



We wish all of our readers a safe and happy New Year.  
The Timberjay office will be closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 4

Please note: There will be no Timberjay published on Jan. 4

# the TIMBERJAY

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\$1<sup>00</sup>



## TOWER CITY COUNCIL

# Town home agreement deadline extended to Jan. 3

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

Chambers overflowed with city residents in favor of finalizing a deal

TOWER— A short special meeting agenda yielded one of the longest Tower City Council meetings in years on Wednesday, Dec. 19, as councilors wrestled for the third straight meeting

with how to proceed on the proposed town home project at the harbor. And this time they had plenty of company as the council chambers were filled to overflowing with city residents, many of

whom spoke out in favor of finalizing a deal for the town home development. On Dec. 10, the council had given representatives of Tower Harbor Shores (THS) until Dec. 14 to sign a new

revision to a development agreement for the project, but that deadline came and went without a signature. A Dec. 19 email from Kelly Klun, the attorney for THS, indicated that the developers needed to

see some changes in the wording to portions of the agreement, particularly timelines for phasing and wording surrounding the assignability of dock space.

“It’s up to us what we want to do,” said Mayor Josh Carlson, who noted the council could walk away from the project and seek a new developer or continue to try to reach an

See...TOWER pg. 7

## TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY CONCERT



Tower-Soudan elementary students performed their holiday concert on Dec. 20 under the direction of music teacher Michelle Anderson and band teacher Kevin Ryks. Above, students in grades Kindergarten through second sang holiday favorites, including Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Below left, the elementary band with students from TS and NER performed. Below right, fourth-grader Trevor Zaitz sang a solo. photos by J. Summit



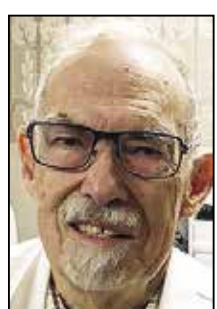
## HEALTH CARE

# A prescription for retirement

Cook doctor reflects on 45-year career

by MARCUS WHITE  
Cook/Orr Editor

COOK— Dr. Harold Johnston sat in his office Tuesday morning last week reflecting on a career that has now spanned more than four decades. It’s a small office, and as he pondered his retirement at the end of the week, he was trying to work through what among his old files and computer would go and what would remain behind.



Dr. Harold Johnston

The occasional nurse still knocked on his door to ask questions on a patient, part of a daily routine that, for Johnston, is now part of the past.

## From Jamaica to north woods

The road to Cook for the doctor would take him across two continents and across the Atlantic twice before he’d find himself in the north woods of Minnesota. Dr. Johnston was born in Jamaica, but much of his early education was across the pond in Europe. “My mother took me to England for an education,” he said. “I came to the United States for better opportunities after that. I’ve been here since I was 19.”

See... DOC pg. 8

## LOST AND FOUND

# The Retrievers work to find lost pets

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

REGIONAL—Losing the family dog can be the loneliest feeling in the world, and the most daunting situation a pet owner will ever face. But there is help, including right here in the North Country. The Retrievers is an all-volunteer team with the tools, experience

and expertise to help individual owners find their lost dogs. Based in Minneapolis, the group has the resources to help organize an effective search, and through free consultation, experienced team members offer advice on strategic decisions as the search unfolds. Their specialty is capturing skittish dogs, and they can be especially helpful once a missing pet has been

spotted and is remaining in the same general area. Lisa Foss of Ely is one of 10 caseworkers on The Retrievers team. She told her story of a recent capture in the Tower area. Sasha went missing from her new adoptive home west of Tower. Her new parents thought she would

See... PETS pg. 8



In this trail cam view, Lisa Foss, of Ely, checks the status of a runaway pet she captured near Tower. submitted photo



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# COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

## VERMILION HEAD START



Vermilion Head Start students performed for family and friends at their holiday gathering on Dec. 18. The children sang a selection of holiday songs, and then worked on craft projects with help from their families. Vermilion Head Start is located on the Vermilion Reservation, and serves children from Bois Forte and the Tower-Soudan communities. photo by S. Ukkola (who noted it was impossible to get all the children standing still at the same time!)

## Vermilion Dream Quilters meet Thursday, Jan. 3 in Tower

TOWER- Vermilion Dream Quilters will meet Thursday, Jan. 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the social hall at St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower.

The guild will celebrate winter with everyone bringing a Christmas or winter item to show, new or old, and by starting the year with two challenges. Our first challenge isn't due until November, the UnFinished Object or UFO that you would like to make a New Year's resolution to complete. Your UFO might be a pattern or kit to start, a partly done project, or anything else languishing in your sewing space. Bring them along in their current state if you'd like, especially if you set it aside after reaching an inspiration wall. Guild members might have just the solution you need. The second will be Brown Bag Challenge #1 presented by Nancy Andreae, more details on Jan. 3. And finally, perhaps Barb Rinne, winner of last year's snowball blizzard blocks, may have her project completed to show us.

As always, please bring your own projects to share for Show and Tell since we all gain inspiration when we see what is possible. Hostesses for January are Kathy Lovgren and Colleen Lepper.

The Vermilion Dream Quilters is a guild with members from throughout the Iron Range and Arrowhead Region and is open to anyone interested in quilting and creative sewing. Members encourage and instruct each other and share tips. Guests and visitors are welcome. For more information, please contact Corrine Hill in Tower by calling 218-753-4600.

## True Stories from the Edge in Ely

ELY- Most people have a story to tell. Stories can entertain, teach, or reveal something surprising about someone's life. You can learn a lot by listening to other people's stories. You get a glimpse of what a "mile in their shoes" might feel like. Plus, stories can be fun to tell and hilarious to listen to!

We are hosting an open mic storytelling event in Ely, called "True Stories from the Edge," from 6-8 p.m. at the Ely Senior Center (cookies and coffee provided) on Thursday, Jan. 17, Thursday, Feb. 21, and Thursday, March 21. The theme for Jan. 17 is "I Didn't See That Coming!" Drop your name in the hat, and if chosen, you can tell us a six-minute true story that happened to you. Please come to listen or tell your story. Email questions to elystorytelling@gmail.com.

## Vermilion Lake Township clerk resigns

Position will be on the ballot for the March 12 township election

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

VERMILION LAKE TWP— The town board here, on Thursday, accepted the resignation of township clerk Steve Peterson. The board then appointed him as interim clerk to fill the vacancy until a new clerk can be elected in March.

Peterson will receive help until the new clerk is seated in March from former clerk Fran Silverberg, who the town board appointed as Peterson's deputy. Peterson has stated that his new job has made it too difficult for him to fulfill the clerk's duties, which prompted his decision to resign.

Filings for the position can be submitted from Jan. 1 -15 at the clerk's office, by appointment, by calling 218-780-7717. The treasurer

seat, held by Steven Lotz, and one supervisor seat, held by Robert Pratt (who was appointed to a vacancy), are also on the ballot in March.

The part-time position does not currently involve office hours, since the clerk has traditionally worked from home. The position currently pays \$175 per month, but \$50 for meetings, however, township treasurer Steve Lotz indicated that the board will likely look at raising that compensation next year.

In other business, Tower Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg made a pitch for the township to increase its subsidy to the ambulance replacement fund and cited other townships as having already done so. "He said Greenwood and Eagles Nest were already on board," said treasurer Lotz.

Altenburg had also informed the Tower City Council earlier in the week that the township ambulance subsidy was set to increase to \$45,300 next year and to \$52,800 in 2020.

But it does not appear that townships have necessarily agreed to those increases. The issue has yet to come before the Greenwood Town Board and Eagles Nest supervisor Larry Anderson said his board hasn't taken it up either. "We've talked about it at the ambulance commission," said Anderson. "We have to bring that up [at the town board meeting]. We really we don't have a decision yet."

The *Timberjay* confirmed that Breitung Township has yet to address the issue, either. The *Timberjay* sought clarification from Altenburg, but he did not respond as of the paper's early holiday press time.



Tower-Soudan Elementary students in grades 3-6 performing at their holiday concert on Dec. 20. photo by J. Summit

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MINING

# BLM proposes renewal of Twin Metals leases

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — The federal Bureau of Land Management is proposing to reissue two mineral leases on the Superior National Forest to Twin Metals and is seeking public comment on the plan during an abbreviated environmental review process. The BLM is giving the public until Jan. 22, 2019, to comment on the proposal.

The latest action by the BLM is not a surprise, given that the agency temporarily reinstated the leases back in May, effectively overturning a 2016 decision by the Obama administration to cancel the leases.

Twin Metals, which is controlled by Chilean mining giant Antofagasta, hailed the decision in a press statement and indicated

the company was working to quickly complete a mine plan in order to begin an environmental review of their proposal. The Twin Metals statement claimed that the Interior Department issued the leases in 1966 with a “right of unlimited, successive 10-year renewals.” In fact, the leases came with an initial term of 20 years and a right of up to three ten-year renewals, but only if actual mining was underway in the initial 20-year term. No mining operations have gotten underway as a result of the leases in the more than half a century since they were issued.

The pro-mining group Jobs for Minnesotans called the BLM action a “positive next step for Twin Metals.”

“The renewal of the leases is just one of many important milestones that Twin Metals will work to achieve before entering the robust environmental review process required prior to any mining activity,” said the group in a statement.

Critics of the proposal, which would open a copper-nickel mine just upstream of the 1.1 million-acre Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, called the proposal and the process “unlawful.” Several Minnesota-based businesses and national environmental organizations are suing the Trump Interior Department over the decision last May to reinstate the leases temporarily. That decision was based on a controversial legal

opinion written by DOI legal counsel Daniel Jorjani, a long-time legal counsel for the conservative, pro-industry Charles Koch Institute. It was Jorjani’s opinion that the Obama-era cancellation of the leases was based on “legal error” that made the current proposal to reissue the leases possible.

Without that opinion, the Trump administration would have had to follow the standard environmental review process for mining leases in order to issue new leases to Twin Metals. That review would have been led by the U.S. Forest Service, which has already weighed in against reissuance of the leases due to



Twin Metals local office in Ely. file photo

See LEASES...pg. 5

CITY OF ELY

## Ely council considers utility rate hikes

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY — City council members here considered recommended increases in utility rates for city residents during their last business meeting of 2018, held on Tuesday, Dec. 18.

The recommendations, from the Ely Utility Commission (EUC), amount to a \$1 increase in the fixed fee rate for water service, from \$14.25 to \$15.25 per month, and an overall three-percent hike in electric rates across all categories. There is no recommended rate increase for sewer service.

A public hearing on the proposed utility rate increases

will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019, beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the council chambers. The council must authorize the increases before they can be implemented.

Speaking for the EUC’s budget and rate committee, Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski said one of the major goals of the EUC over the last several years has been to ensure that the operating fund balances for the electric, water and sewer accounts are sufficient to respond to emergencies like freeze-ups and to avoid making major rate hikes.

“In 2018 and 2019, we also need to consider having a rate base that will allow the EUC to pay the debt service on the automatic metering

bonds, as well as bonding for improvements in the near future,” he said.

Water and sewer fund balances have increased slightly over the past five years, he said, which is the result of “good budget management” and approved rate hikes. “Those increases are not the result of more usage or new users, however,” he added.

As for the electric utility, several aspects of the rate system were adjusted in 2018 that allowed the cash balance to grow in that account as well. “We are seeing an overall rate increase from Minnesota Power (in 2019) and we will on an annual basis, probably forever,” Langowski said. “Obviously their costs go up

on an annual basis as well as our costs.”

The recommended three-percent EUC electric rate increase is largely due to the rising cost of purchased power from Minnesota Power “in addition to our debt service for the meter replacement and other cost increases such as employee medical expenses,” he said.

