arrangements were with Range Funeral Home of Virginia.

She is survived by her children, Terry Grunwald, Deb Grunwald and Dale Grunwald; grandchildren, Jason (Kayla) Holm, Heather (Eric) Pulkinen, Meagan (Jesse) Ciolkosz, Aaron Guski, Daniel Grunwald, Alea Hendricks, Laura Beth Hansen and Trisha Neuromberg; and eight great-grandchildren.

Barbara Schultz

Barbara Autio Schultz, 79, longtime resident of Angora, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 22, 2024, at the Cook Care Center, surrounded by family. A celebration of life will be held in the spring of 2025. Inurnment will be at the Idington Cemetery in Angora at a later date. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her sons, Scott (Karen) Schultz and Kurt (Melanie) Schultz; loving best friend and partner, Alden Bergman; grandchildren, Jared (Samantha) Schultz, Angela (Will)

Schultz, Matthew (Emily) Schultz, Jessica White, Jules White and Jaquelyn White; seven great-grandchildren; and sister, Beverly Palo.

Shirley J. Olson

Shirley Jean Olson, 84, of Little Sand Lake, Britt, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 21, 2024, at her residence. A funeral service was held on Monday, Jan. 6, 2025, at Saints John and Paul Episcopal Church in Virginia with Deacon Kim Heise officiating. Arrangements were with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her children, Kyle (Krissy), Keith (Dianna) and Kevin (Gina); five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; brother, Larry (Ardy); and numerous nieces and nephews.

Elizabeth Shelstad

Elizabeth "Beth" Olson Shelstad, 69, of Ely, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 21, 2024, at Essentia Health St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth, surrounded by her loving family. A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025, at the Grand Ely Lodge. A private interment will be held on a later date. Please honor Beth by sharing your kindness and compassion with those around you. Funeral services have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

She is survived by her husband, Dixon; daughter, Riana (Tim) Hegman; grandchildren, Jakson, Charlotte and Sawyer Hegman; many brothers- and sisters-in-law; nieces, nephews and dear friends.

Mary Ann Vesel

Mary Ann Basarich Vesel, 84, of Ely, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024, at Boundary Waters Care Center after a brief illness, with her husband Ray at her side. A celebration of life will be held in the spring of 2025, so friends and family can gather to cherish fond memories. Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely is assisting with arrangements.

She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Raymond; son, John (Nina) Vesel; daughter, Sandy (Arlyn) Aronson; grandchildren, Daniel, Sarah and Jason Vesel; sister, Roberta Jean (Lyle) Adams, and their children Kristen (Brian) Brandt and Jenn Pann (Greg D'Alessandro); and special niece and Ray's goddaughter, Julie Vesel.

Violet R. Maki

Violet Ruth "Vi" Oquist Maki, 87, former longtime resident of Babbitt, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2024, in Billings, Mont., with members of her family by her side. Her family is honoring her request that no services be held at this time. They are planning to host a celebration of life and her love for coffee an' sometime in the summer. Final arrangements have been entrusted to Cremation and Funeral Gallery in Billings.

She is survived by her daughter, Lynn Nielsen; son, Michael (Lisa) Maki; six grandchildren; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Leola Vezina

Leola "Lee" Crisman Vezina, 80, of Bigfork, passed away on Friday, Nov. 29, 2024, at her home in Pine Tree Villa. A celebration of life will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025, at Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service.

She is survived by her daughters, Julie (Jack) Leblanc and Sandy (Gino) Anselmo; daughter-in-law, Lesley Vezina; fifteen grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

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**FESTIVAL...**Continued from page 1

majestic language."

The NLAA staging uses the premise that the performance is a rehearsal. The actors are in street clothes on a mostly bare stage with chairs, a table, and a ladder as set pieces. Reminiscent of Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," the balcony scene is convincingly played using a ladder to connect the two lovers.

The actors not involved in the action do all the things actors usually do at a rehearsal - they sit on the side and back of the stage drinking coffee and tea, watching the current scene, or studying their scripts. The cast is smaller than the number of characters in the play so several actors play multiple roles.

Several actors from the 2023 and 2024 Broadway in the Boundary Waters theater seasons are in the production. The chemistry between Toby Davis and Mallory Wintz seen in the NLAA production of "Bright Star" is back as these two performers play Romeo and Juliet. Molly Hill Fuller returns to the Ely stage as Lady Montague and Juliet's nurse. Noah Warner, who plays both Friar Laurence and Peter the Servant, will leave the audience convinced that a tea bag should be an essential prop in any Shakespeare play, and Eric Fredrickson's antics as Mercutio are alone worth the price of admission.

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. Tickets are \$25 for general admission, \$22 for veterans and seniors, \$20 for NLAA members, \$10 for college students, and free for students K-12.

Shakespeare workshops

"Romeo and Juliet" is only the beginning of the Great Nordic Shakespeare Festival. Next up on the festival schedule are four workshops appropriate for beginning actors and experienced thespians alike. The first workshop on Shakespeare's characters is this Saturday, Jan. 11, at noon, followed by a workshop on how to create dynamic Shakespeare scenes at 2 p.m. The remaining two workshops, on making Shakespeare relevant to 21st-century audiences and spontaneous Shakespeare scenes, are on Saturday, Jan. 25. Tickets are on a tiered structure: \$30 for supporters, \$20 for a standard ticket, and \$10 for an assisted ticket. Tickets for students in grades 7 through 12 are free.

Staged readings

The festival includes two evenings of staged readings of new works by emerging playwrights, on Jan. 20 and Jan. 27, starting at 6:30 p.m. Attendees will be the first to see the new plays. Each performance lasts two hours. All tickets are \$10.

"Every Brilliant Thing"

The Great Nordic Shakespeare Festival will present the award-winning one-man show "Every Brilliant Thing" by acclaimed British playwright Duncan

Macmillan and comedian Johnny Donahue. The show is a drama, a comedy, a coming-of-age story, and a reflection on all the things that make life worth living. The action follows the narrator's life, starting with the list of all the things worth living for which the narrator made when he was six to cheer up his suicidal mother.

"Every Brilliant Thing" is an uplifting emotional and intimate work where the narrator interacts with the audience, bringing them into the play's action. Toby Davis ("Bright Star," "Romeo and Juliet") is the narrator. Because of the intimate nature of the work and the role the audience plays, the audience size is limited to 40 tickets for each performance. "Every Brilliant Thing" will be at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 16, 17, 18, 30, 31, and Feb. 1; and at 2 p.m. on Jan. 19, and Feb. 2. Tickets are \$25 for general admission, \$22 for veterans

and seniors, \$20 for NLAA members, \$5 for college students, and free for students aged 18 and younger.

Tickets

Tickets are available online at northernlakesarts.org/the-great-nordic-shakespeare-festival. Students should use the "More prices" link on the tickets page to access student pricing and free tickets. All Great Nordic Shakespeare Festival events are at the Vermilion Fine Arts Theater.

