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the TIMBERJAY

VOL. 31, ISSUE 1 January 10, 2020

\$1⁰⁰



ST. LOUIS COUNTY

Commissioners delay on refugee issue

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

DULUTH— The St. Louis County Board, on Tuesday, tabled action on a proposal to allow refugee resettlement after a flood of opposition, mostly from residents in rural parts of the county. The decision came on a 4-3 vote that divided Duluth area commissioners from those representing more rural

Vote 4-3 to table decision until May

parts of the county. It came after three hours of public testimony that was largely in favor of the proposal. Fourth District Commissioner Paul McDonald voted along with his northern commissioners in supporting Commissioner Keith Nelson’s motion to table. The

county board is expected to take up the issue once again at a board meeting set for May 26 in Buhl, just five days before a deadline set for approving possible resettlement. McDonald said he wanted more time to explain the proposal to his constituents. “We have taken over

200 phone calls in opposition at our office,” said McDonald, “not to mention the emails.” McDonald said it’s important for county residents to recognize that “nothing has changed” and there’s no reason to expect any refugees will be resettled in the county any time soon. “We’ve



Paul McDonald

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FUN FUNDRAISER IN COOK



Dashing through the snow

Sleigh ride event benefits Cook Food Shelf

by E. M. SCHULTZ
Staff Writer

COOK – The annual sleigh ride fundraiser for the food shelf here was once again a success. According to organizer Mike Hanson, the event went really well, with a total of seven teams of sleighs doing runs and roughly three hundred people attending. The event resulted in a total of 268 pounds of food and over \$700 in cash collected for the local food shelf. Hanson says this is roughly the same

Seven teams of sleighs participated in the annual Cook Food Shelf fundraiser last Saturday. Marilyn Jenkins, 91, right, took several rides throughout the day. photos by Connie Stone as last year, though the event itself has grown in popularity every year. After enjoying a sleigh ride, attendees were treated to hot chocolate and holiday goodies, as well as the chance to warm themselves by

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Area ambulance administrative costs vary widely

Investigation questions compensation level for Tower’s director

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— A *Timberjaya* analysis of the administrative expenses of local Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance services has found a wide variation in overhead costs, ranging from \$4,800 a year in Orr to more than \$40,000 a year in Tower. Administrative costs for services operating Advanced Life Support (ALS) services, like Ely and Virginia, run higher in absolute dollar terms although they are considerably less costly on a per-capita basis. The *Timberjaya* investigation also found that Tower Area Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg may be receiving substantial compensation which has not been clearly authorized under the existing terms of his employment, potentially a violation of state law. For small rural ambulance services, maintaining financial viability is a continuing challenge, as the rising cost of ambulances and other medical equipment and the need to attract and retain ambulance staff has strained ambulance budgets.

Limiting overhead expenses is one means the Orr Area Ambulance Service has used to keep costs under control and to build the financial reserves it needs to finance the purchase of costly equipment, particularly ambulances, which now regularly cost over \$200,000 per unit.

See...AMBULANCE pg. 8

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

No current plans for True Value at former Ely Shopko

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY—It appears a flurry of reports about a sale of the former Shopko building, located on Ely’s Sheridan Street, were premature. Current building owner Bob McCullough told the *Timberjaya* this week that the building is “under con-

tract,” but has not yet been sold. McCullough said recent media reports suggesting a sale had been consummated were in error. At least one other area newspaper had reported that the building would become a new True Value hardware store, but the *Timberjaya* has confirmed that that report was in error. Sales officials for the True Value chain,

that serves northeastern Minnesota, told the *Timberjaya* that they were unaware of any such plans for a new store affiliated with True Value. While the *Timberjaya* was aware of the initial rumor about a possible new hardware store, this newspaper held off reporting the possibility until

See...ELY pg. 8



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COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NOTICES

Yet another delay in Keith trial

VIRGINIA – Former Tower City Clerk-Treasurer Linda Keith's trial date has been pushed back once again. Keith did make a court appearance on Monday, Jan. 6, but the judge overseeing cases that day happened to be former Tower city attorney Andy Peterson. Due to a potential conflict of interest, Keith's attorney requested a new judge and court date. This request was granted, and a new date for a contested hearing was set for Monday, Feb. 24 at 1 p.m.

Hearing on legal cannabis set for Monday in Hibbing

HIBBING— Majority Leader Ryan Winkler and Rep. Julie Sandstede will host a community conversation on cannabis at the Memorial Building Little Theater in Hibbing this coming Monday, Jan. 13. The meeting will be one of 15 hosted by Rep. Winkler and legislators around the state to encourage Minnesotans to join the conversation on how to legalize and regulate cannabis for adult use. The forum gets underway at 6:30 p.m.

The Little Theater is located at 400 E. 23rd St. in Hibbing.

Eleven states and Washington, D.C. have legalized cannabis for recreational use. In an op-ed written earlier this month, Rep. Winkler announced that legalizing cannabis for adult use will be a legislative priority during the 2020 legislative session.

NWFA Winter Writers Group

COOK – There is a writer waiting to be discovered in each of us! The Winter Writers Group will meet at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts (NWFA) Gallery in Cook on Saturday, Feb. 11 from 1-3 p.m. The group is open to anyone who enjoys writing. In each session, writers respond to prompts and share writings they have completed outside of the meetings. All forms of writing are valued and welcome, as are all interested individuals.

NWFA is a non-profit membership organization supporting artists in all fields in the area of Cook. Forty artists display their work year-round at NWFA Gallery. Visit nwfamn.org for more info.

What to Keep, What to Leave Behind

VIRGINIA – Rev. Eric Northard will discuss "What to Keep, What to Leave Behind" at Mesabi Unitarian Church in Virginia on Sunday, Jan. 12 at 10:30 a.m. We will share reflections on personal and spiritual housecleaning as we move into the New Year. What are we bringing with us and what are we leaving behind?

Ruby's Pantry food distribution

COOK - The next Ruby's Pantry food distribution will be Thursday, Jan. 9 from 4:30-6 p.m. at the old Cook School. Registration begins at 3 p.m., and volunteers are asked to arrive at this time. Please be sure to bring your own containers. \$20 cash donation at the door. This month's distribution is sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango.

Ruby's Pantry is now offering online registration at rubyspantry.com starting Friday, Jan. 10 for February's distribution. \$21 donation at sign-up. For more information, contact Amy Viita at 218-666-2220.

No. Minnesota students encouraged to apply for Alworth Scholarships

REGIONAL – Northern Minnesota high school seniors interested in furthering their education at colleges and universities around the country are encouraged to apply for Marshall H. and Nellie Alworth Memorial Fund scholarships for the 2020-2021 school year by Wednesday, Jan. 15. Students must have an interest in pursuing a bachelor's degree in mathematics or scientific fields of study. Eligibility criteria and online application forms may be found at www.AlworthScholarship.org.

CHORAL MUSIC

Cantus to perform in Eveleth, Jan. 12



EVELETH- The Lyric Center for the Arts in partnership with the Virginia High School Choral Music program is pleased to present Cantus in concert on Sunday, Jan. 12. The concert will take place at United in Christ Lutheran Church in Eveleth at 7 p.m.

This season, the acclaimed men's vocal ensemble Cantus looks to the night sky to shape One Giant Leap, an exploration of the celestial heavens and their hold on mankind. Drawing on repertoire from Franz Schubert to Ériks Ešenvalds, this program builds toward the 1969 Apollo mission that put a man on the moon.

"The poetic arc of the evening is structured around the moment of the moon landing and the groundwork that was laid to make this historic achievement possible," says Cantus tenor Paul Scholtz.

However, One Giant Leap looks beyond that singular triumph, now a half a century removed, to consider elements of why we sought to go to the moon in the first place: mankind's capacity for wonder, our innate desire

to discover, and – in doing so – to better understand our own place in the universe. Cantus matches these motivators to music through pieces as varied as Camille Saint-Saens' Aux Aviateurs and Gabriela Lena Frank's evocative Picaflor Esmeralda.

With Ken Jennings' And Death Shall Have No Dominion, One Giant Leap addresses the sacrifice and uncertainty inherent in exploration. Yet throughout this thoughtful and dynamic program, Cantus seeks to celebrate the siren song of the sky, as well as the larger and lasting themes of bravery, innovation, and shared accomplishment that led to "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Perhaps none of this is captured more poignantly than with the program's closing song Beyond, a brand-new composition by Cantus bass and composer Chris Foss with text by Katharine Lee Bates.

The moon, stars, and the tapestry of the night sky all are responsible for some of humanity's oldest legends and mysteries. In One Giant Leap, Cantus celebrates the allure of upward exploration, the triumph

of the human spirit, and striving for excellence through innovation and technology.

"I remember being a kid in northern Minnesota at my family cabin," Scholtz says, "and on clear nights I would stand outside and look up at the stars. I was mesmerized by the beauty of those countless twinkling lights in the sky. I felt so small trying to comprehend all that was out there, yet feelings of excitement and curiosity always prevailed. There is a deep feeling of connectedness knowing how many billions of people have gazed upon those same stars and have been struck with those same feelings of wonderment and inspiration. It is in this spirit that we decided to craft a show around one of humankind's most awe-inspiring achievements, because at its core it is a story that embodies the tenacity and triumph of the human spirit."

Paul Scholtz says, "We hope the audience will leave carrying with them those same feelings of inspiration and awe that the night sky has evoked in each one of us."

Art exhibit investigates climate change in northern Minnesota's forests



REGIONAL – A new art exhibit, "Art From the Edge of the Boreal Forest: Reflecting Biodiversity" is set to open on Saturday, Jan. 18 at the James J. Hill House in St. Paul. The exhibit will be available for viewing until Sunday, June 21. Gallery-only admission is free or included with \$6-\$10 site admission. In the new exhibit, visitors can see traditional botanical artwork depict-

ing Minnesota's most threatened trees from the following local artists: Vicki Barth, Wendy Brockman, Marj Davis, Kathy Franzen, Nancy Gehrig, Debra Greenblatt, Julie Martinez, Mary Anne O'Malley, Kathleen Reeves and Bruce Wilson. These artists have been working with climatologists, naturalists, and other specialists for the past ten years to identify and create works regarding

the ten Minnesota trees that are most vulnerable to climate change: balsam poplar, balsam fir, black spruce, white spruce, jack pine, red pine, paper birch, quaking aspen, black ash and tamarack. Items created by woodturner Bob Carls from wood harvested from each type of tree will also be on display.

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ELY IN WINTER

Ely's new big snowblower seeing lots of action

ELY – The accumulating piles of snow this winter and the city's efforts to deal with it all were on the minds of city council members here Tuesday night during an abbreviated council meeting to open 2020.

Mayor Chuck Novak praised public works crews for their "novel approach" to snow removal. "Considering our new snow blower and the amount of snow we have, rather than waiting to remove all the snow from the boulevards, they are going right up to the curbs and widening the streets," he said. "If you've seen that new blower in action, it just keeps on going. If we had two or three more dump trucks, they could move faster, probably. They're doing a good job in widening our streets for parking."

Council member Jerome Debeltz chimed in with additional praise. "We've had more snow this year than in the last five or ten years. [Our crews] are doing a great job and I commend them."

Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski notified the council

that city drivers may experience delays on Friday, Jan. 10, as Sheridan Street—a state highway maintained by the Minnesota Department of Transportation—will have snow removed from the curbs. "We assist where we can and when we can," he said. "We will also be working in the downtown area this week, on Chapman Street, and the business corridor."

Langowski explained that the new approach to removing snow this year involves taking the snow banks away up to the curbs. "This allows us to get snow removed on as many of the streets, and as quickly as possible, to allow room for the next big snowfall. This is done not necessarily for parking. It is done for the next big snowfall that we get," he said.

The city purchased its new snowblower last fall to replace decades-old equipment that could not be maintained any longer. "We were fortunate we bought it when we did. A lot of departments across the state are having some issues with snow

removal, and that is not us right now," Langowski said.

He reminded the public that residential contract snowplow drivers are not allowed to push snow into neighbors' yards or driveways, or into public right-of-ways like city streets. "We appreciate everyone's patience in working with us," he said.

Novak noted that a city ordinance prohibits residents from moving snow to city streets and sidewalks. "We will enforce the ordinance when we have to," he said.

Other business

In other business, the council:

► Called for sealed bids for the city's 2020 legal newspaper. The *Ely Timberjay* is currently the city's legal newspaper because it had the lowest bid last year.

► Approved temporary liquor licenses for the Ely Jaycees Club for the Piragis Lumberjack Party on Feb. 15, Crapola Block Party in June, Music in the



Park events and Blueberry/Art Festival in Whiteside Park and the Ely Marathon on Sept. 20.

► Approved a commercial renovation loan for 141 N Central Ave. for \$17,500 to replace floor and windows.

► Approved the 2020 official city depositories as Frandsen Bank and Trust, Boundary Waters Bank and the 4M Fund.

► Approved the final pay estimate for the Vermilion River ATV Bridge construction project for \$254,173.38. The city was the fiscal agent on that project.

► Approved the city of Ely fee schedule for 2020 with no changes.

► Renewed the Ely Golf Course land lease for another year. The fee remains at zero.

► Approved a resolution authorizing the Knights of Columbus Council 3238 to conduct Bingo on Feb. 9 and March 29.

► Approved city in-kind services for the Ely Winter Fest, Feb. 6-16, and the Northland 300 Snowmobile and Annual Fun Run events at the Grand Ely Lodge, Jan. 22-26 with the stipulation that city street snow removal takes precedence.

COUNTY SCHOOLS

Assistant principals considered for T-S and NER schools

by E. M. SCHULTZ
Staff Writer

VIRGINIA—Tower-Soudan and Northeast Range may soon be seeing changes to their administrative structure. At a working session Tuesday night, Superintendent Reggie Engebretson presented a proposal to establish an assistant principal in Tower-Soudan after receiving feedback from staff who expressed concerns over

mental health and establishing solid relationships with the students.

Currently, Northeast Range shares their principal with Tower-Soudan one day per week. The addition of an assistant principal would eliminate this need and result in a more consistent administrative presence at both schools. Tower-Soudan also currently has a half-time dean, though this position would be eliminated should the assistant

principal proposal be adopted. Ultimately, Tower-Soudan would gain an individual who was present every day, making it easier for them to establish working relationships with staff, students, and parents, she said.

Northeast Range would also benefit from this proposal. At this time, they have a 0.6 dean and a 0.4 counselor. The proposal would eliminate the dean position and up the counselor position to 0.8, resulting in

more time dedicated to working with students. Northeast Range would also get their principal back full-time.

"I see this as a win-win," says Board Member Chris Koviosto.

He was not the only one who strongly supported the idea. The entire board appeared to believe it would be beneficial, with only Board Member Christine Taylor speaking up to say she wanted to make sure the job description

was crystal clear prior to it being posted. Engebretson concurred, telling the board she would bring the matter before the board, complete with a detailed job description, at their next meeting, which will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 5 p.m. at the district office in Virginia.

Prior to the working session, the board held a short organizational meeting to elect officials

See **SCHOOLS...**pg. 5

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OPINION

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Editorial

The Senate and impeachment

Constitutional checks at risk if GOP
leaders refuse to do their duty

Is 233 years of constitutional rule in the United States of America about to come to an end? That’s a disturbing yet highly relevant question as the U.S. Senate seeks to decide how to move forward with an examination of articles of impeachment approved last month by the House of Representatives.

