

Ski season

See/ 1B



Bird counts

See /4B



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POLYMET MINING

DNR issues draft permit to mine

One of numerous permits needed for state's first copper-nickel operation

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — Nearly two years after approving an environmental impact statement on the proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes, the Department of Natural Resources has issued the company a draft permit to mine.

The permit is one of nearly two dozen state and federal permits that the company will need before opening Minnesota's first copper-nickel mine, but it's considered the most important since it covers the totality of the

See...PERMIT pg. 10



The former LTV site near Hoyt Lakes, now owned by PolyMet, could be the location of the first copper-nickel mine operation in Minnesota. MPR photo

ELY

Apartment fire ruled accidental

Grahek resident apparently died before Dec. 27 fire

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY — The quick actions of Ely Fire Department personnel using a specialized piece of fire-fighting equipment likely kept the Grahek Apartment fire on Dec. 27 from growing into a conflagration of tragic proportion.

David Curtis Cashman, 70, apparently died from a medical condition prior to the start of the blaze, according to an investigation involving the EFD, Ely Police Department and the Minnesota State Fire Marshal's Office.

Cashman's body was discovered shortly after Ely firefighters knocked down the blaze in his third-floor apartment. The cause of the fire was determined to be smoking materials and ruled accidental, according to Ely Fire Chief Tom Erchull.

The Ely Fire Department was dispatched at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 27, to a report of a fire at the Grahek

See...FIRE pg. 11

PASTORAL SERVICE

'Where I'm going, I will see you all again'



PJ Bailey gives last sermon to Orr, Alango congregations

by MELISSA ROACH
Staff Writer

ORR—With the flick of his wrist and the word "ki'htwa'm," Pastor Joey Bailey began his last sermon. "There is no word for good-bye in Cree, instead they say ki'htwa'm, it means again." He continued, "Where I'm going, I will see you all again."

"PJ", as he is mostly known as throughout the community, has for the past twelve years tirelessly devoted his time between the two congregations of Calvary Lutheran in Orr and St. Paul's Lutheran in Alango. Much of the emo-

tional last service came full circle with songs that were first sung at his pastoral ordination service over twenty years ago. "I said I wasn't going to cry, but I'm Irish. We fight hard and we cry hard."

He liked to call locals living here in northern Minnesota the "Chosen Frozen." He said, "I'm from the east, and when I came here I realized how hardy'all are...stoic...and then when someone got sick you would hold a benefit for them. I never knew what a benefit was until I came here. And then you had one for me."

Two years ago PJ was diagnosed with schwan-

Pastor Joey Bailey has stopped receiving treatment for schwannoma, a cancer of the nerve sheath. He recently gave his last sermon. photo above by M. Roach

noma, a cancer of the nerve sheath. The grueling treatments and medications have left side effects and taken a toll on his liver. Recently, the decision to stop treatment was made.

"There's a lot of love out there. I wish you all could see yourselves and the love that radiates from you all. It's powerful and I feel it."

See... "PJ" pg. 11



MINING

MPCA proposes to deny tailings basin variance for Minntac

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is proposing to deny a request by U.S. Steel for a variance that would exempt the company's Minntac tailings basin from several of the state's water quality standards. The agency will take public comments on the proposal at a public hearing set for Tuesday, Jan. 23, at the Mt. Iron Community Center, from 4-6 p.m.

U.S. Steel submitted its variance request last fall, after the MPCA issued a draft permit that requires the company to reduce discharge levels of several pollutants, including sulfate, total dissolved solids, hardness, bicarbonate, and specific conductance, from its tailings basin, all of which currently exceed water quality standards.

The tailings basin discharges the pollutants into both surface and groundwater and the MPCA has documented the

See.. MINNTAC pg. 10



Check out Poetry at the top of the stairs!

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POLITICS

Phifer stumps for support at Ely's Tuesday Group

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – Iron Range resident Leah Phifer quit her job with the Federal Bureau of Investigation just days after President Donald Trump fired her boss, James Comey.

The former FBI terrorism analyst, 33, a native of Two Harbors and current Isanti resident, is looking to help change the federal government by challenging incumbent Congressman Rick Nolan in Minnesota's 8th Congressional district. She joins three other candidates vying for the DFL endorsement.

Phifer made a stop in Ely last week to speak to a standing-room-only crowd of nearly 100 people at Tuesday Group and to attend a fundraising event.

Phifer spent 80 days touring the district in northeast Minnesota last summer, logging 5,000 miles on her motorcycle visiting all 18

counties in the district. She heard a lot of anxiety about health care, she said, and about what she called a lack of transparency in politics.

She is basing her campaign on "a frustration over where the money is coming from, how decisions are made, and feeling left out of the process," she said.

Phifer's connection to Ely goes back to her childhood. "My mom met my dad here in Ely, and they got married here in Ely. We have a cabin on One Pine Lake," she said. Her grandparents, Jack and Linda Jensen, worked for some 30 years in the Ely School District.

"Ely is genuinely my second home," she said. "I spent every summer here, going to kiddie college at Vermilion, and picking through rocks and picking off leeches at the cabin."

Phifer said her comfort zone is not speaking to a large audience, but rather listening to individuals

about their own community. "I want to replicate that at the federal level," she said.

She hails from a mining background. Her father, grandfather and great-grandfather all worked in the mining industry. Her grandmother founded Sherry's Kitchen (now known as the Vanilla Bean) in Two Harbors. She said she remembers picking taconite pellets out of her father's shoes and shooting them around like marbles. "My family understands how the service industry and mining industry must and can pull people together," she said.

Phifer said she noticed in enforcing laws for the past 10 years under three administrations, "Far too often there is a very real human cost in political posturing. You would get whip-lash working in the federal government enforcing laws that are written by one president and immediately struck down by the next," she said.

"We are relying far too heavily on policies being written by single people, such as the president, and we are not getting enough accomplished at the congressional level to get long-lasting policies that will benefit our communities," Phifer said.

She said there is no coincidence "that public trust in government has plummeted as political intervention and manipulating laws has occurred to benefit a few folks."

Several divisive development proposals in northern Minnesota are poised to be key issues in the 2018 race— Enbridge Energy's proposed Line 3 oil pipeline project, PolyMet's bid to open



the state's first copper-nickel mine, and the potential development of copper-nickel mines in

See PHIFER...pg. 5

CITY OF TOWER

Council approves new contract with SEH

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER— In a brief meeting on Monday, the city council here, minus Councilor Brad Match, gave its approval to an agreement with SEH, Inc. for engineering and architectural services for the new TEDA building at the city's industrial park. Just over half of the 8,500 square-foot building is slated to be the new home of Lamppa Manufacturing, with the remaining space to be available for another business or for future expansion by the Tower-based

stove manufacturer.

SEH estimated the cost of their services at \$150,000, although the final number won't be known until the project is fully scoped. SEH will provide preliminary and final design, permitting, bidding, and construction administration, staking, and observation services for the facility. Construction is expected to get underway in the spring, with a tentative completion date set for next September.

In other economic development action, the council gave approval for application to the IRRRB's demolition program to

help fund planned demolition of dilapidated docks, dock canopies, ramps, sea walls, and some interior building walls at the former Standing Bear Marina located on the East Two River. Twin Cities-based Your Boat Club recently purchased the site and is planning extensive renovations and upgrades to the facility. Your Boat Club principal Luke Kujawa said he needs to move quickly to finish up a long list of tasks which he hopes to complete while ice remains on the river. Kujawa estimates the total cost for the demolition at about \$110,000.

In other business, the council:

- Approved a second pay estimate for the Hoodoo Point Campground sewer project for \$88,298. City engineer Jason Chopp told the council that work on the project has wrapped up for the winter and would get underway again in the spring. He also said that the contractors had found 11 broken sewer cleanouts and could replace them for an additional \$17,600. The project is currently under-budget by about \$15,000 because the contractors have not encountered much rock during their excavations.

tions.

- Approved a gambling permit for the Take A Kid Fishing event set for next August.
- Approved a donation of \$250 to the St. Louis County Fair.
- Reviewed a letter from the Department of Health outlining the most recent water testing results for haloacetic acids and total trihalomethanes, both of which appeared to be in compliance with the standards in the most recent test, conducted Nov. 1, 2017.

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CITY OF ELY

City staff receive new contracts for 2018

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY - The city of Ely approved new three-year contract agreements with two bargaining units of its top administrative staff at the City Council's final meeting of 2017.

Contracts with the supervisors of essential employees, and supervisors of other than essential employees cover Police Chief John Lahtonen, Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski, Deputy Clerk

Casey Velcheff, Librarian Rachel Heinrich and Assistant Treasurer Dan Smith.

The contracts call for pay increases of 2.75, 2.75 and 2.5 percent for the agreement that started Jan. 1, 2018, and runs through the end of 2020, according to City Atty Kelly Klun.

Under the new deal, Langowski will receive a salary of \$108,098 next year. Base salaries for the other supervisors are: Lahtonen, \$78,835 per year; Smith, \$35.77 per hour; Heinrich,

\$65,139 per year; and Velcheff, \$28.65 per hour.

Other benefits include longevity pay of an additional two-to-seven percent for years of service, health insurance and paid vacation. An additional life insurance benefit was also awarded to the union that represents most city employees.

An abbreviated meeting on Jan. 2, with two council members absent, Paul Kess and Heidi Omerza, resulted in the delay of various 2018 committee assign-

ments by Mayor Chuck Novak.

In other business, the council took the following action:

► Approved a proclamation for the Special Olympics Minnesota Northland 300 Day on Jan. 25, and approved a request for parades during the event to be held at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. from the Trezona Trail parking lot to the Grand Ely Lodge on Pioneer Road.

► OK'd a proclamation supporting National School Choice Week, Jan. 21-27, 2018;

► Approved a call for sealed bids for the 2018 legal newspaper;

► Approved advertising for open committee seats;

► OK'd the payment of \$700 for dues for the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools;

► Designated the 2018 official city depositories as Wells Fargo Bank, Frandsen Bank and Trust, Boundary Waters Bank and 4M Fund.

CITY OF COOK

Council OKs three-percent levy hike

by MELISSA ROACH
Staff Writer

COOK — Meeting just ahead of the new year, the city council here passed their 2018 budget, which includes a three-percent levy increase.

City Administrator Teresa Martinson said the increase was necessary. "We sat down with all the departments and this is what we were able to come up with," she told the council.

The 2018 general fund budget includes expected revenues of \$524,861 and expenses of \$551,164. The budget covers a general fund deficit of \$8,303 and an airport deficit of \$2,865 from 2017.

City Maintenance Supervisor Don Flack expressed concern about the service and maintenance contract that the city has with Maguire Iron, Inc. The city has used the company for clean-out and inspection of the water tank since 2014 at a cost of \$1,980 every three years.

"We don't get any real or good information to base decisions on with the information from Maguire," Flack said. He reminded the council that Maguire had recommended in the June 2017 report that the interior of the water tower needed a chemical wash just to determine the condition of the tank, which Maguire had estimated would cost \$4,000-\$5,000. "All they really did was stick their head in there and look." Wanting more information, Flack met a representative from KLM Engineering and learned the company uses a remote operated vehicle (ROV) to perform inspections to the interior of the tank, a service not provided with Maguire. The ROV would be inserted into the tank and would take detailed photos. Flack felt the services provided by KLM were more complete and informative. He said that KLM services provide an inspection, not just a report. The cost of an inspection would be \$3,400. "We would get a

complete work-up on the tank, and the preliminary inspection will determine how often the tank will need to be cleaned." Administrator Martinson told the council the city has the ability to cancel the contract with Maguire before Jan. 10. With that, the council approved cancelling the contract. Flack told the council he would schedule a representative from KLM to address the council.

Councilor Liz Storm met with Friends of the Parks and a representative from the IRRRB for the "River Street Way-Path & Patio Project" last month to develop a concept plan that includes using the area around the library and downtown city park. The proposed plan, which will be funded by a \$25,000 IRRRB grant, looks to develop a low maintenance outdoor gathering area which highlights art and landscaping, while keeping an open space.

In other action, the council: ► Approved submitted

invoices from JPJ Engineering for the River Street bridge project for \$3,295 and 2016 Infrastructure Improvements for \$605.

► Accepted new hires Justin Bachman and John Pearson to the Ambulance staff. The department is currently focusing on holding two trainings a month, as well as community outreach events.

► Councilor Elizabeth Storm updated the council on the progress to the Lake Vermilion Trail. The steering committee has been looking to assemble the Joint Powers Board, comprised of a representative of each government entity listed on the Joint Powers Agreement. The council approved appointee Tim Johnson to represent the city of Cook, with Mayor Harold Johnston serving as an alternate.

► Recognized Sheryl Aune and Betty Chos in their resignation from the Library Board.

► Approved 2018 license renewals for the VFW and the Muni.

Briefly

Ely woman injured in one-car crash on Hwy. 1

ELY - Tonya Susanne Hecht, 63, of Ely was injured in a one-vehicle crash on Thursday, Jan. 4 on Hwy. 1 just south of Ely.

According to the Minnesota State Patrol, Hecht was driving a 1994 Chevy Corsica south on Hwy. 1 just outside of Ely at about 6:30 p.m. when she lost control, went off the road and hit a rock outcropping. The vehicle then came to rest in the north-bound ditch among some trees.

According to the incident report, the road was snow and ice covered at the time of the crash. Hecht was transported to the Ely-Bloomenson Hospital and treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

The St. Louis County Sheriff Department also responded to the accident scene.



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OPINION

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Editorial

Progress on PolyMet

Still a way to go, but company's persistence is paying off

Supporters of the proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes have reason to celebrate the release of a draft Permit to Mine by the Department of Natural Resources. It's a significant milestone in a project that has been a long time in coming.

But those who expect that the announcement means construction on the project could begin later this year are likely to be disappointed. As DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr noted in a press conference with reporters last Friday, there is still much unfinished business.

The issuance of a draft permit means at least several more months of additional work, including the signing of final contractual agreements between the DNR, PolyMet, and financial backers, before a final permit could actually be issued. A contested case hearing over the permit, which could take months more, is still a possibility. Meanwhile, other state permits are still in process, and critical federal permits have been in limbo for years, with no indication of when they might be forthcoming.

Residents of the Iron Range have seen projects like this come close to the finish line too many times to call this one a done deal by any stretch. And as the Essar Steel project reminds us, even projects that begin construction can end up flailing under the high capital requirements inherent in large industrial projects. The public still doesn't know where PolyMet will find the financing for its plans and we don't know how the project's financial prospects have changed since the company issued its last financial feasibility report in 2008. The company is expected to issue an updated version of its definitive feasibility study in March, which should give the public a clearer picture of whether the project will provide

the kind of financial returns necessary to attract significant investment dollars for what is, by its nature, a relatively high risk project. While mining has the potential to yield big returns, it is an investment vehicle equally known for burning huge amounts of investor capital and that's one reason why similar projects in the U.S. have found limited interest in recent years from the investment community.

Meanwhile, financial advisors hired by the state of Minnesota have raised doubts about the company's ability to fund its financial assurance obligations in part because of the riskiness of the project. And that's one reason why the state of Minnesota will need an ironclad guarantee, fully backed by irrevocable letters of credit or other financial instruments, before signing off on a financial assurance package. After all, once all the permits are issued, the state would have very little leverage to force the company to keep current with their financial assurance obligations. While the DNR might have regulatory authority over PolyMet, recent political history forecasts that the Legislature would not allow the DNR to pull permits if PolyMet fails to comply with the terms. Once permits are issued, the DNR will be effectively kneecapped as a regulatory agency. It's safe to say that the Legislature will see to that.

But regardless of anyone's view of the project and its merits, one fact is beyond dispute. The folks at PolyMet have been remarkably persistent. It's taken almost 20 years since the company first proposed its mining plans to reach this point. That's close to a career for some of those who began working on this project from the outset. While it's still a long way to the finish line, it's a lot closer than it was when this whole process began.



Letters from Readers

Parroting the mainstream media on Trump

I guess that owning and editorializing for your own newspaper is a very good system for getting your learned ideas out to the rest of us. That being said I find little in the editorial, The West In Tumult, that was anything other than hyperbole. I guess that's the way news is sold.

A couple of observations from my independent side.

It was not any liberal democracy that brought down the former Soviet Union. It was a strong conservative republic that bankrupted a corrupt failing communist system.

The system, mainly in Western Europe but also somewhat in the U.S., morphed into a pseudo-socialist model with globalism as the new world order.

Bernie Sanders would probably have been president if the DNC and the Democratic political system hadn't stolen the primary from him.

The anger of world leadership for the U.S. was eight years of Bush 43 and the vacuum was eight years of Barack Obama.

Then you go full Main Stream media by a setting all the current issues of Big Money in politics, "unconscionable" gerrymandering, use of Twitter I'm thinking, that ends in the rigging of elections as standard procedure as a Republican Party issue only.

No election process was more rigged than the Sanders/Clinton/ DNC debacle.

Followed by the DNC/Clinton/ Trump setup.

Then for a kicker you add voter suppression as a Republican carrot.

What do your independent polls say about mandatory I.D.'s for voters?

Most Americans think it is a fair and reasonable system that

voters show they can legally vote.

I agree that Big Business runs this country and at least you didn't take the standard that it's the Republican Party of big money. I also agree that there needs to be campaign reform, term limits, tort reform and a flat tax so I guess I can get labeled from there.

Our form of capitalism has its flaws to be sure but most of my generation were raised that you can achieve what you want or at least what you need if you work hard, apply yourself and count on yourself for your own wellbeing.

Lastly, in no court of public opinion should a sitting President of any party be called an intemperate grifter, nor should his family be denigrated as well.

They are duly elected officials and are fair game on policies and actions as they relate to the office of the presidency. Personal attacks are unwarranted in my opinion.

I guess it's important for you to let all of your readers know that your opinions are the same as the Main Stream liberal anti-Trump media. We should all want unbiased news which seems impossible to get these days whatever your political stripe.

But it is the *opinion* page, I guess.

**Jay Schelde
Tower**

Too many of us are indoctrinated by our masters

Why do people vote against their own best interests and in favor of the powerful rich? Acting contrary to your interests, aside from being lied to, suggests that your thinking has been shaped by colonizers. Identification with their interests,

beliefs, attitudes and values get the colonized to think like colonizers.