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TRAGEDY

Ely senior dies after mobility scooter catches fire

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

ELY- An 80-year-old resident of the Boundary Waters Care Center tragically died here Monday afternoon after the motorized mobility scooter she was riding at the time caught fire.

A witness who spotted the blaze called 911, but the

victim was reportedly “fully engulfed” in flames by the time staff from the care center were able to remove her from the scooter. Emergency responders from the Ely police and fire departments arrived moments later and they transported the victim to Ely-Bloomenson Hospital. She was later airlifted to St. Mary’s in Duluth, where

she died from the severe burns caused in the incident.

One care center employee who sustained non-life-threatening injuries during the incident was treated at Ely-Bloomenson and later released.

The fire is currently under joint investigation by the Ely Fire and Police Departments and the State Fire Marshal. The

name of the victim had not been made public as of press time.

Right: Ely Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Callen took photos of the remains of the motorized scooter that caught on fire in Ely on Monday evening.

photo by C. Clark



CHARGES FILED

Virginia man charged in hit-and-run death of mother of five

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

TOWER- A Virginia man has been charged with involuntary manslaughter in Minnesota U.S. District Court in connection with the fatal hit-and-run of a Bois Forte band member and mother of five, Amanda Boshey, near the Fortune Bay Resort Casino on Dec. 17.

Federal authorities arrested Eric Scott Peterson, 50, after an investigation pinpointed Peterson’s blue Dodge Durango as the truck that likely struck and killed Boshey as she was walking on Lake Vermilion Reservation Road. Boshey was found dead with severe injuries consistent with being struck by a vehicle.

According to a criminal complaint filed Dec. 20 in U.S. District Court in Bemidji,



Amanda Boshey with one of her sons in happier times. photo submitted

St. Louis County dispatchers received two 911 calls reporting a woman walking along the road near the casino. A Bois Forte tribal officer who responded to the area found a pair of boots and what appeared to be vehicle debris in the roadway. The officer found Boshey laying in the

snow in a ditch with no pulse and cold to the touch at 9:02 p.m.

As the incident took place within reservation boundaries, the FBI was called in to lead the investigation.

With the 911 calls of Boshey walking narrowing the window of time in which she was struck, investigators quickly homed in on Peterson after working with Fortune Bay Resort Casino staff to review surveillance footage. Peterson’s presence in the casino was established by records of the use of a player’s club card in his name that night. In the security footage, a blue Dodge Durango registered to Peterson was seen leaving the casino at approximately 8:49 p.m. The vehicle appeared fully operational at the time, with both head-

lights functioning. However, footage recorded five minutes later at the nearby Y-Store showed the same vehicle with a damaged passenger-side headlight.

Evidence recovered at the scene included blue paint fragments and pieces of a headlight assembly. This debris was consistent with damage observed on Peterson’s vehicle when officers visited his Virginia residence. The blue Dodge Durango parked in his driveway had a broken passenger-side headlight, dents, and damage to the front bumper, hood, and quarter panel. A missing piece of molding from the vehicle’s wheel well was also linked to debris found at the crash site.

Peterson told law enforcement that he had consumed three to four drinks at the

casino before leaving around 8:30 p.m. He claimed he believed he hit a deer on his way home but did not stop to confirm what he struck. A preliminary breath test conducted at 4:30 a.m. on Dec. 18, approximately seven-and-a-half hours after the incident, showed Peterson’s blood alcohol content to be 0.048 at that time.

An autopsy performed by the Midwest Medical Examiner’s Office determined Boshey died from “multiple blunt force injuries.” Blue paint fragments and metal debris were recovered from her body and clothing during the examination, further tying the vehicle to the fatal collision.

Peterson made his first court appearance on Dec. 23 via video conference. He was

released on a personal recognition bond.

Bois Forte Tribal Council member Shane Drift indicated Monday morning that he had asked the tribal council to consider asking the state of Minnesota to also file charges against Peterson. Federal authorities continue to oversee the case due to the location of the crash on tribal land.

Boshey’s family described her as a dedicated mother and a laborer in the construction industry. She was nearing three years of sobriety and was remembered for her resilience and love for her children. A fund for her children has been established with the Embarrass Vermillion Federal Credit Union.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Long-sought local funding fix fails to advance in U.S. House

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— A prime opportunity to resolve a long-standing concern over federal funding to three Arrowhead counties missed a key deadline in the U.S. House when time ran out on the 118th Congress on Jan. 3.

The U.S. Senate had approved a measure authored by U.S. Sen. Tina Smith and co-sponsored by U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, that would have guaranteed future payments to St. Louis, Lake, and Cook counties under the 1948 Thye-Blatnik Act. Those payments, which were based on a percentage of the appraised value of certain federal lands in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, had declined in the wake of a controversial 2018 reappraisal that amounted to a 49 percent reduction in the estimated value of the lands in question. That change would have sharply cut payments to the three affected counties, with Lake County facing the largest cut, of approximately \$1.2 million.

While the U.S. Forest Service, under pressure from state and federal officials, conducted a new appraisal, the new number still came in well below an appraisal conducted

in 2008. Based on the second 2018 appraisal, Lake County still lost \$251,000, while Cook County lost over \$200,000, equal to a little over three percent of the county’s levy. St. Louis County’s payment declined by about \$160,000 a year.

Ever since, the three counties have put a potential solution to the problem among the top items on their federal to-do list.

That solution appeared to finally be at hand, with the passage of Smith’s measure in the Senate on Dec. 18, which set a floor for future payments based on the 2008 appraisal, which was the highest appraisal since passage of the Thye-Blatnik Act. “My bill provides financial certainty and security to these counties and a permanent fix to the problem,” said Sen. Smith in a press release issued the day of passage. “I look forward to seeing this bipartisan and urgently needed legislation quickly move through the House of Representatives and go to the President’s desk so it can be signed into law.”

But the measure never advanced in the House and the 118th Congress adjourned without the fix in place, leaving the three affected counties facing uncertainty

over future funding levels.

The *Timberjay* submitted several questions to Rep. Pete Stauber’s office, but never heard back on the reasons behind the failure to advance the measure in the GOP-led House. Stauber has previously claimed that enactment of a permanent fix to the issue was a high priority. Prospects for passage of a similar measure in the 119th Congress, which will be controlled by Republicans, appears uncertain.

Sen. Smith spokesperson Lexi Byler said the senator has interacted with Stauber’s office for years to resolve the issue and “remains committed to working in a bipartisan way to pass this fix through the Senate and the House this year and deliver much-needed relief to northern Minnesota counties.”