Underlying the Senate’s deliberations is the reality that the only thing that separates the United States from a Third World dictatorship is fealty to the words of our founders, penned back in 1787. While far from perfect, the U.S. Constitution has been the guiding light for our union for more than two centuries. Founded on the principle of the separation of powers, our constitution’s ability to prevent abuses by government and its officials is determined by a willingness by all three branches of government to provide a check on excesses by the other two branches. The founders believed that the three branches would zealously protect their prerogatives and power, but as we’ve seen, it appears such confidence may have been misplaced.

When Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell stated recently that he was actively coordinating a Senate trial at the behest of the White House and would not, in any way, serve as an impartial juror in a Senate proceeding, he was openly acknowledging that our constitutional system is foundering. When Senate leaders become mere functionaries for a White House that feels free to obstruct Congress in the midst of an impeachment proceeding and a President who willfully seeks the support of foreign leaders for his own political advantage, the concept of checks and balances is clearly on life support.

We are in unprecedented times. Never before in American history has a president so openly thwarted Congress in its efforts to fulfill a constitutional duty. From Presidents Andrew Johnson to Richard Nixon to Bill Clinton, every past president has made both records and top administration officials available as part of an impeachment proceeding. Failure to do so is clearly unconstitutional and was rightfully asserted as an impeachable offense by the House against President Trump. Every president subjected to this process has complained that impeachment proceedings were unfair or unwarranted, but none before the current president has ever so clearly defiled the words of our founding fathers and found a Senate so willing to shirk its own responsibilities.

We know some truths here, including that President Donald Trump used his office to pressure a foreign leader into investi-

gating one of Trump’s political opponents. That was clear even before the release last week of emails that prove that President Trump ordered the hold on military aid to Ukraine and did so without informing Congress, yet another violation of federal law. We have also learned from recent criminal indictments that operatives associated with Trump’s personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani and Trump himself raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal foreign campaign contributions from individuals in Ukraine who were promised political influence over the American president for their contributions, much of which was directed to Trump’s primary political action committee. This is a degree of corruption that exceeds anything we’ve seen from a prior president. At least one of those operatives is now seeking to testify before Congress.

And yet we have a political party in control of the U.S. Senate that has now promised the American people a complete and total whitewash, in which not one single witness will be called to testify. If President Trump is an innocent man, as he unceasingly claims, why wouldn’t he want an actual trial with witnesses who could testify to his innocence under oath? Why wouldn’t he want to produce White House documents that attest to the purity of his intent? We all know the answer to these questions. President Trump is guilty as charged and has no defense other than a stone wall.

By helping Trump in his whitewash, the Senate leaders are violating their oaths of office and ensuring that President Trump will only be emboldened in his efforts to tilt the political playing field in his favor. If President Trump can use his office to obtain dirt on a domestic opponent, he can use his office to leverage foreign contributions to his campaign effort, or even ask President Putin to use his own operatives to interfere again, on Trump’s behalf, in the 2020 election. When an executive has no check on his or her power, abuse is inevitable, particularly when it involves an individual of such low character as Donald Trump. By shirking its constitutional duties, the U.S. Senate is knowingly putting America’s democracy at risk of ruin. If the Senate fails to change course and fulfill its obligations under the U.S. Constitution, the GOP will have sealed this country’s fate, all to protect their tax cuts for the rich and courts that favor corporate rule over the public good. That is an ignoble legacy, indeed.



Letters from Readers

Trump’s tax snake oil spikes the deficit

Two years ago the Trump administration implemented its so-called tax reform law. It was based on the long-discredited supply-side economic theory that if you cut taxes you will raise revenue. It’s the kind of magical thinking that former governor Tim Pawlenty indulged in to drive Minnesota into near bankruptcy. It makes the rich richer, short changes everyone else, and deprives government of the funds necessary to maintain infrastructure, social safety nets, and every other important function. In order to work – even in theory – the supply side fantasy needs sustained, long term economic growth of three percent. That never happens. The results of Trump’s snake oil sale are in, and were, of course, predicted: a ballooning government debt and huge tax breaks for the rich, including Trump and his family. As usual, the government shortfalls will serve as excuses to cut government programs that do not benefit the affluent. As G. K. Chesterton wrote: “The poor have sometimes objected to being governed badly; the rich have always objected to being governed at all.”

Peter M. Leschak
Side Lake

A 16-year-old sees what our president does not

“By the law of nature these things are common to mankind — the air, running water, the sea and consequently, the shores of the sea.” The Justinian Code (530 AD) recognized government protection of these, for all Romans to use, later known as the Public Trust Doctrine.

History celebrates the Magna Carta (1215) for legal rights, but environmental rights of ordinary people to use the forest commons remained

hidden. The public trust took hold in English law that some resources are owned by no one and are for use by all. However, enclosure systems for the wealthy replaced common lands.

These ideas traveled to the American Colonies to appear in U.S. documents to protect life, liberty, pursuit of happiness and promote the general welfare. Equal protection of, and equality before, the law followed. Cultural and natural commons in public trust for all were enclosed as private property rights expanded for the owning class.

Corporate capture of government aligned rule-making with big business interests, to exploit the commons as property for profit rather than for public benefit. Political struggle is necessary to dislodge and sever the Corporate/State connection to expand public trust for all.

Atmosphere, oceans, biosphere and climate are fundamental commons necessary for human survival and the public trust doctrine requires government to protect these commons for We the People, not for industrial polluters to use as waste disposal sites.

In Oregon, Juliana v. United States, a historic climate lawsuit filed in 2015 by 21 youths, charges the federal government for failing to protect their health, life and future from threat of climate change. The preamble to our Constitution promises to “secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.” Air is life, land is life, water is life! Greta Thunberg gets it, Donald Trump doesn’t.

Harold Honkola
Tower

Ely Chamber should reconsider ban on festival nonprofits

I was distressed to hear that the Chamber of Commerce is considering eliminating Ely nonprofits from participation in the Blueberry/Art and

Harvest Moon festivals. Long before I moved to Ely full time, I enjoyed the festivals as a way to understand and appreciate what northern Minnesota had to offer. Not just arts and crafts (which are not all from Minnesota) but ideas, ways of life, and traditions. As a summer visitor, I had long enjoyed Tuesday Night Live and become a fan of Pat Surface. But then, having just lost a mother to Alzheimer’s, I was heartened to visit the Spiritwood Foundation booth and learn of Pat and Donna’s efforts to help eradicate this disease. I left with a set of sheets that still make me think of my mother when I slip between them. When I bought property, and was curious to learn more about the birds, animals and plants I found on my little piece of paradise, I wandered into the Ely Field Naturalists booth and came home with pamphlets, maps, and membership in a group that would help me expand my knowledge. Having visited Dorothy Molter on my earliest canoe trips in 1966 and 1967, I was excited to learn about the foundation dedicated to preserving her memory. These are just a few of my experiences with booths hosted by nonprofits in Ely. Every time I enter a nonprofit booth, I am quickly engaged with enthusiastic volunteers eager to share their knowledge. I contrast this with the commercial booth owners who barely look up when I enter to peruse their wares. I support the festivals and always come home with something I have purchased from one of the vendors, and a stomach full of carnival food. But I also come home having learned something new or supported a cause that helps make Ely the place we love to live. I hope the Chamber will reconsider and allow these nonprofits to continue to participate.

Lindsey Lang
Ely

Navigating the challenges of an aging parent

For expectant parents, there is no shortage of books or blogs offering advice on child-rearing. But at the other end of life, when we come to deal with failing parents, it seems each family is left largely to chart its own path. In our case, it’s my father, now 95, who



**MARSHALL
HELMBERGER**

is challenging our ability to negotiate the many complexities of aging.

If there’s a common thread to the attitudes of many old people, it’s resistance to change, and that’s certainly the case with my father, who has stubbornly resisted repeated encouragement and increasing pressure

by me and my siblings to make the move from his home, where he lives alone, to assisted living.

Physically, he’s capable of living alone, but short-term memory loss, brought on by Alzheimer’s, has increasingly left him disoriented and anxious about day-to-day living. Disorientation, of course, is a chronic condition, and not just for old people in a world where change is relentless and the pace of change increases by the moment. I can only imagine how

it must seem for a 95-year-old, born one of 13 kids on a rented farm in South Dakota back in 1924. When my father was young, my grandfather hooked a horse to a wagon to get to town. In the winter, they hooked the horse to a sleigh. What we see today as basics, like electricity and indoor plumbing, came only many years later.

For my father, his own home, surrounded by his familiar things, is a refuge from a world that looks increasingly

unrecognizable in the year 2020. I understand that perfectly. It’s the same reason I live in a log cabin in the woods, where I can look out each day on our familiar landscape and at least pretend, for a few minutes each day, that humanity isn’t destroying the world.

One of the many changes we’ve seen in society is the way in which we treat the elderly. In many ways, it’s been a change for

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Letters from Readers

The truth matters, even in Washington

President Trump keeps hollering that the Impeachment Process in the House was unfair, that it was a big sham! I disagree, here's why.

During the hearings both the Republicans and Democrats had equal numbers of representatives to question witnesses. Each were given equal amounts of time to question all seventeen of them. Trump was asked to have his own attorneys present, but refused to send them. He was also asked to present his own witnesses that may of cleared him of any wrong doings. He refused again. What was he hiding?

Almost all 17 witnesses were Republicans and many were appointed by Trump himself. Many overheard his call to the Ukranian President and were alarmed and willing to tell their stories under oath. His own Ambassador Sundland said it was definitely a quid pro quo, that it was a shakedown by President Trump to withhold aid unlawfully, approved by the entire Congress, until his political rival was investigated, or else an announcement that it would happen soon. Even his own press secretary Mulvaney said on national TV that it was a quid pro quo, that they do it all the time, and to get over it.

The Senate and public need to hear from Bolton, Mulvaney, Guiliani, and Secretary of State Pompeo, under oath, so that the truth comes out. It's up to the Senate to question these guys and get to the bottom of it. If there is a cover up it needs to be exposed. We can't let Mitch McConnell ramrod the Impeachment Process through the Senate unfairly because he's afraid he'd be called a wimp or worse by President Trump who loves to downgrade anyone who crosses his path. Many are afraid of his cutting remarks and won't stand up to him. The Senators need a strong backbone and to uphold their oath of office by making sure these four witnesses, who have firsthand knowledge of the call, are required to testify, even if Trump doesn't like it.

If his call was "so perfect," as he claims, why doesn't he himself testify before the Senate, under oath, as to why the Bidens were targeted? That's what is needed! Sending out Rudy Guiliani, rogue, like a lone

hungry wolf, to dig up dirt is ridiculous when you have a State Department and FBI that would handle such matters when and if they are legit.

**Daryl Lamppa
Tower**

Ely Historical State Theater updates

Here are two pieces of good news about the State Theater from our non-profit board:

First, you may know about the bridge loan of \$300,000 that the IRRRB made to the Ott Family to help complete the historical restoration of the theater building. Just to clarify, our non-profit is a completely separate entity that is raising funds to equip and furnish the theater and to manage it once Alley A Realty, the Otts, have finished the reconstruction.

Secondly, with your donations, much has been accomplished over the holidays: the curtain and backdrops have been hung, the theatrical sound and lighting have been installed, and the new screen has been ordered to be installed immediately after The Quiltmaker's Gift production has closed. The new popcorn popper was ordered this week, and we are just days (and a few dollars) away from ordering the new 4K digital projector and the portable seating. That's very good news!!

Our next steps will be to raise the funds to put finishing touches on the State Theater, to equip the concessions area and prepare the second theater for movies in the Solerno Building.

We appreciate the tremendous support the theater has received from the Ely community, Ely visitors and friends so far. We will keep you posted about our progress, and we will ask all future movie-goers to contribute to keep advancing the tremendous momentum you have built. Thank you for helping to support fun, the arts and one more fabulous attraction in Ely!

**David Wigdahl
EHST Board Chair**

Thank you for keeping me informed

A science-based career encouraged me (required me?) to leave the Iron Range in the 1970s.

St. Louis, Lake, and Cook

counties are still my favorites, however. I still visit families in the area and camp, grouse hunt, and paddle, though not as much as in my younger days.

So thank you for the regional reporting and keeping me informed. It's much appreciated.

Sulfide mining and climate change have certainly created a divide. I probably fit the category of "traitor" by many for my views on these two topics. Comment sections of and opinion pieces never disappoint, sadly. Have you ever considered requiring commenters to use their actual name when responding? I know some currently do. Locally, it was interesting to see the evolution of "Orchids and Onions" once the *Mesabi Daily* required actual names, although I haven't checked recently to see if they've dropped that requirement. As I'm sure you know, MinnPost requires this and some thoughtful exchanges often occur.

Just some thoughts. Hang on— 2020 is going to be a wild and ugly ride locally and nationally as the dictator-wannabe tweets away. Thanks again for a great regional paper.

**Mark Josephson
Red Wing**

A carbon tax would cut emissions

Burning oil, coal and natural gas creates 82 percent of U.S. greenhouse emissions. There appears to be a consensus that the best way to address this issue is the implementation of a carbon tax. Other supplemental measures include ending governmental subsidies to fuel producers, but establishing subsidies for solar, wind, hydropower and nuclear. Also, re-imposing energy efficiency standards for appliances and autos.

The fact that there is recognition of the benefits of a carbon tax, does not mean there is any consensus on the level of the taxation per ton of carbon emissions produced nor the amount of proposed annual tax increases.

The biggest controversy is how the significant tax revenues should be spent. One recommendation is to distribute the revenue over the entire population on a monthly basis equally on a per person basis. Still another consideration is to use a portion of the tax revenue for earned income tax credit tax provisions.

This proposal would be directed to help those people with low incomes that spend a disproportionate amount of their income on fossil fueled transportation to work and/or heating their home. Other recommendations are reducing the federal debt, funding health care, education, infrastructure, or restoring forest and wetlands. These are just a few of many opinions.

The producers of fossil fuels are likely to increase their sale prices to off-set the cost of the carbon tax. The need and market for fossil fuels is relatively inelastic, meaning people have to buy the product whether the price goes up or down.

The impact of a carbon tax is long term strategy and a means to alleviate climate change. The carbon tax will accelerate the use of transportation electrification and the use of solar, wind and nuclear for the generation of energy. The addition of the carbon tax to fossil products will make alternative energy sources more price competitive.

Carbon tax bills have been submitted to Congress, but none have been acted upon or openly discussed. Assuredly, the petroleum industry will lobby against a carbon tax.

The prime purposes for taxes are to raise revenue to finance public entities. A carbon tax, however, would be used primarily to achieve a sustainable and healthy environment and the revenue is a by-product of this goal. This is an atypical use of the tax code for what might be termed societal engineering.

An MIT analysis indicates that starting with a \$50 per ton carbon tax and increasing it by five-percent per year would lead to a 63-percent reduction in total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Unfortunately, the impact of man-made climate change is accelerating, and some detrimental changes are becoming irreversible. It is important for Congress to address the issue now because the scope of damage to our planet will become too massive to rectify.

**Gerry Snyder
Ely**

Are Americans like Germans before WWII?

There is misery, hunger, disease, accidents, death of children in the U.S. and the world.