In other business:

► Mayor Novak corrected erroneous information disseminated by an Ely-based media publication, concerning the availability of free wireless Internet service in downtown Ely. “The *Ely Echo* retweeted information about free wi-fi

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### Correction

The Dec. 21 story on the Bay View Lodge RV park indicated that the proposed RV facility and existing lodge would be operated as two entities. In fact, the RV park is part of a business proposal to purchase the resort and operate the existing property and RV park as one entity. The *Timberjay* regrets the error.

### Clarification

In last week’s story on Lake Country Power, it was reported the co-op was spending \$25 million this year on projects. That dollar amount is a combination of several capital investments that will be made over many years. The meters that are being replaced read accurately but the new system will provide many benefits to members compared to the current system. The new meters will provide faster response times to outages and improve the number of meters that read on a regular basis. The new meters will also allow co-op members to monitor electric usage on an hourly basis.

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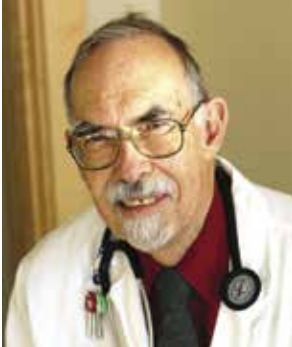
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# OPINION

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

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

## Editorial

### Ely teachers' claims

Both sides should make an effort to find an amicable settlement

Both the teachers and administrators in the Ely School District should sit down and resolve the 17 separate claims that teachers recently filed in conciliation court in Virginia.

All sides can certainly agree that the cause of education is poorly served by forcing the school district to pay out attorney's fees to address 17 separate court actions over the district's decision to recoup excessive wages paid in error to teachers last year.

If the district failed to adequately inform teachers or consult with them on their plan to recover the funds paid out in error, that's a shame, but it's not clear that it's a violation of the law.

It appears to be an example of poor communication, which could best be addressed by sitting down and talking.

The teachers acknowledge in their legal filings that they were overpaid in error, through 13 paychecks that were larger than they should have been. And that could well pose a problem as they seek to recover twice the amount that was deducted from their paychecks. That's based on Minn. Stat. Section 181.79 Subd. 1, which makes it illegal for employers to make any deduction, directly or indirectly, from the wages due or earned by any employee.

Yet the key words there are "wages due" and it's easy to see both sides on that question. If the school district is seeking to recover wages that were overpaid in error, were the

wages that the district later deducted actually "due" the teachers?

In effect, the teachers received an unexpected advance on the pay they agreed to in their contract. And it appears the district was trying to correct the overpayment.

There is little doubt that the recovery period was an inconvenience for some teachers, particularly those without sufficient financial reserves to make up for the deductions. That's where more communication would have been better. The Ely School District isn't so large that accommodations couldn't have been made for teachers who needed a slower repayment schedule. Given that the school district made the error, it certainly could have taken steps to alleviate the effects of recovering the funds. According to the teachers, the overpayments came over the course of 13 paychecks, but the school district has sought to recoup the funds in just seven pay periods. For some teachers, that deduction was undoubtedly painful.

Is this something that should really be headed to court, or is this an issue that could be better addressed through a little communication? In a season where we offer our glad tidings and wishes for goodwill among all of us, perhaps a few Christmas cookies could break the ice and allow all sides to sit down and reach an amicable agreement. This is one issue that just shouldn't require 17 trips to court.



## Letters from Readers

### County schools must give Turnbull a raise

I'm a parent of an infant and in a few years I plan to send him to a school that displays good ethics. I am appalled at St. Louis County Schools and Reggie Engebritson's decision to turn down Marilyn Turnbull

for the wage and position she deserves, once again, even after public outcry. Turnbull manages a kitchen and should be paid for such. She should be paid at least \$16 per hour and more for her longevity, hard work, and good attitude day after day. The district should also be paying for her licensing. I refuse to support

any school that so clearly fails to value hard-working and caring employees. Please make this right and apologize or you can expect me to vote no on any upcoming referendums and send my kids to school elsewhere.

Stephanie Ukkola  
Soudan

### COMMENTARY

## What does it really mean to be patriotic?

Patriotism has been on a lot of people's minds lately. French President Emanuel Macron recently criticized President Trump and other world leaders for their "us versus them" view of patriotism. "By putting our own interests first," he said, "with no regard for others, we erase the very thing that a nation holds dearest, and the thing that keeps it alive: its moral values."

Meanwhile, just ahead of the midterm elections, *The New York Times* noted that two clashing visions of patriotism were heading to the polls. President Trump and Republicans saw patriotism as "conspicuous displays of respect for the traditional expressions of America — the flag, the military, the Pledge of Allegiance." Democrats, by contrast, saw it as protecting the norms and institutions of our democracy.

I don't entirely buy this distinction, at least when it comes to partisan labels. I've known plenty of Democrats who consider it patriotic to honor the flag, the military, and the Pledge. And I've known a lot of Republicans who

value our democratic traditions.

The vast majority of Americans consider themselves patriots — even if, as Gallup found in June, less than half of poll respondents considered themselves "extremely proud" to be American. This was the first time this has happened in almost two decades of polling on the question.

The two broad strands outlined by *The Times* arguably exist. We all remember the naval hero Stephen Decatur's famous toast in 1816, "Our country, right or wrong." And Senator Carl Schurz's amendment a half-century later: "My country, right or wrong — if right, to be kept right, if wrong, to be set right." We may criticize our country, in other words, but this is not motivated by malice. It's motivated by special affection and a belief that a great country can be made greater.

"There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America," President Clinton argued, laying out a vision of patriotism that is not about symbols, but about building on

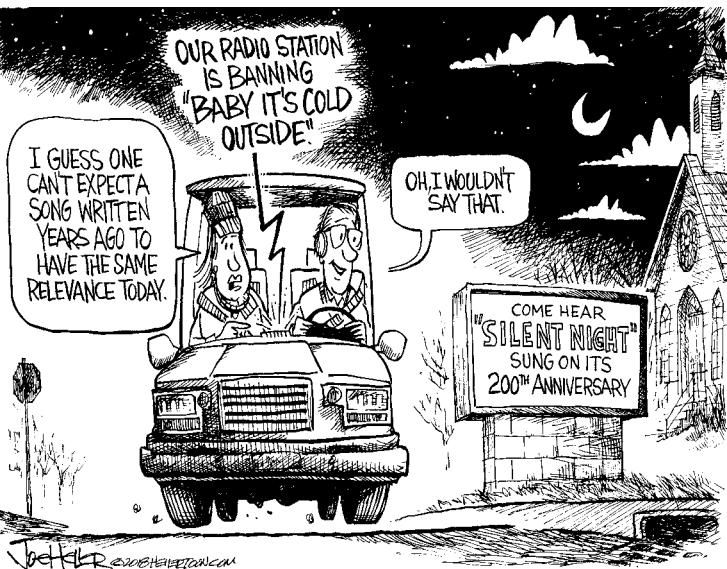
a nation's intangible strengths.

I buy that. I believe that patriotism means getting on with the serious business of improving our country. It means that we strive to ensure that we live up to our pledge of liberty and justice for all. In this formulation, patriotism is best expressed not in parades or speeches or exhortations or conspicuous displays, but in what we do.

Perhaps the most persuasive description I've heard on this score was Adlai Stevenson's. "True patriotism is not manifested in short, frenzied bursts of emotion," he said. "It is the tranquil, steady dedication of a lifetime."

Stevenson hit the nail square on the head. So much of our national discussion of patriotism is about military heroes. This is important, but it's an incomplete view of love of country. I'd argue that we encounter patriotism at all levels of American life. The teacher in the classroom, the parents who raise their children to be good citizens, the clerk who keeps town records and helps people vote, the ordinary working person who goes about her tasks with dedication and proficiency — patriotism can be found everywhere in our com-

See PATRIOTISM...page 5



## Trump's sell-off of America's public lands hits close to home

As reported in the Dec. 7 edition of the *Timberjay*, Interior Department notes and memoranda from 1965 and 1966, provide extraordinary insight into the discussions that led federal officials to issue the two mineral leases now the subject of a lawsuit by opponents of the proposed Twin Metals



MARSHALL  
HELMBERGER

copper-nickel mine near Ely.

They also provide a devastating rebuttal to an attempt by pro-industry operatives, embedded within the Trump administration, to rewrite history in a transparent and ongoing effort to raid some of the nation's most valuable and pristine public lands, all to

benefit a handful of foreign billionaire investors.

In a well-functioning democracy, the memos obtained by plaintiffs in the Twin Metals case would be game, set, and match in any legal battle over whether the Trump administration acted lawfully when it temporarily reinstated the Twin Metals mineral leases back in May. The administration took yet another step down that road last Thursday, announcing that it was planning to formally reissue the leases in the new year.

Yet in a federal judiciary that is rapidly being transformed with the appointment of Trump-friendly ideologues, the notion of the courts as a fair arbiter of such issues is increasingly in question.

Nonetheless, it now appears virtually certain that disgraced Trump Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who resigned earlier this month under a slew of ethics investigations, acted beyond his legal authority when he temporarily reinstated the Twin Metals leases, which had been lawfully rescinded by the Obama

administration in 2016.

The Obama administration decision did not prevent Twin Metals from reapplying for new mineral leases, but doing so would have required a full environmental review process, including public comment, which would have been led by the Forest Service. It also would have required the U.S. Forest Service to give its consent to mining, which was certainly up in the air even under the Trump

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**INTERIOR...**Continued from page 4

administration. The agency had quite thoroughly documented the scientific and economic reasons behind its 2016 decision not to consent to the mineral leasing. There are dozens of scientific studies that suggest that the proposed mine poses a serious risk to the Boundary Waters, and economic studies that argue the local economy would be better off without the mine.

While the Trump White House has shown a willingness to ignore the scientific findings of its own agencies, the Forest Service would have had a difficult time defending a purely political decision in the courts. For the Forest Service to walk back all of its previously-stated concerns would be the virtual definition of arbitrary and capricious, which is the legal standard that courts use in determining whether to overrule an agency decision. Government decisions are supposed to be based on scientific or economic arguments and those that are seen as little more than political payoffs to special interests are routinely overturned by the courts, and

justifiably so.

In order to avoid all this, Trump Interior officials turned to Daniel Jorjani to craft a creative “legal opinion” that could sweep aside troublesome review processes and deny the Forest Service its statutory right to approve or deny any mining proposal on the Superior National Forest — a law that has been in effect since 1950. Jorjani, who cut his teeth at the pro-industry Charles Koch Institute, used the only plausible legal argument available to him, suggesting that federal officials had intended to give the International Nickel Company absolute rights to minerals within the boundaries of the leases for at least 50 years, with no strings attached.

The documents now in the hands of plaintiffs, which we published earlier this month, demonstrate exactly the opposite. Interior officials did ultimately agree to give INCO a 20-year initial lease, which was longer than the usual term, but they did so under heavy pressure from then-Congressman John Blatnik, who hoped a new

copper-nickel mine would alleviate persistent unemployment in the Ely area at the time, as well as mitigate the employment impacts of the pending shutdown of the Pioneer Mine.

The lease also gave the company preferential rights to three future renewals, which is standard in federal mineral leasing. But those renewals, as is also common in federal leasing, were conditioned on the start of actual mining at the site within the initial 20-year lease term. That’s not only stated in memoranda — it was a point noted in the 1966 Interior Department press release announcing the leases. And that’s not surprising. There’s no conceivable federal interest in giving mining companies half-century-long rights to lock up federal lands and minerals with no obligation to produce anything. Otherwise, mining interests could simply lock up federal minerals indefinitely, simply to control supply and maintain high prices. Neither INCO nor any of its successors have engaged in commercial mining in the more than half a

century since the leases were first issued, so under the terms of the leases at issue, the company has no right to automatic renewal. Department of Interior legal counsel, under both the Reagan and Obama administrations, previously concluded as much.