Long-standing payments

Congress passed the Thye-Blatnik Act in 1948 as a way to compensate the three northeastern Minnesota counties for lost property tax value as the federal government began acquiring private lands in the region for the establishment of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Advocates of the wilderness have long pointed to the annual payments, in addition to the economic

impact of the BWCAW, as among the regional benefits of the 1.1-million-acre wilderness. The payments amount to three-quarters of one percent of the appraised value of the lands in question located within each county. Since its passage, the measure has directed more than \$150 million combined to the three counties. The annual allotment to the counties jumped sharply following the 2008 appraisal, which more than doubled the allocations the counties had received based on prior appraisals.

The 2018 appraisal would

have resulted in a roughly 40-percent reduction in the payments, but the Forest Service conducted a second appraisal and ultimately agreed to reduce the county payments by only ten percent, although that’s still a significant amount for Lake and Cook counties, whose annual budgets and property values are dwarfed by St. Louis County.

Boundary Waters advocates said the passage of Smith’s bill in the Senate had been a golden opportunity to permanently address the funding uncertainty and they

put the blame squarely on Stauber’s inaction. “By failing to prioritize this bill, Rep. Stauber is depriving northeastern Minnesota communities of the financial stability they desperately need, leaving them vulnerable to uncertainty and hardship,” said Ingrid Lyons, Executive Director of the Boundary Waters Action Fund and Save the Boundary Waters.

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GREENWOOD

Board meets to place fire chief on temporary medical leave

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor



Fire Chief Jeff Maus

GREENWOOD TWP- At an occasionally contentious special meeting on Jan. 2, the Greenwood Town Board voted 2-1-1 to appoint fire captain Brian Trancheff as interim fire chief until Jan. 22, or until the time that fire chief Jeff Maus has doctor's permission to return to a full work schedule.

Supervisor John Bassing voted against, chair Lois Roskoski and supervisor Paul Skubic voted in favor, and supervisor Craig Gilbert, a member of the fire department, abstained. Rick Stoehr was absent. Maus was not physically at the meeting but participated via teleconference.

But even as board members appointed an interim fire chief, they did not pass a motion placing Maus on medical leave or removing him as chief. They did pass motions allowing him to use his earned sick leave time to cover his salary in December, and said they would prorate his salary in January, based on the actual number of days worked. Bassing voted no on both motions.

Maus had hip surgery last month and had sent a doctor's note to the board stating he would be able to return to full duty on Jan. 22. On Jan. 2, Maus obtained a second doctor's note, stating he was able to perform administrative duties during this time.

Roskoski said she had not found anything pertaining to medical leave in the township's personnel policy.

Bassing reminded the board that former fire department officers, including past chiefs, had spent "significant time" away from Greenwood Township and still retained their jobs.

"This will be deviating from what previous Greenwood Boards have done," said Bassing. "It is singling out Jeff. Others were on vacation in the winter, and we paid them." Bassing noted that Maus had been doing the administrative work required by the fire chief while convalescing at home.

"He just has 20 days before he can return to his physical duties," said Bassing.

"Twenty days is a long time," said Roskoski. "We had some major incidents in the last few weeks," although she didn't respond when asked to elaborate.

Roskoski also said the board couldn't consider al-

lowing Maus to return to "light duty."

"To approve light duty is not on the agenda," she said.

"This leaves us without a fire chief," said Roskoski. "The board has a right to appoint a captain as an interim chief."

Maus said that he and fire department EMS captain Dave DeJoode had already arranged for the OSHA-required annual training, as well as annual department physicals, to be done during a training meeting later this month.

Skubic complained about the lack of communication between Maus and the board relating to his surgery. Maus said he had informed the chair of the surgery three weeks before it took place, and that he had been communicating back and forth with the chair during this time. He also said he had sent the clerk with information for the board.

Maus said he was able and willing to do the administrative part of his job during this time.

"I know how to do these things," Maus said.

Maus said both he and DeJoode had tried to contact Trancheff this past month, but that Trancheff had never responded, so that Trancheff had not been involved with planning the upcoming trainings.

Roskoski said she had been in contact with Trancheff.

Gilbert noted that Trancheff is qualified for the

captain position, but that he does not have the qualifications to be chief. The chief position does require EMR certification, since the vast majority of department calls are related to emergency medical.

Fire department membership and credentials

In related fire department action, Roskoski complained that training and personnel files for fire department members appear to have vanished.

Maus has insisted for some time that he brought all the relevant files to the clerk's office last summer, after the board requested that he do so. But now, many of these files are missing.

"They are gone," said clerk Debby Spicer, "presto disappeared."

But Maus said the records were there earlier this year.

"Debby and I went through the records this summer," Maus said. "We were looking for a former department member's retirement information. She was with me and they [the files] were there."

DeJoode said it was concerning that files that contained personnel information, like W-4 forms, were missing.

"I don't want to point fingers," he said. "Our W-4s are missing, our confidential information. It needs to be found."

Maus repeated that he

had given all the files and training records to the clerk. Employee personnel files were always with the clerk, as was noted at earlier meetings.

The board had asked members to resubmit their training certifications, but not all the information had been resubmitted. Four members are certified through the state (which is not required), and one additional member had resubmitted forms.

"Five had turned in their training," said Roskoski.

"That's pretty bad," said Skubic.

The department currently has 13 members, but most are emergency medical responders.

Maus said that a few of the newer department members have not completed the Firefighter I and II classes but are still valuable members of the department. The department conducts in-house trainings twice a month in addition to Firefighter I and II classes.

Roskoski said she was concerned about the township's liability for having untrained personnel at a fire scene.

"I am trying to reduce liability," she said. "That is why I was elected."

"We have to cover our butts," said Skubic. "It's sad it is coming down to this."

Maus said the board could pass a motion stating that firefighters that don't have all the required training only assist at fire scenes under the direction of

trained department members. "The day someone starts in the fire department they are considered a firefighter on our roster. They can be on scene to do some functions and observe. They have time to complete the classes," he told the board. The certification classes are offered in-person with some classes available online.

The board unanimously passed a motion stating that department members who are not certified can only assist on fire calls.

Budget information

In other business, the board asked deputy treasurer JoAnn Bassing to provide the board with financial information for the 2026 budget, including the disbursement and receipt ledgers.

Maus asked why they didn't just get the information from the clerk, but Roskoski said they needed to make sure the clerk and treasurer information both matched.

"I was told the clerk was too busy to print them," said Maus, who also serves as town treasurer. "I can do them."

The board voted to have the deputy treasurer submit the requested data by the end of the following week. The vote was 3-1, with Bassing voting no. Bassing noted that the board did not have the statutory authority to request the elected treasurer to submit that information on that timeline.

Silver Rapids lawsuits both dismissed by district court

by CATIE CLARK
Ely Editor

DULUTH- Two lawsuits over the now-suspended Silver Rapids Resort redevelopment are dead, at least for now.