Psychologists describe this mental process (introjection) to show how the colonized adopt, incorporate and embrace the beliefs of their colonizers. Studies demonstrate how prisoners take on behaviors of prison guards, servants imitate masters and children absorb attributes of their parents. When "nobodies" believe, think and act as subservient to "somebodies," they fall captive.

Nations colonize other countries to extract wealth as do "fat cats" within a nation. They gain power by making promises to be broken, then pillage and plunder public wealth. Colonized minds, externally shaped by others, internalize an inferior status and act out submissive stereotypes. Colonized minds ignore their own oppression as long as "dog-whistles" comfort them in feeling racially superior to minorities.

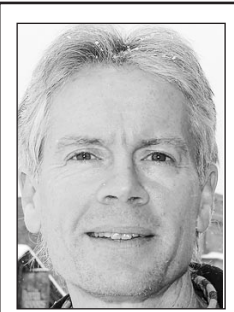
Colonized minds see a dangerous world where everyone is for themselves and close ranks to protect their own. Exploiting nature, greed is good, money and markets rule is their creed. The "art of the deal" picks your pocket, leaves a mess and you foot the bill. Endorsing rule by the rich, identifying with them and supporting their agenda makes subjects an accomplice in waging class war against themselves.

Colonized minds exhibit learned helplessness, seek scapegoats for their problems and see "others" as us against them. Accept the world as it is, fit in, accept your lot, dare not imagine what might be and do nothing to change it. These indoctrinated live their lives through others, are loyal to their "keepers," but are perilous to each other!

**Harold Honkola
Lake Vermilion**

Twin Metals decision part of a much broader initiative

Now we know why the Trump administration has been so intent on reshaping America's courts. For more than a century, governmental decisions have for the most part been made based on facts and law. Sure, politics intercedes at times, and no one would deny that the decision-making gears of the federal bureaucracy grind slowly. But the executive branch of government makes thousands of decisions every month, from administrative to regulatory, most of which the public never hears about, and



**MARSHALL
HELMBERGER**

despite the oftentimes rancid rhetoric of critics, most are sound and based on facts, the law, and a sincere desire to advance the public interest.

And that's a problem for an administration that acknowledges its desire to "blow up" the administrative state and effectively reverse decades of well-established rules, regulations, and protections that previous administrations, of both parties, have put in place.

Republicans know they can't rewrite the laws that govern everything from

food inspections to clean air and water, to safety on the job. Such changes would be tremendously unpopular with the public and impossible to pass even with Republicans in control of Congress.

President Trump may still labor under the illusion that he can sweep aside past decision-making with the swipe of a pen, but American government doesn't work that way. We've limited the power of those who govern our country, and with good reason. Reversing the course of government takes time, and it's subject to review by the public, and perhaps most importantly, by the courts.

And that's where the Dec. 22 legal opinion by Department of the Interior

legal counsel Daniel Jorjani, regarding the Twin Metals mineral leases, faces its toughest test. There is little doubt about the role that Jorjani was hired to play in Trump's Washington. Jorjani was a top operative for the Koch brothers before being tapped to reimagine the legal framework that has governed the management of millions of acres of public lands in the U.S. for decades. He recently, for example, reinterpreted the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to allow energy producers to avoid penalty when their actions—such as oil spills—kill birds. Attempts to limit bird deaths cost money, however, and its

See **JORJANI**..pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Ladies should get a pair of pointy-toed cowboy boots

When I was a young mother of four children, their dad deserted his responsibility. I got a job at

the nearby bar/restaurant in a northern suburb of St. Paul, which served a neighborhood of ensconced "good ol' boys".

I would come home after a shift with black and blue pinch marks on my arms, top, and back side. So I piled my kids in the car and drove down to a thrift

shop on Payne Ave. and found a pair of serviceable pointy-toed cowboy boots.

After that, when someone tried to grab or pinch me while I had a huge tray of drinks in my hands, they got a good kick in the shin, and they went home with the black and blue bruises.

Defend yourself, ladies! It doesn't matter who they are—or think they are! Our former First Lady said, "Just say no."

In a more formal situation where you don't really want to get too violent, just roll up a newspaper and smack an offender in the offending body part. If

that fails to deter the behavior, maybe you should consider the purchase of pointy-toed boots.

Janet Y. Schultz
Sturgeon Township

COMMENTARY

Grassroots democracy to shine during Feb. 6 caucuses

It's happening again.

An event in your local community so important that:

► Employers must give their workers time off to be there.

► No school, county, or township board or city council can hold a meeting after 6 p.m. that night.

► No state agency, board, commission, department, or committee can hold a meeting after 6 p.m. that night.

► No class or other event can be held at the University of Minnesota or any state college or university after 6 p.m. that night.

Sounds pretty important, eh?

It's the Minnesota Precinct

Caucuses, Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2018,

at a location near you.

Surprised? You might be. Because this very basic building block of citizenship doesn't always get the respect it needs.

But this is the place where regular citizens like you and me start the whole process that leads up to the next general election in the fall of 2018.

It's where neighbors come together in their local communities to talk about the issues they care about and choose people to be delegates to future conventions where the candidates for office representing each political party are nominated.

There's one being held near you—one for the Republican



Party and one for the Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) Party—at your township hall, your school, or community center or some other place close to you.

This year there is a large field of candidates from both parties in the running for the Minnesota governor's office to fill the seat Governor Mark Dayton will be leaving. And, most unexpectedly, there will be races for not just one but, rather, two U.S. Senate seats. Further, there is a contest for the DFL nomination for Minnesota's 8th Congressional District seat.

So, if you have a particular candidate you like for any of these offices, and you want to weigh in, it's the caucuses where

you can speak your mind and support the person of your choice. Unless someone challenges a party's nominees, there won't be a primary in which you can go to the polls to make your wishes known. It all happens at the Feb. 6 caucuses.

The caucuses start at 7 p.m., with registration starting at 6:30 p.m. Participants choose the leaders of their local party units, pass resolutions to be sent to the state party for the platform, and select delegates to represent them at future conventions (county or county unit conventions).

While multiple precincts may meet at a central location, residents of each precinct meet separately that night in their own small groups. In the rural areas that's a township or a city. Larger cities have multiple precincts. Watch for the announcement in mid-January of the location where your precinct will be meeting

this year. For more about Minnesota's precinct caucuses, go to: www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-work/precinct-caucuses/.

Some of us remember from our elementary school history books the direct democracy practiced in the early days in New England. Citizens came together at their town halls and took care of all the business of the community at those local meetings. The country's gotten a lot bigger and much more complicated since then, but the caucuses remain in Minnesota the most local, accessible opportunity to make your voice known.

As the old saying goes, "Eighty percent of success is just showing up."

So, please show up for the Minnesota caucuses Tuesday, Feb. 6.

Leah Rogne lives in Greaney.



LEAH ROGNE

Citizens for Civic Education

JORJANI...Continued from page 4

money that the Koch brothers and their friends in the oil industry would just as soon deploy on more productive purposes, like buying up Senate seats. So their man at the Interior reinterprets the law, allowing them to kill birds without consequence.

It was the same process at work on the Friday before Christmas, when the department released Jorjani's reinterpretation of the law governing the Twin Metals leases on the Superior National Forest. Previous legal counsels under both the Reagan and Obama Interior departments had determined that the Bureau of Land Management had discretion over whether to renew the Twin Metals leases. In 1986, officials with the Reagan Interior department questioned whether they could even legally renew the two federal mineral leases, then held by INCO,

because the company had failed to begin production during the initial 20-year lease period. The suggestion that INCO had some kind of absolute right to renewal apparently never even crossed their minds. That question was examined by the legal counsel for the Obama administration, who found no basis for such a claim, under either the terms of the original 1966 lease or the substantially revised lease language approved in 2003.

Even Twin Metals acknowledged in its own feasibility study that renewal of the mineral leases is subject to the discretion of the BLM.

And those aren't the only provisions that apply to these leases. Leasing federally-owned mineral lands in Minnesota national forests also requires approval from the U.S. Forest Service. If the Forest Service determines that the

mineral development poses a significant environmental risk to important resources, the agency has the authority to block authorization of a mineral lease within a Minnesota national forest. That's exactly what happened with the Twin Metal leases. As the BLM noted in its rejection letter to Twin Metals in late 2016, "the development and utilization of such mineral deposits shall not be permitted by the Secretary of the Interior except with the consent of the Secretary of Agriculture." That statement wasn't just an opinion—it's a direct citation of federal law (16 U.S.C. § 508(b)). It's the Secretary of Agriculture, by the way, who oversees the Forest Service.

Under federal law, if the Forest Service says no, the BLM is not authorized to approve the leases. Jorjani's legal opinion doesn't even address this

issue, and it's easy to understand why not. It's a pretty big legal hurdle to surmount, even for someone who is little more than a bought-and-paid-for industry functionary.

The bottom line, of course, is that many of Jorjani's legal opinions, including the Twin Metals decision, probably can't survive the inevitable court challenges—unless the courts fail to be fair arbiters. And that's why the Trump administration has focused so much energy on filling the courts with its lackeys, even as it has left hundreds of other important positions within the rest of the federal government vacant. The administration has salted the various departments with their own versions of Jorjani, who are busily reinterpreting previous federal decisions, findings, and law, in hopes of undermining or destroying federal administrative oversight

over vast segments of the American economy and society.

They know such efforts are likely to face legal challenge, so they are hurriedly seeking to fill the backlog of vacancies on federal district courts that built up over the last couple years of the Obama administration, when Republicans in the Senate routinely blocked well-qualified candidates. Rather than seeking experienced judges, the Trump administration has focused mostly on the appointment of individuals who they believe will rule based on politics rather than the law. Matthew Peterson, who Trump nominated for the Washington, D.C. federal circuit court, was a typical example. You may have seen the video of his testimony before the Senate recently, which went viral after the clueless Petersen was unable to answer even

basic questions about legal practice. He was one of three recent Trump nominees who had to withdraw their names after their gross lack of fitness was exposed publicly, and was too much even for some Republican senators. These are the kind of people that the Trump administration is trying to put in place throughout the federal court system. And there's a method to their madness. With the right judges in place, operatives like Jorjani can undermine decades of administrative process, toss out reasoned decision-making, and twist the workings of their departments to the benefit of the Koch brothers and other big conservative funders.

The only question is whether they can complete their mission before the American voters can rein in this out-of-control administration.

PHIFER...Continued from page 2

the Superior National Forest just south of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Phifer acknowledged the issues have at times bitterly divided the DFL-base, between those concerned with the potential impact the proposals could have on the region's prized lakes and rivers, and those eager for the economic stimulus and jobs the projects would create.

She said there are deep divides in the 8th Congressional District. "This past summer we saw our congressman override the judicial process and guarantee the Forest Service decision on the PolyMet land swap," she said. "That was incredibly important to (Rep. Nolan). And the very next month he introduced an amendment to defund the Forest Service decision to study the Twin Metals proposal for two years. So when we see a decision being made to uphold an agency action in one month, and another decision to strike down the action the next month, it leaves people feeling that

their lives and livelihoods are being used for political gain."

"People say the DFL has left our values behind," she said. "We need to make sure that elected officials can't place their thumbs on the scales of these projects and ignore our system's checks and balances because it prevents the regulatory process from

working the way it was intended," Phifer said. "We are, in the DFL, in very real danger of losing this seat."

I n c u m b e n t Congressman Rick Nolan defeated GOP challenger Stewart Mills by less than half a percentage point last year in one of the most expensive races in the country. Nolan also defeat-

ed Mills in a tight race in 2014. Mills hasn't announced yet whether he will run a third time. Republican St. Louis County Commissioner Pete Stauber has launched a campaign, as has Green Party Candidate Skip Sandman.



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TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY



MPR brings Baroque music to TS School

TOWER- Classical MPR sponsored a concert at Tower-Soudan Elementary on Jan. 8, as part of its Class Notes artist-in-residence program. A Baroque music ensemble, Flying Forms, with Marc Levine on Baroque violin, Tami Morse on the harpsichord, and Tulio Rondon on the viola da gamba performed a variety of musical styles for the students.

After the concert, students got a chance to play the harpsichord. photos by Max Helmberger



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Movie Night at St. James Sunday

TOWER- St. James Presbyterian Church in Tower is hosting a free movie night on Sunday, Jan. 14 at 6 p.m.

“Hardflip” (PG-13) follows the story of Caleb, a young skater whose ill mother and absent father leave him reaching for the only hope he has...becoming a sponsored skater. After finding a stack of old love letters, he sets out to find the father he never knew and inadvertently begins a journey he never could have expected. The story explores what happens when we let go of our anger and pain and forgive those who have hurt us most. The true-to-life family drama is interwoven with action-packed skateboarding sequences featuring top pro skaters including Brian Sumner

and legendary Christian Hosol.

Chimpy Skating Parties this weekend, Monday

SOUDAN-Chimpy’s Skating Parties are now underway. These are family-friendly events for all ages, held at the Soudan Skating Rink. Loaner skates are available in the warming shack, and boot skaters are also welcome.

Skating parties will be held Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, Jan. 13-15, from 12 noon - 3 p.m.

Parties include plenty of food and treats served inside the warming shack, as well as fun and games with Chimpy. The parties are made possible by generous grants from area businesses and individuals. This week’s parties are sponsored by Brew Pub Pizza Company, A&W

Sodas, and Bob Padgett. Last weekend’s parties were also sponsored by Brew Pub Pizzas (serving Roma’s, Lotzza Motzza, Orv’s, Bellatoria, and Real ‘Za), A&W, and Bob Padgett.

Penguins plan group ride to Side Lake on Saturday

REGIONAL- The Penguins Snowmobile Club is hosting a group ride on Saturday, Jan. 13 to Bimbo’s in Side Lake. Riders should meet at the Vermilion Club at 10 a.m.

Township election filings open through Jan. 16

REGIONAL- Filings for local township elections in townships that hold their elections in March (Greenwood, Breitung, and Vermilion Lake) will close

on Tuesday, Jan. 16 at 5 p.m. Filings must be done at the clerk’s office; for information contact your local town clerk. Most area townships will be electing a supervisor and a clerk, but Greenwood Township has two open supervisor positions on the ballot.

In Vermilion Lake, incumbent Clerk Fran Silverberg and incumbent Supervisor Bruce Swieringa have both indicated they are retiring from their positions.

Township elections will be held on Tuesday, March 13. In addition, all area townships will be holding their annual meetings that day.

In Breitung, incumbent Supervisor Chuck Tekautz has filed. The incumbent Clerk is Valeda “Polly” McDonald has also filed. Breitung has been discussing the idea of moving to a hired (instead of elected) clerk/treasurer position.

Greenwood has two open supervisor seats (designated seats 3 and 5). Rick Stoehr and Byron Beihoffer have both filed for seat 5, which is currently held by incumbent John Bassing, who has not yet indicated if he is planning to run. Incumbent Larry Tahija has filed for seat 3.

Range of Voices Area Chorus begins practices

VIRGINIA- The Range of Voices Area Chorus will resume rehearsals on Sunday, Jan. 14 at 4 p.m. in the Virginia High School choir room. There will be a meet and greet time at 3 p.m. for everyone to renew acquaintances and welcome new members.

The group will be singing “Madrigals, Motets, and Movie Tunes,” so singers and audiences alike can enjoy a lot of variety.

Any questions about the presentation can be directed to Rolf Anderson at 218-753-3262.

Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Rec Board to meet

TOWER- The Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Recreation Board will meet on Friday, Jan. 19 at 8:30 a.m. at Good Ol’ Days. Requests for funding must be made in writing prior to the meeting; contact Julie Suikonen for details.

Jonathan Lanari named to Dean’s List at UMD

DULUTH- Jonathan Lanari, of Tower, has been named to the Fall Semester Dean’s List at University of Minnesota, Duluth.

Students on the Dean’s

List have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher. Lanari is a freshman in the Swenson College of Science of Engineering, and is studying chemical engineering.

Tower-Soudan Women’s Bowling

Results from Jan. 3

Team Rankings: Vermilion Club (98-38), Broten Construction (86-50), Jeanne’s Cards (84-52)

Hi Game- Jeanne’s Cards 653; Hi Series- Vermilion Club 1,889; Hi Ind. Game- Johnny Schlieske 178; Hi Ind Series- Johnny Schlieske- 456.

Results from Dec. 27

Team rankings: Vermilion Club (92-36), Broten Construction (84-44), Jeanne’s Cards (76-52).

Hi Game- Vermilion Club 712; Hi Series- Vermilion Club 1,972; Hi Ind. Game- Flora Ferretti 174, Hi Ind. Series- Bev Thomas 447.

Results from Dec. 20

Team Rankings: Vermilion Club (86-34), Broten Construction (78-42), Jeanne’s Cards (74-46).

Hi Game- Vermilion Club 708; Hi Series- Vermilion Club 1,932; Hi Ind. Game- Bev Thomas 164; Hi Ind. Series- Hazel Quick 424.

Our Christmas Coloring Contest Winners!

6-8 Age Group: James Yernatich

0-5 Age Group: Vivian Leino

9-12 Age Group: Presley Chiabotti

Winners received a Christmas mug with hot chocolate, apple cider, Hershey’s kisses, an ornament, stickers, and playdough.

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VERMILION COUNTRY SCHOOL



Vermilion Country School students celebrated the holidays on Dec. 22 with a full day of costume fun, games, prizes, and awards. Above: Honor Roll students were honored. Right: Teams of students competed in holiday games. photos by Max Helmberger



BREITUNG

Nylund appointed interim police chief

by SCARLET STONE
Staff Writer

SOUDAN-At their Dec. 29 meeting, police Chief Jesse Anderson told the Breitung Town Board that his last day of work would be Jan. 9, 2018. The board passed a motion for officer Dan Nylund to serve as interim chief until the position is filled. The details of the application process to fill the chief opening will be discussed at the Jan. 23 meeting. The board approved the purchase of a new sign for the Breitung Police Department building. Mesabi Sign is making the sign with metal letters so it will be more durable than the current sign. The quote for manufacturing is \$2,108 with an additional \$880 for installation. The water commission received a recommendation from the Tower-Breitung Wastewater Board to raise the water/sewer rates in Soudan. A

motion was passed to increase the rates from \$50 to \$60 a month, effective Jan. 1, 2018. The last time rates were raised in Soudan was in 2009. Discussion by the board revealed Soudan's monthly water rates are still less expensive than Tower's, which have been set at \$65.15 /month. A motion was approved to put a street light on a corner on Birch Street to illuminate what is agreed to be an excessively dark area. The monthly cost for operation will be \$12. Chairman Tim Tomsich addressed the need for the installation of a light at the intersection of McKinley Park Ave. and County Road 697. More information on the cost of installation and operation will be presented at a future meeting. Dale Swanson, Maintenance Supervisor, recommended a new 12-foot-wide plow blade for the

John Deere Loader at a cost of \$2,500. It would replace the current 11-foot-wide blade and reduce the time required for plowing the city streets by three to four hours. The board approved the purchase. In other business, the town board: Tabled a decision on renaming the Minos Surface Building that will become the new police station. Will research costs for repairing a sunken manhole near the baseball field. The issue will be addressed at a spring meeting with repair to follow. Heard that Chuck Tekautz has filed for re-election to the board. As of publication, no one had filed for the open clerk seat. The next board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 23 at 6 p.m.