And while people are struggling to make ends meet we (yes, we as taxpayers) kill them or maim them. Do you need to be reminded that American taxpayers killed 3 million Vietnamese as well as 58,000 young U.S. soldiers who thought they were doing a service as was told to them by the corporate bastard media, a million Iraqis dead at the dirty hands of every president in the last 28 years and they are still dying. They have families that are struggling to survive and then America kills them. Are Americans so self-centered as to forget that there are grandparents abroad who don't want their grandkids or kids killed by U.S. bombs? And the corporate media would have us believe that Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Venezuela, Palestine are our enemies. They aren't. Damn it Americans-when are you going to wake up? It is our tax dollar (60 percent for military) that is killing these people, our brothers and sisters. Vietnam was never our enemy, Iran and North Korea aren't either. The enemy of humanity is in Washington, the biggest and rottenest scam artists. If they can't do things in a peaceful manner they have no business being in Washington as our public servants. Washington is a dirty corrupt cesspool. Washington equals war. It must end. Stop believing what the corporate media feeds you.

Are Americans like the Germans before WWII that allowed Hitler to do what he did? What we allow the U.S. corporate-controlled government to do is criminal. I am ashamed of America.

The U.S. killed an Iranian patriot yesterday and the press is not questioning it and even saying it was a good thing but the press lied to us about Saddam's WMDs; they make the gullible Americans believe. It's time to start seeing the media for what it is-the mouthpiece of corporate controlled Washington. The U.S. named Nelson Mandela a terrorist. What more do you need to start doubting? Come on Americans. It's time to wake up! America wants to steal the oil! It's not rocket science.

**Steve Johnson
Ely**

AGING...Continued from page 4

the better. Programs like Medicare and Medicaid have allowed seniors to age without the risk that poverty will leave them without the services they need. Assisted living facilities offer a range of services, from independent living to round-the-clock care, that can ease the transitions brought on by aging. Some seniors are eager to take advantage of such options, feeling that it frees them up to enjoy their remaining years without the worries that come from living on their own. They enjoy the company of others, make new friends, and thrive in assisted living communities.

That, unfortunately, would not describe my

father. After a tour of one such facility this past fall, I asked him what he thought. "Too many old people," grumbled the 95-year-old curmudgeon.

I've given up arguing with him about it. We have had the same argument, sometimes lasting hours, and it always ends the same way every three minutes, which is about the length of time it takes him to forget he just made that same argument moments ago. And then we go around and around again, like a hamster on its wheel. It doesn't take long to figure out you're getting nowhere.

It doesn't help that my father has about 90 years of experience as a debater,

a skill that he honed over the years with three of his brothers who all became professors at major public universities. For them, time spent together invariably centered around a ten-mile hike in the morning, followed by cocktails and hours of spirited argument over economics, politics, foreign affairs, or the meaning of life. I participated in a few of their soirees over the years and it was always invigorating and a test of your rhetorical skills. While my father may not remember whether it's winter or summer outside, his ability to parry our arguments, at least in three-minute increments, has clearly become an innate ability,

like muscle memory in a star athlete.

And because there aren't many resources out there about how to handle old people and the difficult discussions that aging makes necessary, we tend to rely on the anecdotal. A neighbor or a cousin, or a friend of a friend, who offers up their own solution, which usually involves a form of kidnapping. "Just put 'em in the car and tell 'em you're going to lunch," is a pretty common one. It's just that lunch is set at an old folks home and it's a one-way trip.

After hearing a number of such "success" stories, we even planned our own such intervention while we

had some time off over the recent holidays. We had a very nice room waiting for him at the Vermilion Senior Living in Tower, had rented a U-Haul for his furnishings, and had the story line about "going to lunch" all set. His doctor, who has been pleading for assisted living for months, prescribed a sedative, that we hoped would leave him uncharacteristically compliant during the four-hour trip from his home in Plymouth to Tower. The doctor suggested we try it out a couple days beforehand to make sure it would have the intended effect. My brother has been staying with my father in recent weeks to care for him and he administered

the medication in the morning a couple days before our planned moving day. A few hours later, my brother called with the bad news. Far from calming him, my father had responded to his new medication by fixing a long-broken bird feeder and shoveling the snow from his entire driveway. Which just goes to show that my father is contrary in every way.

As I've told my poor wife Jodi: "You're seeing your future," which means if she had any sense, she'd be planning to divorce me. After dealing with my father, I could hardly blame her.

SCHOOLS...Continued from page 3

for 2020. Current Chair Dan Manick, current Vice Chair Lynette Zupetz, current Clerk Pat Christensen, and current Treasurer Christine Taylor will all maintain their positions for an additional year. The board also voted to establish the salaries and reimbursement rates for members. Those serving on the board will receive \$400 per month for regular working sessions and meetings, plus a rate

of \$12 per hour for special meetings, conferences, workshops, and committee meetings. They will also receive reimbursement for mileage and a meal per diem.

In other business, the board:

► Heard from ICS Project Manager Nathan Norton regarding the Cherry remodel/expansion. According to him, things are moving along

at a good pace. Several portions will be complete prior to the end of the school year, including the new fitness center. The company is in the process of receiving a wetland permit from the county and has received verbal confirmation that there should be no issues moving forward.

► Designated the *Cook News Herald* as the district's official newspaper for 2020. Board

Member Christine Taylor abstained from this vote.

► Designated Colosimo, Patchin & Kearney, Ltd. as the district's legal counsel for 2020. Taylor abstained from this vote as well.

► Designated Frandsen Bank, North Star Credit Union, and Ely Area Credit Union as the district's depositories for 2020.

► Heard from

Engebritson regarding the results of the staff and student surveys. The numbers indicated overall satisfaction with how the district functions, particularly when it came to maintaining small class sizes and providing a variety of opportunities to the students. There was a handful of areas where staff believed improvements could be made, as well, including communi-

cation, meeting the social and emotional needs of the students, and training for technology utilization.

► Designated school board representatives for several committees, including human resources, health insurance, MSHSL, marketing, curriculum, negotiations, and collaboration with MIB.

VERMILION SENIOR LIVING

December was a busy month at Vermilion Senior Living



Above: Emily Sipola was surprised with a cake and special luncheon last month. Right: VSL staff (from right) front: Emily Sipola, Joyce Hudack, Wendy Varey, Maija Marconett, Karen Heikkila, Ginger Moats. Back:Miguel Campa, Mitch Pallansch, Matthew Pallansch. photos by E. Schultz



The communities of Tower and Soudan didn't forget those living at Vermilion Senior Living over the holiday season. The assisted living facility's "Gift a Resident" program brought in multiple gifts for every single resident

at VSL, filling every request placed on the giving tree. Community groups also stopped by to share the spirit of the season, including a visit by the Tower-Soudan Area Singers, sharing Christmas carols, and a party sponsored by Immanuel Lutheran Church.

VSL also hosted a surprise luncheon for new administrator Emily Sipola, who has been working at the assisted living as a nurse for several years.

TOWER-SOUDAN EARLY LEARNERS



Gingerbread plus Christmas songs equals family fun



Tower-Soudan Learning Readiness families celebrated the holidays during an event in December. Clockwise from top left: Zaija and Lily. Delani. Eddie. Vince Vesel helps his son Vince Jr. Students performed a concert of holiday songs. Kim Poppema helped her children Landon and Grace. Nitanis.



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

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES
BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

Area Solid Waste
Facility
site hours

Northwoods Transfer Station 9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt Winter Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: 11am-5pm	Cook Transfer Station 2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm
County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon-5pm	Soudan Canister Site 5160 Hwy 169, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun 8am-5pm
Embarrass Canister Site 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30-4:30pm Thu: 10am-5pm	Aurora Transfer Station 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
Household Hazardous Waste Facility 5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department
1-800-450-9278
Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday
www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle

Township filings
to close on
Tuesday, Jan. 14

REGIONAL- Township filings for area townships that hold their elections in March opened on Tuesday, Dec. 31 and close on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 5 p.m.
Breitung, Vermilion Lake, and Greenwood all hold their township elections in March. Eagles Nest, Kugler, and Tower hold their local elections in November.
Vermilion Lake and Breitung both have one supervisor seat (three-year term), and one clerk (two-year term) on the ballot. In Greenwood, which has a five-person board, there are two supervisor seats (three-year terms), and one clerk (two-year term) on the ballot.
To file in Vermilion Lake Township, you need to make an appointment with the clerk by calling 218-749-2902. The clerk's office at the Vermilion Lake Town Hall will also be open from 1 - 5 p.m. on Jan. 14.
Filings in Breitung can be done during the clerk's office hours, Tuesday through Thursday from 12 noon - 4 p.m., or by calling 753-6020 to make an appointment. The clerk's office will also be open from 1 - 5 p.m. on Jan. 14.
Filings in Greenwood can be done during the clerk's office hours, open Tuesday and Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Please call in advance to confirm the office will be open, 218-753-2231. The clerk's office will also be open from 1 - 5 p.m. on Jan. 14.

Read us online at
www.timberjay.com

SOUDAN SKATING

Chimpy’s Skating Parties underway

Next parties set for Jan. 11 & 12

SOUDAN- Chimpy’s Skating Parties are now underway. Stop by the Soudan Skating Rink on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 11 and 12, from 12 noon - 2 p.m. for food, fun, and games. This week’s sponsors are Paul Johnson and Dave and Gen Bjorgo.

Skating parties got underway during school vacation. The first four parties were sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Joint Powers Recreation Board.

These community family-friendly events welcome skaters of all ages. The warming shack has loaner skates in most sizes and boot skaters are also welcome. Adult volunteers are also needed to help supervise skaters outdoors as well as to help serve the hot food indoors.

There will be no skating parties Jan. 17 and 18 due to the Finlander Bocce Ball Tournament set for Saturday, Jan. 18 at the skating



rink. This event is sponsored by the Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board.

The skating rink warming shack is open daily, weekdays from 4 p.m. until closing, and weekends from 11 a.m. - closing.

The rink will be closed due to inclement weather, and will be posted in such instances.

WINTER EVENTS

Sign up now for Finlander Bocce Ball, Jan. 18

SOUDAN- Play bocce ball the Finlander way, on the ice, on Saturday, Jan. 18 beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Soudan skating rink. **Teams much be preregistered by 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 17.** All teams must be two men and two women, 18 years of age or older. Sign up at Good Ol’ Days or D’Erick’s in Tower, on the Events Board Facebook page, or with Julie Johnson.

Cost to play is \$10/person, with 100-percent payout to the top four places. Payment must be made before playing starts. Due to the ice conditions on the lake, games will be at the Soudan skating rink this year.

Good Ol’ Days will have food and beverages available. Coolers are allowed. For questions, contact Julie Johnson at 218-750-7242.



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 Meals on Wheels, or for more information, please call AEOA Senior Nutrition at 218-735-6899.

- Week of Jan. 13**
- Monday- Grilled Cheese, Tomato Soup
- Tuesday- Chili Mac, Bread Stick
- Wednesday-Popcorn Shrimp, Tater Tots, Green Beans in Cheese Sauce, Bread Stick
- Thursday- Breaded Pork, Mashed Potatoes, Country Gravy, Dinner Roll, Vegetable
- Friday- Chicken Philly Sandwich, Onion Rings

Week of Jan. 13

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. 21.

Greenwood Fire Dept.- Meetings on the first (business meeting) and third (drill) Tuesday of each month at 6 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.

Call to Subscribe (218) 753-2950

THE NEWS OF THE WEEK FROM MS. VERA MILION



Dear Hearts,

I had a quiet New Year’s Eve. Popped some corn, spiked the Geritol, and hit the hay about 8:30 with John Grisham’s latest, “The Guardians,” his fortieth novel.

I am looking for someone to add on to the bookcase...at least the Grisham section.

There will be a ‘special’ section for my collection of Mickey Spillane first editions.

I only allow HARD-COVER books in ‘Casa Du Million.’

I need to read ‘real’ books with big, thick pages and hard covers.

I do not ‘dog ear’ pages and I have a special bookmark...no dog-eared tomes in this house.

My only mania (literary) I have is the tendency

to battering a book if I am not happy with the outcome. I have designed a bookcase with an attached axe head so I can destroy books that do not meet my standards—Charlotte Armstrong, Un-su Kim, Gillian Flynn, J. L. Carrell, and Linwood Barclay.

Charlotte Armstrong and good old Un-su Kim have new books...None off which appeared gaily wrapped under the Christmas tree.

However, “The Shakespeare Secret” by John Grisham awaits me! Charlotte Armstrong, and good old Un-su Kim are astonished to discover Sherlock Holmes’ complicated history with substance abuse, cocaine and morphine use, appears throughout Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.”

Thankfully, the brilliant British detective had a taste for far less illicit vices as well. This smoky tea-infused cocktail is the perfect to sip while contemplating the mysteries of the foggy London streets.

- Instructions
- 1-1/2 oz single-malt Scotch
- 2 oz chilled brewed Lapsang Souchong tea
- 1 oz honey syrup
- 3/4 oz fresh lemon juice
- Pour ingredients into a mixing glass. Stir well and strain into an ice-filled glass.

Dashiell Hamett’s creation, the moody San Francisco sleuth Sam Spade from The Maltese Falcon, is gruff, rough, and an absolute loner. Nevertheless, this icy PI shares one thing in common with the fun-loving couple— a definite love of drink. Nashville’s Patterson House created a cocktail in honor of the beloved gumshoe.

- The Bronx Cocktail
- 1-1/2 oz gin
- 1/2 oz sweet vermouth
- 1/2 oz dry vermouth
- 1 oz orange juice

James Bond is no stranger to martinis and this truly unique mixed drink is the best of the bunch. Bond creates the cocktail on the spot in Casino Royale, Ian Flem-

ing’s first installment in the beloved spy series. The drink is named after 007’s love interest in the novel, the alluring Vesper Lynd.

- Vesper Lynd
- 1/2 oz sweet vermouth
- 1/2 oz dry vermouth
- 1 oz orange juice

Why, I know you are asking...why Vera, noted for her abstinence, offers these recipes.

Simple answer...tax writeoff. I bought this huge HUGE cookbook filled with party recipes and adult beverages. That’s my story and I am sticking to it.

However, as always whenever I set out to scam Uncle Sam...I fail. Got the book home, checked out the party recipes, and they ALL require liquids not available in the USA! Ta-ta

P.S. There will be a sign-up sheet posted soon for a field trip. You have to be twenty-one!

Ms. Vera Milion

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, Jan. 15; Feb. 5 and 26

- 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



the TIMBERJAY

The Tower-Soudan Timberjay and Cook-Orr Timberjay are published weekly on Friday by The Timberjay, Inc. Offices are at 414 Main St., Box 636, Tower, MN 55790 [218-753-2950], and PO Box 718, Ely, MN 55731 [218-365-3114]. Fax number is 218-753-2916. E-mail address is editor@timberjay.com. Visit our website at www.timberjay.com.

Entered as Periodicals at the Post Office in Tower, Minnesota. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Timberjay, P.O. Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Three award-winning community editions are published each week for Tower/Soudan, Cook/Orr, and Ely.

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Official Newspaper:

City of Orr, City of Ely, Townships of Bearville, Eagles Nest, Embarrass, Kugler, Vermilion Lake, Field, Morcom, Leiding, Crane Lake, ISD 707.