The Minnesota Sixth District Court in Duluth has dismissed both lawsuits as moot after the developers handed in their permits and preliminary plat approval to Lake County following the filing of the lawsuits by a local citizens group and the Department of Natural Resources. Judge Eric Hylden filed those decisions on Dec. 27, exactly one month after he heard oral arguments over the claims. Hylden granted

Lake County and the resort's motions to squash the cases "because (the) Defendants voluntarily gave (the) Plaintiffs the relief they sought."

The two lawsuits, filed in October, sought to block a proposed redevelopment of the century-old resort. As part of the resort's makeover, the developers proposed to build 49 timeshare cabins on the bluffs overlooking Farm and White Iron lakes. Lake County approved both permit applications for the resort expansion on Sept. 4.

Plaintiffs both argued that the zoning permits for the project violated state law and the county's own ordinances on allowable density. The court heard both suits at the same time due to their

similarity.

Prior to the Nov. 27 hearing to consider the two cases, the owners of Silver Rapids surrendered their two contested permits on Oct. 21, claiming they wanted to

avoid a protracted legal battle. Instead, they said they plan to propose "a scaled-down project with fewer units than were approved in the (original permit) approvals."

After the permits were surrendered, both the resort and Lake County filed motions on Oct. 21 for a summary judgment to dismiss both cases as moot. Hylden might have done so if the two

plaintiffs had not objected.

In the end, Hylden sided with Lake County and the developers in dismissing the case.

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BOYS BASKETBALL

Ojibwe upend Grizzlies in heartbreaker

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- The new year hasn't been kind to the North Woods boys basketball team. The Grizzlies took to their home court on Tuesday against Fond du Lac.

Left: The Grizzlies' Talen Jarshaw lines up a guarded baseline jumper late in the second half on Tuesday against Fond du Lac.

photo by D. Colburn

looking to rebound from Friday's big loss to Ely. But North Woods came up empty handed, letting a halftime lead slip away and missing a pair of last-second treys in a 65-62 loss to the Ojibwe.

Andrew Hartway got the Grizzlies on the board first when he was fouled on a made driving layup and hit the free throw for a 3-0 lead. Louie Panichi followed up a Kalvyn Benner deuce with a triple for a 9-4 advantage, and consecutive treys by Benner and Talen Jarshaw put the Grizzlies

ahead 15-6 at the 13:22 mark. The Grizzlies maintained that nine-point edge the rest of the half, going into the locker room up 33-24.

North Woods got two quick buckets from Jarshaw and Hartway to start the second half and held a ten-point advantage when the Ojibwe began to slowly cut into the lead. A basket by Fond du Lac's Kingston Almer at the 9:06 mark knotted the score at 43-43, and a knockout battle ensued from there. The Ojibwe took the lead 50-48 when Chazz Martineau faked a

three and drove for a score, and after North Woods tied it Martineau shot a trey that went down for a 53-50 edge.

Fond du Lac continued to lead until 2:58 remained in the game when Jarshaw connected on a three from the top of the key to tie the score at 58-58. Martineau put the Ojibwe back on top 61-58 with another three, but Jarshaw converted on a pair of baseline drives to hand the lead back to the Grizzlies.

See NW BOYS...pg. 4B

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Ely makes it six straight with win over Greenway

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

GREENWAY— Four Ely players reached double digits in scoring here on Tuesday as the Timberwolves won their sixth straight game in a 68-25 rout on Greenway's home hardwood.

Amelia Penke led the pack in scoring with 14 points along with eight rebounds, while 11 proved to be Audrey Kallberg's lucky number as she notched a double-double with 11 points and as many rebounds. Lydia Schultz added 13 points and nine boards to just miss her own double-double. Schultz and Penke also led with four steals apiece.

Ruby Lowe proved the hot hand from the outside as she connected on four of six attempts from beyond the arc for a total of 12 points. Zoe Mackenzie added eight points for Ely, including two treys, while Maija Mattson added six. Clare Thomas posted eight rebounds in the match.

The Wolves host Hill City on Saturday, with a 1 p.m. start. They'll be at Duluth Marshall on Tuesday with a 6:30 p.m. start.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ely dominates North Woods

Caid Chittum hits 1,000th point

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

ELY- With both teams coming off big wins during the holiday break and both sporting winning records, fans were anticipating a heated battle when North Woods and Ely renewed their cross-county rivalry on Friday on the hardwoods at Memorial High School.

Instead, what they got was an Ely rout, as the Timberwolves ran roughshod over the visitors in an 80-53 blowout, the biggest Ely win over the Grizzlies since the 2012-13 season.

On a night when Wolves' senior Caid Chittum scored the 1,000th point of his career, Ely could do no wrong and the Grizzlies could do little right. North Woods got off on the right foot when Andrew Hartway answered a deuce by Chittum with canning a three-ball for a 3-2 Grizzlies' lead. But Ely's Jack Davies countered with a basket for the Wolves, and they never trailed again. Ely went up by double digits at 22-12 when Drew Johnson scored a bucket and one at the 8:41 mark, and Davies sent the Wolves into halftime with a buzzer-beating three-ball from way beyond the arc and a 47-28 lead.

Davies was on fire in the first half, scoring 23 points and draining five treys on the way to a game-high 29 points.

Above: Ely point guard Jack Davies moves the ball upcourt under pressure from the Grizzlies' Andrew Hartway.

Left: Ely's Caid Chittum connects on a jumper for his 1,000th career point while North Woods' Talen Jarshaw looks on.

photos by F. Zobitz

North Woods fared no better in the second half, as the hot-shooting Wolves nailed 51 percent of their shots while the Grizzlies hit on only 37 percent of theirs.

North Woods Head Coach Andrew Jugovich attributed Ely's dominance to their use of a box-and-one defense to neutralize the Grizzlies' leading scorer, rebounder, and passer Louie Panichi. Considered a junk defense when it was first introduced to the game a century ago, coaches today routinely employ the box-and-one to foil an opponent's top player, and it worked to perfection against Panichi, who scored just one point and took only four shots in the game.

"When you have a player like that and they shut him down by playing a box-and-one, it's up to the next man, and that's where our troubles really started," Jugovich said. "We weren't

See BASKETBALL...pg. 4B



The Grizzlies' Brynn Chosa looks for help under heavy pressure during last Friday's game with the Broncos.

photo by F. Schumacher

Grizzlies outpace Silver Bay 63-51

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

SILVER BAY- The North Woods girls basketball team picked up their first win of the new year on Tuesday, a 63-51 victory on the road against Silver Bay.

The Grizzlies got out to an early 15-6

See GRIZZLIES...pg. 4B





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Outdoors

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OUTDOOR RECREATION

Celebration planned for new Flathorn-Gegoka trailhead

To provide better access to ski trail system that had been cut off by flood damage

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ISABELLA — The Superior National Forest, in cooperation with Friends of the Flathorn-Gegoka Trail, has opened a new trailhead parking lot for the popular cross-country ski trail system here. The new trailhead is located on Jensen Trail, otherwise known as FR 949B, located about two

miles west of the Knotted Pine Inn and just north of Hwy. 1.