BOOSTER CLUBS

Friends of VCS to hold annual meeting Jan. 18

TOWER- Friends of Vermilion Country School will hold their annual meeting on Thursday, Jan. 18 at the Vermilion Country School, at 5 p.m. The group is a booster club for the school, and all money raised goes to support school activities and other needs that are not funded through the regular budget. The group sponsors Senior Bingo, held at the Tower Civic Center on the first Monday of each month from February through December. This year, bingo raised, on average, \$380 per month. Students from VCS volunteer each month at bingo, helping run the event. The group also sponsors the Fourth of July 10K run/walk, and also writes grants to support school activities and community events. In addition, Friends sponsors the annual December Craft Show at the Tower Civic Center. Friends also works with the school's student council, helping to support student fundraisers and activities such as dances. School activities supported in 2017 included VCS yearbook, BW Choral Festival, purchase of art and other project supplies, NLAA play trip, environmental education/greenhouse construction, graduation expenses, field trips, mileage for volunteer math tutor, student council expenses, advertising for carnival/open house, computer/server equipment,

assorted expenses reimbursed for teachers for materials/supplies, and matching funds for the student council's holiday gifts for staff. The 2017 officers are Muriel Scott, president; and Jodi Summit, treasurer.

TSAA annual meeting set for Jan. 18

TOWER- The Tower-Soudan Athletic Association will hold their annual meeting on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 5:15 p.m. at the Vermilion

Country School. The non-profit group raises funds for athletics and activities for Vermilion Country School and Tower-Soudan Elementary, as well as for summer youth baseball programs. The group hosts one fundraiser each year, the TSAA Fall Auction. This year's auction once again met its fundraising goal of approximately \$4,000. In 2017, TSAA donated a total of \$4,950, including \$2,640 for athletics and activities at Vermilion Country School, \$1,218 for youth baseball, \$292 for Tower-Soudan Elementary programs, plus

helped fund the VCS Community Carnival last August. Tower Soudan Athletic Association, a non-profit organization, is organized to support and assist in any way the athletic and/or art programs in the Vermilion Country Charter School and Tower-Soudan Elementary School. The 2017 officers are Marshall Helmberger, president; Joan Dostert, vice-president; and Jodi Summit, treasurer. Anyone wishing to learn more about the group, or to request funding, can contact Jodi Summit at vcs.charter@gmail.com.

AEOA Senior Dining Menu

TOWER- Vermilion Country School and AEOA sponsor a senior dining site at the charter school in Tower. All meals include salad bar, fruit, choice of beverage and dessert. Reservations are appreciated the day before, or morning of, but walk-ins are always welcome. Take-outs available. Seniors age 60 and older who have registered for the program and their partners qualify for special pricing of \$4 per meal, but all ages are welcome at the regular rate of \$5.75. There are no income guidelines. Meals are served from 12:30 - 1 p.m. on days when the charter school is open. Call the school at 218-753-1246 ext. 1003 for reservations, or call AEOA at 1-800-662-5711 ext. 7323 for the one-time registration process.

- Week of Jan. 15**
Monday- Chicken Alfredo with a Twist, Bread Stick, Vegetable
Tuesday- Breaded Pollock, Mashed Potatoes, Dinner Roll
Wednesday- Chunky Chicken Gravy over Mashed Potatoes, Dinner Roll, Vegetable
Thursday- Tater Tot Hot Dish, Dinner Roll
Friday- Chicken ala King in a Bread Bowl

- Week of Jan. 22**
Monday- Chicken Noodle Soup, Cheesy Bread Sticks with Marinara
Tuesday- Italian Meatball Sub, Vegetable
Wednesday- Taco Soup, Tortilla Chips, Corn Muffin
Thursday- Pizza, Fruit Salad
Friday- No School

Week of Jan. 14

- Monday**
TOPS - Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower, at 9 a.m.
Embarrass Al-Anon Family Group- Hope Lutheran Church, 5088 Hwy. 21, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday**
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:30 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is Jan. 16.
Greenwood Fire Dept.- Meetings on the first (drill) and third (business meeting) Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

- Wednesday**
Tower AA- Open Basics- 7 p.m. at St. James Presbyterian Church. Questions, call 753-2332.
- Thursday**
Vermilion Country School Board- Fourth Thursday (except near holidays). Meetings posted online at vermillioncountry.org. Next meeting is Thursday, Jan. 18 at 5 p.m. (third Thursday).
AA Meeting- Lake Vermilion 12x12 (Open). 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower, use the rear side door entrance.

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County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm	Soudan Canister Site 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun 8am-5pm
Embarrass Canister Site 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30-4:30pm Thu: 10am-5pm	Aurora Transfer Station 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
Household Hazardous Waste Facility 5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

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WINDOW INTO YESTERDAY

Postcards were the social media of yesterday

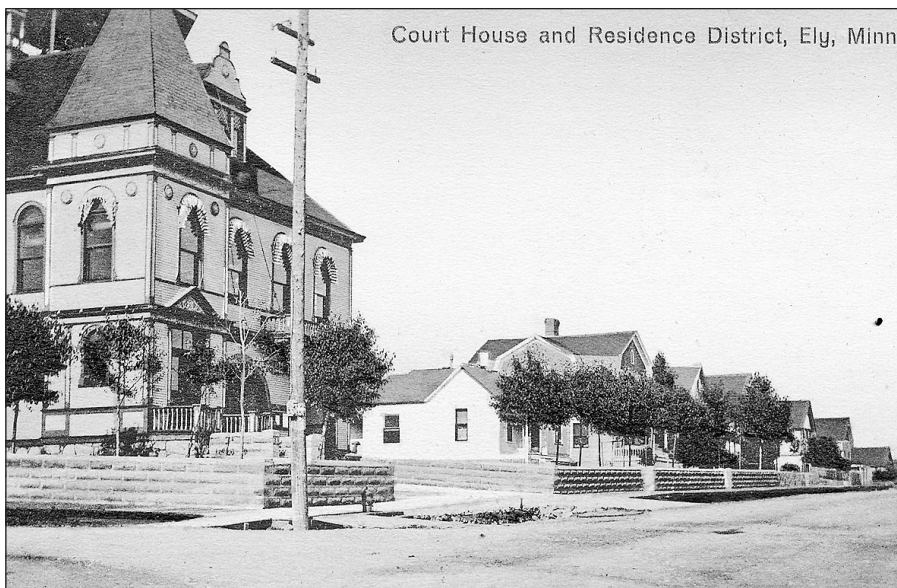
by DAVID KESS
Ely-Winton Historical Society

One kind of social media existed some time before smart phones but it required paper and a stamp. No, not letters, but postcards.

Those that were purchased from the U.S. Postal Service came with an imprinted stamp and were called postal cards. The name and address of the contact went on the stamped side and a message went on the reverse side.

Post cards were a bit different: Usually there was a picture on one side. The other side was divided in halves, part for a name, address and a stamp, and space for a brief message. Both postcards and postal cards could be sent through the mail at a cheaper rate than letters. In fact, the first stamps for them cost only a penny.

The first known postcard dates back to 1849 in England. Theodore Hook sent a postcard to himself as a way of testing the system. He received it. The first American postcard was printed by a private company in Massachusetts in 1873. The same year, a government post office printed and sold their own



Court House and Residence District, Ely, Minn.



Voyageur Visitor Center - Ely, Minn.

versions which were called postal cards.

Most postcards had photographic scenes on one side which were intended to be souvenirs for travelers. The first of this type was printed for the Colombian Exposition in 1893 in Chicago. Reporting on one's travels became very popular as did the news of one's family

happenings.

Electricity and telephone lines were extended to many rural areas only after World War II. Those living in the country, even as close to Ely as White Iron, were accustomed to sending postcards to friends and relatives saying they were coming to town and would stop by to visit.

out attics, garages, sheds, and basements.

Picture postcards with a colored linen finish were produced in great quantity from 1930 until 1959. Nearly all resorts had their own. Buildings often seemed to be a popular subject: lodges, cabins, city halls, schools, and park pavilions. Wilderness scenes touted Ely as a "vacationer's paradise." Others featured strings of fish, deer, bear, and other wildlife and sold well.

When camera phones, Facebook, and email were introduced, postcards became obsolete. In fact the Ely-Winton Historical Society gives postcards away. Their archives hold 400 - 500 vintage ones, all sorted and categorized. One can find images of animals, city buildings, churches, Duluth scenes, fish, lake scenes, logging, mining, parades, people, resorts, schools, and street scenes. But, nearly all of them are from Ely.

A select group is now on display in the VCC Fine Arts lobby. It will remain there until the first week of March and then be moved to the Ely Public Library for the following two months. Call the historical society office at 218-365-3226 for further information.

Old postcards from Ely, courtesy of the Ely-Winton Historical Society

My great-grandmother lived in Embarrass and had customers in Ely for eggs and butter. She would send postcards to my grandmother in Ely saying when she would be coming to town. She traveled by horse and buggy prior to WWII.

A recent display featuring The Great Augustus included some postcards from venues in different cities where his magic show was playing. A number of these, including early Ely ones, had never been seen at the historical society. They seem to show up most unexpectedly as people clean

Tuesday Group schedule
ELY - The upcoming Tuesday Group schedule (subject to change) is listed below. All talks are at 12 noon on Tuesday at Grand Ely Lodge, unless noted.
Jan. 16 - Joe Henry, Lake of the Woods Tourism Council

OUR COMMUNITY

Local musher preps for Junior Beargrease race

by ALI JUTEN
Northern Wilds Magazine

ELY — There is no doubt about it, 14-year-old Jasper Johnston is a busy teenager. As a freshman at Ely Memorial High School, he is on the cross country team and the cross country skiing team, while also training for his third Junior Beargrease. The races take place the weekend of Jan. 28-31.

Last year, Johnston's training paid off when he came in first in the junior race. Although it is not a requirement to be fit to dog sled, Johnston says it does help.

"Especially with racing. You can help the dogs a lot by running up the hills," Johnston said.

The 68-mile Junior Beargrease race takes place within the mid-distance race, using the same route and rules and occurs the same weekend as the full John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon. For Johnston, competing in the junior race allows him to combine his passions of being an athlete and working with animals. When he was in elementary school, he began reading books about dog sledding and had the opportunity to go on a few rides. By the time Johnston was in sixth grade, he decided to email a few different mushers. Some responded, some didn't.

Peter McClelland, owner of White Wilderness Sled Dog Adventures in Ely, was one of the mushers who responded with an invitation to come train with his dogs. So in the fall of his seventh-grade year, Johnston began training with McClelland's dogs and still uses his dogs today. Over the years, McClelland and the guides at Wilderness Sled Dog Adventures have been a big help in teaching Johnston all about dog sledding and building relationships with working dogs.

"If you look through human history, our relationship with working animals has gotten us to modern times. That is getting lost," McClelland explained.

He added that while pets are great, there is a different kind of relationship that is developed with working animals.

"I think that is why it is really important that kids work with animals. Not only to preserve the history of how things used to be, but we learn so much more about ourselves doing these things, too."

The nine-time John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon veteran has nearly 100 dogs that he works with year-round. A typical



Jasper Johnston, 14, of Ely, is preparing for his third Junior Beargrease race later this month. submitted photo

day with his dogs begins in the morning with breakfast, cleaning the kennel, and then between him and four others, the training.

For Johnston, in order to keep building a relationship with the dogs, he has had to put in extra effort to ensure he has enough time and miles with them. The dogs, while trained year round with McClelland, need to get to know Johnston, too. He typically gets to see them a few times in the fall and about six or more times in the winter before the race.

And as for the Junior Beargrease race itself, Johnston says that his favorite part last year wasn't just the fact that he won.

"Almost more so than winning, just getting to be a part of the Beargrease. Running at night, going down the trails, just me and my dogs. And, going down trails we'd never been on before was just really, really cool," he said.

This year, he hopes to win again, and also compare his time to mid-distance racers, with the goal of one day competing in the full marathon.

To follow along with the John Beargrease Sled Dog races, visit bear-grease.com.

the TIMBERJAY

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Moving? Questions about your subscription? Call the Tower office at (218) 753-2950.

Minnesota Twins Tour to visit Ely

ELY - The Minnesota Twins Major League Baseball team will make a stop in Ely on their annual Winter Caravan Tour on Thursday, Jan. 25.

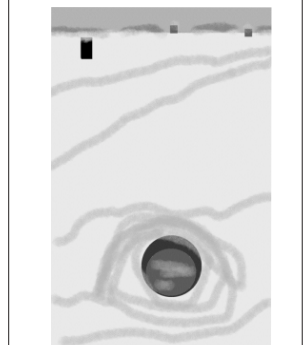
Ely fans can expect to see pitcher Jose Berrios, outfielder Eddie Rosario, broadcaster Dick Bremer and the Twins mascot, TC, at the International Wolf Center beginning at 1 p.m.

Typically, at the stops, Twins players and representatives each speak for a few minutes about the upcoming season. There's usually time for questions from the audience, too. It's expected that the stop will last about 60 minutes.

Doors open at 12:30 p.m. on Jan. 25. There will be no fee for admission. The Wolf Center will close at about 4 p.m. The capacity of the Wolf Center's auditorium is approximately 150 people. Seating is not guaranteed.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2018



twenty three inches a deep hole bored in the ice mystery beneath

THE ARTS

Auditions set for NLAA musical

ELY – Auditions for the Ely Community Spring Musical, in conjunction with Northern Lakes Arts Association and Vermilion Community College, for the 2018 production of SEUSSICAL, will be held Jan. 15-16 at 6 p.m. in the VCC theatre.

SEUSSICAL is a charming compilation of several beloved Dr. Seuss characters, set to original, tuneful and peppy music. There are roles for ages fourth grade to senior citizens, with a variety of singing, dancing and character acting opportunities. Family groups are encouraged to come together. (Children younger than Junior High need to have a parent/relative to participate with them on stage.)

Production dates are March 15-24, with eight performances. Rehearsals run Sunday-Thursday,



6-9 p.m., with large group rehearsals on Sunday and Thursday evenings; individuals and small groups meet on Monday-Wednesday as needed.

Interested performers should come ready to sing, dance and read from the script, but no prior preparation is necessary. Whether onstage

or behind the scenes, there are places for everyone.

Questions or inquiries can be directed to the Artistic Director Sara Skelton at 235-2142 or s.skelton@vcc.edu. This spring's production is partially funded by the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust.

News In Brief

Food Shelf will be open Jan. 17

ELY - The Ely Area Food shelf, located at 15 West Conan Street, will be open on Wednesday, Jan. 17 for food shopping.

Upon arrival, shoppers will be given a shopping time based on 15-minute intervals. In January, participants will need to update their sign-in sheet information. Please bring one form of identification. Proof of income is not required.

If you need assistance shopping, 4-6 p.m. is a quieter time. If you are unable to get to the Food Shelf due to physical or other disability problems please call the Food Shelf at 235-8527 by Monday, Jan. 15 for home delivery.

The Food Shelf welcomes new volunteers and accepts donations. Please call 365-8527 for further information.

Celebrate music and the arts in Ely

ELY - The third annual Celebration of Art and Music is now in the works. Stone Soup Events is looking for artists, teachers, musicians and anyone wanting to share their talents. Host an art show or concert, teach a class, read poetry, sell your wares - the sky is the limit.

Spend two weeks celebrating the amazing talent that Ely has to offer. The Celebration will run from March 23-April 14. Your event may take place any time within that time period.

There is no cost for you to participate. Stone Soup Events will advertise and help to coordinate dates, space and anything else you may need.

Contact elystonesoup@gmail.com or call 218-206-4702 by March 1.

PEO meets Thursday

ELY - PEO Chapter FD will meet on Thursday, Jan. 18, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Alice Moren, 345 E. Pattison. Visitors from other PEO chapters are also welcome. For more information, call 365-5134.

Higher Education

Ely students make UMD Dean's List

DULUTH - The University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) announced its Dean's List for Fall Semester 2017.

Ely students on the Dean's List who have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher include:

- ▶ Leonard M. Harri, Senior, UMD-Sci & Eng. Swenson Coll of, Mechanical Engineering B S M E;
- ▶ Melissa Nap, Senior, Labovitz School of Bus & Econ, Management B B A.

Pirkl honored at MSCTC

FERGUS FALLS - Minnesota State Community and Technical College has named Andrew Pirkl, of Ely, along with 690 other students to its President's List for the 2017 Fall Semester.

MINNESOTA YOUTH SKI LEAGUE



Opening Day was celebrated last Sunday at Hidden Valley for the 2018 edition of the Minnesota Youth Ski League. Emcee Todd Hohenstein, above, welcomed dozens of skiers and their families.



Mary Bianco, above, lit the torch marking the opening of the two-month youth ski league. Greyson Anderson, 4, below, gets bundled up by his mom, Kaylen, before hitting the trails.



Ten-month-old Aiden Kosinski, above, needs to wait a couple of years before he can join the ski league. Flag bearers, below, assembled for the opening ceremony. photos by K. Vandervort



Yesterday's news, this week

from the archives of

THE ELY MINER

Courtesy of the Ely-Winton Historical Society

January 11, 1918

Men wanted for the Navy

The recent announcement by Provost Marshal Gen E.H. Crowder to the effect that no more formal calls for deferred percentages of the present draft makes it possible for more draft registrants to enlist in the Navy that at any time since Dec. 15.

The Navy is greatly in need of apprentice seamen, the quota of 800 for this district being far from filled. This number must be obtained by Feb. 22. Men enlisting now are being sent home on furlough, subject to call, because the training stations are filled.