Twin Metals even acknowledged that the renewal was discretionary, in financial filings the company made in 2014.

While the actual reissuance of the Twin Metals permits will require a modicum of environmental review, it matters little since the Interior Department now argues that it’s bound to reissue the leases regardless of what evidence of environmental or economic harm might be presented. That falsehood is being used to allow the Trump administration to complete the handover of several thousand acres of the Superior National Forest to Andronico Luksic, the Chilean billionaire who controls the Twin Metals project, during Trump’s current term. Luksic, as has previously been reported, just happens to be the landlord for Ivanka Trump and Jared

Kushner, President Trump’s daughter and son-in-law. A company controlled by Luksic purchased the Washington, D.C. mansion where Trump and Kushner now live shortly before Trump was inaugurated. It was all very conveniently-timed.

This, of course, is standard operating procedure in the Trump administration, where it’s open season on public lands and the environment as a whole, all to benefit well-connected special interests. From the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the Bears Ears National Monument, to vast swaths of America’s coasts, the Trump administration is engaged in a lawless rush to sell off millions of acres of our most pristine public lands to the fossil fuel and mining industries. Their push to reinstate leases for the Twin Metals project is part of that same effort.

The only question now is whether the courts will allow a renegade administration to get away with it.

**PATRIOTISM...**Continued from page 4

of people who pursue their lives with the good of the country at heart.

We have inherited a magnificent political legacy, a set of customs

and traditions and, yes, moral values that give ordinary people the tools and power to improve life for themselves and succeeding generations.

Patriotism lies in our efforts to enlarge that legacy so that it applies to all citizens. It means we defend civil liberties, the right to dissent, and the

equality before the law of all Americans. And it means that upholding our core values — tolerance, mutual respect, the right of everyone to be heard, the

belief that in pursuing our own lives and interests we all are capable of contributing to the vibrancy of our democracy — is every bit as patriotic as placing our

hand over our heart while reciting the Pledge.

*Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative*

**LEASES...**Continued from page 3

side-based mining poses to the Boundary Waters. The Forest Service would have also had the right to reject the leases outright, since a 1950 federal law gives the agency veto power over mining projects on the Superior National Forest.

“The Trump Administration’s unlawful renewal of toxic mining leases next to the Boundary Waters goes against good science, obvious facts, and basic common sense,” said Becky Rom, National Chair of the Campaign to

Save the Boundary Waters. “The Trump administration is trying to do an end run around the environmental review process and ram through federal approvals while they still can.”

**You can comment**

Written comments should be addressed to MN Hardrock Lease Renewal EA Project Manager, Northeastern States District Office, 626 E. Wisconsin Ave., Ste. 200,

Milwaukee, WI 53202. Prior to including your address, phone number, email address or other personally identifiable information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment —

including your personally identifiable information — may be made publicly available at any time.

The Environmental Assessment is available at <https://go.usa.gov/xPtDd>.

**COUNCIL...**Continued from page 3

here,” he said. “If anyone does see that, it is for Ely, England. We are not set up to provide free downtown wi-fi here.”

►Police Chief John Lahtonen informed the council that all seven officers on his force will soon be equipped with and trained on the use of Narcan, used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

In other action, the council:

►Denied the step one grievance to the overtime offered as required in the law enforcement personnel contract.

►Agreed to form an annexation committee, consisting of Mayor Novak, Clerk Langowski, Council Member Heidi Omerza and City Attorney Kelly Klun, to prepare a counter-offer to the town of Morse’s land-swap proposal and report back to the council.

►Approved in-kind services for the Wolf Track Classic Sled Dog Race, slated for Feb. 23-24, 2019.

►Adopted the city budget for fiscal year 2019 and final tax levy for 2019 as approved last month.


►Approved advertising for two EUC Commission seats to replace Angela Campbell, who will begin her term as city council member, and Terry Soderberg, whose term is expired.

►Adopted a resolution designating the Ely Senior Center as the city’s 2019 polling place.

►Authorized the hiring of Troy Bissonette in the spring for parking and civil enforcement for the summer as a 67-day part-time employee.

►Approved the council and staff to attend the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Legislative Action Day on Jan. 20 in St. Paul.

**Enjoy Family & Friends at Christmas!**  
from **D’Erick’s Tower Liquor**



**Kooper Dostert**  
Grade 2

**Merry Christmas to Creatures Great & Small**  
from **Disability Specialists**



**Winning Artist BRITTIN LAPPI**  
Grade 5

**Have a Very Merry Christmas!**  
from **LUMBER ORR HARDWARE**



**Winning Artist • ALEX BOON**  
Grade 4

**We Wish You A Very Merry Christmas!**  
from **GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP**



**Artist • JASE ZIGLINSKI**  
Kindergarten

**Peace On Earth To All**  
from **First National Bank**



**Winning Artist • RIVER DEATHERAGE**  
Grade 2

**WE WISH YOU PEACE, JOY & LOVE**  
from **GOOD ‘OL DAYS BAR & GRILL**



**Winning Artist • IVY RUSSELL**  
Kindergarten

**Happy Holiday To You & Yours!**  
from **Fortune Bay Resort Casino**



**Winning Artist • KAILANI GESHICK**  
Kindergarten

**We Wish You The Happiest of Holidays!**  
from **Fortune Bay Resort Casino**



**Winning Artist • MATTHIAS BOSHEY**  
Grade 3

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!**  
from **Embarrass Vermillion Credit Union**



**Winning Artist • CHLOE ADKISSON**  
Grade 5

**HO HO HO THIS HOLIDAY!**  
from **Glenmore Resort**



**Winning Artist COLE SCHUSTER**  
Grade 6



Week of Dec. 31

**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. 15.

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

Vermilion Country School Board- Meetings posted online at [vermilioncountry.org](http://vermilioncountry.org).

**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 are 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 – 1:30 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.

Homebound seniors can sign up for meal delivery. To register for the new Meals on Wheels, or for more information, please call AEOA Senior Nutrition at 218-735-6899.

**Week of Dec. 31**  
No School All Week- no lunches served. Lunches resume on Monday, Jan. 7.

# Operation Santa says THANK YOU

## Gifts for 181 children from over 65 families were distributed on Dec. 18

Once again, the community has risen to the challenge and made sure that every child in our community has something to celebrate during this holiday season. The spirit of Christmas is certainly alive and well!

We had hundreds of toys donated, and enough gift cards for every teenager on our list. Cash donations were used to purchase toys for all ages. We also had enough to put together smaller gift bags for the senior citizens who use the food shelf.

We knew going into distribution day that our need was going to be significantly higher than the previous three years, when we served between 150-160 children. We had 155 children (from 53 families) on our list the morning of Dec. 18, but by the time the food shelf had closed its doors, we had served 181 children from a total of 65 families.

But the most amazing part of this story is we still had enough donations on our shelves to reach out to other children in our community who are in need (referred through area schools).

All told, your donations meant we could deliver gifts of toys and warm clothing to at least 200 children in our community.

Special thanks to Lake Country Power’s Operation Roundup program for their \$3,500 donation to the Tower Soudan Civic Club that was used to purchase warm winter items such as coats, hats and mittens, socks, pajamas, and sweatshirts.

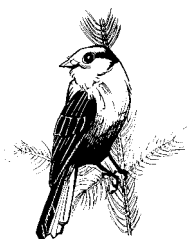
Thanks to the individuals and organizations that made larger contributions to the drive this year: Tower-Soudan Civic Club, Wendy and Jim Tuominen, Greg “Arch” Archibald (Vermilion Club), St. James Presbyterian Church (mitten tree drive), Vermilion Dream Quilters, Block of the Month Quilt Group, Frank and Katy Popesh, Eric Norberg, Dennis and G. Larson, Stephen Abrahamson, Tim and Nancy Kotzian, Fr. Nick



Nelson and St. Martin’s Catholic Church, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tom and Renee Aro, Mel and Ellen Hintz, Rolf and Laura Anderson, Jane and Daniel Johns, Steven and Sheryl Redmond, Jayanne and William Suihkonen, The Little Church of Vermilion Lake Township, Vermilion Land Office, Steven and Lori Vukelich, Dick and Ellie Larmouth, Wilbert and Bertha Hill, Barbara and Roger Rinne, Peter and Colette Johnson, Helen Adkisson, Ron and Susan Norha, Cathy and Jim Wright, Paul and Carol Knuti, and the Timberjay. Several other anonymous individuals made larger donations of gift cards and cash. If we inadvertently missed your name, we apologize, sometimes donations are left at the Timberjay office when I am not there and names are not recorded.

And thanks to all those who volunteered their time: Kathy Lovgren and her crew from the Tower Soudan Civic Club, Mary Shedd, Corky Eloranta, Janna Goerd, and the crew at the Timberjay for all their help.

**Jodi Summit**  
**Operation Santa Coordinator**



**Read the news from all three Timberjay editions each week**

[www.timberjay.com](http://www.timberjay.com)

**Timberjay subscribers get free access to the online e-edition**



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	Stephanie Ukkola
Ely Editor	Keith Vandervort
Cook/Orr Editor	Marcus White
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## BREITUNG POLICE DEPARTMENT

### November 2018

Calls: 125  
Arrests: 0  
Citations, formal charges: 1  
Monthly mileage: 1,877 (Tahoe: 1,365; Explorer: 512)

**Additional shifts:**  
During the month of November the Breitung Police Department worked one Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) shift.



**Training:** Officer Sanderson attended a three-day D.M.T. (breathalyzer) training.

### November Police Report

**Breitung Police Chief Dan Nylund**

**Squads:** Current end-of-month mileage for the Gold 2012 Chevy Tahoe (Tower) is 76,363. Current end-of-month

mileage for the 2017 Ford Explorer is 15,736.

**DUI enforcement:**  
There is no excuse to put yourself or others in danger. Extra DUI enforcement will be out during the month of December.

**Citations, formal charges, arrests:**  
(1) Driving after revocation (DAR) – citation issued.

### Chimpy’s Skating Parties

SOUDAN- Chimpy’s skating parties at the Soudan Rink are now underway. Children of all ages are welcome to stop by for skating fun and food. Loaner skates are available in the warming shack.

Chimpy is planning to host skating parties on Saturdays and Sundays, weather-permitting, during Christmas vacation. The Soudan Rink warming shack hours on holidays and school vacation are 11 a.m. to closing. The warming shack regular hours are weekdays from 4 p.m. to closing,

and weekends from 11 a.m. to closing.

### St. Martin’s New Year’s Mass Schedule

TOWER- St. Martin’s Catholic Church is happy to announce their New Year’s schedule:

Confessions are heard one half-hour before all Masses. If these times do not work for you, contact the rectory.

The Solemnity of Mary is celebrated each year on Jan. 1. Our Mass schedule is: New Year’s Eve at St. Mary’s (Cook) at 5:30 p.m.; New Year’s Day at Holy Cross (Orr) at 10 a.m. and at St. Martin’s at 5 p.m.

## Transfer station

### Soudan Canister

Expanded hours year-round  
**Monday** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Wed.** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Saturday** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Sunday** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For info: 1-800-450-9278

### Hwy. 77 Canister

Winter hours now in effect  
**Thursday** 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Sunday** 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Recycling canisters available daily at the Greenwood Town Hall. For info: 1-800-450-9278

## Bookmobile Schedule

### Wednesday, Jan. 2, 23; Feb. 13; March 6, 27

Bois Forte Boys/Girls Club	11:00-11:30 a.m.
Greenwood Town Hall	12:00-12:30 p.m.
Soudan Fire Hall	1:45-3:00 p.m.
Tower Civic Center	3:15-4:15 p.m.
Embarrass, Four Corners	5:15-6:00 p.m.