Four ski trail bridges in the Flathorn-Gegoka system were damaged in the flooding from the June 18 rains in the Isabella area. These bridges were essential for skiers to access the main portion of the ski trail system.

Even before the flooding created the need for a new access point, the Friends of the

Flathorn-Gegoka Trail and the Superior National Forest had begun planning for a new trailhead to provide quicker access to the trail system. "The timing of this project couldn't have been better for cross country skiers in the area, says Ryan Blaisdell, recreation specialist on the Superior. "When the flooding damaged the four bridges, it cut off access for a significant group of skiers,"

Right: A pair of skiers enjoy the Flathorn-Gegoka trail system near Isabella.

courtesy Friends of the Flathorn-Gegoka

said Blaisdell.

During the fall, forest staff were able to finish evaluating locations for the trailhead and parking lot. Working with the Friends of the Flathorn

See **TRAILHEAD**, pg. 3B



BIRDS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

Season of the finches

With an abundant crop of tamarack and spruce cones, small northern finches are here in big numbers

On a recent warm and foggy Christmas bird count near Cook, the flocks of finches defied my previous experience. With an abundant crop of tamarack and spruce cones, finches had descended on the boggy western edges of the Lost Lake swamp in numbers I had never seen before.

Christmas bird counts in the North Country can be tedious affairs here in the North Country at times. In the depths of December, most birds have fled to warmer climes, leaving bird counters mostly to tally chickadees, ravens, blue jays, and red-breasted nuthatches. But there are often surprises that make the effort worthwhile, and this year it was the finches—flocks and flocks of them, most of which just filled the sky without being identified.

In some cases, my birding partner and I were able to get a clear enough look to identify the species. We counted 163 white-winged crossbills, a definite record for us considering that it was only the second year in the past five that we had even counted crossbills. Crossbills, both red and white-winged, are among the most unpredictable of the

Above: A male purple finch tries to get a jump on the breeding season with a raised crest and a pleasant song.

Right: A goldfinch in winter plumage on the edge of the Lost Lake swamp.

Lower right: A fluffed-up redpoll looks content.

photos by M. HelMBERGER

northern finches as they comb the northern forests in search of the best cone crops.

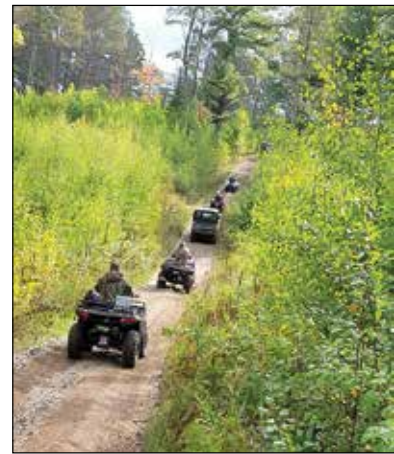
Our crossbill count was definitely a conservative one since in some cases we didn't get a good enough look at some of the flying flocks of crossbills, which quickly disappeared in the fog, to determine their species. So, they simply went uncounted.

And crossbills weren't the only finches taking advantage of the cone cornucopia. We ran into flocks of redpolls, pine siskins, and other flocks of these smaller finches that we never identified. Huge numbers of goldfinches had also descended on the area this winter, to take advantage of the cone crop as well. And while we didn't see any on our bird

See **FINCHES**, pg. 3B



MARSHALL
HELMBERGER



RECREATION

DNR accepting comments on OHV strategic master plans

Informational webinar to be held on Jan. 28

REGIONAL — The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is accepting comments through Feb. 21 on strategic master plans for each of the three primary categories of off-highway vehicle recreation: including all-terrain vehicles, off-road vehicles, and off-highway motorcycles.

The plans communicate the background and trends of these kinds of motorized recreation, share information about statewide off-highway trail management and strategic planning, and provide guidance regarding future trail maintenance and development practices. While the plans do not identify specific trail alignments or include commitments for future development, they do identify considerations that might make an area well-suited or ill-suited for future trail development. In addition to the three strategic master plans, the DNR has developed an overview document that ties the individual plans together.

The plans and overview document are available for review on the off-highway vehicle planning project webpage (engage.dnr.state.mn.us/off-highway-vehicle-strategic-master-plans). Printed copies of the plans are available by request.

The DNR will host an online webinar with live captioning on Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 6 p.m. to provide an overview of the draft plans. Instructions for how to join the webinar can be found on the project webpage at: <https://engage.dnr.state.mn.us/off-highway-vehicle-strategic-master-plans>.

Comments on the draft plans must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 21.

Comments can be provided electronically through the project webpage (engage.dnr.state.mn.us/off-highway-vehicle-strategic-master-plans) or by emailing them to OHV.Planning.DNR@state.mn.us.

Mail-in comments should be sent to Molly Lou Pintok, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155.

All comments will be considered as the DNR finalizes the plans during the first half of 2025.

For additional questions, to request printed copies of the plans, or for more information about the Jan. 28 webinar, contact Molly Lou Pintok at MollyLou.Pintok@state.mn.us or 651-259-5095.

FISHING

DNR considering new rulemaking to drop walleye limit to four statewide

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Catching your limit of walleye may become easier beginning in 2026. That's because the Department of Natural

Resources is considering lowering the bag limit on walleye from the current standard of six fish, to four.

It won't be a change for many of the state's premier walleye lakes, like Vermilion, where special regulations

already limit the daily harvest of the state's most popular game fish to four. But it would affect many smaller lakes that don't have special regulations in place and where anglers have had the ability to keep up to six walleye ever since the

regulation was put into effect back in the 1950s.

Under state law, the DNR has authority to establish bag limits for game fish through a standard rulemaking process. That process includes public notice of the change along

with a public comment period and a public hearing before the agency can make a final determination. That process typically takes more than two years, so anglers shouldn't expect to see a change in bag limits before 2026.

DNR officials maintain that a number of factors, including overfishing and increasing impacts from aquatic invasive species and climate change, are straining fish populations and make the new regulation necessary.

FINCHES...Continued from page 2B



Left: A white-winged crossbill sits near the top of a black spruce.

Right: A black spruce in the Lost Lake swamp is loaded with cones. photos by M. Helmsberger



adapted specifically to prying open these small cones in search of the nutritious seeds that lie within.

While we often may not think about it, an abundant cone crop can be an enormous source of high energy food that can attract huge numbers of the birds specifically adapted to exploiting this resource. When you think of the density of tamarack and black spruce in a typical mature bog stand, and figure one hundred cones in each tree (which is conservative in many cases), there could easily be over 100,000 cones per acre. That's more than a million cones in just ten acres, which can perhaps give some explanation for the clouds of finches we watched the other day.