Member: Minnesota Newspaper Association, Lake Vermilion Resort Association, Lake Vermilion Area Chamber of Commerce, Ely Chamber of Commerce, Orr Chamber of Commerce.

Subscriptions Available:

St. Louis County: \$37 year Elsewhere: \$52 year. We accept VISA/Mastercard/Discover. Please specify Tower/Soudan, Cook/Orr or Ely edition.

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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,
and 7:30 p.m.
Wednesdays, First
Lutheran Church,
915 E. Camp St., Ely
WOMEN'S AA - Noon
Mondays, St. Anthony
Church basement, Ely
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 encounter
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.
Tower by appointment.
Call 365-3359, 827-3232,
or 1-800-662-5711.

Tuesday Group

ELY - The upcoming
Tuesday Group
schedule is listed below.
All talks are at 12 noon
on Tuesday at the Grand
Ely Lodge.

Jan. 14 - Stephanie
Pearson - Outside
Magazine Adventures

Ely Free Clinic

ELY - The Ely
Community Health
Center is open every
Thursday evening from
5:30-7 p.m. in the AFU
Building, 111 S 4th
Ave. E.

For more information,
call 218-365-5678, or visit
their website, www.elycommunityhealth.org.

Game night

ELY - Smear tournaments
are held the first
and third Mondays, and
cribbage tournaments
are held the second and
fourth Mondays at the
Ely Senior Center, 27 S
First Ave E, starting at 6
p.m. There is a \$5 entry
fee, plus 25 cents per set.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2020



January days
lacking bitterness from cold
a sign of something?

WOLFTRACK CLASSIC 2020

50 years of sled dog racing

Local racing legends help celebrate milestone

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY - The 50th anniversary
of local sled dog
racing will be celebrated
here next month with the
running of the WolfTrack
Classic on Sunday, Feb.
23. The history and spirit
of sled dog racing is an
important part of Ely's
culture, steeped in robust
spirit, independence and
adventure.

Two individuals who
embody that spirit are Don
and Val Beland. "They
are true champions of the
sport," said Race Director
Ellen Cashman. "They
raised, trained, raced and
promoted the sport across
the country. They ran as
many as twenty races a
year from Ely to Huslia."

WolfTrack Classic
officials were recently
honored to have the opportunity
to visit with the
Belandts at their Ely-area
home.

"They shared
a glimpse of their trophy
room filled with sleds,
trophies, photos and memorabilia
from their decades
of racing, and the stories,"
Cashman said. "They even
had stuff on their ceiling.
Words escaped us as we
stood in the presence of
these racing legends."

Don and Val
Beland will be attending
the Mushers Dinner
and Musher Meeting
on Saturday, Feb. 22 at
Vermilion Community
College's cafeteria to
help the Ely community
celebrate 50 years of sled
dog racing history.

An all-you-can-eat
spaghetti dinner will be
served along with bev-



Don and Val Beland have a packed
trophy room in their Ely-area home
from their sled dog racing days.
submitted photos



erage, salad, bread and
desert. The dinner runs
from 4-6:30 p.m., followed
by the Musher Meeting at
6:30 p.m.

The cost is \$10 per
adult, \$5 for youth 10 and
under, and VCC students
with student ID. Proceeds
from this event support the
Vermilion Community
College's Wilderness
Club.

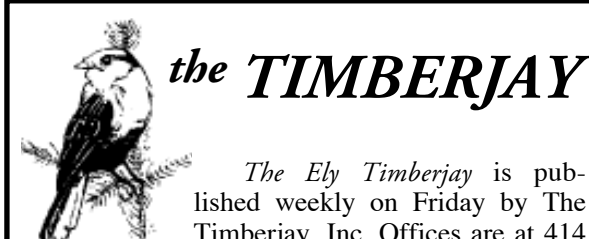
Mushers will be able
to pick up their race bib
numbers. Local veterinar-

ian, Dr. Chip Hanson, will
be present to review all race
dog vaccination papers.
Registration deadline is
Feb. 15. No late registrations
will be accepted at
the Mushers Dinner.

Also on Saturday, Feb.
22, a benefit art show for
the WolfTrack Classic Sled
Dog Race, featuring original
sled dog art, hosted by
Ely artists Roy Misonznick
and Nancy Ensley, will
be held at the Grand Ely
Lodge starting at 10 a.m.

The show will run through
the race awards ceremony
on Sunday. All purchases
support the WolfTrack
Classic Sled Dog Race.

Join Cashman, and
Volunteer Coordinator,
Eva Sebesta, for cookies
and coffee at the Grand Ely
Lodge at noon on Saturday,
Feb. 22 for a Volunteer
Appreciation Meet and
Greet. Last minute volunteer
sign-ups will be gladly
accepted.



The Ely Timberjay is published
weekly on Friday by The
Timberjay, Inc. Offices are at 414
Main St., P.O. Box 636, Tower,
MN 55790 [218-753-2950], and PO Box 718,
Ely, MN 55731 [218-365-3114]. Fax number is
218-753-2916. E-mail address is editor@timberjay.com. Visit our website: www.timberjay.com.

Entered as Periodicals at the Post Office
in Tower, Minnesota. POSTMASTER: Send
address changes to: The Timberjay, P.O. Box
636, Tower, MN 55790. Three award-winning
community editions are published each week for
Tower/Soudan, Cook/Orr, and Ely.

Publisher	Marshall Helmberger
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Official Newspaper:

City of Ely, City of Orr, Townships of
Bearville, Breitung, Crane Lake, Eagles Nest,
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Member: Minnesota Newspaper Association,
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WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Kelly Noble's fifth-grade class was presented with a copy of the book, "The Quiltmaker's Gift,"
on Tuesday. A volunteer reader from Ely Community Resource, Craig Haberman, read the story
to the students. photo by K. Vandervort

Tickets still available for Quiltmaker's Gift
Ely's Historic State Theater production set for Jan. 24-26

ELY - Tickets for The
Quiltmaker's Gift are
available at two locations
in Ely, Potluck
Kitchenware at 101 E.
Chapman and Art and
Soul Gallery, 421 E.
Sheridan St.

Adult tickets are \$10,
students K-12, and children
ages 2-5 are \$5. A
lap child gets in free.

A limited number of
"premium tickets" for
each showing at \$25 per
seat are available online
at QuiltmakersGiftEly.com.

"The purchase of
these center front seats
also includes entrance
to an on-site gathering
following the show with
the author and illustrator

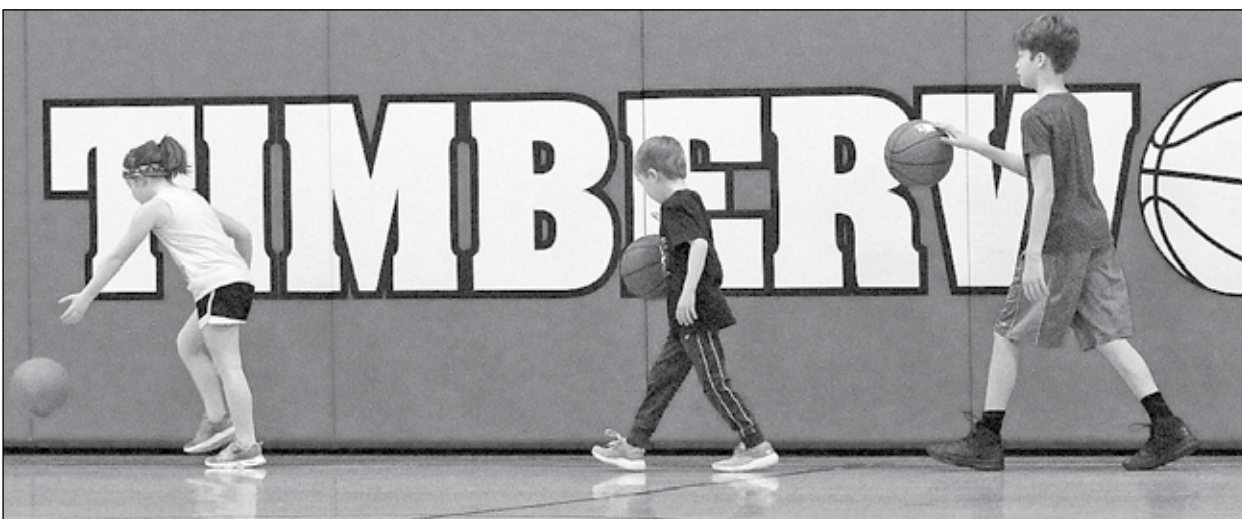
and light refreshments,"
Co-chair Muffin Nelson
said. The website offers
credit card purchases;
the two local sites will
accept cash or checks.

Free children's
tickets for ages 2-10
(maximum two per
family) to the Saturday
and Sunday matinees are
available at the Ely Public

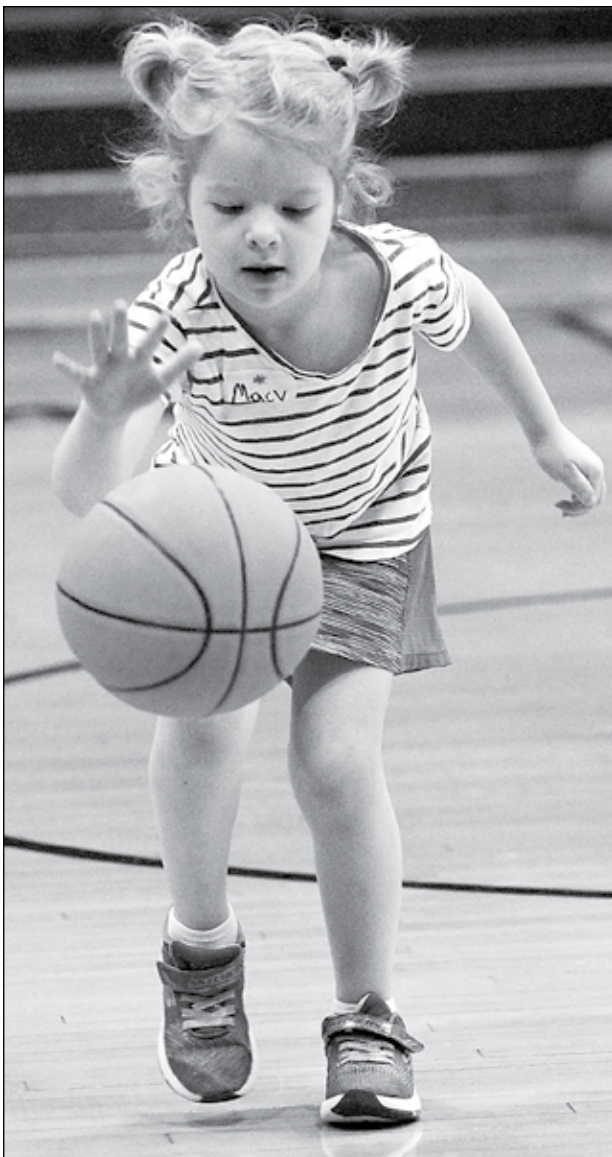
Library courtesy of Lake
Country Power.

All remaining
tickets will be available
two hours before
show times at the State
Theater Box Office on
performance days,
Friday, Jan. 24 at 7 p.m.,
Saturday, Jan. 25, 2 p.m.
and 7 p.m., and Sunday,
Jan. 26 at 2 p.m.

YOUTH BASKETBALL



Hoops camp



Macy Coombe, above, and Brooklee Sharber, above right, practice their dribbling skills at the Ely Youth Basketball skills camp held at Memorial School gym on Saturday mornings. photos by K. Vandervort



Shooting, passing and ball-handling skills are taught to Ely-area youth in grades K-5.



News in Brief

Library hosts Harry Potter event

ELY - Return to the world of Harry Potter and help your house win victory next week at the Ely Public Library. The Hogwarts House Cup Alumni Championships are scheduled for Friday, Jan. 17, 6:30-11 p.m.

Compete in themed contests and activities representing one of the four Hogwarts houses; the team with the most points at the end of the evening will be champions.

Participants need to fill out a registration form in advance for this event as numbers will be limited. Library staff will also need to take your photo as part of the registration process.

There will be 10 contestant slots available for each Hogwarts house - Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin. Due to the nature of the last activity, they cannot run this event for more than 40 people.

Contestants will also be required to place their phones and other personal items into a locked container for part of the evening (similar to doing an escape room). Staff encourages everyone to dress up or wear house colors for the evening.

This program is sponsored by Friends of the Library.

Have coffee with a policeman

ELY - Join members of the Ely Police Department at the Front Porch Coffee and Tea Co. on Wednesdays at 9 a.m. for Coffee with a Cop. The program was started as a community-police initiative to build relationships between law enforcement and the community they serve. "This event provides a way to meet a police officer from the Ely Police Department in an informal and relaxed setting," said Chief John Lahtonen.

Ely Winter Festival seeks sponsors

ELY - The Ely Winter Festival, scheduled to run Feb. 6-16, seeks sponsors, including businesses and organizations in the Ely area, to help support the independent, non-profit organization.

The group relies and depends on sponsorships, grants, and gifts in-kind to keep the festival running, marking 26 years.

Despite support from all sectors of the Ely community, and having received a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board for specific expenses, they still depend on sponsors for their ongoing operation.

If you are interested in being a sponsor, contact the festival at 365-SNOW or at their website, <https://elywinterfestival.com/>.

The Ely Winter Festival and Ely ArtWalk are funded in part by grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council (thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund), the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust, and the Ely Chamber of Commerce.

Senior Center seeks donations

ELY - The Ely Senior Citizen Center is seeking donations to remodel their 40-year-old kitchen and dining area.

They are a nonprofit organization, and many community organizations and groups use the building. AEOA meals are served Monday through Friday and meals are delivered to the home-bound by the AEOA bus.

Donations can be sent to the Ely Area Senior Center, 27 S 1st Ave E, Ely, MN 55731 or to Ely Senior Citizen Building Fund C/O Frandsen Bank, 102 E Sheridan St., Ely, MN 55731.

Contact Terri Muhvich at 218-365-4305 for more information.

Senior lunch offered daily

ELY - The Ely Senior Lunch program is held daily at the Ely Senior Center, 27 S First Ave E, from noon to 1 p.m. Must be at least 60 years of age to participate.



Area Solid Waste Facility site hours

Northwoods Transfer Station
9384 Hwy 21 N. Ely/Babbitt
Winter Hours
Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm
Tue: 9:30am-3pm
Wed: 11am-5pm

Aurora Transfer Station
5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora
Hours
Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm
Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm
Sat: 8am-noon

Embarrass Canister Site
7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass
Hours
Sat: 12:30-4:30pm
Thur: 10am-5pm

Soudan Canister Site
5160 Hwy 169, Soudan
Hours
Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun:
8am-5pm

Household Hazardous Waste Facility
5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia
Hours
Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm

Regional Landfill
5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia
Hours
Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm
Sat: 8am-3:30pm

Winter hours effective October 1st through April 14th

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NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

Elementary Christmas Concert



North Woods Elementary students put on a holiday concert for their families on the last Friday before winter vacation. photos by E.M. Shultz



NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

Fifth-graders go skiing at Giants Ridge



JOHN VUKMANICH

North Woods School elementary students are very fortunate to have many field trips that include skating, fishing, skiing, wild rice processing, making maple sugar, seeing the Minnesota State Capitol, and other enrichment opportunities. As I have commented on in previous articles, I believe that these enrichment opportunities for kids are equally important to academics in the overall education of a child for many reasons.