For further information, call the Arrowhead Library System at 218-741-3840 or [www.arrowhead.lib.mn.us](http://www.arrowhead.lib.mn.us)

### Hale Honeybells

The once a year citrus sensation!



Buy 12 get 12 more pieces **FREE!**

Call 1-866-930-2098 to Order Item 2693X or Visit [HaleGroves.com/J19175](http://HaleGroves.com/J19175)  
Only \$29.99 plus \$5.99 shipping & processing.  
Satisfaction completely guaranteed. IC: H9VW-J253



## Cook VFW

Open Daily at Noon  
**CLOSED on TUESDAYS**

**Happy Hour**  
**Daily 4-6 p.m.**  
**All Beer & Drinks**  
Bar Menu & Pizza Available

**Event Rentals**  
**Welcome**  
**218-780-6709**

**Pull-Tabs Sold Daily**  
Lic. 00390

**Sunday FREE Pool**

**Thursday Bingo**  
Early Bird 6 p.m.  
Progressive Prizes

**Friday 4:30-7 p.m.**  
Hamburger Special

**Take-Out 666-0500**

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of all three  
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every week.



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to place  
yours now!

[www.timberjay.com](http://www.timberjay.com)



Libraries

**Ely library**  
Hours: Monday — Friday,  
10 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Saturdays — 8 a.m. to noon  
Closed on Sundays  
Phone: 365-5140

**Babbitt library**

Monday Noon-6 pm  
Tuesday Noon-6 pm  
Wednesday Noon-6 pm  
Thursday Noon-6 pm  
Friday Noon-5 pm  
Phone: 827-3345

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous  
AA - 7 p.m. Mondays,  
First Lutheran Church,  
915 E. Camp St.  
WOMEN’S AA - Noon  
Mondays, Ledgerrock  
Community Church, Ely -  
use 15th Street entrance.  
BABBITT AA - 7 p.m.  
Tuesdays, Woodland  
Presbyterian Church.  
AL-ANON - Sundays  
8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony’s  
Catholic Church in Ely.  
For persons who encoun-  
ter alcoholism in a  
relative or friend.  
BABBITT AL-ANON -  
Thursdays, 7 p.m., at  
Woodland Presbyterian  
Church.  
CO-DEPENDENTS’  
12-step support group,  
noon Fridays, St.  
Anthony’s Catholic  
Church, Ely.  
ELY FOOD SHELF -  
Third Wednesday each  
month, 15 W. Conan St..  
ADULT BASIC  
EDUCATION  
GED - Study materials  
and pre-test available.  
Ely Community Center  
Thursday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.;  
Tower by appointment.

In Brief


**AAUW Branch  
collecting shoes**  
ELY — The  
American Association  
of University Women  
(AAUW)Ely Branch is  
conducting a shoe drive  
fundraiser through Jan.  
15, 2019, to raise funds  
for local area, educa-  
tional programming for  
women and girls.  
AAUW Ely will  
earn funds based on the  
total weight of the pairs  
of gently worn, used  
and new shoes collect-  
ed, as Funds2Orgs will  
issue a check for the  
collected shoes. Those  
dollars will benefit mis-  
sion-based educational  
projects serving the Ely  
community.  
Anyone can help  
by donating gently  
worn, used and new  
shoes at designat-  
ed local drop boxes,  
with any AAUW Ely  
member, or by calling  
218-365-6802.  
Drop boxes are  
currently located  
at The Pebble Spa,  
Gators Grilled Cheese  
Emporium, and  
Vermilion Community  
College, Office CL135.  
All donated shoes  
will then be redistrib-  
uted throughout the  
Funds2Orgs network of  
micro-enterprise (small  
business) partners in  
developing countries  
where economic oppor-  
tunity and jobs are  
limited.  
Funds2Orgs helps  
impoverished people  
start, maintain and grow  
businesses in countries  
such as Haiti, Honduras  
and other nations in  
Central America and  
Africa.

FLOATS OFF, SKIS ON



The water floats are off and the snow skis are installed on a U.S. Forest Service de Havilland Beaver airplane as it flies past the Ely water tower in early December. photo by Lance Cheung, USDA

ELY MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT





*the* **TIMBERJAY**

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Emily Brown, left, admires student art displayed in the Washington School library prior to the Winter Concert on Dec. 13. Cora Olson, right, was one of the featured soloists in the Memorial High School Concert Choir’s presentation of “Glory to God in the Highest.” photos by K. Vandervort

OUR COMMUNITY



Mike Motors of Ely recently presented the Ely Area Food Shelf with a donation of \$800. Shown from left are Joseph Hiller of Mike Motors, Cheryl Boyes, Kathy Champa of the Food Shelf, and Nels Pierson of Mike Motors. “Thank you to all who helped us in donating to the Ely Area Food Shelf,” Hiller said. submitted photo



Briefly

Public comments requested for Hwy. 53 project

COOK - Department of Transportation officials are asking for input on a plan to reconstruct portions of Hwy. 53 between the Hwy. 1 junction south of Cook and International Falls.

A 30-day public comment period will open on Dec. 31 and remain open until Jan. 30.

The environmental assessment worksheet (EAW) is on file at four locations for public viewing, including the Cook Public Library, Orr City Hall, the International Falls Public Library and the MnDOT regional offices in Virginia.

The full report is also availbale online at [www.dot.state.mn.us/d1/projects/hwy53-1-st.-louis-koochiching/](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d1/projects/hwy53-1-st.-louis-koochiching/).

The project will see both of Hwy. 53’s junctions with Hwy. 1, north and south of Cook, reconstructed to provide better visibility along with additional passing lanes between Cook and International Falls.

Last Thursday, State Representative Rob Ecklund released a statement on the project saying, “I’m thrilled to hear the news about this important investment in our northern Minnesota transportation infrastructure. We’ve seen too many collisions at these interchanges and on stretches of the highway where passing is difficult, putting travelers in danger. This investment will save lives, and I look forward to seeing it completed.”

Comments can be submitted to Josie Olson by email to [josie.olson@state.mn.us](mailto:josie.olson@state.mn.us). Comments can be mailed to Olson at 1123 Mesaba Ave., Duluth, MN., 55811. More info is available by calling 1-800-627-3529.

Cook Senior Citizens Club

COOK - The Cook Seniors meet monthly on the first Wednesday at 1 p.m. For more information, call Nancy at 666-2726 or Lois at 666-5578.

Bookmobile schedule

Visit your library on wheels, the Arrowhead Library System Bookmobile.

Jan. 10 & 31; Feb. 21; Mar. 14

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](http://www.alslib.info).



FIELD TWP - The North Woods Junior High band and choir performed the school’s final Holiday Concert of the season here Wednesday night.

The concert consisted of several holiday tunes and featured the school’s newest music instructor, Rachel Roettger.

Above: The North Woods choir sings at the holiday concert. Far right: Helen Koch plays the flute. Near right: New choir director, Rachel Roettger, conducts the students’ performance.

photos by B. Smith



GRIZZLY UPDATES

Meet Ms. Beth Wilenius

Principal John Vukmanich interviews a selection of educators and coaches at the North Woods School

This week’s teacher interview is another staff member with roots in our area since day one, and her upbeat, positive nature is legendary at North Woods!

Mr. V: Where are you originally from and where did you go to high school and college?

Ms. W: I was born and raised right here! I grew up in Sturgeon and graduated from Cook High School in 1998, got my teaching degree from UMD and my master’s degree from St. Mary’s. I actually attended school back in the day at Alango through 2nd grade!

Mr. V: Were there teachers who were an influence on you? Please name a few if you can.

Ms. W: Definitely! Mrs. Marconett, Mr. Durbin, and Mr. Kleppe.

Mr. V: What characteristics did these teachers have that were important to you?

Ms. W: Mrs. Marconett made learning fun by thinking outside the box (and letting us think outside the box!), Mr. Durbin recognized the good in everyone, and



JOHN VUKMANICH

Mr. Kleppe made connections and lasting friendships by caring about us and our lives outside of school.

Mr. V: What do you teach at North Woods?

Ms. W: Kindergarten :)

Mr. V: Why did you choose teaching as a profession?

Ms. W: It’s in my blood. I can’t imagine doing anything else. I love connecting with kids and making a difference!

Mr. V: What are your hobbies?

Ms. W: Rollerblading, basketball, hunting, snowmobiling, lawn mowing, boating, and of course my favorite-spending time with my



BETH WILENIUS

kids Alex, Addy, Aidan and Andrew!

Mr. V: What is something you really like about North Woods?

Ms. W: I really love a lot of things about North Woods, but my two favorites are one: knowing families and students on a personal level, and, two: watching the North Woods Grizzlies play- all sports!

Mr. V: What is a professional goal for you?

Ms. W: I’d like to get my doctorate someday. I’m not in a hurry, but someday!

Mr. V: What is something you love about northern Minnesota?

Ms. W: Everything except the mosquitoes-

that’s why I came back after college. We live in the best place on earth! Every boat ride, every sunset, every trip to Moosebirds, and every Dave’s Pizza!

Mr. V: What is a piece of advice you’d give your students?

Ms. W: Work hard and dream big!

Mr. V: Do you have a favorite saying or expression?

Ms. W: “Today is a great day to have a great day!”

Mr. V: What do you hope that your students will remember you for?

Ms. W: I hope they always remember that I love and believe in every one of them.

Thank you, Ms. Wilenius, for letting us get to know you a little better. Thank you for your dedication to all of our kids at North Woods School!

Go Grizzlies! Your Principal, John Vukmanich



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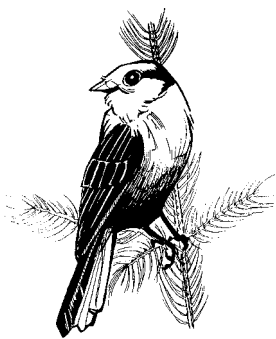
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Cook Optical



HOURS: 9-4:30 Mon.-Fri.  
Jerel D. Johnson, ABOC Certified  
23 E. Vermilion Dr., Cook

EYE EXAMS • 666-2879  
Call for Appointment  
with Dr. Jensen, Optometrist



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# TOWER...Continued from page 1

agreement with THS.

Councilors expressed ambivalence about the project. “A lot of work has gone into this,” said Councilor Lance Dougherty. “I don’t think we can give up on it at this point.” Yet Dougherty also expressed concern that eight questions that City Clerk Linda Keith had submitted to the developers had not been answered.

“I’m 50-50 on it,” said Councilor Kevin Fitton, “but how many deadlines have to go by before we do something?” Fitton also questioned if THS could meet the April deadline for greenlighting the project for 2019 construction given the delays over the development agreement.

Councilors also wanted to know the developers’ position on the latest tax abatement proposal, that the city had adopted on Dec. 10.

Michael Wood, one of the investors in the THS project, said he shared the council’s frustration with the project delays. “Delays cost money,” he said, and he urged the council to contact the project’s general manager, Jeremy Schoenfelder, to find out what still needs to be done. “I don’t understand the phasing. Jeremy could explain those things if you wanted.”

Steve Altenburg said the city erred in not issuing a new Request for Proposals after the original development agreement expired in 2017.

Dougherty questioned whether there was much interest in development at the harbor. “In the past five years, how many developers have come forward?” he asked.

Keith said three other developers had inquired about the project, although she provided no details.

“I’ve never heard about that,” responded Dougherty.

The council continued to discuss the issue for considerable time, without much resolution. Several in the audience urged the council to give the project more time. Longtime city maintenance director Randy Johnson said the council had little to lose and noted that the city had shown patience in the past on other portions of the overall harbor development. “If we have a little glimmer of hope, we need

to give it time to work,” he said.