The finches are a highly successful family of birds, with about 235 species worldwide. They're most often

recognized by their short, stout beaks that are adapted for extracting and crushing seeds. Male finches tend to be colorful while the females are generally drab.

Because finches rely on seeds as their primary food source, they're generally not migratory because seeds can typically be found throughout the year. As long as food is available, birds generally don't migrate, since migration saps energy and makes birds more vulnerable to predators and other hazards.

The several species of what we typically refer to as "northern finches" here in North America, tend to move about more than most other finch species. That's because the cone crops that these species rely on, tend to go from boom to bust in any given region from year-to-year. While most birds in

North America move from north to south in winter, the northern finches move in any direction based on the availability of cones— and this year, the tamarack and spruce cones are abundant in much of our region so we're seeing large numbers of the smaller finches in particular, which feed heavily on these smaller cones.

The northern finches as a group include both species of crossbills, redpolls, siskins, goldfinches, purple finches, and pine and evening grosbeaks.

If you're heading out to the woods sometime soon, keep an eye out for some of these feathered travelers of the vast boreal forest. They're definitely worth a look.

count, my feeders located on the eastern edge of the Lost Lake swamp have been filled for weeks with dozens of purple finches in addition to goldfinches.

By contrast, the larger

finches, like pine and evening grosbeaks, seem to have found better options this winter. These larger birds, which have shown up in limited numbers in our area, are less interested in the finer seeds of the tam-

arack and black spruce. But those small seeds are just right for the smaller finches, which use their fine, sharp beaks to extract seeds from between the scales of the cones. The crossbills, in particular, have

TRAILHEAD...Continued from page 2B

Gegoka Trail, they worked to prepare the area in time for the 2024/2025 winter ski season. Thanks to the diligent work of the partners and Forest Service staff, the work has been completed in time for the season, says Blaisdell.

"We would not have been able to keep access to the trail complex open to the public without the vision and support of the Friends of the Flathorn Gegoka Trail," said Blaisdell. "We're grateful for their help in developing and implementing this project."

To get there, take Hwy. 1 south from Ely approximately

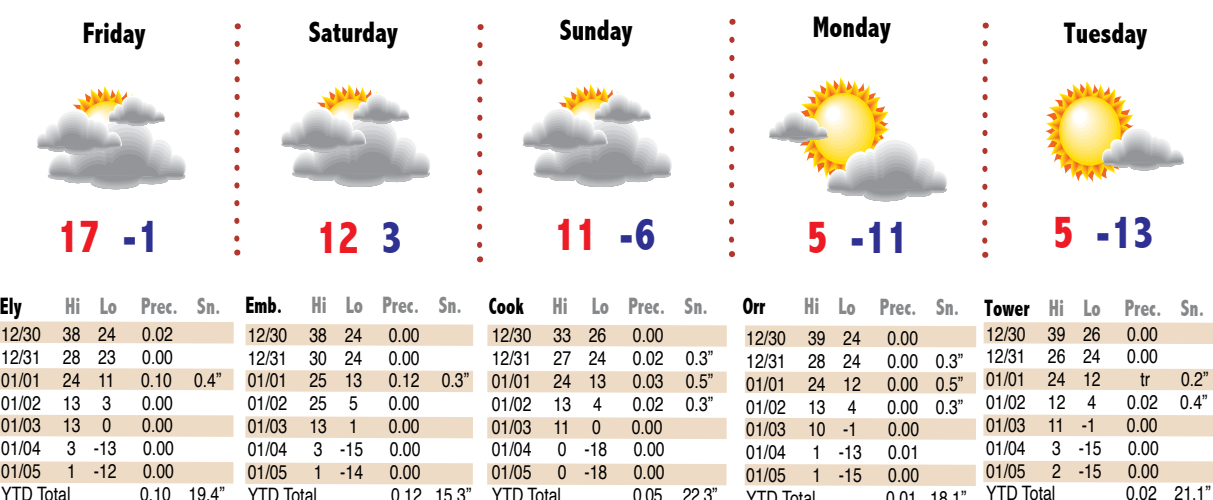
32 miles, take a left (north) on Jensen Trail. The trailhead is approximately one-quarter mile north on the west side of the road.

You can join the Friends of the Flathorn-Gegoka at 12:30 p.m. on Jan. 18 for a ribbon cutting at the new trailhead followed by complimentary hot dogs and chips at 9926 National Forest Lodge Road, located nearby. Kids events and activities begin at 1:30 p.m. or just get out and ski the groomed trails in the afternoon.

For more, go to <https://www.flathorngegokatrails.org>.

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KABETOGAMA LAKE CANISTER SITE 10150 Gamma Rd	HOURS Wed: noon – 4 p.m. Sat: 8 a.m. – noon
ORR CANISTER SITE 4038 Hwy 53	WINTER HOURS Tue, Thu: 9 a.m.–noon Sat: 8 a.m.–noon
PORTAGE CANISTER SITE 6992 Crane Lake Rd, Buyck	WINTER HOURS Tue, Sat: 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
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BOYS BASKETBALL

Wolves fall to Greenway for second loss of the season

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

E L Y — T h e Timberwolves' offensive power appeared to sputter on their home hardwood on Tuesday as they fell for just the second time this season,

finishing on the short-end of a 72-59 score with Greenway. "I thought we played well and had under ten turnovers against a very athletic and tall team," said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. "But our shooting did us in... we just could not get into a rhythm

offensively and we ended up shooting nine of 38 from the three-point line." Ely looked strong on defense as they tallied an impressive 17 steals against the Raiders. "But we had a hard time converting those into baskets on the other end,"

said McDonald. Caid Chittum led Ely scorers with 19 points, well below some of his recent offensive performances. Chittum made up for it on defense as he wracked up ten rebounds for a double-double on the night. Jack Davies added 14 points

and Wyatt Tedrick added 13 for the Wolves. Over the holiday break, the Wolves lost their first game of the season, falling 77-71 to visiting Two Harbors. They followed up with a 111-63 rout the following day as they hosted Bigfork.

The Wolves are set to visit Nashauk to take on the Spartans on Friday. They host Northland on Saturday with a 2:30 p.m. start. Bigfork comes back to town for a rematch on Tuesday.

HOCKEY

Ely hits the skids offensively in four-game losing streak

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

BABBITT— The Ely hockey team has hit an offensive dry spell during the heart of their season, and it continued last Friday when they were

shut out by Bagley/Fosston in a contest held at the Babbitt Arena. The Wolves have managed just four goals in as many games and are currently in a four-game losing skid, their worst of the season so far. The Wolves, now 3-9, last

won a game on Dec. 21, when they topped Wadena 4-3. Their struggles started during their holiday tournament, held Dec. 26-28 in Ely. Mayville/Portland (N. Dak.) outpaced the Wolves 7-1 on the tournament's opening day,

while Kittson County topped Ely 6-1 in tournament action on Friday. In the tournament's final day, the Wolves fell 5-2 to Moose Lake Area. Against Bagley on Jan. 3, the Wolves put 26 shots on goal, but Bagley tender

Kyle Johnson turned them all aside. Bagley put 28 shots on goal. The two teams played a scoreless first period before Bagley lit the lamp early in the second on a power play. They went on to add two more in the third. The Wolves hit the box

six times during the contest to five times for Bagley. The Wolves are set to visit Siren, Wis. on Saturday and will be up at the border on Tuesday to take on International Falls.