Pay, \$32.60 a month to start, begins the day of enlistment. Men enlisted after their periods of training are put in branches they are best qualified to fill.

Recruiting officers at the Minneapolis station, 304 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis, Minn., say that there are very few instances where registrants in the draft have not been able to secure certificates stating they are not needed for current draft quotas. These are required of all those who registered and are obtained from the applicant's local draft board. Even many who have been called and examined by their local boards are eligible to enlist in the Navy.

Court to open

Clerk Holloway of Virginia was in the city the first of the week making arrangements for the opening of court which begins Tuesday.

Dance planned

The Modern Woodsmen Lodge of Winton will give a masquerade dance at the St. Croix Hall in Winton on Saturday night, Jan. 19. Tickets are placed at 75 cents and all are invited.

Artists come together at NWFA

COOK- Artists will be meeting in Cook at Northwoods Friends of the Arts on the third Saturdays each month; the next meeting will be on Saturday, Jan. 20. Conspiring artists will meet to work and discuss their own particular projects from 12 noon until 3 p.m. at 210 S. River St. next to Dream Weaver Spa and Salon. Carvers, painters, sculptors, photographers, writers, weavers, musicians, and others, it's open season for "Open Art" at NWFA Gallery.

Since 2010, NWFA has organized artists and their works of art at the NWFA Gallery as a non-profit membership organization. Membership is only \$15 and the website is nwfamn.org.

Cook Library offering story time on Fridays

COOK- The Cook Public Library is offering winter story times on Fridays at 10:30 a.m. Themes this month are making music on Jan. 12, animals on Jan. 19, and fire safety on Jan. 26.

Daniel Holman named to Dean's List at Central Lakes College

REGIONAL – Daniel Holman, of Orr, has been named to the Fall Semester Dean's List at Central Lakes College, Brainerd and Staples. The Dean's List included 265 students who earned a grade-point average of 3.25 to 3.74. The President's List included 214 students who earned a grade-point average of 3.75 to 4.0 while enrolled for at least 12 credits.

Central Lakes College is a comprehensive community and technical college and is a member of MnSCU. The college serves about 6,000 students annually in liberal arts and career education programs.

Beginners Wood Carving class offered twice a month at NWFA in Cook

COOK- Have you ever wanted to try whittling something from wood? The Beginners Wood Carving Class at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery, 210 S River St. in Cook will be held twice monthly beginning Thursday, Jan. 18 and 25 from 6 to 8 p.m. Experienced carvers will supply some tools and knives if students are unable to bring their own. A one-time fee of \$10 will cover the cost of blanks of wood and some patterns as well.

Howard Hilshorst, Dave Pearson, and Warren Anderson will partner with you to learn the ins and outs of carving, including keeping your tools sharp. Class size is limited to 12 participants. Registrations will be taken in Cook, next to Dream Weaver Salon at NWFA Gallery (open Thursday, Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.). Or, call Howard Hilshorst at 218-741-7941.

Other regular events for winter 2018 are The Writers Group on the second Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m., "Open Art" on the third Saturday from 12 to 3 p.m. The website is at www.nwfamn.org. The photo above is a carving by Edward Nelson from Cherry.

Penguins plan group ride to Side Lake on Saturday, Jan. 13

REGIONAL- The Penguins Snowmobile Club is hosting a group ride on Saturday, Jan. 13 to Bimbo's in Side Lake. Riders should meet at the Vermilion Club at 10 a.m.

Range of Voices Area Chorus begins practices on Jan. 14

VIRGINIA- The Range of Voices Area Chorus will resume rehearsals on Sunday, Jan. 14 at 4 p.m. in the Virginia High School choir room. There will be a meet and greet time at 3 p.m. for everyone to renew acquaintances and welcome new members.

The group will be singing "Madrigals, Motets, and Movie Tunes," so singers and audiences alike can enjoy a lot of variety.

Any questions about the presentation can be directed to Rolf Anderson at 218-753-3262.

Bookmobile schedule

Visit your library on wheels, the Arrowhead Library System Bookmobile. **NOTE NEW STOPS AND TIMES!**

Thursday, Jan. 18; Feb. 8; March 1, 22.

Nett Lake – Community Center 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Crane Lake – Ranger Station 11:15 a.m. - 12 noon

Orr – Lake

Country ReMax building 1:45 - 2:30 p.m.

Kabetogama – Town Hall 3:15 - 3:45 p.m.



For further information on the Bookmobile or Mail-A-Book services, write or call the Arrowhead Library System, 5528 Emerald Ave., Mt. Iron, MN 55768 218-741-3840, or check our website at www.alslib.info.

COOK AMBULANCE

Family first aid class held in Cook

by MELISSA ROACH
Staff Writer

COOK- In an effort to improve community outreach, the Cook Ambulance held a Family First Aid event at the Cook Community Center in late December. The Cook EMS program touched on basic first aid for common medical emergencies including child and infant safety and care, allergic reactions, burns, carbon monoxide poisoning, frost bite and hypothermia. Lead EMT Marilyn Hannan emphasized that even if administering first aid, people should not hesitate in calling 911. "They will talk to you, and aren't going to yell at you." Communication is key. "Sometimes people are confused or scared, and can't talk, but it's important to keep calm," she said.

Emergency events are

not predicted, but can be prepared for. "Everyone should have an emergency contact sheet on their fridge and the number for poison control," said Hannan. "Dispatch is out of Duluth now, and they will relay information to dispatch services for the proper jurisdiction and depending on the emergency situation, different equipment may be needed." She continued, "We want people to understand that it could be a 45-minute to one-hour response time." EMT Danny Reing added, "People come up here to vacation and they don't realize we cover 450 square miles, and sometimes the only access to that emergency is by boat."

Emergency situational preparedness includes simple actions that can be taken like an emergency contact sheet, letting people know where you are going and when you expect to be



EMT Marilyn Hannan showed how to fashion a splint from improvised materials. photo by M. Roach

back, having a first aid kit, a fire extinguisher, working smoke detectors and a carbon monoxide alarm. Knowing how to care for a person before EMS arrives is also important.

The Family First Aid event was aimed at parents and grandparents, however

the department would like to hold more events focusing on information for babysitters, CPR training and more. Reing said, "If there is something that you want us to focus training on, call us and we'll put that on. We are open to ideas."

VOLUNTEERING



St. Louis County Schools administrators after participating in the United Way Buddy Backpack Filling Program. From left: Kristi Berlin (Director of Curriculum and Technology), Dr. Reggie Engebretson (Interim Superintendent), John Vukmanich (Principal-North Woods), Andrew Bernard (Principal-South Ridge), Michael Johnson (Principal-Cherry), and Kelly Engman (Principal-Tower Soudan and Northeast Range). submitted photo

CRANE LAKE

Crane Lake News by the Singing Teapot Dames



One of the Dames has flown the coop and headed for a henhouse in warmer climes. It was very cold upon leaving Minnesota, and it stayed cold all the way down south. Today, however, it is supposed to be 65 (though rainy) with temps hitting the 70s by the end of the week. No one is walking on the white, sugar sand beach in front of the Dame's condo, but the waves are crashing up on shore and are a pleasant sight. It is good to see green grass again; the palm trees and shrubbery also make the eyes happy. Taste buds have also perked up as there are many restaurants in the area— already cuisines from Asia, Italy, Mexico, and the South have been sampled, with a lot of the world left to come. (In

other words, tacos, pizza, egg rolls, and BBQ have been consumed.)

Do not worry that the Dames will not be reporting the news. We will report "Life in the North" and "Life in the Land of Sun and Sand".

It has been cold in the North Country. Not so cold that the locals did not enjoy ringing in the New Year. Enjoyable dinners, dancing and sociability kept everyone warm regardless of the 40-below weather. Hearty folks went fishing, enjoying the comfort of great fish houses. Life is good in the North Country!

It is interesting the people one meets when traveling, if one is open to the experience. At an overnight stop in Alabama, while waiting for a table while out for dinner, a Dame began speaking with a couple from Tennessee. The gentlemen queried if we were aware that the toothbrush was invented right there in Alabama. Denying knowing this fact, the new friend from Tennessee replied, "Had to have been. Anywhere else, it would have been called a

TEETHbrush!"

Hope everyone back there in tundra-land experienced a Happy New Year. The banquet at Voyageaire was reportedly a delicious feast. The Southern Travelers experienced dinner at Ruby Tuesday, with the night ending at 10:30 p.m., so hope everyone there saw the New Year in with a bang! Life is not too exciting when putting on hundreds of miles in the car in a day. Hope the year 2018 is a good one for all of us and our nation.

Kids everywhere have gone back to school after the holiday break. Teachers have returned to work. Hope both have gone back with the same degree of enthusiasm and anticipation. After all, Easter vacation is not too far off!

How about those Vikings? What a thrill to have them in the play-offs. Be sure to wear your purple on Jan. 14, 2018, for the next game. New Orleans is the opponent. The odds are that the Vikings will win by four. Let's hope Minnesota wins and goes on to play in the Super Bowl

in our own US Bank stadium. It has never happened to have a Super Bowl home team play in the team's stadium. Let us hope the Vikings will make history!

Let us hear from you. If you are a snowbird tell us what life is like in your area. Snowbirds like to hear the news of what is going on at Crane Lake; we like to know about you.

Send news by e-mail to info@thelakecountry.com, by fax at 218-757-3533, or by phone to Sandy at 218-757-3233 and it will be added. So fire away with your news. Remember, any funds received for this column are added to the Crane Lake Scholarship Fund. This scholarship is given to our local students who graduate and will receive further education.

The committee for the Scholarship Fund is Sandra Bodkin, Linda Lang and Tracey Francke. Contact any member of the committee should you wish to make a donation. Happy New Year and may 2018 be kind to you and yours.

GRIZZLY MUSIC

Junior high band and choir

photos by B. Smith



GRIZZLY UPDATES

Some thoughts on addressing hunger in the new year

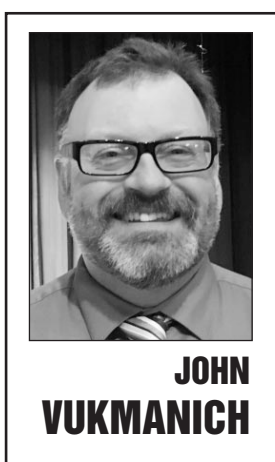
Happy New Year, everyone!

With winter break occurring, I took a break myself from work and had some much needed “R and R.” Hopefully everyone had some time away from work to spend with friends and family. In education, we know that when we come back from vacation, we enter the “long stretch” of the year with fewer breaks. It’s the time when staff and students buckle down for the long haul. But, before we know it, spring will be upon us.

A reminder to North Woods families that classes will not be in session on Monday, Jan. 15 (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day) for a teacher in-service day. On in-service days, teachers participate in educational opportunities to make ourselves better teachers, and trainings to make ourselves more aware of issues in our professions. One of the issues we face at our schools is the effects of poverty on our students and families.

During the holiday season, educators remind themselves of the circumstances of those who are less fortunate. While we live in the “land of plenty,” we still see large numbers of students who come to us from families who struggle to make ends meet. It reminds me of how fortunate I am to live in the area where I want to live and have a job that will support my family. Many of our school families are not as fortunate. Through circumstances out of their control or the curse of generational poverty, many of our students go without basic necessities such as food and proper clothing. The incredible cold spell we have experienced in the last few weeks reminds us that even the necessity of a warm home can be a challenge in northern Minnesota.

When students come to school hungry, it is difficult for them to learn. In



JOHN VUKMANICH

this era of educational accountability, it is difficult for children to meet the standards and goals set forth by the school and the Department of Education when they are simply trying to survive. What do we do? At school, we feed them. Students in poverty typically qualify for subsidized breakfast and lunch programs that allow schools to feed them the same meals available to all students. Call it brain food!

How about after school or on the weekends? What do kids do if there is no food in the home?

One of the organizations in our area that gives back to our community in many ways is the United Way. You may have heard of the Buddy Backpack

Program. This program provides a bag of non-perishable food items that are easily prepared or already prepared to families across the Iron Range area. Through the United Way of Northeastern MN, our school district administration team volunteered to assist with the Buddy Backpack Program on Thursday, Jan. 4.

It was a great experience! We arrived in Chisholm and entered a huge warehouse-style building from the alley. Once everyone had arrived, we joined dozens of other volunteers from local organizations and businesses in teams. Our group was a part of Table Team 3. We were called to attention by a United Way worker who gave us instructions on how our afternoon was going to go. All of us had nametags with our name, group, and a job listing. My job was “bag filler.” The running joke from our United Way leader was that the title was initially called “Bag Packer” until some local football fans complained about that “other football team” wearing green and gold. Other job titles were box filler, bag knot-tier, cardboard disposal, bag distributor, and food item

monitor/replacer. There were at least sixteen of us at our table. Everyone’s role was described, with bags being handed to each filler at the start of the line, with each bag filler proceeding along the long tables assembly-line style placing one of each food item in the plastic grocery bag. There were juice boxes, milk boxes, crackers, fruit cups, soup, Chef Boyardee, granola, and numerous other items placed into each bag. At the end of each table, we handed our filled bags to the knot-tier who tied a knot and handed the bag to the box filler. He placed ten bags in each box. Each group’s target was forty filled boxes, or 400 meals per team. All the while, the monitors replaced the food items from stockpiled items near our stations, and the cardboard disposal folks removed the used boxes.


The operation was executed like a well-oiled machine, with military-type precision. In about an hour, our team had reached 400 meals, with the other teams close at hand. It was hard to believe that in an hour, 1,200 meals were packaged for local youth. We worked together with folks we had never met

from several local communities. I’d even say that we bonded a bit!

Many professional experiences have allowed me to see things through a different lens. This is certainly one of those experiences. Our district character education program, the 7 Mindsets, contains the mindsets “Attitude of Gratitude” (focusing on being thankful) and “Live to Give”

(focusing on giving back to our communities). I hope that as a principal, I can bring similar experiences to our students and staff. I know now that I can do more to give back to our communities, and feel thankful that I had the opportunity to do so last week.

Have a great weekend!
Your principal,
John Vukmanich



the TIMBERJAY

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SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

Area Solid Waste Facility site hours

Ash River Trail Canister Site 11391 Ash River Trail Winter Hours Sat: 12:30pm–4:30pm	Kabetogama Lake Canister Site 10150 Gamma Rd Winter Hours Wed: noon–4pm Sat: 8am–noon	Sturgeon Canister Site 8380 Hwy 73 Hours Sun: 10am–4pm
Orr Canister Site 4038 Hwy 53 Winter Hours Tue, Thu: 9am–noon Sat: 8am–noon	Portage Canister Site 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Winter Hours Tue, Sat: 1pm–4:30pm	County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77 Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon–5pm
Cook Transfer Station 2134 S. Beatty Rd. Hours Mon: 10am–6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am–3:30pm	Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon–Fri: 8am–4:30pm Sat: 8am–3:30pm	St. Louis County Environmental Services Department 1-800-450-9278 Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle

Household Hazardous Waste Facilities 5345 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Tue, Sat: 8am–1pm	3994 Landfill Rd, Hibbing Sat: 8am–1pm
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Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

TOWER

Tower area snowmobile safety class

Adult volunteers needed to help on Saturday, March 3; Students need to complete online class prior to attending session

TOWER- There will be a Field Day for the Minnesota Snowmobile Safety Course offered by the Minnesota DNR and Penguins Snowmobile Club on Saturday, March 3 from 9 a.m. until approximately 1 p.m. A knowledge test and information session will be set up in the morning and a skills test on operating will be set up immediately after.

Youth ages 11 and older can attend a snowmobile safety certification course and receive their certificate. The Snowmobile Safety Certificate becomes valid at age 12.

DNR Snowmobile Certification is required of anyone born after Dec. 31, 1976, to operate a snowmobile on public land in Minnesota.

Students will need to complete the online snowmobile safety course before the start of the class on March 3. Follow the links from the Minnesota DNR website, at the top of the page click on (Education/Safety), from the dropdown pick (Recreational Vehicle Safety Classes), next choose Snowmobile Safety, from here you can read the options available. There are two options for the course, (snowmobilecourse.com) at a cost of \$29.95

(or \$10 if a student has taken the huntercourse.com within a year, or for additional children within one family), and (snowmobile-ed.com) at a cost of \$29.50. Either class will work, once enrolled into the course it will take approximately two weeks to complete depending on the amount of time spent. This will get you the certificate needed to enroll in a Snowmobile Field Day. Students need to complete either course on their own at home. On March 3, this certificate is mandatory to begin the snowmobile field day and enrollment application. After the snowmobile field day is complete and students have passed, another certificate will be given to them. Their Snowmobile Safety Certificate can then be purchased for another \$5 from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. This certificate will become valid when the applicant turns twelve. The one-day class will be given under the leadership of area volunteers. The day will start with an information session and then a written test to see if the students are knowledgeable on the subject, after which there will be a hands-on riding course, where the students will be able to prove their skills. Because

of the lack of hands-on class instruction, parents are asked to help their children by teaching them the fundamentals of handling a snowmobile.

Students are asked to sign up by Friday, Feb. 16 by calling the Tower DNR office between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 218-300-7841 and signing up with Joan Broten of the Area Trails and Waterways division. Students will be asked to leave their full name including middle name, telephone number, address, and birthdate. A total of 25 students will be accepted for the class, on a first call basis. Students will be asked to bring warm clothes, boots, gloves and a helmet, the day of the class.

A parent or guardian (chosen by the parent for that day) will have to come along to sign a waiver before the student can begin the class.

A minimum of five volunteers will be needed for the number of students anticipated. The class will last most of the day on Saturday with some set up before. Volunteers who wish to help on the Snowmobile Field Day would be greatly appreciated and may call Dan Broten at 218-780-3004.

WINTER SPORTS

Pond hockey returns to Lake Vermilion Feb. 24

COOK- Hockey returns to Lake Vermilion this year for the Second Annual Lake Vermilion Pond Hockey Championship. Several teams converged on the Cook area to compete in a 4-on-4 tournament in front of White Eagle Resort last year, and the 2018 event is slated for Saturday, Feb. 24.

Over the past few years, ice hockey in Cook has been rapidly regaining momentum. In past decades there was a strong local hockey tradition in Cook, but the sport slowly dried up in the area as the town could no longer support youth hockey and the Cook-Chisholm partnership was phased out. However, throughout the last three years the sport has been growing in popularity again, and on any given evening in Cook the town rink is busy with pick-up hockey.