Today, we talk to Mrs. Johnson's and Mrs. Panichi's fifth-grade classes at North Woods who were lucky enough to go alpine skiing at Giants Ridge on Monday, Jan. 6. The weather was beautiful with calm



winds, mostly sunny, and temperatures around 30 degrees. A great day to hit the slopes! The kids had a blast enjoying the outdoors with their classmates.

The students met at North Woods and were bussed to Giants Ridge where kids were responsible for their lift ticket and ski rental. In polling the class, 24 kids were first-time skiers and 13 had skied before. All but three of the students said that they would like to go skiing again. This is why enrichment days such as this are important. Skiing is a sport that a person can participate in recreationally for much of their life. With Giants Ridge so close to where we live, it is a great chance to be involved in a winter

hobby that is easy to take advantage of in northern Minnesota.

I visited the two fifth-grade classes at North Woods to ask the kids about their experience skiing. Students were put in small groups and asked about the best part of their day. Group one said that the best part was watching one of their classmates hit the brush and wipeout. Group two said it was funny that a classmate got stuck on the chair lift, and they had to back it up. Group three also said it was funny to watch a student hit a tree, which was later clarified by the teachers as a "very skinny twig." Whew.

At that point, we decided that no more answers regarding the student wiping out would be

considered. Group four thoughtfully answered that it was a great day to ski with friends. Group five stated that the best part of the day was the HUGE hills. Group six loved that they could choose different big hills to go down. The final group loved the chair lift.

Mrs. Panichi really enjoyed her day with her kids and said, "The best part of the day was getting a chance to visit with my students after winter break and hear about what they did. It was a nice opportunity before getting back into the classroom."

Mrs. Johnson added, "The best part of the day for me was watching how students helped each other with learning how to ski. I could tell that some



of you were frustrated, but you didn't give up."

As an occasional skier myself, I would love the chance to go with the kids if another opportunity arises, even if just for a part of the day. Even though I am 48 years old, I can still ski nearly as well as when I was a teenager, even though I ski much more conservatively now. It really is a sport that can be participated in for much of one's life. Falling hurts much more than thirty years ago, though, and I did fall a few years ago.

I would like to thank

Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Panichi for their bravery in taking 40 eleven-year-olds on a skiing trip, our great parent chaperones, and also Giants Ridge for welcoming student groups to their excellent facility.

Take some time to get outside this winter. The snow is deep, but there are many opportunities to get out in the woods, to hit the trails, and ski down the slopes.

Go Grizzlies!
John Vukmanich
Principal

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NORTH WOODS SCHOOL

High School Band and Choir



The North Woods High School Band and Choir performed their concert before Christmas break.

Band director Mr. Peter Micholic accepted a \$1,536 donation from the Cook Lions Club.
photos by E.M. Schultz



COMMUNITY NEWS

Curious and Creative Winter Classes

COOK – Northwoods Friends of the Arts (NWFA) is offering several Curious and Creative winter classes. You may register for these classes at the gallery, which is open Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., by calling Alberta at 218-666-2153, or by email at nwfamn.org@gmail.com. Each class has a base fee of \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members. Annual NWFA membership starts at \$25. Visit the gallery or www.nwfamn.org to become a member or learn more.

Lyn Reed will teach a two-part class on Simple Etching, with the first part taking place on Saturday, Jan. 18 from 1-3 p.m. at the NWFA gallery in Cook. The time and date of the second part will be determined by those who participate.

During the class, Reed will demonstrate a drawing and printing

technique that has a similar appearance to an acid etching. The class will use simple materials and technique to accomplish this affect. Traditional etching materials will not be used, and the end product will not be an etching, but will have the appearance of one, with great creative potential.

Lyn Reed will teach Let’s Paint a Feather, a class that will include drawing and painting a realistic feather, on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 1-3 p.m. The class will include watercolor paints and learning how to make grays by using complementary colors.

Recurring NWFA arts groups

COOK- Open Studio Art takes place every Saturday at the NWFA gallery from 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. All artists and would-be artists are welcome to share the time and space. No registration required.

The Woodcarving Group meets on Thursdays from 6-8 p.m. All skill levels are

welcome to attend and participate. No registration required. Some tools are available to practice with. Call Howard at 218-741-7941 to verify.

The Winter Writers Group will meet on Saturday, Jan. 11 from 1-3 p.m. at the NWFA Gallery. The group is led by volunteer educator Dr. Ellie Larmouth, and is open to the public.

Readers and Rappers to meet

COOK – The Cook Area book club, Readers and Rappers, will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 1 p.m. in the Community Room of the Homestead Apartments in Cook. Lisa Simensen will moderate a discussion of the book “Laurentian Divide” by Minnesota author Sarah Stonich. Krista Bangert-er will act as hostess. February’s book will be “The Second Mountain” by David Brooks. New members are always welcome.

January Events at the Cook Public Library

COOK- Everyone is invited to read Death on the Nile by Agatha Christie. Stop by the library during January and February to pick up the book or learn about other ways to read it. Those who read the book are welcome to join a discussion of it on Thursday, March 5 at 5 p.m. at the library.

Friends of the Cook Public Library will be hosting a watch party of the 2017 movie Murder on the Orient Express, based on the Agatha Christie novel, on Thursday, Jan. 16 at 6 p.m. Popcorn and water will be provided.

Turn tablecloths, T-shirts, and thrift shop treasures into contemporary heirlooms and useful accessories at Recycle, Repurpose, and Restyle with Mary Mulari on

Thursday, Jan. 30 at 6 p.m. Learn Mary’s laundering/whitening tips and how, with basic sewing skills or fabric glue, to create special gifts with priceless memories attached. This program is free to the public.

All teens are welcome to watch the movie Book of Life and enjoy

cocoa and treats provided by the Friends of the Cook Public Library on Friday, Jan. 17 at 6 p.m.

Preschool Story Time takes place every Friday at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 17 will feature Knights and Princesses, Jan. 24 will be G is for Giraffe, and Jan. 31 will be School Days.



the TIMBERJAY

The Cook-Orr Timberjay is published weekly on Friday by The Timberjay, Inc. Offices are at 414 Main St., Box 636, Tower, MN 55790 [218-753-2950] and Box 718, Ely, MN 55731 [218-365-3114]. Fax number is 218-753-2916. E-mail address is editor@timberjay.com. Visit our website: www.timberjay.com.

Entered as Periodicals at the Post Office in Tower, Minnesota. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Timberjay, P.O. Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Three award-winning community editions are published each week for Cook/Orr, Tower/Soudan, and Ely.

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Official Newspaper:

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Orr Canister Site 4038 Hwy 53 Winter Hours Tue, Thu: 9am–noon Sat: 8am–noon	Portage Canister Site 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Winter Hours Tue, Sat: 1pm–4:30pm	County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77 Winter Hours Thurs, Sun: noon–5pm
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AMBULANCE...Continued from page 1

While the administrative tasks associated with operating even a small ambulance service are significant, Orr relies largely on dedicated staff who are paid very modest amounts for the work they do for their community.

Orr Ambulance Supervisor Donna Hoffer is paid just \$450 per quarter, or \$150 a month for her efforts. Hoffer’s assistant is paid the same salary and the service pays a finance director \$100 per month, bringing the administrative costs for Orr’s ambulance service to \$400 per month, or \$4,800 per year. “I wish we could pay more,” said Orr City Clerk-Treasurer Cheri Carter. “I know it’s a lot of paperwork and getting ready for the annual inspections takes a lot of time.”

But despite a relatively limited number of runs, and a population that’s generally low-to-moderate income, which can limit reimbursement rates, the OAAS has managed to maintain a healthy fund balance of over \$450,000, which helps to finance the cost of ambulance replacement as needed. The OAAS also minimizes the number of miles on its rigs— thereby extending their useful life— by limiting non-emergency transports solely to those emanating from the Cook Hospital.

Ambulance replacement is proving a financial challenge for the Tower Area Ambulance Service, although that’s primarily because past profits from the TAAS were used to finance other city spending, without being reimbursed. That means most of the funding for a new ambulance, that is expected to arrive later this winter, will come from township contributions (of \$15 per capita) to a dedicated ambulance and equipment replacement fund. However, those reserves won’t cover the entire remaining expense

of the ambulance, which will require the city to pay the rest of the cost from its already-stressed general fund.

But relatively high overhead costs are putting added stress on TAAS’s budget, which topped \$513,000 in expenditures this year. While the TAAS, which spent less than \$250,000 as recently as 2017, posted operating margins in excess of \$100,000 annually in the recent past, those margins have largely disappeared as a result of the decision to convert the service to a full-time paid staffing model and due to higher administrative costs under current ambulance director Altenburg.

When the Tower City Council hired Altenburg in November 2016, he insisted on a substantial pay increase over the previous supervisor, Matt Tichel, who took a leave from his ambulance work during recovery from shoulder surgery. Tichel had been paid \$1,300 a month, but at Altenburg’s insistence, the council raised the monthly pay rate to \$1,800. The council, at the urging of Altenburg and former clerk-treasurer Linda Keith, further increased that to \$2,000 a month early last year.

Unlike other area ambulance directors in the region, Altenburg has no required office hours, which was another of his demands that the former city council agreed to at the time of his hiring.

That lack of established work hours has allowed Altenburg to rack up a significant number of hours on ambulance runs and, unlike other area ambulance supervisors, Altenburg is paid \$25 an hour on top of his salary for those runs. That appears to be in violation of his job description, which clearly indicates that serving as an EMT on ambulance runs is part of his assigned duties as supervisor— for which Altenburg is paid

his monthly salary. The job description includes no apparent provision for additional pay for ambulance runs, nor does it appear that the city council ever explicitly authorized the additional pay for the TAAS director.

Minn. Stat. 609.45 makes it a misdemeanor for a public officer to receive unauthorized compensation.

According to a joint response from Tower Clerk-Treasurer Victoria Ranua and Altenburg, the arrangement where an administrator would also serve as an EMT, appears to be a longstanding practice with the TAAS, dating back at least 20 years. “It was understood by the city council, the clerk-treasurer, the ambulance [director], and the staff that the terms of employment were that the administrative work was compensated via a salary and the runs be compensated at the hourly EMT rate,” stated Ranua and Altenburg in their response to questions.

While past TAAS directors did routinely respond as EMTs— as is typical of other area ambulance directors— it’s only been relatively recently that they received any additional pay for doing so.

For years, TAAS EMTs, including directors, received credits that went toward their pension in lieu of cash payments. Former TAAS director Matt Tichel said he made the change to cash payments during his tenure, either in 2013 or 2014, in an effort to encourage better participation from members.

City records indicate that at least two previous directors were paid at least something for run time in addition to their salaries, but the totals were modest, typically amounting to no more than a few thousand dollars per year. Tichel, for example was paid a total of \$18,899 in 2015, and \$24,310 in 2016, for both his director duties and

ambulance runs.

Altenburg, by contrast, spent approximately 390 hours over the past year on a total of 236 ambulance calls. That was more than any other member of the TAAS, including paid on-call staff, and it generated \$9,771 in additional income for Altenburg, putting his combined 2019 city salaries and wages at \$47,337. That includes the money he’s also paid as the city’s fire chief.

The *Timberjay*’s analysis of administrative costs does not include Altenburg’s run time, nor his payment as fire chief, as part of the TAAS’s overhead costs. In addition to Altenburg’s supervisor salary of \$24,000 a year, TAAS maintains two paid assistant supervisors, and a paid training officer. According to council-approved salaries in 2019, the four paid administrative positions cost a total of \$3,350 per month, or \$40,200 a year.

That’s substantially higher than the overhead costs of the Cook Area Ambulance Service. There, a single full-time administrator, Christina Roth-Leutner, is paid \$16.19 per hour, or approximately \$33,600 on an annual basis. Roth-Leutner has no assistants and also serves as CAAS’s training officer. In addition, her position includes serving as safety officer for all city departments and personnel, as well as the city’s emergency management director.

Roth-Leutner is required to perform ambulance runs as needed, at least during her regularly-scheduled work hours, but she is not paid extra for making those runs. Roth-Leutner said she averages about six runs per month, which is usually enough to meet the requirement of the Cook Ambulance Service that all EMTs put in a minimum of 24 hours of call time per month. EMTs for the CAAS are paid four dollars an hour while

on call, while Emergency Medical Responders, or EMRs, make three dollars. The CAAS finished the year with a total of 377 ambulance runs.

Ely Area Ambulance Service Supervisor Geoff Galaski also performs ambulance runs as part of his duties but isn’t paid extra for doing so. “Typically, when you’re salaried, you’re salaried, and don’t get call pay like line staff,” stated Galaski, who is paid \$57,000 annually for running the EAAS, which maintains both ALS and BLS service. Galaski has regular work hours and is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but receives no additional compensation for that. While he isn’t paid extra for ambulance runs, Galaski said he does typically bank those hours as comp time, which he can use for time off. Galaski does have one assistant, who is paid \$13 an hour, and that assistant receives an extra \$20 per run for serving as an EMT.

Ely’s ambulance service, which averaged close to 600 runs annually over the past two years, has managed to maintain surpluses in the \$60,000-\$80,000 range in most recent years. Expenditures for the service have averaged about \$580,000 in recent years, without much variation year-to-year according to Galaski.

Virginia Area Ambulance Director and Fire Chief Allen Lewis said his position has no requirement to participate in ambulance runs, although he does serve in that capacity at times to maintain good communication with his ambulance personnel. “As an administrator though, my best way to serve the department is through strategy and long-range planning,” stated Lewis. “I am required in my job description to maintain my credentials as a paramedic and a firefighter, but I have a salaried position and am

not eligible for overtime. I am also not eligible for additional compensation such as would be awarded in the case of a run.”

Small towns face high emergency service costs per capita

High fixed costs, like administrative overhead, can make a difference in how much communities pay for emergency services. On a per-capita basis, the cost of emergency services is comparatively high in smaller area communities. According to an analysis of combined police and ambulance costs by the state auditor, the city of Cook spent a total of \$426 per person on these emergency services in 2017, the most recent year for which data is available. That ranked 14th highest among 413 cities of similar size.

Orr, with a population of just 295, ranked 11th among those 413 cities, with total police and ambulance spending of \$140,487, or \$476 per capita. Tower, meanwhile, was ranked as the most-costly community in the state for police and ambulance services, having spent \$346,864 in 2017, or \$702 per person. Based on the increases in TAAS spending since 2017, the city of Tower’s spending for police and ambulance services will exceed \$600,000 in 2019, or approximately \$1,255 per capita.

Ely, with a larger population base, spent \$827,000 for ambulance and police services in 2017, or \$243 per capita. That ranked 56th out of 228 similarly-sized communities. Virginia, with total police and ambulance costs of \$3.05 million in 2017, was the seventh highest in the state for mid-sized cities, at \$361 per capita.

ELY...Continued from page 1

it could be confirmed.

The reports of the sale appear to have been prompted by the appearance of a large trailer that was recently parked outside the store. It now appears that the truck was not there to deliver any merchandise or materials, but to pick up shelving that a Perham business owner purchased from the former store.

If and when a final sale of the building is completed, the *Timberjay* will provide an updated report.

COUNTY...Continued from page 1

had no refugee resettled in the county since 2011,” he said.