Local resident Steve Wilson agreed. “As a taxpayer, this thing may ultimately fail, but if the plug gets pulled now, when will construction begin? You’re talking years, if ever.”

Wilson and others urged the council to call Schoenfelder, something the council had refused to do at their Dec. 10 meeting.

“Jeremy really knows this stuff,” said Wood. “I guess I don’t know why you won’t get him on the phone. He is available tonight.”

Tom Mesojedec, who owns the Marjo Motel property, pressed the issue as well. “Why isn’t Jeremy being brought on the phone?”

After just over an hour of unproductive discussion, the council finally agreed to call Schoenfelder, using one of the councilor’s cell phones. Once on the line, Schoenfelder quickly clarified the concerns over the details in the agreement as presented. He noted that he had received the revised development agreement late on Dec. 13, one day before the city’s imposed deadline to sign. The version he received still listed Tower Vision 2025 as the developer, rather than Tower Harbor Shores, which was an issue that Keith said she had quickly fixed. But Schoenfelder said some of the smaller details had been overlooked by both sides as larger issues, such as a city demand for a letter of credit and tax abatement, took center stage in the discussions.

Schoenfelder indicated that THS is prepared to accept the latest tax abatement plan the city had proposed on Dec. 10, even though it falls short of the reimbursement that he had earlier indicated would be necessary.

Schoenfelder, in an interview the following day, said he opted to accept the terms in the end to prevent the city from doing something to end the project. He also indicated that he’s aware of recent discussions with funding agencies that suggest there might be more funding available to help pay for the public infrastructure, which would reduce the amount of private dollars

that THS would need to expend for streets and utilities. “I’m not sure they’ve been approached as aggressively as they could be to this point,” he added.

As for the questions that Keith had submitted, Schoenfelder said he could answer some, while others were irrelevant to the project. In one question, Keith had asked who from THS had indicated to *Timberjay* Publisher Marshall Helmberger that a lawsuit was a possibility. “I’m frankly a little gun-shy when I’m getting these questions that have no relevance to what we’re trying to accomplish,” he said.

Schoenfelder also questioned a claim by Keith that she needed \$250,000 in receipts to meet city guidelines on the developer’s funding match. Schoenfelder said he saw nothing in the loan agreement requiring that, but added that the project will generate far more than \$250,000 in qualified expenses.

When asked if the changes to the development agreement could be completed by the end of the year, Schoenfelder hedged, saying that would be up to attorneys for both sides. He noted that Klun was planning a trip to China in the near future, which could affect her availability.

The council then discussed whether to set a deadline or leave the issue to the next council. Dougherty said he had intention of coming back to another meeting, which would have to be held in early January, before the new council takes over on Jan. 7.

But Fitton motioned to set a deadline of Jan. 3, and the council indicated they would come back for one last meeting at that time to either give final approval of the deal or take some other action.

## TEDA loan

With the development agreement apparently still in play, the council took up the TEDA loan, which is being transferred to Tower Harbor Shores. Attorney Klun had raised questions about how the new loan was being presented. In a Dec. 19 email to the city, Klun said her clients had expected the loan would be

written as an addendum to the existing loan with both Tower Vision 2025 and THS. “We can sign this new loan agreement, but we would need to update the dates of first payment and execution,” Klun wrote. “If that is the case, I’m assuming the previous loan with Tower Vision would then be cancelled, but am wondering how that would be memorialized. We can’t speak for Tower Vision, but would assume they would want some sort of documentation.”

Keith asked the council what criteria should be used in reissuing the loan to THS, suggesting that the new loan would be subject to requirements that had not been part of the original loan.

Keith and Carlson repeated earlier complaints about the handling of the loan, in which TEDA served as a pass-through for IRRRB funds that went to the town home project.

In the end, however, the council repeated their earlier decision to convert the loan solely to THS.

“This loan has been the bane of my existence,” said Carlson. “If they’re willing to sign the loan, let them.”

City officials, as they have at every meeting since installing a video camera in the council chambers, then launched into another extended criticism of Helmberger.

Keith began the assault with an angry presentation, accusing Helmberger of misrepresenting the guidelines surrounding the loan in an email to Councilor Fitton. In an email on a different topic, Helmberger had noted that the purported TEDA guidelines that Keith had put in the council packet earlier in the month were not the ones that TEDA had approved, at least not in 2017 while he was president of TEDA.

Keith challenged that claim, angrily tossing more than a dozen emails, agendas, and other documents onto the council table, which she claimed show the guidelines she presented were the ones approved by TEDA.

Helmberger did not

respond at the meeting, but indicated following that meeting that he will have a documented response to Keith’s outburst, and that response will appear in a future edition of the *Timberjay*. Early holiday deadlines made it impossible to address the issue immediately.

## Ambulance

Councilor Fitton then offered a presentation on ambulance funding that took issue with some of Helmberger’s comments on the subject during recent public input. At the Dec. 10 council meeting, Helmberger had asked Fitton to examine the accuracy of claims by Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg, who accused Helmberger, on Nov. 26, of lying about call run data and of misquoting him from a November council meeting. Shortly after that meeting, Helmberger provided councilors with an excerpt of his digital recording, showing that he had accurately quoted Altenburg.

Altenburg had also taken issue with financial projections that Helmberger had produced in March. On Dec. 10, Helmberger provided the council with data that Altenburg had provided to him at the time, from which he derived his projections.

Fitton’s presentation did not address Altenburg’s claim that he had been misquoted nor the earlier financial projection that had appeared in the *Timberjay* in March. And Fitton did not challenge the call run numbers that appeared in a *Timberjay* story earlier this fall, but he did take issue with the claim that emergency runs have seen little growth in recent years. He had to go back 10-15 years to demonstrate a growth trend, however, since emergency runs have been essentially flat for the past five years, as the *Timberjay* documented in a Dec. 21 story on the issue.

Altenburg presented a new chart to go with Fitton’s presentation, that went back to 2004 and which showed gradual

growth in emergency calls from 2004-2013, before leveling off in more recent years. Altenburg’s chart showed the department responded to 336 medical calls in 2013 and had responded to 339 such calls in 2018 with just over ten days remaining in the year. Actual run reports from the city of Tower show 340 medical calls in 2013. While the number of emergency calls peaked at 361 in 2016, the numbers have declined the past two years and are likely to end 2018 below 350.

Fitton’s presentation also failed to address the inaccuracy of Altenburg’s claim at the Nov. 26 council meeting, stating that the department’s call volume had experienced “five years in a row that went up 20 percent.” Fitton indicated that Altenburg’s claim was subject to interpretation and suggested that he might have meant to claim a 20-percent increase over a five-year period.

Fitton claimed there had been an 18-percent increase over the last four years, but Fitton’s selection of 2014 as a starting point appeared cherry-picked, since it had the lowest number of runs in the past several years. An actual five-year comparison, starting at 2013, puts the increase at just 15 percent, and the increase is due almost entirely to the department’s decision to accept more non-emergency, inter-hospital transfers. Emergency runs have been virtually flat over the five-year period.

Fitton did address a concern raised by Helmberger about whether the cost of the paid-on-call program could make it more difficult to fund ambulance purchases in the future. Fitton said it did not appear to be the case, although he came to that conclusion by assuming that the ambulance service will now replace rigs on a 14-year rotation, rather than the previous goal of replacement every five years. Helmberger, in raising his concerns, had assumed an average of a seven-year replacement schedule.

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## DOC...Continued from page 1

Dr. Johnston would go on to earn his medical degree from the University of Michigan before heading to Illinois for his residency. It was there, that what is now history for the city of Cook would be made. “I wanted to be in a small town,” he said. “I had finished my family practice residency in Illinois. Somebody associated with the program had some connections with Cook. They gave them my name. We flew up here, had a meeting. It was nice enough.”

### 45 years later

When he took the job in the summer of 1974, Dr. Johnston only planned to stay for a year or so. “When I came, the hospital had been closed,” he said. “The physician they had had died the previous fall. The nursing home was still operating with visiting physicians from Virginia, but the acute care was closed down.” “Maybe it was inertia to begin with,” he says slowly after a moment

of wondering why he’d stayed 45 years ago. Being the only physician in the community, he had his work cut out for him. “For a few years I thought of leaving to take fewer calls and have less stress,” he said. “Afterwards, we got other people to help.”

By 1976, the hospital would begin adding more physicians to its staff, averaging three permanent doctors at any given time for the rest of Dr. Johnston’s career.

### A career of change

A lot has changed since 1974. “It’s busier than it used to be,” Dr. Johnston said. “I was just looking over the old reports. The emergency room used to see 700 patients per year, now it is stable at 2,400 per year. A lot of those patients come through in the summer. It’s always something.” The emergency room numbers aren’t the only thing that has changed.

The hospital used to house a small obstetrics ward from 1977 until 1989. On average, the ward delivered around 30 babies each year.

Patients with heart issues are also no longer housed at the hospital beyond initial intake.

“We used to keep patients that now we would not keep because of the developments in care,” Dr. Johnston said. “When I started, if you had a heart attack, you would be put in a coronary care unit that would monitor you. We did some of that here. Nowadays, there is so much more a cardiologist can do, like an angiogram. The treatments have changed dramatically.”

The hospital also used to perform surgeries, but now only does basic procedures such as colonoscopies.

But services have been added as well. “We have much better imaging,” the doctor said. “We have our own CT scanner and an MRI that visits once a week.” With the change in

care, so too, has the building changed.

“The hospital is coming up on its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary,” Dr. Johnston said. “When I came it was 15 years old or so. Just about everything is new now compared to what it was. It was old and getting older. In about 1994, we started redoing everything. Nothing of the old remains.”

Before the renovations, the hospital even featured something you wouldn’t be allowed to have legally in a medical facility nowadays.

“When I came, there was a cigarette machine and I joked with people I got the profits,” he said. “Things are different now.”

### Public life

If you’ve never visited the Cook Hospital, you may recognize Dr. Johnston from somewhere else - City Hall.

For more than a decade, Dr. Johnston has served as the mayor of Cook, with another 20

years or so as a city councilor.

“I had mentioned to one of the ladies who was on the council I would be interested,” he said. “I was on the council since the early 80s.”

Dr. Johnston plans to continue his service to the city. He recently won re-election to another term. “It’s been a good community for me and my wife,” he said. “This is my home, I am grateful for the community. I plan to stay here.”

He said one thing he wants to do in the coming years is devote more time to his city job and sort out some of the city’s more confusing bylaws.

### Retirement

After a career packed so much change, even for such a small place like the Cook Hospital, Dr. Johnston has a hard time deciding where life goes from here, aside from continuing as mayor.

“I am not totally sure what’s next,” he said. “I am sure I will (figure it out), I

want to keep my medical license.”

As to why he’s chosen now to retire, he said he feels it’s the right time to step aside.

“I’m probably 10 or 11 years beyond the usual retirement age,” he said. “Right now, you have several practitioners at the clinic. They are really good. It seemed to be the time to retire.”

A party in honor of Dr. Johnston will be held on Friday Dec. 28 at the hospital from 5 to 8 p.m. with a program honoring his career at 6 p.m.

Until then Dr. Johnston will have plenty of time to reflect on four decades in Cook and remember what made it all worth it.

“When you actually save a life, that’s rare. Usually we make little differences,” he said. “Let’s say someone comes in in cardiac arrest and you get them back, that’s something. Or if you meet someone on the street, and they say ‘you really made a difference in my life.’ Those things would stand out.”

## PETS...Continued from page 1

love her new home in the country. “They were never told by the shelter personnel that she would need to be on a leash until she could be taught this was her new home,” Foss said.

“A worker at the Humane Society where Sasha was initially adopted was talking to my coworker, and she suggested he fill out a request for assistance from the Retrievers on our site,” she said. “He did that a few days after Sasha went missing, and I went out to set up my remote cam the next day. That worker has since joined The Retrievers.”