As a way of celebrating this momentum, Cook began hosting a hockey tournament at the end of skating season. In 2016 the competition featured just four local teams



and was played entirely at the town rink, but last year the event grew to ten teams and was moved to Lake Vermilion in front of White Eagle Resort. The pond hockey tournament featured several teams from around the Range and one group that travelled from the Twin Cities. This year

the event expects even greater participation.

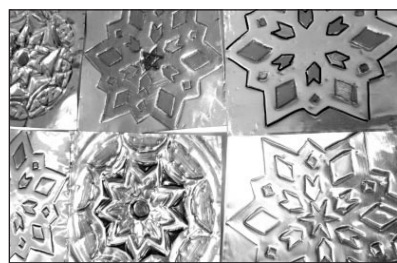
The tournament offers two divisions (Gold and Silver) with a \$100 entry fee per team. All squads are guaranteed at least three games, with cash prizes and trophies awarded for top finishers.

ARROWHEAD LIBRARIES

Metal tooling class offered at local libraries on Jan. 23

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Library System is pleased to present Duluth Art Institute's Metal Tooling, a free interactive program being offered for ages 10 to adult at the following dates and locations: Tuesday, Jan. 23, 12 noon, Babbitt Public Library; and Tuesday, Jan. 23, 3 p.m., Ely Public Library.

Create a unique, colorful and textured artwork by tracing designs onto thin metal sheeting before coloring with permanent markers. Watch



your design emerge through your inner artist.

This program, sponsored by Arrowhead Library System, was

funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. To learn more about Arrowhead Legacy Events, please see our calendar at www.alslib.info, find us on Twitter www.twitter.com/ArrowheadLegacy, on Pinterest at <https://www.pinterest.com/alexisleitgeb/legacy-events>, or like us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/alslibinfo>.

Parenting classes, ACEs seminar offered in Ely

ELY- Have you ever felt lost or wondered what your child needs from you? Learn how to support and strengthen your relationship with your child by attending the Circle of Security Parenting Series. This eight-week series starts on Wednesday, Feb.

7 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the First Lutheran Church of Ely. This workshop emphasizes examples specific to birth throughout preschool aged children, but the parenting tools and concepts applies to all ages. This free parenting series is being offered by the Ely

Behavioral Health Network. Onsite childcare will be available. For more information and to register, please visit Ely Circle of Security Parenting Series on Facebook, or call Riana Hegman at (218) 235-6104.

Community Forum on Monday, Jan. 22 in Ely

ELY- Join us on Monday, Jan. 22 from 6-7:30 p.m. at Amici's Event Center to learn how childhood trauma impacts adult health. This free community workshop will focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - stressful or traumatic events

such as abuse, neglect, witnessing domestic violence, or growing up with family members who have substance use disorders. Information on how ACEs impacts people's lives and what we can all do to improve the well-being of our community will be presented. This free workshop is sponsored by Ely Behavioral Health Network in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services and Minnesota Communities Caring for Children (MCCC).

For more information please contact Riana Hegman at 218-235-6104.

Finnlander Bocce Ball Tournament set for Saturday, Jan. 20 in Tower

TOWER- Get ready for some winter fun in Tower-Soudan. The Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Area Events Board will host a "Finnlander Bocce Ball" Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 20. The tournament will begin at 9 a.m. at the Tower Harbor and last until a double-elimination winner takes the victory. Want to know the best part? This low-cost event is not-for-profit, so there is a 100-percent payout for places first through fourth.

The board is asking anyone who is interested in participating to sign up at Good Ol' Days, D'Erick's, or Benchwarmer's, or you can also sign up on our Facebook page at fb.me/tseventsboard. Teams must be four people and consist of two females and two males; cost is only \$40/team. All entry fees must be paid up front. The board would also love to see the whole community out there - whether playing or cheering on the participants. Feel free to bring a cooler, some concessions may also be available, and a bonfire is planned as well.

Also, please plan to attend the annual Hockey Day, supported by the TSLVAEB, on Sunday, Feb. 11 in Soudan.

Ruby's Pantry in Babbitt on Jan. 27

BABBITT- Ruby's Pantry will be distributing food at the Babbitt Municipal Center (71 South Drive) on Saturday, Jan. 27 (always on the fourth Saturday of each month) from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. A \$20 cash (no checks) donation buys an abundance of food. No income or residency guidelines. Bring two large boxes or baskets. Sponsored by St. Pius X Catholic Church. Volunteers always welcome. Young children must be supervised by an adult.

Services at Mesabi Unitarian, Jan. 14

VIRGINIA- On Sunday, Jan. 14, "Everyday Beauty" will be presented by Rev. Suzanne Wasilczuk, answering the question of: "In the white and gray and brown and black of winter where do we find the beautiful?" Mesabi Unitarian Universalist Church is located at 230 7th Street South in Virginia. Usual services are Sundays at 10:30 a.m. For more information, visit www.mesabi-uu.org. A parent/infant area is provided, as is toddler care, and religious education is provided for the over fives. All are welcome and we are handicap accessible.

Candidate Tim Walz will be at The Crescent on Jan. 23

COOK- Democratic candidate for Governor, Tim Walz will be at the Crescent Bar and Grill on Tuesday, Jan. 23 at 6:30. Come and meet Tim and learn why he is running for Governor of Minnesota. This civic event is sponsored by Northern Progressives and is part of the "Why I'm Running" series, bringing constituents and candidates together.

Casting call for Swedish-Americans

REGIONAL- Meter Television is searching for Americans with Swedish ancestry for the Emmy Award and Kristallen (Swedish version of the Golden Globe)-winning reality TV show, "Allt för Sverige". After the major success of Allt för Sverige, Great Swedish Adventure (the U.S. title of the show) is now casting for Season 8. Now looking for people 19-70 years old. Please apply by Wednesday, Feb. 7. Information on applying is available at www.greatswedishadventure.com.

The producers of the Swedish version of American Idol and Master Chef are coming to the U.S. to find fun, outgoing Americans with Swedish ancestry to participate in their television series, Allt för Sverige. Brian, the Season 1 winner, said, "Before I used to hear the stories, now I lived the stories." Americans will travel to Sweden and participate in an exciting television series. Chosen participants will compete in extreme cultural challenges to discover their rich and fascinating roots while trying to win the grand prize: Meeting their Swedish relatives. This is an incredible once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for someone to discover their ancestry and experience their rich and fascinating Swedish cultural heritage.



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COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Sleigh ride fundraiser

by MELISSA ROACH
Staff Writer

COOK- Equine enthusiasts from around the region came out to the trails of Cook residents Mike and Kathie Hanson for their annual community food shelf sleigh ride. Mike is the president of the North Star Draft Association and this was the sixth year that the couple have been harnessing their draft horses and inviting the community over for an old-fashioned sleigh ride, with s'mores, hot cocoa, and a bonfire.

Along with the Hansons' draft horses, members of the North Star Draft Association brought their horses (and a donkey) as well as hand-crafted sleighs and cutters to

show off. "We can all geek out. Everyone gets out and gets their horse fix," said Alana Maijala of Virginia, also a member of the association. Although she doesn't have horses now, her family had horses while she was growing up. She said that there are a lot of people who are a part of horse associations and clubs who don't own horses, yet enjoy the camaraderie of the events.

With temperatures hovering at zero degrees, it was a reprieve from the bitterly cold temperatures the area has seen for the past weeks. The Hansons felt this year was a big success since the event also set a new record for the amount of cash and donations collected for the food shelf.



It wasn't just draft horses that were part of the fun. Jennie Wetterstein showed up with Jack the donkey and a bright red metal sleigh. photos by M. Roach

INT'L FALLS

Backus Community Center to host family movie night and annual chili challenge

INT'L FALLS- Backus is pleased to announce a new addition to the Icebox Days festival, a family movie night showing a winter classic about the Jamaican bobsled team. On Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m., Backus will show the film in the auditorium on the 24-foot screen, thanks to a partnership with KAPE Coalition (Koochiching Area Prevention in Education) and Northland Counseling. Admission is \$2 per person and includes free popcorn.

The Annual Chili Challenge Cook-Off will be held Saturday, Jan. 20 from 3:30 - 5 p.m. For \$6 per person, diners can sample each chili and vote for their favorite. Two prizes will be awarded at 5 p.m. with

winners determined by a panel of judges and the general public. For admission of \$6 per person, diners will receive a cup of chili from each cook, condiments and beverages.

This year's entries to date are Teresa Rom, Bruce and June Wilson, Erik and Hailey Silvers, Roger Jackson and Betty Olson, and Knights of Columbus. If you would like to prepare a chili, please contact Robin at Backus at 218-373-3004. Entries must contact Backus by Wednesday, Jan. 17 with chili being delivered to Backus by Friday, Jan. 19 before 4 p.m.

Also at Backus Community Center over Icebox Days will be the annual CWAC (Community Wellness

Action Council) Wellness Expo on the Backus stage. The Expo will be open Friday from 5 to 7:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. For more information or details about the Expo, please contact CWAC on Facebook at "Community Wellness Action Council".

For more information on these events, please contact Backus Community Center, 900 5th Street, International Falls, 218-285-7255, or online at www.backusab.org. For Icebox Days event, contact the Chamber of Commerce at 218-283-9400 or online at www.ifallschamber.com.

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

High school essay contest to win Boundary Waters trip

REGIONAL- Ely Outfitting Company's Jason Zabokrtsky has been worried. Recent studies show that young people today spend as little as four to seven minutes outside each day - less time outside than prison inmates. Time in front of a screen is replacing time around a stream and it's leading to increased anxiety, obesity, and attention deficit disorder. So Zabokrtsky is giving away a fully outfitted, self-guided five-day canoe-camping adventure in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for three or four high schoolers - with no parents allowed. Guide Fred Sproat says it's important for kids to get out in the woods unsupervised like he used to do.

"A few times, we borrowed the parents' gear and went up for a summer weekend," Sproat says. "We came back healthy and happy, with all our digits—no broken bones or anything. It was pretty sweet."

The contest is open until Sunday, Feb. 11 to current sophomores, juniors, and seniors. All they need to do is write a 1,000 to 1,500-word essay answering one question: Why



Jason Zabokrtsky wants to get more teens thinking about spending time in the wilderness. submitted photo

do you want to go on a parent-free BWCA Wilderness canoe-camping adventure with your friends?

In addition to the grand prize, entrants will win random prizes like water bottles, shirts, and hats throughout the contest. And everyone who enters gets a \$50 coupon for an out-

fitted trip in 2018. So there's plenty of free stuff to go around.

Find more details at <http://ely-outfittingcompany.com/boundary-waters-teen-essay-contest/>.

New storytelling event in Ely on Thursday, Jan. 25

ELY- You are invited to come and listen, applaud, cheer, whistle and shout out encouragement! Or tell us a story. No experience needed. Anyone can put their name in the hat to tell a six-minute story. We'll draw eight to ten names from the hat each night. Stories must be true and experienced by the storyteller. Each evening will have a theme. Our theme for January is "Lessons Learned".

Storytelling takes place at the Ely Senior Center on the last Thursday of the winter months: Jan. 25, Feb. 22, Mar. 22 and Apr. 26, from 6 - 8 p.m. We'll have coffee, tea and cookies. Storytellers have a maximum of six minutes to tell their story. For the January event we'll have some storytellers lined up in advance, but after that, it's on you to put your name in the hat. We admit we are inspired by the Moth Radio Hour, but not affiliated. Check out www.themoth.org to see what storytelling is all about.

For more information, contact Terry Cooper at tcooper@umn.edu. Please come. Listen to stories by others and then drop your name in the hat to tell your story!

Genealogy Genie on Saturday, Jan. 13

CHISHOLM- Did you miss the Minnesota Discovery Center's December Genealogy Genie class? Do not fret! We offer the same class twice, once on a Thursday evening and once on a Saturday morning to give you the option on which class you can attend. Join us on Saturday, Jan. 13 at 10:30 a.m. for our next Genealogy Genie class. The topic for this class will be how to use the Iron Range Research Center archives. Some questions that will be answered by our archivist, Christopher Welter are: What is an archives? How can I use this archives? Am I able to find a specific family member? Can I get copies of specific items? Each class is free to the public and will last about an hour. Watch our website for upcoming Genealogy Genie classes!

NWFA Writers Group meets on Saturday, Jan. 13 in Cook

COOK- Do you find writing to be calming or stimulating? Or, is writing your favorite way to communicate? The NWFA Winter Writers Group will meet the second Saturday of each month, Jan. 13, from 1 - 3 p.m. at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery, 210 S River St. in Cook, next to Dream Weaver Salon and Spa.

All who enjoy writing, talking about writing, and writing together are welcome to join this supportive writers' group led by Ellie Larmouth. Ellie often assigns a prompt subject to write about each month. The prompt for Jan. 13 is "Home".

Regular events this winter are the Writers Group, the Beginner Wood Carving Class, every other Thursday, starting Jan. 18 from 6 - 8 p.m., and Open Art, the third Saturday from 12 to 3 p.m. Visit our website at www.nwfamn.org.

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PERMIT...Continued from page 1

planned mining operation. The issuance of the draft document signals that state regulators are prepared to go forward with allowing the operation, as long as the company agrees to a long list of conditions and financial assurance requirements spelled out in the document.

That's considered likely, since the document was prepared in close consultation with PolyMet representatives.

"This really does involve a lot of sitting around the table," said DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr. "There's been a lot of back and forth and some tough negotiating on both sides," he added.

The public will have its chance to weigh in on the proposed permit during a 60-day public comment period that ends March 6. The DNR is also planning public hearings on the document, set for Feb. 7 at Mesabi East High School in Aurora, and Feb. 8 at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. The DNR will host open houses at both events beginning at 1 p.m. in Duluth and 4 p.m. in Aurora, followed by public comments from 6-9 p.m.

The draft document spells out how PolyMet plans to construct and operate its proposed open pit mine, processing plant and tailings basin, as well as how it plans to close and restore the site and to replace nearly 1,000 acres of wetlands the mine will

destroy. It also outlines the company's plan for long-term water treatment at both the mine site and the tailings basin. The project's environmental impact statement predicts that water treatment will be necessary at both locations for centuries following closure of the mine and the permit to mine outlines how that treatment will be done and how the company plans to cover the long-term costs of that treatment. That's part of the permit's financial assurance component.

The draft permit would require PolyMet to put up \$544 million in financial assurance in the first year of mining, which is similar to the number that PolyMet proposed in its recently revised permit application. Most of that would be pledged in the form of letters of credit or surety bonds, rather than actual cash.

The numbers would rise to more than \$1 billion at the midpoint of the mine's 20-year projected lifespan.

The \$1 billion figure is how much the state estimates it would cost to close and reclaim the mine at its peak liability, and operate a water treatment plant indefinitely, if the company were to walk away and the state would have to manage the work.

Still much to do

While the issuance of the draft permit marks progress, DNR officials

declined to offer any timeline for when construction on the mine might actually get underway.

"It's a big milestone to be at this point, but we are nowhere near done, sad to say," said Landwehr. It's likely to be several months before the DNR has a chance to respond to what is likely to be a large number of public comments on the proposal. It's also possible that a contested case hearing could be ordered, although legislative action this past session sharply limited who has standing to seek such a hearing. A contested case hearing, which involves a lengthy process overseen by an administrative law judge, could add several more months to the permitting process.

Meanwhile, state regulators are still processing other permits needed by PolyMet, and a significant federal permit, known as a Section 404 wetlands permit, which will need to be issued by the Army Corps of Engineers, has been sitting in limbo for years. The Army Corps has also yet to issue a record of decision on the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which was completed in early 2016.

Polling shows project remains controversial

Environmental groups greeted last Friday's announcement with new

polling from Public Policy Polling showing that Minnesotans remain broadly split on their support or opposition to the project. The latest survey, based on data gathered in December, finds that 44 percent of Minnesotans say they're opposed to the project, while 40 percent expressed support and 16 percent weren't sure.

The survey also found a sharp political divide over the question, with 62 percent of DFLers expressing opposition to the project, while only 19 percent of Republicans oppose the plan. Independents opposed the project by a margin of 45-39 percent.

"PolyMet's sulfide mine proposal is unpopular with Minnesotans already," said Kathleen Hoffman, executive director of the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. "PolyMet has made lofty promises to treat polluted water for hundreds of years, prevent taxpayers from being stuck with a \$1 billion cleanup bill, and to meet or exceed industry best practices. Will PolyMet meet their promises to Minnesotans or will they break them?" Hoffman asked.

MCEA refrained from making a quick judgment on the draft permit, but promised that its own experts will be examining the document and will have more to say in the near future.

Meanwhile, others

lauded the latest announcement.

"This decision...is a significant step forward for the PolyMet project and for bringing more good paying jobs to the Iron Range after more than a decade of thorough environmental review and study," said Eighth District Congressman Rick Nolan. "As someone who has helped coordinate agency discussions and actions to move this process forward, I applaud the DNR's work to ensure that the NorthMet project will be done in a safe and environmentally responsible way."

Jobs for Minnesotans called the draft permit "a historic achievement" for both PolyMet and the state. "It builds on our rich iron mining heritage and is a catalyst for a new era of responsible mining," read a statement from the group.

Financial questions remain

While the company is making slow but steady progress on the permitting process, less is known publicly about PolyMet's progress in obtaining financial commitments to build the enormous project, or how much it might cost in today's dollars. The last financial projections released by the company put the construction cost at \$650 million, but that was ten years ago. Adjusting for standard inflation would put that tab at nearly \$760

million, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. And that doesn't include the upfront financial assurance cost of the project.

That could put the upfront financial price tag at well over \$1 billion. Company officials indicate they've already spent over \$300 million to reach this point of the process.

The public should get a clearer picture of the company's financial prospects when it issues an updated Definitive Feasibility Study later this year. DNR officials indicated that the company has told them to expect the document sometime in March.

The updated financial study will also show the effects of the fallout in the metals market, which began in 2015. While the prices of both copper and nickel have recovered somewhat from earlier lows, they still remain well below peak levels and, in the case of nickel, at less than half the price that PolyMet used in its most recent financial projections.

State officials say they'll be reviewing the updated financial report in detail before issuing a final permit to mine.

Meanwhile, investors appeared buoyed by the release of the draft permit, sending PolyMet's stock price to a peak of \$1.08 in trading this week, the stock's highest price in more than two years.