According to McDonald, longstanding rules in place for refugee resettlement require the presence of a resettlement agency within 50 miles of the new residence of a refugee. McDonald noted that the closest such agency is currently in the Twin Cities, which all but eliminates the possibility of refugee resettlement in the county.

As such, the proposal to allow resettlement was largely symbolic, and was made in response to a recent executive order by President Trump that requires states and counties across the country to approve resettlement in order for any new refugees

to be relocated within their borders. Many critics of the plan see it as an electoral strategy for President Trump, designed to stir up anti-refugee sentiment to turn out votes for Trump in November.

“I think that we’re following Trump’s agenda to divide communities, to divide counties, to divide states, and divide the country,” said Orlyn Kringstad, Tower’s mayor, who spoke as a citizen during public input at Tuesday’s meeting. Kringstad said he has a long history of working with refugees during his prior career in the non-profit sector and found the experience to be “99-percent positive.”

“Many refugees are highly entrepreneurial,

and typically create jobs rather than cost jobs,” said Kringstad, who added that he was extremely disappointed in the board’s decision.

Others found irony in the timing of the vote, coming one year to the day after the death of longtime state representative and former St. Louis County Commissioner Tom Rukavina, who was outspoken in support of refugees. Shortly before his death, Rukavina penned a letter to the editor of the *Timberjay* that lauded the care that he received from recent refugees who cared for him as he battled a rare form of leukemia at the University of Minnesota Medical Center. More than one person made reference to Rukavina’s final political testament during comments to the board.

“It just showed how far apart people are with their understanding of the situation that refugees are in,” said Leah Rogne, a resident of Greaney who attended the board meeting to express her support for keeping the county open to refugees, as has long been the case. “These are some of the most vulnerable

people in the world, some of the most highly-vetted people in the world, and often some of the best educated and ambitious people in the world. It struck me how afraid some people are, and their fear seems to trump all.”


McDonald said most of those who called his office were asking for more time to understand what the proposal actually involves. “That’s why I welcome the chance to talk about this,” he said. “We just need time to get the correct message out there. This just gives us some time to educate the constituency.”

The state of Minnesota has already indicated a willingness to continue to accept refugees, who are defined as individuals proven to be fleeing war or other forms of violence, famine, or natural disasters. The vast majority of refugees have been resettled in the Twin Cities metro region in recent decades, where resettlement organizations, often affiliated with religious institutions, are available to assist them.

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Thursday, February 20
(Theme - "Falling in love with people or place").

All are invited to come to the Ely Senior Center from 6-8 PM to listen to stories by others or drop their name in the hat to tell a story.

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This Activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust.



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AMBULANCE COMMISSION

Tower City Council to consider new ambulance service agreement

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editorw

TOWER - The Tower Area Ambulance Commission, on Monday, asked the Tower City Council to scrap the existing ambulance service agreement with the townships, and to come back with a new proposal for the commission's next meeting, set for April.

The commission, which meets four times a year, is comprised of representatives from the city of Tower and each of the townships in the service area, along with the Bois Forte reservation. The governmental units each pay a per capita subsidy amount, currently set at \$15 per person, which helps pay for the purchase of new ambulances, other equipment, and training. The reservation, home to Fortune Bay Resort Casino, pays a set amount each year as a donation.

The existing contracts expired Dec. 31, 2019, and none of the parties have agreed to a new contract proposed by Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg, which called for increasing the subsidy over the next three years, to nearly \$30 per capita in 2022.

"The commission has nothing to do except pay you and you supply the rigs," said Eagles Nest Fire Chief Larry McCray to Altenburg. "If that is all there is to the contract, my vote is no, and my board's vote is no."

While McCray was the most vocal at the meeting, others also expressed frustration with the management of the service, the lack of business planning, as well as the department's projections for future ambulance purchases.

"About a year ago you sat at this table and told us there was \$800,000 in the ambulance fund," Breitung Representative Chuck Tekautz said. "To me, if you'd look at this as a business, you'd close the doors." Tekautz was alluding to the fact that most of the ambulance service's reserves had been transferred to other city funds, without reimbursement, and that the service's financial situation has deteriorated under Altenburg's tenure.

Tekautz also echoed



At the Tower Area Ambulance Commission meeting Monday night, Assistant Ambulance Director Josh Villebrun, Ambulance Director Steve Altenburg, and Commission members Sarah Schmidt and Rachel Beldo, from left, discussed the existing ambulance service agreement. photo by J. Summit

previous criticisms that the ambulance service's willingness to do long distance non-emergency transfers was putting excessive mileage on the existing rigs.

"When you are doing transports, you are putting beaucoup miles on the ambulances," Tekautz said. "Your turnover is faster because of the miles being put on."

Greenwood Representative Larry Tahija asked if those transfers were actually making money for the service.

Vermilion Lake Representative Sarah Schmidt, who is also a member of the ambulance service, said the department's mission was to care for patients.

"I feel like there is a lot of concern about the money," she said, "and, yes, we need to be concerned, but let's keep in mind that we want an ambulance service here with reliable vehicles."

McCray noted that the mission of the commission was to provide funding for the new ambulances. "We are here for the money," McCray said. "I don't think I can go back to my board and have them approve a 100-percent increase over three years. I can justify this year's 25-percent increase if we don't arbitrarily say we are buying another new rig in two years."

Tekautz stated that if the previous city administration had not kept transferring money from the ambulance fund's surplus

to the city's general fund, there would be enough money now for the new rig. The city currently has \$148,490 earmarked for the ambulance purchase. That's somewhat higher than last month due to a city fund transfer of general fund dollars to the ambulance purchase account and additional revenues that came from area townships before the end of the year. That will leave about \$18,000 in additional city funds that will be necessary to cover the purchase of the new rig, which is expected to be delivered in the spring. In past years, the city's ambulance operating margins were used to cover such shortfalls. But city year-end financial reports show the ambulance department revenues at \$415,693 (budgeted revenue was \$440,555, and expenses at \$513,682 (budgeted projections were \$439,655), for a year-end loss of close to \$98,000. The city auditors did make a year-end adjustment in 2018 that transferred about \$80,000 in 2019 revenue back to 2018, so the actual deficit is smaller than it appears.

Altenburg responds

Altenburg reminded the commission that they had earlier approved the contract they were now asking the city to scrap.

He noted that the department's ambulances were purchased in 2005 (Unit 3 with 101,406 miles and a rebuilt engine), in 2011 (Unit 2 with 141,295 miles), and in 2013 for the newest rig (Unit 1 with 100,214 miles).

"We used to do a five-year replacement cycle," he said.

"This commission was put together to purchase rigs," Altenburg said. "We haven't done that in a long time. I've done everything I can to stretch those rigs." Altenburg has been ambulance supervisor a little over three years.

Altenburg said criticism of the department having a third rig was misplaced. "I don't want to hear anything about the third rig," he said. "The ambulance service paid for the new engine." The department had tried to sell that rig for several years before simply putting it in storage.

"That rig is not costing us money," he said. "Every time we use it, we make money."

McCray repeatedly asked Altenburg to come back to the commission with a plan that addresses questions that have been raised, including how many times multiple rigs are out on calls at the same time, how many miles on each rig are for rescue/911

calls versus transfers, how the new rig will be used (rescue versus transfers), and if there is a plan to use the new rig in a manner that would prolong its service time to as long as feasible.

Tower Representative Rachel Beldo said that commission members were asking both foundational and longer-term questions and agreed that the commission should be given the information they need regarding rig mileage, along with call numbers and type, and plans for each rig in a single document. "So we are confident we understand where we are going."

Altenburg asked, "Who is going to make this plan? Besides mileage, what other information do you need?"

Beldo noted these questions had already been asked at the meeting.

McCray responded that the group wanted breakdowns of each unit, their repair history, cost to run each rig, number of times there had been a rig failure and why, as well as tracking the mileage and usage for each rig.

"You are the person in charge," McCray told Altenburg, noting he needed this detailed information to justify the increase in the subsidy rate to his board.

McCray said he hopes the transfers are making money for the service so they can afford to upgrade to ALS but said the concern of the commission is purchasing rigs.

Altenburg told the commission that transfers were making money for the TAAS but when he asked Tower City Clerk-Treasurer Victoria Ranua to back up his claim, she declined, noting that the ambulance service has not broken down its expenses and revenues in a way that could determine the answer to that question.

In the past there was no detailed breakdown on the costs of adding the paid-on-call service and housing for the paid-on-call staff, but that data is now being tracked at city hall so it should be avail-

able in the future.

Transfers were 22 percent of the service's calls in 2019. Estimates of 2018 data from Virginia Ambulance Director Al Lewis, however, showed they were responsible for about two-thirds of the total mileage for the service's ambulances.

The board then decided to have members come up with a list of suggestions for the new agreement which will be sent to the city by early February. They also may ask the city to allow the commission to have input into any new ambulance purchases. The commission's next meeting is Monday, April 6 at 7 p.m. at the Tower Civic Center.

Part-time ALS

Altenburg reported that the department will not be able to add part-time Advanced Life Support (ALS) care this year.

"We need to have \$50,000 up front to pay for the education and stuff we need," he said.

Altenburg said the department had paid out \$20,000 for ALS transports in 2019. "It's becoming a bigger and bigger need."

The service currently offers basic life support (BLS) with EMTs. ALS uses paramedics who can administer advanced care and more medications on route.

Dr. Pettinelli, the service's medical director, said the need for ALS transports is increasing, and that the waits for ALS transfers often mean patients end up needing emergency transport by air, which is very costly as well as dependent on good flying conditions. "Anything with trauma needs to go to a trauma center," he said.

Pettinelli said he is trying to get the Ely Ambulance Service to do more ALS transfers.

"A good, strong ambulance service is more important in Ely," he said. "There is lots of crazy stuff in the summer."



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SUPPORTING THE ARTS

Additional show added for The Quiltmaker’s Gift

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

Performances set for Jan. 24-26 at Ely’s Historic State Theater

ELY— The Historic State Theater Board has added a fourth performance of The Quiltmaker’s Gift to its January schedule, due to high demand for tickets to the debut event at the just-restored theater on Ely’s Sheridan Street.

In addition to performances scheduled for 7 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 24, and 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, a fourth show was added for Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. “Our ticket chair said the combination of a best-seller book by a local illustrator, a newly opened and restored local landmark theater, low ticket prices, and community interest and participation, seems a winning formula for ticket sales as the first three original show dates are nearly sold out,” Co-Chair Muffin Nelson said on Tuesday. Tickets are available online and in Ely at the Front Porch Coffee and Tea Co. Prices are \$10 for adults, \$5 for pre-school and K-12 students.

Nelson and Karen McManus, organizers of the production and related Ely events, said they expect to need even more volunteers for all aspects of this unusual production. “If you’re able to assist, please contact Pat Bieber, Volunteer Coordinator, at Bieber.pat91@yahoo.com,” McManus added.

Quilt show at EFS

In collaboration with the run of The Quiltmaker’s Gift at the Historic Ely State Theater, the Ely Folk School, located just across Sheridan Street, will host a quilt show by the Ely Heart of The Woods Quilters from Thursday, Jan. 23 thru Sunday, Jan. 26 from 12-4 p.m. each day.

The Heart Of The Woods Guild began in Ely in 1979 when quilter Corine Buechner moved to town and placed an ad in the paper searching for other quilters.

Today they have approximately 50 members ranging in age from 30 to mid-80s. They meet monthly at Ledge Rock Community Church



Ely Community Resource volunteer Craig Haberman read “The Quiltmaker’s Gift to Washington School fifth-graders on Tuesday. photo by K. Vandervort



to Nelson. “Beginners are welcome as are quilters with some experience who want to deepen their skills,” she said.

Space is limited and early registration is encouraged. The fee is \$40 per student. A Fabric Wall Hanging Class is also scheduled Thursday, Jan. 23 from 1:30-4 p.m., taught by Cecilia Rolando for a \$25 fee. Registration information and details are available at ElyFolkSchool.org.

Ely school events

Ely Community Resource will also be sending costumed “reading pals” into Washington Elementary classrooms this week and through Monday, Jan. 13, and they will make quilting fabric bookmarks with students, Muffin said.

“EFS will also host a fun morning for elementary students on Monday Jan. 20, an ISD 696 Teacher Workday,” she said. Three classes will be offered:

Watercolor Notecards with Sandy Brandley and Claire Taylor; a simple beaded bracelet with Kay Vandervort; and quilting techniques using other media with Cecilia Rolando.

Several classes from Washington Elementary will attend a dress rehearsal of The Quiltmaker’s Gift on Thursday, Jan. 23

Each Washington Elementary School classroom will be given a copy of the book donated by the Ely Kiwanis Club.

“Ely Memorial High School art students will get a taste of the important mathematical component of quilts by creating quilt squares relevant to life in Ely to be fashioned into a quilt for display,” Nelson said.

Free tickets at Ely Library

The Ely Public Library has a limited number of children’s tickets to matinee performances of The Quiltmaker’s Gift on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26.

Tickets will be given out on a first come/first served basis with the following conditions:

➤ Tickets are only good for children ages 10 and younger;

➤ Children will need to be accompanied to the performance by a paying adult;

➤ Only two tickets per family;

➤ Please specify which performance you will be attending when you get the tickets;

➤ The library can not save tickets to pick up later. Tickets will be giving out in the order that you physically come to the library to pick them up.

on the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. to share ideas, instruction and friendship.

Their work will also be displayed in the Ely Art Walk during the upcoming Winter Festival. “They regularly donate their time, talent and supplies to make and donate quilts to many charitable causes,” Nelson said.

“Also on display will be the national prize-winning quilt of Cook resident Linda Bergerson, fashioned from a line of Benartex fabrics, based on illustrations in The Quiltmaker’s Gift,” Nelson said.

Local quiltmaker and guild member Dorothy Sand donated two quilts

for a drawing to assist in funding the production. Dorothy has also helped to complete the King’s Quilt used in the play, according to Nelson.

A special quilting class at the Ely Folk School is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 24, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with a break for lunch. “The play’s organizers and the book’s illustrator can’t imagine this production without quilts nearby,” Nelson said.

Sue Covey, owner of the Quilted Cabin shop in Cook, will be the instructor. She will introduce basic quilting skills and do a demonstration before having students work on a simple project, according

COOK...Continued from page 1

a roaring fire. Hanson says they had an excellent day for the event, and a church group from Chisholm must have agreed, since they showed up in a charter bus for the chance to hop in a sleigh.

Hanson, with help from the North Star Draft Horse Association, has helped organize the event for the past eight years. To see more pictures, check out the North Star Draft Association Facebook page.



Elizabeth Brown and Kady Scofield enjoy the sliding hills during the Cook Food Shelf fundraising event. photo by Connie Stone

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NORDIC SKIING

Ely skiers in the hunt at Mesabi Invitational

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

BIWABIK – Ely Nordic skier Jasper Johnston took first place in the Nordic varsity free-style race here at Giants Ridge on Saturday, Jan. 4 to lead the Timberwolves boys team to a fourth-place

overall finish with a large field at the Mesabi East Invite.

Johnston finished with a time of 14:10.5, while Ely's Raif Olson finished 17th with a time of 15:52.2 and Nate Nettifee was right behind in 18th place with a time of 15:54.7.