NORDIC SKIING

Ely skiers post middling performance at Cloquet pairs event

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- Ely's Nordic skiers hit the trails at Spirit Mountain on Tuesday

for the Cloquet Invitational relay races, with ten boy-girl duos competing. Duluth East dominated the pairs event, claiming six of the top seven finishes on the

six-kilometer circuit, including the top two spots. Brooks Brenny and Anna Dunn were the fastest Wolves to complete the six-kilometer circuit, placing 19th with

a time of 26 minutes, 46 seconds. Other racers for Ely who finished in the top half of the 60 pairs competing included Otto Devine and Elsa Ellerbroek, 23rd, 26:51;

Oliver Hohenstein and June Nelson, 24th, 26:53; and Wyatt Devine and Molly Brophy, 29th, 27:08. The Wolves were scheduled to be in action again on

Saturday for the Mesabi East Invitational at Giants Ridge, followed by the Cook County Invitational on Tuesday at Pincushion.

GRIZZLIES...Continued from page 1B

lead with Brynn Chosa dropping in a pair of three-pointers, and extended the lead to 14 by halftime, 35-21. While North Woods continues to be hampered by low shooting percentages from the field, they compensated for that

on Monday by crashing the boards and creating turnovers. The Grizzlies snared 56 rebounds and had 28 steals as they forced the Mariners into 39 turnovers. North Woods shot 28.4 percent overall, but only 16.7

percent from behind the arc. The Mariners held the advantage from the free throw line, outscoring North Woods 16-9. Four Grizzlies notched double-digit scoring nights, led by Chosa with 19. Tatum Barto scored 13, Corra

Brodeen dropped in 12, and Sierra Schuster hit for 11. Brodeen and Chosa shared honors in rebounding with nine each. The win broke a four-game losing streak for the Grizzlies that included two

hard-fought holiday tournament losses to McGregor, 71-63, and Ashby, 74-67. North Woods opened the 2025 portion of their schedule with a 78-39 loss to Ely on Thursday and a 51-36 loss to International Falls on Friday.

North Woods stands at 3-9 on the season and was scheduled to host perennial powerhouse Mt. Iron-Buhl on Thursday, followed by road trips to Littlefork-Big Falls on Monday and South Ridge on Tuesday.

BASKETBALL...Continued from page 1B

doing our game plan, and that was to move the ball around, break down their defense and get to the middle." Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald also gave kudos

to the team's defense. "I thought our defense subdued them pretty well," he said. "We played really well defensively." Chittum came into the

game needing 11 points to hit the 1,000-point mark and ended up with 25. Drew Johnson had a solid all-around game with 15 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists.

"I give them credit," Jugovich said. "They shot the lights out, over 50 percent from three and 50 percent from two, and when they're shooting that good, especially

in Ely, a hard place to play, it's going to be hard to win. They ran their game plan, executed it perfectly, and our boys and myself weren't able to adjust to it."


For the Grizzlies, Talen Jarshaw led the way with 19 points, and Kalvyn Benner hit for 14.

NW BOYS...Continued from page 1B

62-61, with 1:07 remaining. Almer connected for two for Fond du Lac on their next possession, and after North Woods missed a pair of shots Almer was fouled and converted a pair of free throws for a 65-62 edge with 23 seconds remaining. Jarshaw and Aidan Hartway both had good looks at threes to tie the score in the final seconds, but neither connected and Fond du Lac grabbed a rebound to preserve the win.

Grizzlies Head Coach Andrew Jugovich was clearly frustrated that his team let this one slip away. "It comes down to how hard our boys want to work," Jugovich said. "I just told them there are going to be changes. If they don't want to work when they're in the game, whether it's going after loose balls, boxing out, making layups, playing help defense, it's going to be the next man up, because we need something to change. I watch the junior varsity, I watch practice, I see who works hard. I think it's time to reward them and see what they've got." Aidan Hartway led the Grizzlies in scoring with 18, followed by Jarshaw with 16 and Andrew Hartway with 10.





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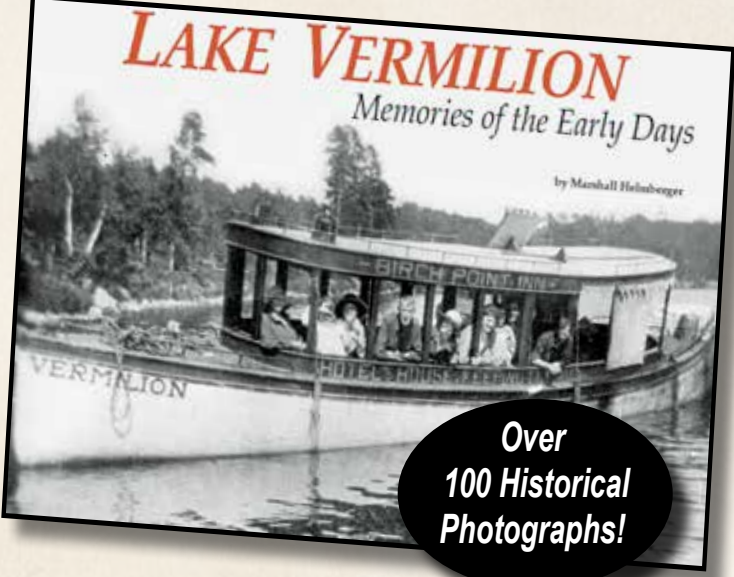
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MS SUPPORT GROUP- meets the second Friday of the month at 1 p.m. at the Babbitt Municipal Building, senior room. Open to all. For information contact Mary at 218-827-8327.