MINNTAC...Continued from page 1

violations for a number of years. Minntac's current tailings basin discharge permit expired in 1992, and the MPCA has faced political backlash from the

Iron Range legislative delegation as it has sought to bring the company under stricter regulatory control.

The MPCA finally issued its draft permit for

Minntac last fall, just days after environmental groups filed suit against the agency, arguing that the state regulator had failed to meet its obligations to

enforce state water quality standards on the company.

U.S. Steel filed its application for a variance along with comments it submitted to MPCA as part of the public review phase of the draft permit. In its application, company officials argue that the company should not be required to comply with groundwater standards for sulfate and dissolved solids because the aquifer underlying the tailings basin had naturally elevated levels of manganese and iron, which made it less desirable for drinking. But MPCA officials argue that those contaminants are relatively common and easy to treat through standard water softening, which is not the case for sulfate. U.S. Steel also argued that its contamination of groundwater is inconsequential, since the company owns the surface above it, which would preclude the public using the water for drinking. But MPCA officials note, and U.S. Steel officials acknowledge, that groundwater moves through the rock and that

the zone of contamination continues to grow and may eventually spread outside of U.S. Steel's ownership. The agency also notes that land ownership changes over time.

As for surface discharges, U.S. Steel officials argue that they should not be forced to spend millions of dollars to clean up sulfate and dissolved solids levels in its tailings basin when the levels found in the basin are not known to be significantly harmful to human health. The MPCA's proposed Minntac permit would require the company to reduce the sulfate level in the tailings basin to 357 milligrams-per-liter, which a company-produced study predicted would allow the company to meet a 250 mg/l drinking water standard for sulfate. The company had previously agreed to meet stricter sulfate standards in its tailings basin as part of an agreement with the MPCA back in 2011. But the company later backed out of that agreement and has been waging a political fight since then to avoid having to comply.

MPCA officials say they reject the company's proposed variance for surface water discharges from its tailings basin since the new draft permit for the company already provides a schedule of compliance that will be based on what is technically feasible in terms of clean-up.

The Iron Mining Association expressed concern about the MPCA's proposed denial, issuing a statement late on Tuesday. "The MPCA's proposed denial of U.S. Steel's variance application is very concerning because it poses challenges for a larger employer on the Iron Range and raises questions about how the agency will respond to variance applications from other industrial facilities and municipalities in the state," IMA President Kelsey Johnson said.

"The MPCA has continually used the potential for variances to brush away concerns raised by multiple stakeholders," she continued. "But this proposed denial raises serious concerns that the agency has no intention of granting variances on the wild rice sulfate standard."

Besides the Jan. 23 hearing in Mt. Iron, members of the public can submit comments on the MPCA's proposal variance denial by 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 24. Comments should include a statement of your interest in the matter, a statement of the action you wish the MPCA to take, and reasons supporting your position. Written comments can be submitted to Erik Smith, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 520 Lafayette Rd. N, St. Paul, MN 55155 or to erik.smith@state.mn.us.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ely welcomes Sen. Smith's push for broadband expansion

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY — The Ely Economic Development Authority reviewed their 2018 priorities for economic growth this week, and many projects from last year, namely the extension of high-speed fiber internet service in town, will likely carry over into the new year.

City council members, acting as EEDA commissioners, will review the priorities list in detail next month with the city's economic development advisor John Fedo.

The broadband project remains high on the city's list of potential drivers of

economic growth in the Ely area. Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski met with Minnesota's newest U.S. Senator, Tina Smith, last weekend during an introductory session in Eveleth and broadband was discussed.

"It certainly seems that she is hitting the ground running on the broadband issue," Langowski said. "Our feasibility study will be presented Feb. 12-13 with Design Nine coming back to Ely to discuss our project."

When Smith was Lieutenant Governor for Minnesota, she was the point-person on behalf of the state for broadband expansion. "She was a real

advocate and having her really hear us for the first time from her senatorial position, she has the experience to help us," Fedo said.

Mayor Chuck Novak indicated there has been some recent movement on the national level as far as available broadband funding. "From what I hear, President Trump this week signed a couple of executive orders on rural broadband," he said. "He was talking about the (broadband) deficiencies in rural America, and what its impact is relative to economic development or lack thereof."

"It looks like things are starting to align,"

Langowski added. "I spoke with Paul Brinkman of the Northeast Service Cooperative last Saturday as well, and they indicated they are very supportive, and waiting to see how they can help our city. "Once we have our feasibility study in hand, we will have a clearer direction in where we are going to go."

The city of Ely was the recipient of grant funding last year from Blandin Foundation and the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board and continues to work on various projects to highlight the use of broadband to spur economic growth.

Fedo said he implemented a contract last

month with Incredible Ely for the development of a business tech center where small business entrepreneurs can utilize existing high-speed fiber in establishing growth in individual projects. "The Northeast Entrepreneur Fund staff will help market and facilitate the program in cooperation with the EEDA," he said. "We are looking to launch this in the spring."

Langowski updated EEDA members on the development of the Rural Living Environment project for persons with disabilities. "The next step is to survey the boundaries of the 26-acre site behind the hospital," he said. There is a lot of property there.

We have a pretty good path forward."

EEDA members approved a resolution to apply for and accept funds of more than \$170,000, if approved by the IRRRB, for the project.

Novak said the Housing and Redevelopment Authority is interested in exploring a townhouse project in the vicinity of the Rural Living Environment site. "We already have plans for townhomes, and this may be feasible. We have a backlog of people looking for such residences," he said. "This could be the most logical location within city boundaries."

"PJ" ...Continued from page 1

He looked out into the congregation, "I see some of my Confirmation students. I see some of you who I officiated your wedding, and some who I have buried your loved ones. I always say give me a good funeral over a wedding, any day. At weddings, everyone is worried about the flowers or the dress. At a

funeral, nobody worries about that, people just want to feel God's love."

Many have said although they weren't "church-going", they were drawn to PJ because of his down-to-earth style, and that he made room for everyone. His sermons often included his own personal stories of his rough

childhood, or of people he knew who felt they were outcast, or didn't belong. "The island of misfit toys," he would sometimes say, wanting to let everyone know that they were loved, and there was a place for all. He would admonish the mega churches that would turn away the homeless or those in need,

and those he called "church people", only showing up on Sunday to judge others. Often he would remind his congregations that church isn't a building or a Sunday service, rather it was people going out and doing the work of Jesus.

He ended his last sermon as he had ended many of his

sermons, with the words of Bob Dylan: "May God bless and keep you always, may your wishes all come true. May you always do for others and let others do for you. May you build a ladder to the stars, and climb on every rung. And may you stay forever young."

FIRE...Continued from page 1

Apartments, 330 South 3rd Avenue West.

There were initial reports of flames and smoke coming from the windows of a third-story apartment. The first calls came through 911 dispatch from the nearby Sibley Apartments and Boundary Waters Care Center, according to officials.

Some people in the Ely community referred to the quick action by the Ely Fire Department as mere "luck" or "divine intervention."

Fire Chief Erchull reported to Ely City Council members last week that water was thrown on the fire in as little as six minutes after the first call to dispatch. He pushed back at the opinion of some who said the local volunteer firefighters were just lucky.

"Back in 1996 when the City Council approved the purchase of the Hummer fire truck, a lot of people said we spent too much money on equipment like that." Erchull said the truck was used as a quick-attack water supply for the city and the

townships. "It is now used primarily as a quick-attack vehicle for the city."

"At the recent Grahek Apartment fire, had it not been for that piece of equipment to get there in lightning-fast time, combined with fast decisions by our firefighters, the outcome would have been a lot different," Erchull said.

Ely firefighters were able to quickly bring the fire under control. "We threw about 250 gallons of water through the living room window from our Hummer (fire truck) and got the fire out," Erchull said. "We were dispatched at 5 o'clock. The first unit was en route three minutes later, and on scene in two minutes. We had water on the fire within one minute of arrival."

The Ely Fire Department's efforts in responding to the fire were assisted by mutual aid partners Morse-Fall Lake Fire Department, Babbitt Fire Department, Ely Ambulance, Ely Police Department, St. Louis County Sheriff Department, staff at the

Ely - Bloomenson Community Hospital, Boundary Waters Care Center, Red Cross, and the owners of the Adventure Inn, he said. "This was a great group effort that was put forward on this sad occasion."

Ely firefighters, Ely ambulance personnel and law enforcement officers were able to safely evacuate the apartment building's residents to the nearby Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital. The outside temperature was pushing minus-20 at the

time. No other injuries were reported. Ely fire officials reminded area residents to have a fire escape plan, as well as working smoke detectors.

The American Red Cross was contacted as a number of residents were displaced by the fire.

Council members heaped high praise on the efforts of the fire department.

ment.

"Everybody seemed to gel together," said Mayor Chuck Novak, who was out of town on the night of the fire. "Council member Ryan Callen was one of the first firefighters to respond. Council member Al Forsman (facilities director at EBCH) organized a bus to transport Grahek residents to the hospital. It was a good

effort. The folks in Ely don't have to worry. Not everything goes perfect every time, but this was exemplary of what you get with a trained fire department."

Forsman noted, "The way the community all came together, makes me proud to be part of this community."



54.5 cents per mile is now the reimbursement rate for AEOA volunteer drivers.

Volunteers in the Cook, Nett Lake and Lake Vermilion area are needed to drive persons to medical appointments and to work. Must have a valid driver's license, a dependable vehicle, insurance, a clean driving record and pass a background check.

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GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

Slow progress being made on fire department issues

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- After three months on the agenda, the Greenwood Town Board, Tuesday, finally held a substantive discussion on the issue of the fire department hiring of an individual who had been "convicted of soliciting a child to engage in sexual conduct."

Township attorney Mike Couri, in a memo to the board dated Nov. 13, 2017, had noted since a fire fighter is considered a public safety official in Minnesota, that the township should be conducting criminal background checks of their fire fighters and EMR personnel. Criminal history data may be used in assessing job applicants or employees only if the criminal history data are directly related to the position of employment sought or currently held. In addition, the memo detailed the issue of negligent hiring and negligent retention, when an employer was on notice that an employee posed a threat and failed to take steps to insure the safety of third parties.

Couri recommended that the township "take steps" to safeguard the public from the possibility of an "encounter of a sexual nature" between this employee and a minor by insuring the employee is not left alone with a minor while on duty as a fire fighter. Couri also noted

that the township could also put the employee in an administrative only position.

Chairman John Bassing wondered if the department could update the Standard Operating Guidelines to create such an administrative position where the fire department member would still qualify for pension credits.

Fire Chief Dave Fazio noted there were no instances he would think of where a Greenwood fire fighter would respond to a fire call alone. He noted that guidelines call for two department members to take a fire truck from the hall. While emergency responders might respond alone, this did not apply to fire fighters.

Bassing asked if the SOGs could be amended to state that a fire fighter could not respond alone.

The board gave Fazio permission to speak to the township attorney on the issue, and to come back to the board with some new wording to address the issue in the department's SOGs.

The board did not make progress on the issue of correcting the service record of retired fire chief Scott Kregness, who had previously asked the township to correct the paperwork relating to his years of service for his pension credits, as well as on-call payment that had never been received. Kregness is asking that one year be added to his service time, since he did respond to calls

during that final year.

Bassing noted that the fire chief must submit updated documentation to PERA to get the correction made, but Fazio said he did not have any documentation, and previously had informed the board that he felt that Kregness had not met the standard for a pension credit for that year, because Kregness had not attended 50 percent of the meetings and drills, even though Kregness had responded to the minimum number of calls.

Both Bassing and Fazio had spoken to staff at PERA on the issue. Bassing noted that there were qualified exemptions in place in the department's SOGs at that time, such as working out of the area, that the board had granted in the past. Kregness, in his last few years on the department, and even while serving as chief, worked out of state for extended periods while employed by FEMA.

Bassing asked Fazio about a certified letter that Kregness had sent to Fazio on the issue back in 2014, that Fazio never responded to. Fazio was hired as fire chief in the fall of 2013.

Bassing also noted that during that time period, there were many gaps in the fire department record-keeping.

Supervisor Carmen DeLuca asked if the board could just write the letter to FEMA.

The board took no action on the issue.

Snowmobile club land request

The board approved a resolution asking St. Louis County to begin the process of conveying a 10-acre parcel of tax-forfeit land that will be used for the Penguins Snowmobile Club maintenance/storage building. Bassing voted no because he said he wanted to understand the tax implications before moving forward.

The resolution is the first step in the process. Whether or not the township will receive the land for free and then lease it to the club, have the county lease the land directly to the club, or have the club purchase the land is yet to be determined. Bassing noted that whoever ends up owning the parcel will need to pay the property taxes, unless the township itself goes into the trail grooming business.

Equipment inventory

Clerk Sue Drobac said she was unable to find any information on a previous township equipment inventory, though there was supposed to be an inventory list and video tape in the township's safety deposit box that dated back to the late 1990s. Drobac said she will be conducting an inventory of the office, town hall, and kitchen equipment, with help from treasurer Pam Rodgers. She told Fire Chief Dave Fazio that he would need

to begin work on compiling an inventory of fire department equipment, with makes/models/ages of larger equipment and listings of all other.

Drobac said they are also working on organizing the equipment in the heated garage, and asked Fazio to help with identifying what equipment needed to be in that space and what could be moved to the cold storage building. She also said there are boxes of office records in the fire department that need to be moved to the clerk's office.

Other business

In other business the town board:

► Heard that Pete Makoski has retired as a fire fighter effective Jan. 1, but will remain as an EMR.

► Heard that the township ended the year with a balance of \$761,855. Bassing will begin to work on a budget for 2019 with help from the clerk and treasurer to present at the February meeting.

► Heard that some township residents are sponsoring a chili and soup feed on Saturday, Feb. 10 from 1-3 p.m. at the town hall. All township residents and friends are invited to stop by. Contact clerk Drobac for more information.

► Heard that the Tower-Soudan-Lake Vermilion Events Board is sponsoring a Finnlander

Bocce Ball Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 20 starting at 9 a.m. at the Tower Harbor. Entry fee is \$40 per team of four (two men, two women), and there will be 100-percent prize payout for the top four teams.

► Appointed election judges and absentee ballot judges for the upcoming township election.

► Will hold the Board of Audit at the close of the regular meeting on Feb. 13.

► Heard that incumbent Larry Tahija has filed for seat 3, and that Rock Stoehr and Byron Beihoffer have both filed for seat 5, which is currently held by John Bassing. As of Tuesday, Bassing had not filed for one of the open supervisor seats.

► Thanked volunteers Mike Ralston and John Bassing for their work on the skating rink, and Larry Tahija and Carmen DeLuca for their work to restore the electrical service to the rink's lights and warming shack. Mary Richard thanked the board for their work to get the rink opened, and said she has been skating there with her grandchildren. Ralston noted he had received photos of others who are enjoying the rink. Fire department members are also helping to flood the ice. Drobac thanked Bassing for his time spent setting out chairs prior to the board meetings.

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BOYS BASKETBALL

Another game, another rout

Olson, Goggleye lead North Woods to 98-35 romp at Two Harbors

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TWO HARBORS— Tate Olson and Cade Goggleye led the way as the top-rated Grizzlies routed the Agates 98-35 in boys high school basketball action on Monday. The senior Olson and junior Goggleye each poured in 24 points on the night as they helped North Woods improve to 10-0 on the season.

The Grizzlies ran up a 51-24 lead by the break and pulled

further away in the second half, outpacing the Agates 47-11 in the stanza.

Sophomore forward Trevor Morrison added 12 points for the Grizzlies, while senior guard Brendan Parson added 11. Also scoring for the Grizzlies were Tanner Lokken, with seven, Tanner Barto, with six, Chase Kleppe, with four, and Darius Goggleye, with four. Isaiah Squires and T.J. Chiabotti each added three points.

Jayden Ruberg led scoring

for the Agates, with 18 points.

Grizzlies Head Coach Will Kleppe said he was pleased that his team could hold Ruberg to 18 points. "He's one of the leading scorers in the Northland and scored his 1,000th point against us," he said.

The Grizzlies are set to host 6-5 Mt. Iron-Buhl on Friday night. Game time is 7:15 p.m.

They travel to Duluth East on Saturday to take on third-ranked Nevis in what could be the Grizzlies' toughest challenge

of the season so far. Nevis went to state in basketball last year and is returning many of the same players this season. And it's mostly the same group of athletes who helped Nevis beat North Woods in the state football tournament this fall. "Obviously the state football game is on many of our players' minds so I anticipate a very good game," said Kleppe. Game time is set for 1:15 p.m.

NORDIC SKIING

Ely shows strength at the Ridge

Girls team finishes fourth among 54 teams from across the state; boys finishes 16th

by JAY GREENEY
Sports writer

BIWABIK— Both of Ely's Nordic ski teams put up strong performances at one of the biggest meets of the year, the annual Mesabi East Invitational, held at Giants Ridge last Saturday. The Ely girls team took fourth place among the 54 girls teams competing in the event, while the boys took 16th out of 56 teams. The event featured both classic and freestyle events.

"It was a solid day for us," said Ely Head Coach Paula Anderson. "I didn't load the varsity races like I could have and so our team results don't reflect much."

Some of the team members chose to try the classic race this year instead of skiing in the usual freestyle event. With the large field of skiers it was a good opportunity to see where Ely stood on individual race times.

"The format difference also makes it very hard to use this race to predict much," said Anderson. "So I guess considering that, the girls finishing fourth was good and Ben and James had solid results and

See **WOLVES...**pg. 2B



Above: Ely's Evelyn Bercher powers her way up a hill during competition last Saturday at Giants Ridge.

Left: Former teammates Seth Prigge, Hanna Jesme, Taryn Osthoff, and Cate DeRemee offer encouragement to Ely's Ben Gustafson.

photos by D. Dalberg

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies hit mid-season slump

Top Nighthawks, but fall to Virginia, ME

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The Grizzly girls have hit a rough patch, losing three of their past four games. On Tuesday, they fell to Mesabi East 88-54, as the Giants racked up 50 points in the first half and never looked back.

Ava Hill had an outstanding game for Mesabi East, racking up 30 points. Bria Chiabotti was top scorer for the Grizzlies, with 17 points. Hanna Sandberg and Regan Ratai added eight points apiece for North Woods, followed by Kate Stone with six and Alanna

Rutchasky and Kennedy Wardas with four points each.