In the boys varsity

classic race, Ely's Gabriel Pointer finished in sixth place with a time of 15:53.4, followed by Ethan Bremner, 33rd, with a time of 17:11.7, and Jon Hakala, in 46th, at 17:40.1.

Ely's varsity girls team finished in 11th place.

See **SKIING...** pg. 2B



Left:
Ely sophomore Gabriel Pointer looks determined as he passes a rival skier during classical competition at Giants Ridge last week.

photo by
L. Anderson

BOYS BASKETBALL

Greenway's quick start sinks Ely

Wolves take first in Ely tournament

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY — Greenway was unstoppable in the opening minutes here on Tuesday night as they scored 27 unanswered points against the Timberwolves enroute to a 69-46 win.

"We didn't score until the nine-minute mark and they made almost everything they shot at the basket," said Ely Head Coach Tom McDonald. "We had only five rebounds at halftime and we just couldn't do anything with their size and athleticism."

Ely freshman Joey Bianco led scoring for the Wolves, with 11 points and five assists, while sopho-

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



Ely junior Brock Latourell takes aim for the bucket under pressure from Greenway defenders.

photo by J. Greeney

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Grizzlies slip to Blue Devils

Strong second half lifts Virginia to 79-49 win

by E. M. SCHULTZ
Staff Writer

FIELD TWP — A second half Blue Devils surge lifted Virginia to an easy win over the North Woods girls basketball team here on Monday night. It was a story of two halves as the Grizzlies played a strong first half, taking a 32-29 lead into the break. But the second half was all Blue Devils as Virginia outscored the Grizzlies 50-17 in the frame to head home with the 79-49 win.

North Wood senior Sasha Strong led scoring for the Grizzlies, with 17 points, including four

three-pointers, while junior Brynn Simpson added nine points and senior Coley Olson added eight. Senior Kennedy Wardas tallied seven points and freshman Hannah Kinsey added five.

The girls were headed to Mt. Iron-Buhl on Thursday, before a home game against Greenway next Monday night.

Right: North Woods senior Coley Olson works her way around a Virginia defender during Monday's match-up at the North Woods School. It was a tough second half for the Grizzlies.

photo by C. Stone



Mattson's 25 points lead Ely over Littlefork

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

LITTLEFORK — Ely senior Erika Mattson poured in 25 points as she helped lead the Timberwolves to a 58-44 win over the Vikings here on Monday.

"This was a good section win for us to start a busy schedule after

the break," said Ely Head Coach Darren Visser. "Littlefork is well coached and our girls were able to withstand several of their runs in the second half to hold on and get a quality win."

Senior Brielle Kallberg added 18 points toward the Timberwolves' effort, while senior Winter Sainio added

nine points. Freshman Rachel Coughlin chipped in with seven rebounds. Mattson helped Ely's cause by hitting pay dirt on ten of 12 free throws. Kallberg went four for five from the charity stripe.

"We did a very good job of shooting free throws, allowing us to maintain our lead at the

end of the game," said Visser. The Wolves were set to travel to Grand Marais on Saturday to take on Cook County. They'll be back home next Monday to host Northeast Range. Tip-off is set for 7:15 p.m.

HOCKEY

Wolves fall to Broncos

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

INTERNATIONAL FALLS-The Timberwolves hockey team fell 13-1 to International Falls last Friday as they returned to regular season action following a holiday tournament in which they played three games at Two Harbors.

It was a rematch of last year's playoff game, during which Ely upset the favored Broncos. But it was a very different outcome this time around, as the Wolves managed just 10 shots on goal while the Broncos peppered Ely goalie Chase Sandberg with 62 shots.

The Broncos came out hot, scoring four times in the first period, once during

See **HOCKEY...** pg. 2B

Sports week

BOYS B-BALL

Friday, Jan. 10

Ely vs Nash/Kee, 7:15 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 11

Ely at Cook County, 2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

North Woods at Fond du Lac, 7:15 p.m.

Ely at Bigfork, 7:15 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 16

North Woods hosts Cass Lake, 6:15 p.m.

GIRLS B-BALL

Saturday, Jan. 11

Ely at Cook County, 1 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 13

North Woods hosts Greenway, 7:15 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

North Woods at Northeast Range, 7:15 p.m.

Ely hosts Cherry, 7:15 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 16

North Woods at Nash/Kee, 7:15 p.m.

HOCKEY

Friday, Jan. 10

Ely at Bagley, 6 p.m.

NORDIC SKIING

Saturday, Jan. 11

Ely at Marshall, 11 a.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

Ely at Two Harbors, 11 a.m.

North Woods pummels Two Harbors 90-53

Above: Jared Chiabotti and Darius Goggleye put the press on a Red Lake player. photos by C. Stone

The Timberwolves were scheduled to play at Siren, Wis., on Friday, Jan. 10 and will return home on Friday, Jan. 17, to host Red Lake Falls.

Pick Up ☐ Mail

Obituaries and Death Notices



Rita F. Plotnik
Rita Frances Plotnik, 84, of Willmar, died on Monday, Dec. 23, 2019, at Carris Health Rice Memorial Hospital in Willmar. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Friday, Dec. 27 at the Church of St. Mary in Willmar. Interment was at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Cemetery in Spicer. Arrangements were with Peterson Brothers Funeral Home in Willmar.

Rita was born in Browerville on March 29, 1935, to Frank and Mary (Bonik) Plotnik Sr. She grew up in Browerville, attended St. Joseph's Grade School and graduated from Browerville High School in 1953. She attended St. Catherine University in St. Paul and majored in English and Communication. Rita taught at Eveleth High School and St. Anthony Village High School until she retired. While teaching school, she spent summers traveling in Europe, Canada and Alaska. After retirement, Rita moved to Willmar to be near her brother Frank and sister-in-law Donna. From May to September each year, Rita operated a small fishing camp on Lake Vermilion near Tower. Rita was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Willmar (October to May) and St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower (May to September). Enjoying nature on Lake Vermilion and teaching were two of Rita's favorite pursuits.

Rita is survived by her brother, Frank (Donna) Plotnik of Spicer; sister, Agnes (Gene) Geigenmiller of Seguin, Texas; sister-in-law, Sherry Plotnik (Don Delorme) of Red Lake Falls; nephew, David (Cori) Plotnik of Lakeville; nieces, Tammi (Riad) Youssef of Houlton, Wis., Paula Sherber of Duluth and Heidi (Mel) Springer of Littleton, Colo.; and many grand-nephews and grand-nieces.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and two brothers, James and one in infancy.



Robert R. Martin
Robert R. Martin, 77, of Cook, passed away on Monday, Dec. 23, 2019, with his family by his side. A memorial service was held on Saturday, Dec. 28 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook. Military honors were accorded by the Cook VFW Post 1757 Honor Guard and the Orr American Legion Post 480 Honor Guard. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Robert was born to Cecil and Goldie (Emerson) Martin on Dec. 21, 1942, in Bertha. Robert attended Bigfork School, and like many young men his age, left school early to go to work. Robert served honorably in the United States Army and was stationed in Germany while he served. Robert was united in marriage to Linda Hill on Oct. 21, 1967, in Byron. After their marriage, they returned to the Range and Bob worked construction as a heavy equipment operator and mechanic for the IUOE 49 until an injury forced his retirement and he went into sales. During that time, Bob and Linda managed the Parkville Trailer Court and moved to Cook in 1976. He and Linda were foster parents to 50 teenage boys over a period of five years and then established Martin Home for Seniors, for adult foster care. They enjoyed the company of 55 elderly adults living in their home with them over a period of 11 years.

Bob was Past Master of the Masonic Vermilion Lodge 197 in Tower, a 40-year member of the AAD Temple of the Shrine in Duluth, Scottish Rite of Duluth, and the Hibbing Lodge of Perfection. He was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Above all, he loved his kids and grandkids and lived vicariously through their accomplishments. He beamed with pride when speaking of them and was so proud of the fine young men and women they have become.

Robert is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, Linda Hill Martin; daughter, Sara (Pete) Niska and their children, Olivia

(Jeffrey Chaulklin); son, Dave (Shannon) Martin and their children, Dustin (Ashley) Finner, Damon Finner (Heather Hill) and Cole Martin (Hannah Johnson); daughter, Amy (Rick) Viita and their children, Spencer Viita and Macy Viita; brother, Burton Martin; aunt, Doris Martin; numerous nieces, nephews and cousins; and his beloved dog, Gus.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Dolores Bjorge; brother, Arvid Martin; infant brother, Elvin Martin; father-in-law, Arne Hill; mother-in-law, Lois Hill (12/20/2019); brother-in-law, Leon Bjorge; sisters-in-law, Mary Martin and Jean Martin; and nephew, David Bjorge.

Verner L. Keskitalo
Verner Lavern Keskitalo, 94, of Embarrass, died on Friday, Jan. 3, 2020, at Essentia Health in Virginia. A memorial service for Verner will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 11 at the Apostolic Lutheran Church in Pike with Pastor John Salo officiating. Friends may gather one hour prior to the service at the church. Inurnment will be in the Embarrass Cemetery at a later date. Arrangements are by Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home in Aurora.

Survivors include his children, Aleta (Richard) Roy of Embarrass, Craig (Gwen) Keskitalo of Embarrass and Gary (Shari) Keskitalo of Port St. John, Fla.; grandchildren, Aaron, Chad, Travis, Sheila, Perry, Allison, Kyle, Kirsten and Adam; eight great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Linda M. Blauert
Linda Mary De Shaw Blauert, 76, formerly of Babbitt, passed away on Sunday, Jan. 5, 2020, at Guardian Angels Care Center in Elk River with family by her side. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 10 at St. Pius X Catholic Church in Babbitt with visitation being held one hour prior to the service at the church. Family arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

She is survived by her son, John; daughter in law, Camille; grandchildren, James and Elizabeth; brother-in-law, Jimmy (Oni) Blauert; godchild, Jennifer (Krause); nieces, Susy, Lori and Carrie; and nephews, John and David.

William D. Maki
William "Bill" D. Maki, 75, of Ely, passed away on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020, at Essentia Health-St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. A Funeral Mass was held on Thursday, Jan. 9 at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely. Family arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his children, Bill (Jodi) Maki and Kelly (Lance) Ronn; grandchildren, Madison, McKenzie and Parker Maki, Wyatt and Whitley Ronn; brother, David (Carolyn) Maki; and sister-in-law, Nancy Rozman, who supported him tremendously after the loss of his wife, Jean Miklausich Maki.

John C. Ojala
John Chester Ojala, 89, of Ely, passed away on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2020, at his home. Per his wishes, there will be no funeral services. Family arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his wife, Kathryn Koski Ojala; son, Jon; nieces, Colleen and Cheryl; and nephew, Dan.

Milton H. Netzer
Milton Harvey Netzer, 80, of Ely, passed away on Christmas Day, Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2019, at Carefree Living in Babbitt. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020, at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely with Father Bill Skarich officiating. Burial was in Ely. Family arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Catherine Netzer; children, Paula (Dan) Vogel of Shafer, Grant (Pam) Netzer of Ely, Kent (Kim) Netzer of North Branch, Brenda (Randy) Wagner of Andover, S.D., and Alan (Suzanne) Netzer of Grand Forks, N.D.; siblings, Clarice (Rev. Abe) Reddekopp of Kansas City, Mo., Alida Posein and Clarence (Shirley) Netzer, both of Jamestown, N.D., and Rev. Dwight (Darcy) Netzer of Albert Lea; sisters-in-law, Mary (Orval) Netzer of Aberdeen, S.D., and Ruth Taterek of Superior, Wis.; grandchildren, Heather Vogel, Becky (Travis) Luczak, Chantal Netzer, Nathan Baseman, Caitlin Netzer, Ashley Wagner, Eden Volk and Grace Netzer; and great-grandson, Wyatt Luczak.

William R. Warzonek
William "Wild Bill" "WWW" Robert Warzonek, 59, of Orr, passed away on Friday, Dec. 20, 2019. A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday, Dec. 28 at the American Legion Hall in Orr. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Lois C. Hill
Lois Caroline Storm Hill, 91, of Cook, passed away on Friday, Dec. 20, 2019, at the Cook Care Center. There will be no services per her wishes. A private family burial will be held in the spring. Arrangements are with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

She is survived by her daughters, Barbara (Bart) Hoag of Darby, Mont., and Linda (Bob) Martin of Cook; son, Jeffrey (Janice Johnson) Hill of Duluth; grandsons, Todd (Dawn) Seopa and their children, Mitchell and Jordan of Minot, N.D., Dean Seopa and his children, Ryan (Esther) and Morgan of Side Lake, Dave (Shannon) Martin and their children, Cole, Dustin (Ashley) and Damon of Cook and Tom (Taryn) Hill of Wichita, Kansas; granddaughters, Sara (Pete) Niska and their children, Jenna and Olivia of Cook, Amy (Rick) Viita and their children, Spencer and Macy of Cook, and Ashley (Josh) Johnson of Belgrade, Mont.; and many nieces and nephews.

Katherine A. Scheuer
Katherine Ann Rauscher Scheuer, 88, of Ely, died peacefully at home on Saturday, Dec. 21, 2019. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Anthony's Catholic Church on Monday, Dec. 30. Family arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

She is survived by her sons, Karl, Paul and John; daughters, Gretchen (Brad) Bensen, Veronica (Warren) Olsen, Anna (Keith) Larson and Nichole (Duane) Farkas; grandchildren, Bronte, Brandise (Mizi), Peter Jr. (Tom), Eugene, Danielle, Tim, Benedict, John, Kyle, Andrew, Louis, Gretchen, Matthew and Will; great-grandchildren, Emily and Marcus; and foreign exchange sons, Luiz, Garry and Jorge.

William H. Caron
William "Bill" Henry Caron, 95, of Virginia, passed away on Wednesday, Dec.

18, 2019, at Essentia Health in Virginia. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Monday, Dec. 23 at Holy Spirit Catholic Church with Fr. Brandon Moravitz officiating. Military honors were accorded by the Virginia Honor Guard. Arrangements were with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy; children, Renee (Bob) Pearson of Tower, Tom of Irving, Texas, and Elizabeth (Gary) Wetzel of Parrish, Fla.; brother-in-law, Joe (Sue) Froehlingsdorf; and several nieces and nephews.

Andy L. Morse
Andy Lynn Morse, 44, of Grand Rapids, formerly of Tower-Soudan, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 15, 2019 in Mason City, Iowa. A celebration of life was held on Saturday, Dec. 28 at the Loyal Order of Moose in Grand Rapids. Arrangements were with Rowe Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Grand Rapids.

He is survived by his fiancé, Lynn Achas and unborn daughter, Maisie Lynn; daughter, Mariah Morse of Embarrass; granddaughter, Brylee Linaman; parents, Terry and Mary Morse of Grand Rapids; brothers, Lucas (Megan) of Cohasset and Zachary (Kara) of Grand Rapids; nephews and nieces, Jace, Ricky, Drake, Lexi and Tenley; special aunt and uncle, Sandy and Mark Gorrill of Embarrass; and many other family and friends.

Belva Larson
Belva Gulbranson Larson, 95, of Virginia, died peacefully at home surrounded by family on Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019, after a long battle with cancer. A memorial service was held on Friday, Dec. 27 at Bauman-Cron Funeral Home in Virginia with Pastor Kate Stangl officiating. Interment was at Greenwood Cemetery in Virginia.