According to Foss, Sasha was let out to potty, but decided to start roaming the area. A camera was aimed at her kennel, where she was spotted

right away. The next day a trap was put up in the family’s yard, along with intersection signs, and online and paper flyers. She never came back.

Many “lost dog” posters were posted at road intersections in the area, Foss explained. “One type is preprinted where we attach a photo and phone number, and the other is handmade using bright neon paper,” she said.

“The next time she was spotted was in Soudan, east of Tower,” Foss said. “More intersection signs were deployed. Calls started coming in almost immediately about a big white dog that would run whenever anyone even looked at her.”

Sighting reports came in from Eagles Nest, a

region even further east. “I put up a camera in that region as well, and saw her eating from my feeding station, so the trap was put up in that spot. I only saw a red fox who lives there.”

After a day, Foss said Sasha was spotted back in the Tower and Soudan areas. “I took the trap down, and waited to see if she would settle down enough to put it up again. Then she was back in Eagles Nest for a day or two, and then back to Tower.”

After figuring Sasha’s habits, Foss elected to put the trap back on a property adjacent to the second location. “I loaded it up with ‘puploaf’ (rice, bacon, cheese and burger) and parked my car about a quarter of a mile down the road.” She was visited by many deer strolling

around.

“Suddenly several deer shot past my car in a panic. I looked around to see what startled them, and there was Sasha, strolling past my car,” Foss said. “I had sprinkled Liquid Smoke from the trap to my car earlier, and her nose was taking it all in.”

Within five minutes, her phone started receiving texts from the folks next door that they heard the trap door shut. “I traced up there, and there she was. A video camera I had set up at the site shows how calmly she walked in. The door slammed and startled her, but once she realized nothing was hurting her she went right back to eating. She’s now with a family and animal friend who all love her dearly.”

### About The Retrievers

The Retrievers is a Minnesota-based all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to providing lost dog support services for rescues and individual dog owners. They got their start as members of the Lost Dog Rapid Response team for Retrieve a Golden of Minnesota (RAGOM), the nation’s second largest Golden Retriever rescue organization.

In 2014, the group founded the Retrievers, an independent volunteer group whose nucleus consists of veteran members of the RAGOM lost dog team. Many team members have several years of experience, dealing with shy, skittish dogs. Some have fostered, rehabilitated and even adopted dogs from puppy mills, hoarding situations and extreme neglect situations.

Their experience has taught them how to behave around and approach a dog who is distressed and

scared of humans—the most difficult kind of dog to catch once they’re on the loose.

They offer free phone consultation to individual owners and rescues whose dogs have gone missing.

If a team member of the Retrievers is available, they will help a pet owner catch a skittish dog provided the following criteria are met:

► The dog is routinely visiting a feeding station or other localized area. Setting a trap is only effective when it can be placed in the dog’s path. If the dog is not remaining in the same general area, the Retrievers will not be able to help trap it.

► Pet owners agree to provide a refundable \$500 deposit for the use of the group’s equipment, less a \$10 processing fee.

► The capture site is located within an hour’s drive of one of their trapping-qualified team members. The team is located primarily within the Twin Cities area, but they do have some team members, such as Foss, in other parts of the state.

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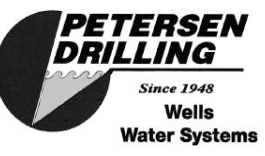


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SOUP FOR ALL



Nancy Lilya stands with her soup of the day in the dairy section at Tower Zup's. Right: Some of the soup base brands available for purchase that Nancy uses to cook her creations.

## Nancy Lilya's Zup's soups warm up Tower and Soudan all winter long

Story and photos by Jodi Summit

**T**OWER- The daily soup offering at Zup's Grocery in Tower is the closest thing you can find in town for piping hot take-out food. For over 11 years, it has been prepared each day, October through May, by Nancy Lilya, who also oversees the other take-out deli food like sandwiches, subs, and salads. "Lord, no," Lilya said with a laugh when I asked her if she used a recipe. The type of soup changes from day to day, and no one but Lilya knows what will be on tap. "I never know what I am going to make until I get to work in the morning," she said.

The soup of the day generally takes her between 30-45 minutes to get going. The soup is cooked in a restaurant-sized stock pot, over a two-burner

gas stove that sits in the back room of the store. Ingredients come from the store's shelves and refrigerator cases. Meat and vegetables are cut by hand. "I started making soup when I was working at Good Ol' Days," said Lilya, whose resumé includes plenty of experience with commercial cooking and baking, elementary school teaching, and retail and banking customer service. Lilya was tasked with cooking up soup for the monthly senior bingo event, which was started years ago by Christina Hujanen and is now overseen by the Friends



of Vermilion Country School. Her soups are always a hit at bingo. Selections vary month-to-month, and bingo organizers leave the planning up to Lilya, who seems to know what the seniors will enjoy. She always prepares two types, though one is almost always a chicken-based soup with either egg noodles or dumplings. Chicken dumpling soup, *See SOUP...pg. 2B*

TOURNEY CHAMPS



The Ely Squirts hockey team recently placed first in the City on the Bay Tournament in Walker between Dec. 14 and 16. The team poses above (not in order): Brayden Akins, Jonathan Schlosser, Cazimiro Carlson, Evan Leeson. Nico Lenci, Ryland Sandy, Brady Eaton, Hunter Halbakken, Owen Marolt, Jayden Zemke, Sylvia Shock, Sean Merriman, Williams Forsberg, Stig Majerus, Ozzie Anderson and Lewey Powell. submitted photo

BOYS BASKETBALL

## Grizzlies dominate on the road again

by **MARCUS WHITE**  
Cook-Orr Editor

**COTTON** — The North Woods boys seemed unstoppable heading into the Christmas break, as they beat Lakeview Christian, 81-61, to notch their sixth straight win. "Lakeview Christian is the highest-ranked team in our section," said Head Coach Will Kleppe. "They were 6-0 going into the game. We were familiar with them; we knew they were going to be competitive. Our boys rose to the occasion."

First-half woes plagued the Grizzlies with a handful of fouls, but Kleppe said the team pulled it together and was able to go player-to-play-

er against a relentless defense. "I think we ran things very efficiently offensively," Kleppe said. "It really sprung us in the second half to get a lead."

Darius Goggleye once again led the team with 22 points. His older cousin Cade Goggleye and teammate T.J. Chiabotti each put 21 points on the board. No additional stats were available as of press time. The Grizzlies, now 7-1, will skip the Ely tournament this week. They'll pick up the season again on Jan. 4 when they face Red Lake on the road.



## BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

## Breitung awarded \$220,000 from IRRRB; update from state park

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA  
Timberjay staff writer

BREITUNG TWP - Breitung Township was awarded a \$220,000 grant from IRRRB for renovations of township buildings.

The entire project includes a level access to the Post Office, a new accessible entrance to the town hall, remodel of the existing bathroom, construction of a new ADA compliant bathroom, replacement of storm sewer in parking lot, remodel of current fire hall to a community center, plus infrastructure, utilities and parking lot redesign.

The entire project will cost over one million dollars. The board also applied for a \$125,000 grant from CDBG and will hear in January if that grant has been approved.

To cover the entire project cost, the township will likely be seeking funding in the form of loans or bonds.

## State park

Board Chair Tim Tomsich recently met with Jim Essig, Park Manager of Lake Vermilion Soudan Underground Mine State Park, and updated the board on park news. Tomsich said the land swap to clean up boundary

lines is nearly completed. The township will gain an acre. He said the state park will begin work on eight camper cabins near Armstrong Bay this winter.

The township will pave the portion of gravel on the state park entrance road. The state park envisions ATV campsites and a visitors center in the future.

There was a discussion of placing a plaque at Armstrong Bay Day Use Area in honor of Jerry Nemanich, founder of Mesabi Bituminous. Armstrong Bay was the last project he worked on before passing away. Nemanich was a native of Soudan.

"Jerry always went above and beyond when he was working on projects in Soudan. He gave a low bid and did all kinds of little extras," said township treasurer Jorgine Gornick.

In other business, the board:

► Heard that the surface building generators worked successfully during the recent power outage.

► Heard a request from Maintenance Director Dale Swanson for new lights on the front of the McKinley Park building.

► Heard that Swanson's new maintenance office (formerly the

old police building) is now hooked up to electricity.

► Heard from Supervisor Greg Dostert, who suggested getting a bumper to separate the ice rink into halves. He will bring pricing information to the next meeting.

► Accepted changes to the firefighter and probation firefighter job descriptions, per attorney Jessica Durbin's recommendation.

► Acknowledged the new fire department organizational chart.

► Approved a motion of support for the Tower area broadband project but will not be sending a representative of the board

to the project's steering committee.

► Will review a draft of the new township employee handbook.

► Learned that the question on the ballot to hire a clerk/treasurer must be split into two questions. The first must ask if the clerk and treasurer should be appointed. The second, if the clerk and treasurer positions should be combined.

► The next Breitung township meetings will be Tuesday, Jan. 8 at 1 p.m. and Tuesday, Jan. 29 at 6 p.m.

## POLYMET

## MPCA issues final PolyMet permits

## Agency gives company approval to alter protected wetlands

by MARCUS WHITE  
Cook-Orr Editor

ST PAUL - The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has moved the proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine another step closer to reality.

The agency, on Dec. 20, issued three permits to PolyMet's NorthMet project, including air and water quality certifica-

tions, along with a Section 401 Certificate allowing the altering of protected wetlands.

"Issuing these permits comes after a years-long process that saw the most thorough environmental review any construction project has ever had in Minnesota," MPCA Commissioner John Linc Stine said in a statement.

"We are confident the requirements in these permits will protect the environment and human health over the long term."

Agency officials say they received 700 comments on the proposed permits earlier this year. The federal Environmental Protection Agency, which under previous administrations has generally provid-

ed substantive comment on such major projects, did not comment on the proposed permits.

While the project is planned to be built on protected land, the MPCA said the 401 Water Quality Certificate includes provisions for PolyMet to install water treatment systems that not only treat water but capture toxic runoff through a series of barriers and monitoring systems.

In addition, the MPCA said it will enforce strict air quality measurements at both the mining site south of Babbitt and at the processing facility near Hoyt Lakes.

Opponents of the project had a swift reaction to the decision.

"PolyMet has engaged in a bait and switch scheme to avoid scrutiny of larger

and even riskier mine plans disclosed in their financial documents," Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy CEO Kathryn Hoffman said in a statement. "This is a sham permitting process that the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy has repeatedly objected to."

The MCEA is one of several groups who have filed appeals to previous permits issued by the DNR earlier this year.

The group has taken issue with the DNR and MPCA treating the project as a "minor emissions producers" despite PolyMet plans to process up to 32,000 tons of copper and nickel at the site.

Labor groups on the other hand, have come out in support of the MPCA's

decision.

"Jobs for Minnesotans celebrates the opportunities this final approval from the MPCA brings to northeast Minnesota, with hundreds of well-paying jobs and critical investment to sustain local communities," said the labor and industry group in a statement. "The issuance of these air and water permits is validation that the state's very public, thorough and scientific process of evaluation, analysis and decision-making works."

As of publication, there was no indication if or when any groups opposed to the project planned to appeal the permits.

The permits can be viewed online at [www.pca.state.mn.us/northmet](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/northmet).

## UNDER THE TREE SPECIALS!

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## SOUP...Continued from page 1B

chicken wild rice soup, and boiled dinner appear to be the local favorites. She often will get pre-orders from customers who want to bring home a family-size serving of one of their favorites. The soup, kept hot in a kettle all day, is sold self-serve, so customers can take home a cup or two, or more, depending on how many mouths they have to feed.