The Grizzlies had no more success against a strong Blue Devils squad on Monday, losing 66-30. Virginia's defense held the Grizzlies to just 12 points in the first half. While North Woods got back on track in the second half, it was too little, too late. Bria Chiabotti led scoring for the Grizzlies, with eight points, while Sasha Strong added six. Regan Ratai and Kennedy Wardas each added four points, while Hanna Sandberg added three.

Lexiss Trygg led scoring for the Blue Devils, with 15 points.

In action late last week, the Grizzlies had four players in double-digits as they easily outdistanced Northeast Range, beating the winless Nighthawks 67-32. Bria Chiabotti led the way for the Grizzlies with

Left: North Woods' Bria Chiabotti pressures NER's Natalie Nelmark during girls basketball action last Thursday. photo by C. Stone



See **GIRLS...**pg. 2B

Sports week

Boys bball

Friday, Jan. 12
NW hosts MI-B, 7:15 p.m

Saturday, Jan. 13
Ely at Cook County, 2:45 p.m.
NW v. Nevis at Duluth East, 1:15 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 16
NW hosts Hill City, 7:15 p.m.
Ely at Bigfork, 7:15 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 19
Ely at MI-B, 7:15 p.m.

Girls bball

Saturday, Jan. 13
Ely at Cook County, 2:45 pm

Tuesday, Jan. 16
NW at I-Falls, 7:15 pm
Ely hosts Cherry, 7:15 pm

Friday, Jan. 19
NW at Nash-Kee, 7:15 pm
NER at Hill City, 5:45 pm

Hockey

Friday, Jan. 12
Ely at Bagley, 6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 19
Ely hosts Red Lake Falls, 7 p.m.

Nordic ski

Tuesday, Jan. 16
Two Harbors Invite, 11 am

Sports briefly

Grizzlies dominate holiday tournament

FIELD TWP— The host Grizzlies won their boys basketball holiday tournament, held Dec. 28-30, downing Northome, Bigfork, and Nashauk-Keewatin in commanding fashion to maintain their undefeated season. The Grizzlies won 99-43, 83-59, and 86-60 respectively.

Junior guard Cade Goggleye had an outstanding tournament for the top-ranked Class A Grizzlies, racking up 84 points in three games. He led scoring with 35 points against Northome, and he added 31 to lead all scorers in the championship matchup with the Spartans. He added 18 points in the Grizzlies win over Bigfork.

Meanwhile, Tate Olson tallied 51 points in the series, adding 14 points against Northome, 16 points against Bigfork, and 21 points against the Spartans.

Brendan Parson added 36 points in the series, including a team-leading 19 points against Bigfork. Trevor Morrison was another standout, with 31 points in the series, including 14 points against Northome.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Wolves tripped up by young Raiders

Wolves win two-of-three on the week; top winless Nighthawks 100-14

by JAY GREENEY
Sports writer

ELY – The Wolves were full of confidence after scoring 100 points in their previous win over the Nighthawks, and they held a lead early in their Tuesday night matchup with Greenway. But the Raiders poured it on in the second half to cruise to a 63-45 win, handing the Wolves their third loss of the season.

“It was a tough game for us,” said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. “Their athleticism made it really hard on us on both ends of the floor.”

The Raiders played a patient offense and moved the ball well to consistently find the open shot. They did a good job of using their size to control the boards, limiting the Wolves to many one shot possessions.

“Their size really limited what we got done on the offensive,”

said McDonald. “We really struggled to get shots and rarely got second shots from offensive rebounds.”

Ely was led by senior Carter Gaulke who had 27 points. Fellow seniors Blaise Lah and Adam McDonald each had nine rebounds.

Ely jumped out early and fast on Friday in a 100-14 rout of winless Northeast Range. The Nighthawks never got on track and couldn’t find a way to slow down the Wolves or find a way to put the ball in the bucket.

The Wolves had a couple of big performances and were led by Carter Gaulke with 24 points while Adam McDonald had 13 points to go with six rebounds, eight steals, and eight assists. Michael Lah added 13 points and seven rebounds, while juniors Patrick Vanderbeek had 14 points and Trevor Matson tallied 13.

Ely’s first game of the new year was a close one at home

against Silver Bay on Jan. 4. The Wolves made a strong run at the end to win 66-54.

“It was a close game throughout,” said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. “I thought we played well at the end and made a run to push past them.”

The Wolves were led by Adam McDonald with 24 points and seven rebounds. Carter Gaulke had 16 points and a team-leading seven assists while Blaise Lah grabbed a game high 11 rebounds.

Next up for Ely is a home matchup with Nashwauk-Keewatin on Friday with a 7:15 p.m. scheduled varsity start.

Right: Ely senior guard Adam McDonald goes in for a layup under heavy pressure from a Greenway defender.

photo by J. Greeney



HOCKEY

Wolves continue to struggle on the ice



Senior forward Gage Merhar advances the puck during hockey action Tuesday night in Ely. photo by J. Greeney

by JAY GREENEY
Sports writer

ELY – Another quick start for Eveleth-Gilbert on Tuesday led to the same result as earlier this season—another tough defeat for the struggling Timberwolves.

The Golden Bears picked up three goals in the first period, but didn’t hit their stride until the second stanza, when they racked up seven goals on their way to a 11-1 victory on the road.

Trailing 10-0 to start the third period, Ely finally got on the board with a Nick Mattila break away goal.

Eveleth-Gilbert outshot Ely 47-16, continuing the Wolves’ offensive drought the past several games.

In action on Saturday, Ely drew first blood against Lake of the Woods, but could do little to stop the Bears after that, as they scored 17 unanswered goals to win 17-1.

Nick Mattila again scored the lone goal for Ely, at just 1:43 into the game.

The Bears peppered goalie Chase Sandberg as they easily outshot the Wolves 40-14. It was another long night for the defense as Lake of the Woods put constant pressure on all night long.

The Wolves kicked off the New Year in good fashion on Jan. 2 when they traveled to play Moose Lake. Ely grabbed an early lead and hung on for the 6-4 win, their third of the season.

Two quick goals got Ely started before giving up a goal to end the first period. The Wolves put another three shots in the net in the second while the Rebels added just one to end the second period with the Wolves leading 5-2. A couple quick goals by Moose Lake to start the third period made it a game again. Ely scored a final goal with just under two minutes left in the game giving them the two-goal victory.

Ely will be on the road Friday to play Bagley/Fosston. Game time is at 6 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

T-wolves win two straight

by JAY GREENEY
Sports writer

LITTLEFORK – Some clutch work from the free throw line helped the Wolves edge Littlefork-Big Falls 58-54 in girls basketball action on Monday. It was a nail-biter from beginning to end, with numerous lead changes.

“This was a back and forth game,” said Ely Head Coach Darren Visser. “We showed some grit tonight by overcoming an early 10-point deficit and being down one or two points multiple other times in the game.”

The game was a good test to see how the young Wolves would handle adversity. The team showed it was able to play through some ups and downs and stay

focused. “In the end some key defensive stops and clutch free throw shooting allowed us to secure a four-point victory,” said Visser.

Shayla Zaverl knocked down four free throws to close out the victory for Ely. She was a perfect 6-6 on the night from the charity stripe.

For Ely, Erika Mattson was the team leader in points with 18, rebounds, with seven, and assists, with eight. Shayla Zaverl added 16 points and six rebounds while Brielle Kallberg had ten points to go with six rebounds.

A slow start didn’t keep the Wolves from winning their first game of the new year, against Nashwauk-Keewatin. After trailing early, Ely played well the rest of

the way for an easy 63-27 win. It took the early part of the game for Ely to shake off the rust from the holiday break. Once they got going it was all Wolves for the rest of the way.

“In the second half we did a great job of finding the open player and getting better and easier shots,” said Ely Head Coach Darren Visser. “I felt this was our best game we had with our post play.”

The Wolves were led on offense by Shayla Zaverl with 21 points to go with ten rebounds. Erika Mattson scored 19 and collected eight rebounds while Brielle Kallberg had 15 points to go with a team high 13 rebounds.

Ely hits the road on Saturday to take on Cook County. Game time is 1 p.m.

GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

17 points, followed by Hanna Sandberg with 13 points and Kate Stone with 12. Brynn Simpson added ten points, Kennedy Wardas added six and Sasha Strong notched five. Regan Ratai and Kayla Palm each

added two points. Shayler Lislegard led the way for the Nighthawks, with 14 points, followed by Casey Zahnow with eight points and Makaya Bodas with seven. Natalie Nelmark added two.

The Grizzlies travel to International Falls on Tuesday to take on the Broncos. The Nighthawks head to Hill City next Friday, Jan. 19, to take on the Hornets.

WOLVES...

Continued from page 1B
we’re happy with that.”

INDIVIDUAL ELY GIRLS RESULTS FREESTYLE

- 21. Evelyn Bercher 0:19:41.2
- 22. Laura Pasmick 0:19:43.4
- 96. Lindy Dalberg 0:23:50.8

INDIVIDUAL ELY GIRLS RESULTS CLASSIC

- 9. Emma Terwilliger 0:18:25.0
- 14. Ryne Prigge 0:19:20.9
- 105. Anna Nelson 0:25:01.7

GIRLS TEAM RESULTS

- 1. Stillwater Area 508
- 2. Forest Lake Nordic Team 501
- 3. Duluth East High School 480
- 4. Ely High School 470
- 5. Grand Rapids 449

INDIVIDUAL ELY BOYS RESULTS FREESTYLE

- 14. Ben Gustafson 0:15:50.9
- 24. James Schwinghamer 0:16:27.3
- 83. Henry Dirks 0:18:54.7

INDIVIDUAL ELY BOYS RESULTS CLASSIC

- 45. Ethan Hasz 0:17:41.2
- 84. Chase Eilrich 0:19:38.5
- 103. Aidan Bremner 0:20:30.4

BOYS TEAM RESULTS

- 1. Forest Lake 546
- 2. Stillwater 534
- 3. Mounds Park Academy 525
- 4. Grand Rapids 521
- 5. Edina 492
- 16. Ely 411

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SCENIC RIVERS

New dentists join Scenic Rivers Health Services

by MELISSA ROACH
Staff Writer

COOK-Scenic Rivers Dental Services has added two new dentists with Dr. Michael Talberg and Dr. Robert Wightman joining the team.

Michael Talberg grew up in the Twin Cities west metro suburb area of Plymouth, graduating from Wayzata High School in 2001. He went on to attend University of Minnesota-Duluth earning a degree in marketing. After graduating, Talberg explored other career paths and found himself looking into the field of dentistry. He was accepted to the UofM School of Dentistry, and graduated in 2017. "I like working with my hands and I like working with people." The encouraging mentoring environment of the Scenic Rivers staff has been another affirmation that he made the right move. "The support from the doctors and staff is really important, and the patients have been a real joy to treat." Although he grew up in the metro area, he said he had a posi-

tive rural community residency experience, and knew he wanted to live and work in a rural area. "I knew this was going to be a great fit for me, my family...I really like it here. It was definitely the right fit." he said.

Also coming aboard is Robert Wightman. He comes from the south central Minnesota town of Waconia, where he graduated from high school in 2007. Wightman went on to Northwestern College in St. Paul, majoring in biochemistry. After graduating in 2011, he proceeded to the University of Minnesota's School of Dentistry and graduated in 2016. He completed his residency in Juneau, Alaska, and returned to Minnesota to be closer to family. Wightman enjoys many outdoor activities, especially hiking and camping. He said he knew he wanted to live in a rural town when he came to Cook for his interview and ate at the Montana Café. "I went there to eat and really knew I wanted to work in this community."



New dentists Dr. Michael Talberg (left) and Dr. Robert Wightman recently started practicing at Scenic Rivers, which has dental clinics in Cook and Tower. photo by M. Roach

ELY SCHOOL BOARD

Ely School Board considers plan to improve softball field

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – The Ely Area Girls Softball Club has a four-year plan to improve the playing surface and other areas at the school's softball field. They presented their proposal to the school board this week, seeking up to \$7,500 from the district to help in their effort.

The club, comprised of many community volunteers, has been committed for the past four years to helping the Ely School K-12 softball program grow and improve. "We focus on introducing elementary students to softball so that the program stays strong at the junior and high school level," said Craig Ohlhauser.

As various softball programs are introduced into the community, including 10U, 12U and 18U teams, the number of players, from grades 3-12, has grown along with the number of games being played on the school field.

"As we have been playing at the high school field, many safety concerns have come to light," he said. "It is very bumpy and uneven, creating unsafe footing and higher potential for player injury from bad hops. The grass is in poor health with a lot of weeds. Grass growth is very uneven due to the inconsistent quality of the grass across the playing area."

Ohlhauser highlighted a number of other safety concerns for fans and players, including degrading bleachers and dugouts, overgrown trees, grass maintenance along the fence lines, and poor drainage on the infield.

"While the girls' safety is our first concern, we are also looking to bring increased pride, player enjoyment and fan enjoyment to the game," he said.

Based on the success of a similar plan to improve the school football field, the Ely Girls Softball Club proposed working with the same Duluth landscaper, P.A. Jones, LLC., to improve the softball field over a four-year period, beginning this spring.

For the first year, Jones' work would cost about \$2,500. As much as \$2,000 would be required for three subsequent years of field work and maintenance. "After a meeting with Paul on the field last fall, he feels we can get the playing surface leveled out and improve the grass quality in the next four years," Ohlhauser said.

The softball club is willing to help with any work on the complex that the school board authorizes, including infield dirt maintenance, grass and tree trimming, bleacher and dugout painting and repair, he said.

School Board member Tom Omerza said the infield condition is in such poor condition that it is hard to groom before games.

"And in any sort of rain, we have puddling and ponding, with poor drainage," he said. "Like with the Touchdown Club, we are willing to put in the time and effort necessary to improve the field."

School Board Chair Ray Marsnik suggested that Superintendent Kevin Abrahamson and Facilities Manager Jeff Jankowski meet to recommend a softball field maintenance plan to be reviewed next month, with the hope of starting the project this spring.

Other business

In other business, the Ely School Board took the following action:

- Elected officers for 2018, including Ray Marsnik, chair, Scott Kellerman, clerk, and Rochelle Sjoberg, treasurer;

- Adopted a resolution supporting the purchase and exchange of School Trust Lands in the

Boundary Waters Canoe Area and Wilderness;

- Adopted two resolutions supporting full federal and state funding of Special Education Services;

- Designated the second Monday of each month at 6 p.m. as the day and time of the regular school board meeting, and designated the fourth Monday of each month at 6 p.m. as the day and time of the board study session;

- Designated the *Ely Echo* as the official school district newspaper for

2018;

- Designated Boundary Waters Bank, U.S. Bank, Minnesota School Liquid Asset Fund and PMA Financial Network as district financial institutions;

- Approved Kelly Klun Law Firm as the district's legal counsel for 2018;

- Approved School Board member compensation levels for 2018 as \$185.52 per month for directors and \$238.53 per month for the board chair, and an additional \$53.01

per month for board members who attend the monthly study session;

- Approved the 2018 IRS standard mileage rate for reimbursement for school district travel at 54.5 cents per mile;

- Adopted a resolution directing the administration to make recommendations for reductions in programs and positions;

- Approved paying the 2018 dues of \$1,250 to the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools (RAMS).

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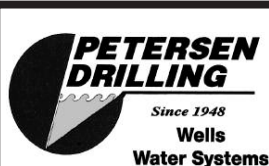
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Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Cold highlights most area bird counts

Isabella count gets underway in temperatures of minus-31; few birds found

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Looking for something to do when the high temperature for the day doesn't break the teens below zero? How about spending several hours traipsing through the forest counting chickadees?

That was the mission for 28 participants who turned out for this year's Isabella bird count, held Dec. 31, which was one of several counts held in the area in late December and early January.

Christmas bird counts in the North Country aren't known for balmy temperatures, but some of the bitter cold that settled in over the holidays posed challenges for birders. It was

minus-31 when the first Isabella counters donned their warmest gear and headed out to listen for signs of life in the woods, the coldest start in the count's 36 years. At those temperatures, binoculars are stubborn things. They refuse to focus. The slightest errant breath turns their lenses opaque with frost. Oh, and your eyes water, which makes everything blurry, at least until your eyelashes freeze together, at which point you can't see at all. And the pen you brought to record your sightings invariably freezes solid, which is why experienced cold weather birders know to bring a pencil.

But it's all good, and all in the name of science.

Right: The warmest clothes were high fashion at the Isabella bird count this year.
submitted photo

And here's a finding that probably doesn't surprise anyone. The birds have more sense than people when it comes to the cold. Turns out, most of the birds just stayed put in Isabella. They focused on food and finding a reasonably warm place to avoid the worst of the cold.

Count organizer Steve Wilson, of Tower, said his counters tallied the second lowest number of birds in the history of the count.

Bird tallies from the Ely and Cook counts weren't immediately

See **BIRD COUNTS...**pg. 5B



WEATHER

The cold... it's all relative

For those of us who spend our winters here in the North Country, there are few things more entertaining than listening to the howls of astonishment whenever the East Coast gets a wee taste of the kind of bracing conditions we take for granted.

You might have thought the world was coming to an end to hear the Eastern media types hype the latest wintery blast from the North.

Schools closed in Baltimore, and thousands of workers across the East Coast stayed home from work to avoid risking exposure to the brutal conditions. Forecasters warned everyone to stay inside, lest they freeze to death in mere minutes. New York City and Philadelphia both set a new record one morning, when the thermometer dipped to... don't faint... eight degrees above zero. Further to the north, Burlington, Vermonters suffered through an overnight low of minus-15. The windchill, however, was reported to hit minus-30.

How do they survive?

Of course if you took the temperature

thousands of feet in the air, such as the summit of 6,288-foot Mount Washington, you could actually find a temperature, at minus-36, that would prompt some of us North Country denizens to put a decent hat on. The temperature on the New Hampshire mountaintop made national headlines in the East. Yet buried within a *New York Times* story on the mountaintop's chilly temperature, was a single sentence that mentioned that the towns of Embarrass and Cotton, Minnesota, where people actually live and go about their daily lives, had recorded minus-39 that same morning. But that was actually a warmup from previous mornings, when the temperature dipped to 45 below in Embarrass.

Far from an inconvenience, our typical winter deep freeze prompts many of us to head outside. For me, it's the best time to strap on my snowshoes and head out into the Lost Lake Swamp for a good tromp in the bush.