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

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

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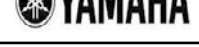
MARINE

MOCCASIN POINT MARINE

4655 Moccasin Point Rd
Lake Vermilion
218-753-3319

Storage, Boat Rentals, Service/Repairs/Sales
Mechanic on Duty

moccasinpointmarine.com



MERCURY OUTBOARDS

Frank's Marine Sales & Service
Mercury, Crestliner, Lund
www.franksmarinesales.com
frankmarine@centurytel.net
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CryptoQuote answer

Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn. — Lewis Grizzard

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Winter Hours Start Nov. 1:
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Sat & Sun: Closed

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& GENERAL STORE
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kaxe.org

SNOWFLAKES
by Japheth Light

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

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

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Super Crossword ADDED WEIGHT

- ACROSS**
1 Posh parties
6 Lumberyard tool
12 Rd. crossers
15 Quick bite
19 Japanese film genre
20 Mob code of silence
21 — au vin (chicken dish)
22 Qualified
23 Milk or egg container in a precinct refrigerator?
25 Volcanic event
27 Bible book after Genesis
28 Strike zones, to pitcher Kershaw?
30 Hefty slice
32 White-coated Scottish terrier, for short
33 Ohio city whose residents all have messy mop tops?
41 It merged with Exxon in 1999
45 Studio alert
46 Off-course
47 Dalai —
50 Brian of electronica
51 Play spiritedly
52 People evaluating a central California city?
55 Wedding vow
56 Seder bread
57 Makes public
58 Suffix with million
59 Has a feeling
61 Shepherd of "Mr. Iglesias"
64 Conjunction with a slash
65 Appliance invented by the first U.S. president?
70 "A Bell for —" (novel)
72 Caged (up)
73 "24" actress Cuthbert
76 William who played Hopalong Cassidy
77 T. Rex, e.g.
78 — fatuus (delusion)
81 Longtime "Conan" ailer
82 Rocker known for the loud crashing noises in his songs?
87 Flapjack chain, in brief
88 Aykroyd of "Soul Man"
89 Sty beasts
90 Beachgoer's headwear
91 Phase
92 Occur next
94 Tactful reply when Churchill asked "Who dislikes me?"
96 Glorify
100 Mai — (cocktails)
101 Name of a labor union in a city south of Los Angeles?
109 Pressure felt at liftoff
113 "Sounds right to me"
114 Clara who collected cleansing cakes?
116 See 75-Down
117 — Father
118 Songlike
119 Cleo of song
120 U. of Maryland athlete
121 Born, in Lyon
122 Gave lip to
123 Actor Murphy
DOWN
1 Stare in awe
2 Strong as —
3 "— & Stitch"
4 In the center of a vessel
5 Not religious
6 Mythical bird
7 Apple line
8 Alternative to JavaScript
9 Madrid Mlle.
10 "This is not —" (warning to kids)
11 Desire
12 Act segment
13 Legal wrongs
14 Crouch down
15 "StarTalk" cable chan.
16 NYC theater award
17 ATM hole
18 Egg sources
24 Actor Morales
26 Fundamental
29 Have title to
31 Film director Ratner
33 Johnson of Britain
34 Battery pole
35 "Mo' Money" star
36 Health expert on TV
37 Former BP gas chain
38 Shaggy ox
39 Blowup stuff
40 Ear-related prefix
42 Else
43 Opening lines
44 Aesop's hare, notably
47 Actress Dern
48 Playful trick
49 Mothers
52 An obi is one
53 Standard
54 One-named New Ager
56 Prefix with -dermal or American
60 Wall St.'s "500" index
61 Big name in fuel additives
62 Weeding tool
63 Bring to a halt
64 Brings pain to
66 Cake coating
67 Taboo things
68 Mess up
69 Prince, e.g.
70 First five of 26 letters
71 Gold-medal swimmer Tom
74 Cable streaming app until 2020
75 With 116-Across, it has trembling leaves
77 Scooby- —
78 With a sharp image, briefly
79 Aussie "Hi!"
80 Abbr. on a food package
83 "— the rub!"
84 "General" on Chinese menus
85 Core
86 Half of dos
87 "Such a pity"
91 Sound from a cold sufferer
93 Maintenance
94 Natal lead-in
95 "Othello" foe
97 Illegal burning
98 Edition
99 Make a goal
101 Figure skater Katarina
102 Horrid giant
103 Regretful person
104 CEOs' degs.
105 Law firm aide, for short
106 Baseballer Speaker
107 Siouan people
108 Schnozzola
110 Doping juice
111 Tot's plea
112 Sword variety
115 Silent assent

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

FUNERAL SERVICES

Range Funeral Home

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

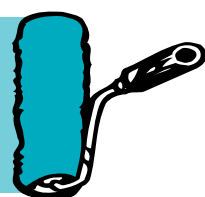
Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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



HOME IMPROVEMENT GUIDE



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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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EMPLOYMENT

POSITION OPENING

Ely Public Schools Substitute Cafeteria Aides

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for substitute cafeteria aides. Training will be provided. A background check is required.

Qualifications include:
► Preferred experience working with school age children
► Evidence of ability to work cooperatively and communicate effectively in a collaborative setting

Application (non-licensed) available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us or in the District Office

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

Rate of Pay: \$15.85/hour

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 10 & 17, 2025

POSITION OPENING

Ely Public Schools Substitute School Nurse

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for substitute school nurses. A background check is required.

Qualifications include:
► Valid state license to practice as a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse

Application (non-licensed) available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us or in the District Office

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

Rate of Pay: \$29.06/hour

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 10 & 17, 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS
SIXTH JUDICIAL
DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT
PROBATE DIVISION
Court File No.
69VI-PR-24-220

Estate of
Harold Duane Robinson Jr.,
Decedent

NOTICE AND ORDER
OF HEARING ON
PETITION FOR FORMAL
ADJUDICATION OF
INTESTACY,
DETERMINATION OF
HEIRSHIP, APPOINTMENT
OF PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE AND
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on February 3, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at 300 5th Avenue South, Virginia, Minnesota, for the adjudication of intestacy and determination of heirship of the Decedent, and for the appointment of Timothy John Sever, whose address is 8748 Waltom Oaks Drive, Bloomington, MN, as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power

to administer the Estate, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.
*This hearing will be held remotely via Zoom Technology.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.
Dated:
December 18, 2024
BY THE COURT
Andrew R. Peterson
Judge of District Court
Jennifer Miller
Court Administrator
Chelsea Opdahl, Deputy

Attorney for Petitioner
Lisa A. Haster
Metropolitan Law Group
LLC, Park Officenter
5775 Wayzata Ave, #700
St. Louis Park, MN, 55416
Attorney License No:
310979
Telephone: (612) 524-9414
Email: lisa@metropolitan-lawgroup.com

Published in the Timberjay,
Jan. 10 & 17, 2025

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

LEIDING TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF FILINGS

Filings for the following offices open on Tuesday, December 31, 2024, through Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 5 p.m. for the offices of:

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

Filing fee is \$2.

File the Affidavit of Candidacy at Clerk's Office. Please call 218-355-0163 (cell) for the clerk's office hours.

Marie Milan, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 10, 2025

CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

YBDGTSLGXR GY LJR IOTE

OVOWRTGTS. LJR XODHJ

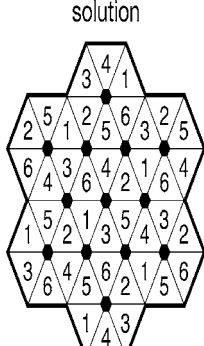
VGTEY ODR LJR XUDTGTS

COVT. - IRVGY SDGKKODE

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solution



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Super Crossword

Answers

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

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