Her soups all start with a high-quality stock. She recommends using a quality soup base, not bouillon cubes, and she pointed out several brands that are available in the soup aisle. Then, most soups use what seasoned cooks call "the trinity," a healthy dose of chopped

onions, celery, and carrots.

For dumplings, she says the secret is to use an egg, a little bit of water, and then enough flour to make a dough. The dough is then dropped by the teaspoon-full into the simmering soup, about 15 minutes before serving. Lilya likes her dumplings to have some chew in them. For fluffier dumplings, recipes will call for adding some leavening to the flour, she said.

Her soups' seasonings come almost exclusively from the meat and vegetables added. Soups do need salt, she said, but the soup base provides a good balance of flavor and salt for all the soups she makes. Sometimes she will add

peppercorns to her soups, a trick she learned from her mother, Helia Seppala.

"My mother was quite a baker and cook," she said. "On the days our Lutheran youth group had bake sales at the Pike Co-op, we would stay home all day with her making her famous donuts." They were so popular, Lilya said, that as soon as a new batch was ready, someone would come pick them up and bring the freshly-fried donuts to the bake sale, and this would go on all day long.

These days, Lilya is known locally for her apple strudel and walnut potica. Back in her heyday, she was known to make as many as 450 strudels and over 100 poticas in a year. She has baked wedding cakes and catered large events.

One of her family favorites is a Slovenian specialty called Zjienkrofe, a meat-filled dumpling. And she still finds time to make some strudel and potica every year.

But after a day working around food, Lilya said she doesn't cook too much for herself at home anymore. She was widowed several years ago, and her grown son Jacob lives in Virginia.

"I'm not ready to retire," she said. "I like to get out of the house and enjoying seeing people all day, along with my co-workers."

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# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
Northwoods

## ESSAY CONTEST

### Teens can win “no-parents” wilderness trip



ELY—The Ely Outfitting Company is sponsoring their second annual “Boundary Waters Teen Essay Contest.” The winner receives a fully outfitted, self-guided, five-day, canoe-camping adventure in the Boundary Waters. Up to three friends, ages 15 through 18, can join in, but—no parents or adult guides are allowed.

The contest is open nationwide to current high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. Essays should range in length from 1,000–1,500 words and respond to the question, “Why do you want to go on a parent-free, BWCAW canoe-camping adventure with your friends?”

The entry deadline is Feb. 10, 2019.

Jason Zabokrtsky, Ely Outfitting Company founder, answers the common complaints that today’s youth aren’t interested in the outdoors. “What are we doing to encourage young people to be outside, seek adventure and love the wilderness?” he asked. “Kids aren’t only interested in the screen.”

His proof is in the paddling. Zabokrtsky cited recent studies that show young people today sometimes spend less time outside than prison inmates. “That trend can lead to anxiety, obesity and attention deficit disorder,” he said. “The Boundary Waters Teen Essay Contest is a celebration of unstructured time outdoors and a chance for young people to safely challenge themselves, build self-confidence and eventually take the reins as this country’s future leaders.”

The first essay contest winner, Julia Ruelle, from Minnetonka, spoke to the value of learning wilderness skills, escaping technology and relying on the group’s independence. “I’m now a little biased toward adventuring parent-free,” she said. “Ely Outfitting Company supported us every step of the way and made sure we were prepared as we paddled into the Boundary Waters.”

Her trip mate Julianna Torelli added, “Being in the middle of nowhere with only a few friends by your side is an extraordinarily empowering experience. It taught me more about myself than I could have ever expected.”

Safety is the top priority to ensure the winning trip is set up for success. “We address considerations and concerns from parents who might have reservations about their child participating in a self-guided trip,” he said.

For complete details, go online to [elyoutfittingcompany.com/essaycontest](http://elyoutfittingcompany.com/essaycontest).

Ely Outfitting Co. will also award random prizes like BWCAW calendars, shirts, hats and water bottles to entrants. Everyone who enters will receive a \$50 coupon good toward outfitting packages and equipment rentals.



## LAKE VERMILION LOON COUNT

# A volunteer who made a difference

## Mardy Jackson began an effort that continues 36 years later

LAKE VERMILION—As someone new to the area I was surprised to learn that lots of local residents take part in the annual Lake Vermilion loon count. From what I’ve been told, this event happens to be a premier volunteer opportunity, in such demand that people can wait years to be assigned a territory to count.

I wondered “Why?” What draws people to volunteer for this now longstanding tradition on Lake Vermilion? And who started the event? With a few questions in hand I sought out Mardy Jackson, who agreed to tell me her story of counting loons for so many years.

As a child, Mardy and her family spent much time at their family cabin located on Sand Lake in Britt. With 30 acres of their own land, Mardy, along with her brother and three sisters, spent summers at the lake, picking blueberries, swimming, playing in the woods, running wild and feeling free. “It was a wonderful, wonderful life,” she recalls. “All of us became so enamored of the north woods.”

As an adult, the north woods and lakes were forever calling her back to cool clear waters and tall pines. In 1973, her husband Bob suggested they look “way up north” for a place on a lake. She immediately knew an adventure was in sight and she was ready for the move.

Bob looked for properties and found one on Fabian Bay of Lake Vermilion. It had just enough land, a cabin and multiple outbuildings. Needless to say, Mardy was extremely excited and could hardly wait to see it. But to her disappointment it wasn’t the cabin she always dreamed of. Her dream cabin was a log home with a split rock fireplace and this didn’t even come close. She looked at Bob and promptly told him “It looks like any other house we could have bought in town. It doesn’t even look like a cabin.” After a lot of negotiations, Bob finally talked her into it.



**Above: Mardy Jackson at her home on Lake Vermilion.** submitted

**Right: A pair of loons on Lake Vermilion.**

It was late August in 1980, while spending time on Vermilion, when Mardy spotted 26 loons gathered near Strawberry Island. In all the summers she had spent at Sand Lake as a child, she had never ever seen that many loons gathered together. She assumed she had witnessed something phenomenal and just had to tell someone. So, she wrote a letter to Carroll Henderson, who headed the DNR’s nongame wildlife program for many years.

It took until late fall before she finally received a reply, but it was the start of a correspondence between the two that lasted for decades. Henderson’s first letter was quite long and suggested, among other things, that she report to him the following summer the positions and amount of any loons she might see on the entire lake. Her first thoughts were “The man must not have a map of Lake Vermilion. He can’t mean the whole lake. Doesn’t he realize how big this lake truly is?”

After giving it much thought, she waited until the following July and took it upon herself to do a personal loon survey. She got out her colorful map of Lake Vermilion and charted her way. Once out on the lake she placed a black dot on



her map for every adult loon she saw. For every chick she placed a red dot on the same map. If she saw people around she would ask them if they had seen any loon families around their bay. If so, she would add this information to her map. This process took two-and-a-half weeks, just to count the loons from the east end to Oak Narrows. Anyone in their right mind could have guessed that this would not be an accurate count.

But, as luck would have it, around that same time, Greg Raps, president of the Sportsmen’s Club, put out a call for projects that had to do with the lake. A light bulb went on! Mardy contacted Greg with her idea and the Lake Vermilion loon count was born. With the help of Bob Daggit and Barb Shook, the lake was divided into 23 territories and volunteers were found to help with the systematic count of all the loons on the lake.

For the past 36 consecutive years, the loon count has taken place during the second week in July. This week was originally chosen as the chicks have survived any predators and are large enough to swim on their own. The counting day is set along with an alternate day in case of inclement weather. At 9 a.m. on the designated day, the counters steer their boats in a grid pattern traveling very slowly back and forth on their assigned territory. They count singles, pairs and chicks. The final count gets tallied at the end

of their assigned timeframe and the numbers are recorded. Over the years the loon population on Lake Vermilion has remained remarkably steady. This year, the volunteers counted 235 loons.

Just imagine what life would be like without volunteers like Mardy Jackson asking the simple question “Why?” or “How many?” Without her curiosity and enthusiasm, we may have never considered the task of counting loons on Lake Vermilion. And each year many dozens of volunteers would not have the opportunity to get out on the lake and add their beautiful loons to the count.

After all these years, Mardy no longer coordinates the annual count, but she still maintains the territory she’s counted for years and goes out on count day with friends Tom and Renee Aro, since her eyesight isn’t what it once was.

Perhaps you, too, can make a difference like Mardy. Maybe you have something in mind that you would like to do or implement. Or maybe you’re just looking for information to volunteer. The Vermilion Lake Association would love to hear from you. Contact Pat Michaelson, Volunteer Program Leader at [plmichaelson@gmail.com](mailto:plmichaelson@gmail.com) or check out the website at [www.VermilionLakeAssociation.org](http://www.VermilionLakeAssociation.org).

*Penny Jackson is an occasional contributor to the Timberjay. She is no relation to Mardy Jackson.*



**PENNY JACKSON**



Obituaries and Death Notices



Julian W. Brzoznowski

Julian Walter Brzoznowski, 78, of Orr, passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018,

at his home, surrounded by his loving family. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday, Dec. 22 at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Orr. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Julian was born to Clemens and Amelia (Knopka) Brzoznowski on July 22, 1940, in International Falls. Julian attended Orr High School, graduating in 1958. He was united in marriage to Jo Ann (DeBoer) Breneman on Sept. 22, 1959.

Julian was a self-employed logger and farmer. He lived his entire life on

the Brzoznowski farm up until a year ago when he and Jo Ann settled in Orr. He served as a board member for the North Star Electrical Co-op for 34 years and the Cook Hospital for 28 years. He was also very active in supporting numerous other community activities and functions.

Julian was a hard-working farmer and logger. In his spare time, he enjoyed trapping and trout fishing. As much as Julian loved to fish, he understood the responsibility of caring for the natural resources. He was involved with the MN Trout Stream

Rejuvenation Program.

Julian was a very loving and proud husband, father and grandfather. His family remembers the laughs he provided as the family's fun-loving practical joker. He always had a "thumbs up" for everyone.

Julian is survived by his beloved wife, Jo Ann Brzoznowski; children, Mary Ruth (Bob) Servis of International Falls, Anne Marie (Jim) Sather of Orr and Julian W. Brzoznowski Jr. of Illinois; stepchildren, Dean Breneman of International Falls, Julie (Russell) Helgeson of Ray and Rebecca (Shad) Murray of International

Falls; grandchildren, Adam Salmi of Rochester, Allan (Marie) Salmi of St. Paul, April (Michael) Wilcox of Angora, Ryan Servis of International Falls, Dustin Helgeson of International Falls, Wyatt Helgeson of Duluth, Sabrina Murray of International Falls, Cody Erickson of Mankato, Christina (Scott) Fuller of East Bethel and Thomas "T.J." Sather of Avon; great-grandchildren, Elizabeth Brown, Jack Udovich, Annabelle Wilcox, Shay Wilcox, Zoey Wilcox, Abel Fuller, Anastasia Fuller, Avaliese Fuller, Braden Sheridan, Haven Westover

and Julian Salmi-Miller; brother, Clemens (Melba) Brzoznowski of California; and sisters, Roseland (Paul) Ehrenberg of Minnesota and Frances Brzoznowski of Arizona; many special nieces and nephews; life-long cherished friends and extended family.

Julian was preceded in death by his parents, Clemens and Amelia; sisters, Victoria Moore and Joanna Kester; and his beloved dog, Morgan.