Of course, whenever I think I'm being a bit too smug about what passes for winter in these parts, I check out the weather report from Yakutsk. It's a city of 250,000

There's nothing like a tromp in the bog on a minus-35 degree morning.

photo by M. Helmsberger

hardy Russians located in northeastern Siberia. Their high temperatures for the next five days include minus-44, minus-44, minus-42, minus-38 and minus-37. And that's not a cold snap... those are routine temperatures there in January. They don't just warm their cars up before heading out. Many Yakutians, particularly truckers, leave their vehicles running all winter.

If there's one thing I've learned over the years it's that cold is relative, so I understand why temperatures we take for granted can seem so jarring to folks out East.

I still remember that morning it hit minus-60 in Tower. I was at the official thermometer that morning, but had to leave early because it was newspaper distribution day and our regular driver couldn't get his truck started. By the time I had returned from picking up the papers, the temperature had warmed considerably, to about minus-45. I remember thinking "You know, forty-five below doesn't feel too bad." It's a dry cold, of course.

Fishing reports

Ely area

With the recent sub-zero temperatures, most of the area lakes have a good foundation of clear solid ice covering them. Shagawa Lake, which has seen the most traffic recently, has sixteen inches of ice on most of the surface. There are exceptions though, such as parts of the lake that have moving water or necked down place between the islands where there is some current flow.

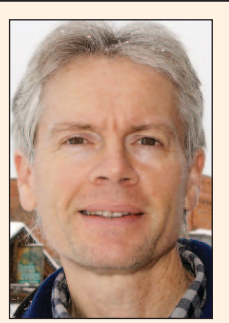
Walleye fishing seems to be slow to moderate, with the best action occurring after dark. Live minnows on a dead stick seem to be the preferred method for most, but many of the more successful anglers are using small spoons tipped with a minnow head slowly jigged starting on the bottom and worked up through the water column. For best results, change the minnow head often, as once the bait gets washed out, they become less effective.

Crappies are beginning to cooperate on some of the smaller lakes and small minnows under a bobber have been working well.

Northern pike have been the target of many, whether it be by spearing, or by the use of tip-ups. The best action seems to come from using dead bait such as suckers or frozen smelt fished right on the bottom. This could be due to the extremely low temperatures, or the fact that the fish have to expend less energy chasing live offerings.

Trout season opened in the Boundary Waters on Dec. 31 and many people are making the trek up into the remote lakes there with good success. Trout season opens outside the Boundary Waters on Jan. 13 and quite a few folks have been gearing up for that opener, which should be great this year in light of the favorable ice conditions.

Courtesy Babe's Bait located at Ely's west entrance.



MARSHALL
HELMBERGER

Outdoors briefly

Take a kid fishing for free this weekend

REGIONAL— Ready to try your hand at ice fishing this weekend? Then take a kid age 16 or younger along and you can fish or spear without a license from Jan. 13-15.

"Ice fishing is a fun way to get outdoors in the winter," said Jeff Ledermann, angler recruitment and retention supervisor with the Minnesota Department of Natural

Resources. "This weekend is a way to encourage anglers to get out and take a kid fishing."

While ice is plentiful on area lakes, it's always best to check on conditions with someone who knows the local area and can steer you away from areas with strong current, that could still be unsafe.

You can also find useful tips on where to go to find fish and what

baits are working by talking to your local bait dealer.

Fishing is a great way to spend time with kids and it helps to introduce them to an activity that fewer young people are exposed to every year. Only by getting kids involved in activities like hunting and fishing, can we guarantee that these activities will continue to be enjoyed by future generations.



BIRD COUNTS...Continued from page 4B

available, but counters in Cook did tally five great gray owls, and great grays were found on the Virginia, Eagles Nest, and Aurora counts as well. The Virginia count also had a snowy owl and a hawk owl, which suggests this is a good year for seeing northern owls.

The Virginia and Aurora counts also tallied

three and eight black-billed magpies respectively, which documents what appears to be a continuing eastward movement for this species. They used to be found almost exclusively west of Hwy. 53, but now are increasingly found well to the east end of the Iron Range.

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James Powers

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-1 -24				-5 -24				0 -16				-1 -21				0 -20			
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec. Sn.
01/01	-8	-34	0.00	01/01	-13	-45	0.00	01/01	-10	-31	0.00	01/01	1	-24	0.00	01/01	-9	-31	0.00
01/02	5	-24	0.00	01/02	-2	-34	0.00	01/02	1	-22	0.00	01/02	7	-6	0.00	01/02	2	-26	0.00
01/03	7	-8	0.04 1.8"	01/03	2	11	0.00	01/03	7	-9	0.07 1.0"	01/03	-2	-24	0.00	01/03	5	-11	0.02 0.8"
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01/05	-1	-32	0.00	01/05	-7	-44	0.00	01/05	-7	-30	0.00	01/05	-6	-33	0.00	01/05	-5	-35	0.00
01/06	-1	-30	0.00	01/06	-8	-42	0.00	01/06	-8	-29	0.00	01/06	10	-31	0.00	01/06	-5	-35	0.00
01/07	14	-30	0.01 0.1"	01/07	13	-39	0.00	01/07	13	-28	0.02 0.4"	01/07	27	10	0.00	01/07	13	-24	0.00
Totals 0.05 28.0"				Totals 0.06 29.4"				Totals 0.09 38.2"				Totals NA NA				Totals 0.02 27.3"			

MINING
Vermillion Gold seeking area mineral leases

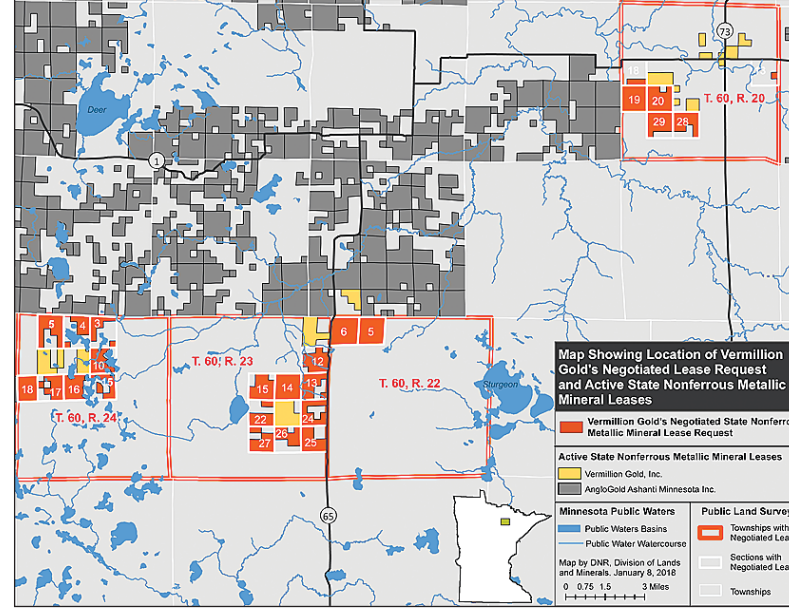
by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— A gold prospecting company is seeking additional state mineral leases in western St. Louis and eastern Itasca counties, and the Department of Natural Resources is currently considering whether to comply with the request.

Vermillion Gold, a Minnesota-based company formed in 2006, has assembled over 11,000 acres of leased mineral rights covering seven target areas, including portions of northwestern St. Louis County, focused on Linden Grove and Sturgeon townships.

The company's latest request for mineral leases includes about 2,200 acres of mostly peatland located just west of Hwy. 73 and just south of Hwy. 1, and about nine miles straight west of Cook. The company is also seeking leases covering several thousand acres beginning about six miles west of Side Lake.

Much of the areas subject to the request is already subject to mineral leasing by AngloGold Ashanti Minnesota, Inc., another prospecting company working in the greenstone belt that runs through



the area. The geologic formation is part of a larger complex that has yielded significant gold mining operations across a wide swath of northwestern Ontario.

The DNR is soliciting public comment on the mineral leasing request through 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 8. Comments can be mailed to: Minnesota DNR, Division of Lands and Minerals Attention: Negotiated Metallic Mineral Leases, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4045, or by

email at MMLeaseSale.dnr@state.mn.us. Subject line should be: Negotiated Metallic Mineral Leases.

Following the review of the public input, the DNR will finalize the areas that it will recommend for lease. The DNR will publish information and maps about these areas on this webpage along with the date, time and place of the State Executive Council meeting at which the leases will be considered.

IMAGINATION
Creative bird feeders wanted for Ely contest
Dorothy Molter Museum seeking entries by Jan. 31

ELY— Entries for the bird feeder contest at the Dorothy Molter Museum are due by Feb. 2. The third annual event opens Jan. 31.

Channel your inner Dorothy and get creative designing and building a bird feeder for this annual contest to celebrate Dorothy's love of birds. This contest is for all ages and abilities.

Submit entries at the museum from Jan. 31-Feb. 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Go to the museum basement door at the back of the Interpretive Center.

Download contest information at <http://www.rootbeerdady.com/programs-events/>.

Judging will be held Feb. 3-8. Winners will be announced Feb. 9 at the museum's Annual Fundraising Dinner and online on their blog.



A creative bird feeder was attracting redpolls at the Molter Museum recently. submitted

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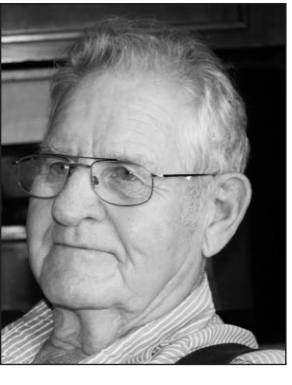
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Obituaries And Death Notices



Ross A. Huismann

Ross "Rod" Allen Huismann, 87, of Greaney, passed away on Monday, Jan. 1, 2018. A funeral service was held on Monday, Jan. 8 at Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook. Rev. Jeff Schirle was the officiant. Military honors were accorded by the combined Honor Guards of Cook VFW Post 1757 and Orr American Legion Post 480. A reception in honor of Rod followed at the Cook VFW. Spring interment will be held at the Willow Valley Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Mlaker Funeral Home in Cook.

Rod was born in Breckenridge on Feb. 19, 1930, to Claus and Doris (McKibben) Huismann. When Rod was eight-years-old, his family moved to Sauk Centre. Rod was united in marriage to Gwendolyn Kraakaas on Aug. 31, 1952, in Granite Falls at Stony Run Lutheran Church. Rod worked at many jobs: farming, labor mechanic, lineman for ATT construction, and then started his own business which he owned and operated for 40-plus years.

Rod is survived by his wife of 65 years, Gwendolyn; six children, Karen (Terry) Skraba of Hibbing, Kathy (Kenneth) Lehman of Greaney, John (Ruth Shermer) of Greaney, Barbara (Mark) Tupy of Hibbing, Frederick "Fritz" Huismann of Greaney and Kenny (Diane

Sauter) of Gilbert; 16 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; brother, Leroy (Mack) Huismann; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his mother and father; mother-and-father-in-law, Phyllis and Johnnie Kraakaas; sisters, Lois (Arne) Quistorff and Linda Winters; three siblings who died in infancy; sisters-in-law, Jean Huismann, Dagny Minsaas and Dorothy Coubal; and nephews, Wayne Quistorff and Robert Winters.



Jan Nilsen

Jan Nilsen, 80, died on Monday, Dec. 25, 2017. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Jan was born in Bergen, Norway, on Dec. 5, 1937, to Ruth and Ole Nilsen. They emigrated to Ely in 1949. We are all thankful for the many years of camping, fishing, boating, four-wheeler rides and going to the cabin that we experienced with him. He meant a lot to many people. We loved him dearly and are missing him so much already.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, JoAnn Seliga Nilsen; three daughters; two sons; 13 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Roger R. Maki

Roger R. Maki, 80, of Virginia, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Jan. 3, 2018, at Essentia Health—Virginia. Private family services were held at the Landmark Funeral

Home in Virginia with Deacon Brenda Tibbitts officiating. Spring interment will be in Greenwood Cemetery in Virginia.

Survivors include his wife, Carole; children, Roger (Lori Vainik) Maki of Lake Vermilion, Brian (Sally) Maki of Eagan, Lori Maki and Todd Maki, both of Virginia, Mark (Linda) Maki of Rogers and Paul Maki of Virginia; stepson, Milan Luzaich of Duluth; five grandchildren; one step-grandson; and a brother.

Rose Hedlund "Gwa Gwa Kigahobawik"

Rose Hedlund "Gwa Gwa Kigahobawik", 87, of Tower, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 30, 2017. Traditional Services were held on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2018, at the Vermilion Family Wellness Center. Gilbert Smith was the Spiritual Leader and Gene Goodsky was the Spiritual Advisor. Casket bearers were Norman Adams, Gordon Adams Jr., Randy Adams, Bradley Goodsky, Garvis Goodsky and Donovan Strong. Honorary casket bearers were David Parson, Joseph Hedlund, Karl Lindahl, Nathan Hedlund, Cody Fredenburg, Erik Larson and Joshua Gudahl.

Rose was born to William and Mary (Ottetail) Burnside on Sept. 5, 1930, in Crane Lake. She made her home in Buhl, where she raised her children with her husband, Carl Hedlund Sr. Rose was an American Indian Cultural Teacher.

Rose was loved by all who knew her. She was quick-witted and fun to be around. Rose had a heart of gold and welcomed the broken, drunken and poor into her home to rest and always provided uncondi-

tional love. She cared about everyone. Rose had a special relationship with each one of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She cherished each one and they cherished her. Rose had numerous nieces and nephews and was a special auntie who loved them all very much. She was their "antique"! Rose loved "her family" at St. Michael's and they loved her. She developed many friendships and made lasting bonds with many people. Above all she was our teacher and instructor and the greatest mom, grandmother and great-grandmother. We will miss you, mom, until we meet in paradise.

She is survived by her children, Mardelle Columbus, John (Cindy) Gudahl, Robert Hedlund, Joseph (Traci) Hedlund, Pamela (Thomas) Parson, Isabelle Larson and Carl Hedlund Jr.; grandchildren, David Parson, Cody Fredenburg, Karl Lindahl, Erik Larson, Joshua Gudahl, Nathan Hedlund, Steffanie Pajari, Nichole Weatherly, Danielle Parson, Kailee Gudahl, Mariah Gudahl, Allison Gudahl, Angela Gudahl, Carol Connor and Adeline Connor.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Carl; and two children, Dinky and Mary Alice.

Kim T. Von Wald

Kim Tina Von Wald, 58, of Babbitt, went to her heavenly home peacefully on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2018, from her home. Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Jan. 9 at Babbitt Assembly of God Church in Babbitt with Pastor Ben Morgan officiating. Spring burial will be in the Argo Cemetery in Babbitt. Arrangements are with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her parents, Bruce, whom she called "Poppers", and Judith; siblings, Brandon (Lori Rosenbush) of Puyallup, Wash., Pastor James Von Wald and Pastor Tina Von Wald of Foley, Rian (Jeannene) Von Wald of Blaine, Ronald (Darla) Von Wald of Blaine; nieces, Emma (Jared) and Ella; nephews, Michael (Lisa) and Mark (Bonnie); grand-nephews, Ean, Noah, Ethan, Sam and Max; great-grand-nephew, Benjamin; many uncles, aunts and cousins; and many friends too numerous to mention. Her family thanks each of you for the love and kindness you have shown to Kim.



Dennis J. Dix

Dennis Jay "DJ" Dix, 35, of Hibbing, passed away of natural causes on Sunday, Dec. 24, 2017, at Fairview Medical Center in Hibbing. Traditional Services were held on Sunday, Dec. 31 at the Nett Lake Government and Services Center. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Mary J. Davis

Mary Jane Clendening Davis, 91, of Eagles Nest, died on Thursday, Jan. 4, 2018, in Ely. Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Jan. 9 at Ely United Methodist Church with

Pastor Dana Thompson officiating. Spring interment will be in the Ely Cemetery. Memorials may be directed to the Alzheimer's Association or the American Cancer Society. Family services provided by Bauman Vermilion, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower.

Mary is survived by her husband, Lawrence Edward "Pete" Davis; daughter, Joy (Robert) Sundquist; son, Mark (Linda) Davis; grandchildren, Shelly, Aaron (Jana), Pamela and Nic; great-grandchildren, Brookelyn, Brayden, Maddelyn, Finnean, Emmelyn, Blake and Molly; Robert Sundquist's children and grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Christine L. Tezak

Christine Louise Koprivnik Tezak, 94, of Ely, passed away peacefully with family by her side on Monday, Dec. 25, 2017, at Carefree Living in Babbitt. A Funeral Mass was celebrated on Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018, at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely. Family arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

She is survived by her children, Edward (Linda) of Duluth, Kathleen Tezak of Ely, Mary Lou (Charles) Lina of Hibbing, Patricia (Gary) Doyle of Santa Rosa, Calif., Michael (Marla) Tezak of Ely and Monica (Mike) Bonderson of Nashwauk; grandchildren, James (Tracy) Tezak, Michael and Samuel Lina, Christopher (Ashlee) Bonderson, Brandon and Mitchell Bonderson, and Zachary Doyle; great-grandchildren, Easton and Will; and several nieces and nephews.

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Full job description online at www.vermilioncountry.org/employment

The Vermilion Country School (VCS), is a grades 7-12 public charter school in Tower. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: interact with staff, students, parent/guardians, and the community; facilitate academic and personal goal-setting; assist students with skill development in reading and math; monitor student progress; manage the physical needs of students as needed; chaperone field explorations; records maintenance and due process paperwork; proctor assessments and diagnostic tests; supervise students during lunch and out in the community; address behavior issues in accordance with school policy; maintain strict confidentiality; assist office staff and director as needed.

Minimum qualifications: Experience working with children, and a commitment to their learning; Excellent math, reading, and organizing skills; Excellent computer and office machine skills; Mature, friendly, and responsible; Commitment to the school's mission and vision; Positive references; A minimum of 60 semester credits or the amount required to complete two full years of fulltime enrollment as determined by the institution of higher education attended; or an AA, AS, or AAS (or higher) degree; or a passing score on an assessment from the state-approved list (The ParaPro test has been approved for state-wide use. The cut score is 460.) Additional desired qualifications (please see website).

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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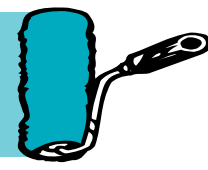
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

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PUBLIC NOTICE

**KUGLER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING**

The Kugler Town Board will hold their regular monthly meeting on Monday, Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. at the Kugler Town Hall.

Julie Suihkonen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 12, 2018

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