PUBLIC NOTICES

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS  
DISTRICT COURT  
PROBATE DIVISION  
SIXTH JUDICIAL  
DISTRICT  
Court File  
No. 69VI-PR-18-176

NOTICE AND ORDER FOR HEARING ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION OF INTERESTACY, DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP, APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
ESTATE OF: Denise Johanna Metsa, aka Denise J. Metsa, aka Denise Metsa Decedent  
It is Ordered and Notice is given that on Jan. 16, 2019,

at 9:30 A.M., a hearing will be held in this Court at 300 5th Ave. South, Virginia, Minnesota, for the adjudication of intestacy and determination of heirship of the Decedent, and for the appointment of Racquel M. Horn, whose address is 412 1st Street South, Suite 1, Virginia, MN 55792 as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the Petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper, and no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes, and

expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate. Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

Dated: December 6, 2018  
BY THE COURT  
Michelle M. Anderson  
Judge of District Court  
Amy Turnquist  
Court Administrator  
Debra Thorstensen, as  
Deputy  
Attorney for Petitioner  
Angela E. Sipila

Sipila Law Office LLC  
412 1st Street S, Suite 1  
Virginia, MN, 55792  
Attorney License No: 024501X  
Telephone: (218) 741-5000  
Email: ange@sipilaw.com

Published in the Timberjay,  
Dec. 21 & 28, 2018

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS  
DISTRICT COURT  
PROBATE DIVISION  
SIXTH JUDICIAL  
DISTRICT  
Court File  
No. 69VI-PR-18-195

NOTICE AND ORDER FOR HEARING ON PETITION FOR DESCENT OF PROPERTY

ESTATE OF: Geraldine Elizabeth Petterson  
aka Geraldine E. Petterson, aka Geraldine Norton Petterson  
Decedent  
A Petition for Determination of Descent has been filed with this Court. The Petition represents that the Decedent died more than three years ago, leaving property in Minnesota and requests the probate of Decedent's last Will (if any), and the descent of such property be determined and assigned by this Court to the persons entitled to the property.

Any objections to the Petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper, and no objections are filed or raised, the Petition may be granted.

It is Ordered and Notice is given that the Petition will be heard on Jan. 16, 2019, at 9:30 A.M., by this Court at 300 5th Ave. South, Virginia, Minnesota, 55792. Notice shall be given to all interested persons (MINN. STAT. 524.1-401) and persons who have filed a demand for notice pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-204. Notice shall be given by publishing this Notice and Order as provided by law and by mailing a copy of this Notice and Order at least 14 days prior to the hearing date.

Dated: December 12, 2018  
BY THE COURT  
Michelle M. Anderson  
Judge of District Court  
Amy Turnquist

Court Administrator  
Debra Thorstensen, as  
Deputy  
Attorney for Petitioner  
Angela E. Sipila  
Sipila Law Office LLC  
412 1st Street S, Suite 1  
Virginia, MN, 55792  
Attorney License No: 024501X  
Telephone: (218) 741-5000  
Email: ange@sipilaw.com

Published in the Timberjay,  
Dec. 21 & 28, 2018

MORCOM TOWNSHIP  
FILING NOTICE

Affidavits of candidacy may be filed with the Town Clerk from January 1, 2019 through January 15, 2019 closing at 5:00 PM.

Offices to be elected:  
1 Supervisor: 3-YEAR TERM  
1 Treasurer: 2-YEAR TERM

Filing fee is \$2.00 to have your name on the ballot for the Annual Election on March 12, 2019. Filing for candidacy may be done by calling the Township Clerk for an appointment at 218-969-5812.

Sasha Lehto, Morcom Township Clerk

Published in the Timberjay,  
Dec. 28, 2018 & Jan. 11, 2019

LEIDING TOWNSHIP  
NOTICE OF FILINGS

Filings for the following offices open on Tuesday, January 1, 2019, and close on Tuesday, January 15, 2019, at 5 p.m.

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

Filing fee is \$2.  
File the Affidavit of Candidacy at Clerk's Office. Please call 218-757-3205 or 218-355-0163 (cell) for the clerk's office hours.

Marie Milan, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, Dec. 21 & 28, 2018

EMPLOYMENT

POSITION OPENING-ISD No. 696  
ELY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Substitute Custodian

Ely Public Schools is taking applications for an as-needed substitute custodian for the 2018-2019 school year: \$14.24/hr.; background check required. Applications available at [www.ely.k12.mn.us](http://www.ely.k12.mn.us) or in the General office, 2nd floor of the Memorial Building; return application to: ISD 696, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731. 12/28

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EMPLOYMENT



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Casual Radiologic Tech (weekends only)

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[humanresources@cookhospital.org](mailto:humanresources@cookhospital.org)

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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# TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

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

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## HOSPICE

VIRGIE HEGG HOSPICE PARTNERS can provide help for patients and their families in ways such as: comfort care, massages, last wishes and more. For more information, contact Program Director Becca Bundy at 218-780-5423 or [vhhpdirector@gmail.com](mailto:vhhpdirector@gmail.com). This ad is paid for by Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners.

## LICENSE BUREAU

COOK AREA LICENSE BUREAU- 221 S. Hwy 53, Cook. Open-M-F 9-5, FastTrack Title Service-MVR-DNR-Limited DL, Dry Cleaning Drop off/Pick up, CDL/ Motorcycle/ Drivers Manuals. Now accepting Visa/MC/ Discover. Questions call 218-666-6199. tfn

## REAL ESTATE

Search ALL MLS listings at [www.pfremmerrealty.com](http://www.pfremmerrealty.com). tfn

## FOR RENT

2 BEDROOM APARTMENT- for rent in Orr. Call Dennis at Bayview Apartments, 218-780-0200. tfn

## STORAGE

RED ROCK STORAGE- Boats, Cars, Household Items. Ideal Location. Many sizes. Also Mobile Storage Containers delivered to your location. [www.redrock-storage.com](http://www.redrock-storage.com). Call 218-753-2375. tfn

## SNOW REMOVAL

VERMILION SNOW MANAGEMENT- Serving the entire Lake Vermilion area. Roads, Driveways & Sidewalks. Free estimates, insured. [tj@vermilionsnowmanagement.com](mailto:tj@vermilionsnowmanagement.com) or 218-290-0966. Online at [vermilionsnowmanagement.com](http://vermilionsnowmanagement.com). tfn

## WANTED

WANTED TO BUY: Will pay cash for junk cars and pickups. Will pick up. Also, we collect used oil. Call 218-757-3255 or 218-780-2579. tfn

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

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

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

CREDIT REPAIR SCAMS- "Credit problems? No problem!" No way. A poor credit history takes time to repair, no matter what anybody claims. The Federal Trade Commission says no company can remove accurate or timely information from your credit report. Learn more about managing credit and debt at [ftc.gov/credit](http://ftc.gov/credit). A message from The Timberjay and the FTC.

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## SUPPORT GROUPS

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

ORR AA and AL-ANON meet Tuesdays, AA at 8 p.m. and Al-ANON at 7 p.m. Holy Cross Catholic Church, Orr.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS- Meetings every Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Virginia.

ELY CO-DEPENDENTS MEETING- Fridays at noon-St. Anthony's Church Classroom 3-Use west side entrance. For more information go to coda.org on the web.

BABBITT AL-ANON- meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. at the Babbitt Assembly of God Church.

VIRGINIA AA WOMEN'S MEETING- Ladies by the Lake. Tuesdays at 12 noon. Peace United Methodist Church, 303 S 9th Ave, please use side door and parking.

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

MEETING in Ely! "New Ideas" WOMEN IN RECOVERY: 12 Steps. For women seeking help and hope to recover from any addiction: drugs, alcohol, food, gambling etc. Every Thursday noon at St. Anthony's Catholic Church. Come join us! Q: 218-235-3581.






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## QUITE A COMPLEMENT

**ACROSS**

1 Like whiskered eggs  
7 11th U.S. president  
11 Two — kind  
14 OshKosh — (clothing brand)  
19 Rio Grande city  
20 Turn about an axis  
21 Hoop part  
22 Supply (with)  
23 Reach  
24 Back in the day  
26 Gird one's —  
27 Elena Kagan and others  
30 Govt. ecology org.  
31 Biblical verb ending  
32 Suffix with front or cloth  
33 — hall (U. hangout)  
34 Limbo and others  
44 Vast quantity  
45 Motel cousin  
46 "Alley- —" (1960 #1 hit)  
47 "So it is!"  
48 Euterpe and others  
56 Cleveland NBAer

**DOWN**

57 Actor Sacha Baron —  
58 Post-it initialism  
59 Up until now  
60 Prior to, in poetry  
62 Parisian pal  
63 Italy's loc.  
64 Way of carrying oneself  
66 Wooded region in France  
68 Kitchen and others  
73 Still a bit firm, as cooked pasta  
75 Russian city or region  
76 Barrett of Pink Floyd  
77 ThinkPad maker, once  
80 Spy novelist John le —  
81 "Boy, — ever!"  
82 Inits. on a battleship  
83 Delhi's home  
85 Noted time  
86 Shortstop and others  
92 Tire trappers  
94 Wall-to-wall, e.g.  
95 Water in une fontaine


96 With 61-Down, request  
97 "Eroica" and others  
104 Sleep cycle acronym  
105 Lead-in to natal  
106 Texter's "Holy moly!"  
107 33rd U.S. pres.  
110 Fact about 27-, 34-, 48-, 68-, 86- and 97-Across  
118 Out in front  
119 Cocky  
120 New Zealand indigenes  
121 "The Trial" novelist Franz  
122 Onetime GI  
123 White cheese  
124 Bewitched  
125 Fidgety  
126 Prefix with thermal  
127 "And there you have it!"  
128 Late actress Gabor

5 Pop singer Brickell  
6 Nitrogen or carbon, e.g.  
7 Intimidates, with "out"  
8 Margarine  
9 Maui feast  
10 Deborah of old films  
11 Mouth pain relief brand  
12 Solve  
13 Singer Tori  
14 Ism  
15 Dumplings in an Italian restaurant  
16 Dog of comics  
17 Phoenix NBA team  
18 "— a Rebel" (1962 hit)  
25 Bic Clic —  
28 Summer, in France  
29 Overused theme  
35 Arthur with a racket  
36 Gas in glass  
37 103, to Nero  
38 Mag for an entrepreneur  
39 It's stranded in cells  
40 "Help!" from a helmsman  
41 City north of San Diego  
42 Hear (of)

43 Flood control structure  
48 Longtime record label  
49 — Kippur  
50 Very inferior  
51 Valuable  
52 Lamb-in-pita treat  
53 Geologist Sir Charles —  
54 Bistro list  
55 Chronicle  
61 See 96-Across  
63 Pro trained in trauma  
64 Callas of opera  
65 Cola cubes  
66 Large chasm  
67 Angling need  
69 Atop, in verse  
70 Certain ground-floor apartment  
71 Tyro PC gamer, say  
72 Petro-Canada rival  
73 Sour in taste  
74 Actor Lash of Westerns  
78 Post office container  
79 Mothers  
81 TV host Ellen  
82 "—, and away!"

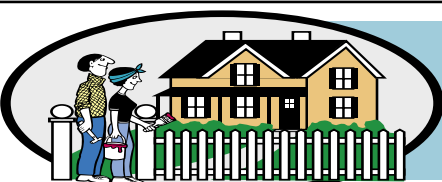
83 Possible reply to "Who's there?"  
84 Shoe brand  
87 Scent  
88 Toyota Sequoia, e.g.  
89 ESPN anchor Bob  
90 Flee quickly  
91 He played Andy Torres on "Cougar Town"  
93 Spells, as of luck  
98 Prime period  
99 Not far from  
100 Fly alone  
101 Age-old flu-fighting drink  
102 Yoga chants  
103 Iranian city  
108 Quick cuts  
109 Seed coating  
110 More — likely  
111 Test by lifting  
112 Sitar player Shankar  
113 Pride parade initialism  
114 — Lee (food brand)  
115 Camelot wife  
116 Big admirers  
117 Comic Dunn  
118 Alias abbr.

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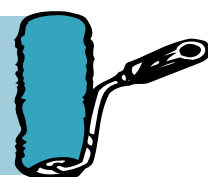


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