She is survived by her children, Gary (Jacalyn) Larson of Lake Vermilion, David (Wendy Schmitz) Larson of New York Mills, Darlene Anderson of Britt, James Larson of Crystal and June (Gary) Berry of Excelsior; grandchildren, Linda, Allen, Justin, Lara, Shannon, Corey, Lauren, Kelly, Eric and Angeline; 14 great-grandchildren with another arriving in the spring; and five great-great-grandchildren.

PUBLIC NOTICES

**CITY OF ELY
TIF District Public
Hearing Minutes
December 17, 2019 –
Ely City Hall
Council Chambers**

Call To Order
Mayor Novak called the public hearing to order at 5:00 pm.

PRESENT: Council members A. Forsman, Kess, Debeltz, Omerza, Callen, Campbell and Mayor Novak
ABSENT: None

Mayor Novak read the following notice.
Modification of The Tax Increment Financing Plan For Tax Increment Financing District No. 3
The adoption of the Modification is proposed to be accomplished pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 469.
The areas of Tax Increment Financing District No. 3 and Development District

No. 1 are indicated on the maps accompanying this notice. Tax increments may be collected from Tax Increment Financing District No. 3 and expended within Development District No. 1 pursuant to applicable Minnesota law.

Mayor Novak asked if anyone would like to speak about the TIF modification.
No Comments were heard.

Adjourn
Mayor Novak adjourned the public hearing at 5:02 pm without objection.

Casey Velcheff, Deputy Clerk

*Published in the Ely
Timberjay, Jan. 10, 2020*

**CITY OF ELY
NOTICE FOR LEGAL
PRINTING BIDS**

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by the Council of the City of Ely, St. Louis County, Minnesota, until Friday, January 24, 2020, 2:00 P.M. for doing legal printing and display advertising for the City of Ely, Minnesota for the year 2020.

Bids shall be securely sealed and endorsed upon the outside wrapper: "Bids for City of Ely Printing for 2020".

The City Council reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities therein.

Specifications, instructions and bid forms for interested bidders are available at the office of the Clerk/Treasurer, 209 E Chapman St, Ely, Minnesota 55731.

BY THE ORDER OF THE
ELY CITY COUNCIL
Harold R Langowski, City
Clerk/Treasurer

*Published in the Ely
Timberjay, Jan. 10 & 17,
2020*

**Northwoods
Business
Incubator**

You are invited!

ATTENTION: We are pleased to announce a new program designed to support area businesses, entrepreneurs and those dreaming of starting their own business.

Monthly meetings will run from January to April and resume again from October through December. Our goal is to provide: information on programs, business development classes and local, state and regional resources. The meetings are free and space is limited.

Each meeting will run 60 to 90 minutes and will be hosted by a local business. Seating is limited, so please reserve your spot by contacting us at 218-365-6123 or fun@ely.org.

Upcoming Meetings:
January 19: 9 am at Frandsen Bank & Trust Speaker: Randy Back from NE Office of Job Training. Randy will be speaking on Workforce solutions including On-the-Job Training, Internships and other programs.
February 20: 9 am at Frandsen Bank & Trust Speaker: Sandi Larson from the Entrepreneur Fund. Sandi will be discussing the Women's Business Alliance and a variety of Entrepreneur Fund programs. Joining Sandi will be the Ely area contacts for EF.
March 19: Curt Walczak from the Northeast MN SBDC will lead a class on creating DIY Websites and SEO for Small Businesses.
April 16: Betsy Olivanti from Northeast MN SBDC will lead a class on Developing Financial Projections.

The Northwoods Business Incubator is sponsored by the Ely Chamber of Commerce

1600 E. Sheridan Street
Ely, Minnesota 55731
218-365-6123 - fun@ely.org
www.Ely.org

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Plenty of birds sighted in area counts

Despite lack of northern finches, other species kept things interesting for area birders during Christmas surveys



by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— Recent Christmas bird counts around the area confirmed that the winter of 2019-20 will be remembered as an

Left: Jake Hagedorn points out a bird to fellow Isabella bird counters Lawson Gerdes and MJ Bach.

photo by M. Shedd

unusual season for the lack of some birds and the abundance of others.

Perhaps the biggest bird story of the year here in the North Country is the near-total absence of pine grosbeaks, those spectacular wine-colored finches that normally brighten up winter feeders across the region every winter. Of all the area counts, including ones in Cook, Ely, Isabella,

and Aurora, only a single counter— Mary Shedd, of Tower— spotted six pine grosbeaks during the Isabella count. And that was still a record low in Isabella, well below the previous low count of 20 in the 38 years of the Isabella count.

Other northern finches were in limited supply as well, as an abundant seed and berry crop in central Canada appears to have kept

many of the region’s normal winter visitors north of the border.

“The whole finch scene was pretty pathetic,” said Steve Wilson, who organizes and compiles the Isabella count. It was a similar story in the Cook area, where compiler Julie Grahn reported no pine grosbeaks, pine siskins, or redpolls, birds that are

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

RESOURCES

DNR nursery needs black spruce cones



Crossbills aren’t the only ones on the hunt for black spruce cones, as seen here. The DNR is also seeking cones to provide seed for the state nursery.

REGIONAL — Want to help Minnesota’s forests grow healthy and strong and make some extra money at the same time? The Department of Natural Resources has a great opportunity.

The state forest nursery is in short supply of black spruce seed. To address this, an additional 800 bushels of black spruce cones are needed within the next few weeks. The DNR relies on individual collectors to provide cones to the state forest nursery.

The nursery dries the cones, extracts the seeds, and sells that seed to land managers. Approximately 6,000 acres of black spruce in Minnesota are replanted each year with seeds from the nursery.

“This shortage will significantly reduce our ability to seed new black spruce forests this spring,” said Mike Reinikainen, forestry silviculture program coordinator.

The DNR can direct people to where they can find black spruce cones and will purchase those they collect for \$70 per bushel.

Before collecting cones, contact one of the following area DNR seed-buying stations for more information and directions on how to present cones for purchase. Northeastern Minnesota stations include Orr, Littlefork, Tower, Two Harbors, Hibbing, Deer River, and Cloquet. Phone numbers for these stations are available on the seed drop off locations webpage.

Cones may be collected on the collector’s property or on state forest land. To be eligible for purchase, cones must be high quality, ripe, and free of stems and debris. Black spruce cones are needed now to the end of February.

RECREATION AND THE ECONOMY

Winter Wonderland



Abundant snow, mild temperatures has been a boon and challenge to winter recreation

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

Above: It’s a great season for snowshoeing with abundant snow making for fun traveling through the woods. photo by M. HelMBERger

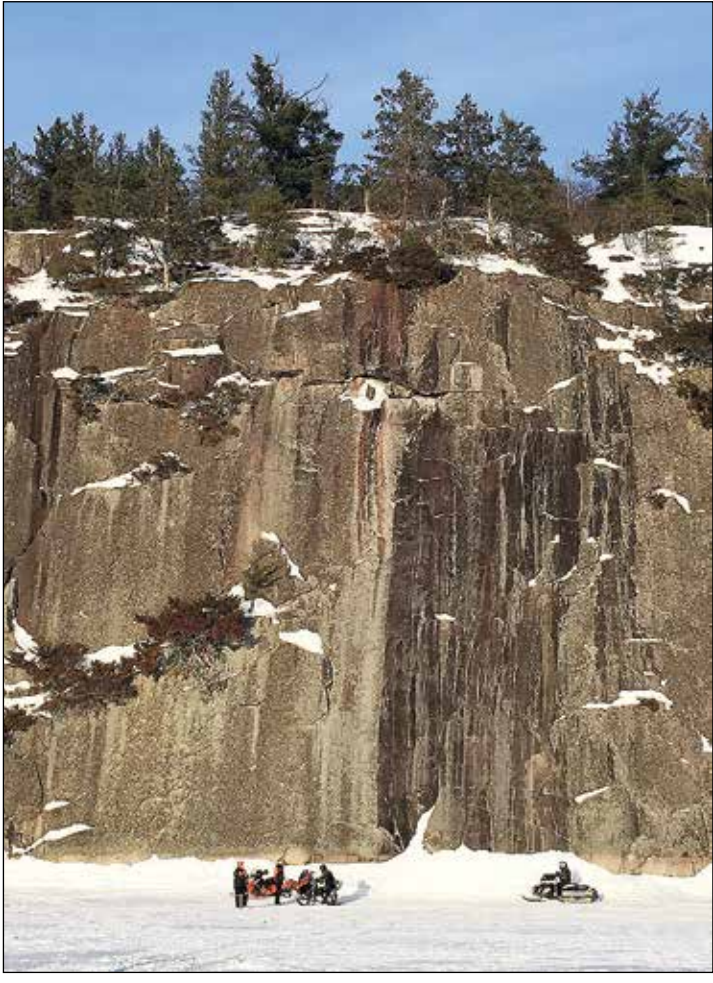
Right: Snowmobile conditions have improved significantly, as sledders in Voyageurs National Park discovered this past weekend. submitted

extra traffic at Good Ol’ Days, according to Semo.

Joe Majerus, who oversees the state snowmobile trails in the Tower area for the DNR, said traffic has been heavy at times, particularly as trail conditions have gradually improved.

While plenty of snow helps to keep snowmobile trails in good shape, Majerus said it has made for challenges as well. While the area saw days of intense cold in early December, mild temperatures have dominated since then. When combined with the snow, that’s meant area swamps and other wet areas, which were near to overflowing after abundant fall rains, have been very reluctant to freeze.

“We’ve been grooming as much as we can,” said Majerus, “it’s just those swamp areas where we are having a hard



time.” DNR trail grooming crews have learned the hard way that pushing the limits in such areas runs the risk of sinking groomers, causing even more problems.

Avoiding those areas does

complicate grooming efforts, however, since it often requires a lot more trailering time for groomers and drivers. A portion of the Arrowhead Trail through

See **WINTER...**pg. 5B

Area report



Big smiles all around for this nice Lake Kabetogama walleye.

Courtesy Cooper's Gateway Store

It was a busy weekend around Kabetogama and Voyageurs National Park as snowmobiling is picking up considerably.

With the recent snow, snowmobile trails are in good shape. As of today, in Voyageurs National Park, the green trail from Rainy Lake to Crane Lake is staked and lightly groomed. The lake trail is rough with scattered slush areas but most of these spots have firmed up. When venturing off the trail, riders are finding slushy conditions but not having issues getting through. Most trails beyond the park are groomed and in good shape. The groomers are doing a great job of keeping up with the recent uptick in activity. The ice road has yet to be plowed but the park service is hoping to begin that process within the next week. All of the ski trails are packed with the exception of the Kab/Ash trail. All of the snowshoe trails are open.

Fishing remains consistent throughout Kabetogama. Even though

the bite isn't fast and furious, walleye fishing has been good. Larger fish are more active right now while the keeper size variety seem to be a bit more elusive. Lively minnows under a bobber or on a rattle wheel are producing better results than jigging. Shiners were the bait of choice. Focus on transition areas or soft bottom in 24-32 ft of water. Spearing has slowed a bit, but this is mostly due to fewer people spending time in the spear house. Ice thickness still varies greatly throughout the area but is safe to travel on, although travel is limited to snowmobiles or tracked machines.

If you are looking to experience winter at it's best, visiting Voyageurs National Park should be on your list of destinations. It's absolutely beautiful out there and the scenery is second to none!

As always, be safe, enjoy yourself and we'll see you soon!

Courtesy Gateway Store, Lake Kabetogama

Snowshoeing at the Discovery Center

CHISHOLM – Want to get outdoors more this winter but don't know where to start? Come by the MN Discovery Center (MDC) during normal operating hours to try out snowshoeing throughout the park. The flat paths make MDC the perfect place to test the waters. Snowshoe rentals cost \$5 on top of regular admission. Discovery Pass Members may rent snowshoes free of charge. You may also bring your own snowshoes and just pay regular admission prices.

For those looking for more of a challenge, MDC offers guided tours to the Glen Location, a three-mile

hike, on Thursdays starting at 5:30 p.m. or Saturdays starting at 2:30 p.m. These tours are only available with advanced reservations and advanced payment. Maximum of ten people per tour. Guided tours will be canceled if weather temperatures drop below zero degrees Fahrenheit. Fees for the tours are as follows: Members \$13 per person and non-members \$15 per person. All fees include snowshoe rental and admission fees. Private guided tours are available upon request. Please contact Program Coordinator Paul Gunter at 218-254-1236 for more information.

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday

11 -15

Saturday

5 -3

Sunday

16 9

Monday

18 1

Tuesday

9 2

Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
12/30	33	25	0.27	0.8"	12/30	33	24	0.17	1.1"	12/30	28	23	0.10	1.5"	12/30	25	18	1.13	8.5"	12/30	29	22	0.14	2.1"
12/31	24	11	0.08	1.0"	12/31	24	11	0.08	0.8"	12/31	23	11	0.04	0.7"	12/31	19	5	0.05	1.0"	12/31	22	9	0.10	2.0"
01/01	19	-4	0.00		01/01	17	-10	0.00		01/01	14	-1	0.00		01/01	25	7	0.00		01/01	17	-9	0.00	
01/02	28	10	0.06	2.3"	01/02	25	10	0.11	1.5"	01/02	25	8	0.12	0.2"	01/02	25	18	0.00		01/02	25	8	0.14	2.5"
01/03	28	17	0.03	0.1"	01/03	27	10	0.00		01/03	27	17	0.00	0.5"	01/03	21	16	0.00		01/03	27	16	0.02	tr
01/04	23	17	0.00		01/04	21	16	0.01		01/04	22	18	0.00	2.0"	01/04	25	21	0.00		01/04	22	16	0.00	
01/05	27	23	0.00		01/05	26	21	0.00		01/05	26	22	0.00		01/05	28	18	0.00		01/05	26	22	0.00	
2019 Precip Total			23.04	57.3"	2019 Precip Total			27.62	32.1"	2019 Precip Total			25.40	32.7"	YTD Total			NA	34.7"	2019 Precip Total			29.15	36.0"

COUNTS...Continued from page 4B

normally found in good numbers in the area this time of year. The low finch counts came despite exceptionally mild weather, that made it easy for counters to spend extra time in the field during the various counts.

Just as some northern birds have yet to venture out of central Canada, some birds that normally leave the North Country this time of year appeared to be hanging on as well. All of the area counts reported significant numbers of goldfinches, which are usually scarce during most winters in northeastern Minnesota. Nine cedar waxwings, which are normally replaced here in winter by their slightly harder and more colorful cousins, the Bohemian waxwings, were spotted during the Isabella count for only the second time. A tree sparrow and a mourning dove

were both spotted during the Cook count, while counters in Ely spotted a dark-eyed junco.

Meanwhile, counters found jays, particularly blue jays, in record or near-record numbers.

Counters in Isabella tallied a total of 157 blue jays, shattering the previous record high of 130. "It seemed the woods were alive with blue jays," said Wilson. He was also pleased by a sizable rebound in gray jay numbers, with 74 counted, well above the count's long-term average of 43. "That was a nice rebound," said Wilson, who has previously made note of recent low gray jay numbers on the count.

Raven numbers were also above average, with 153 tallied on the Ely count and 98 at Isabella.

It was also a strong year for red-breasted nuthatches, with 180 tallied in Ely and 123 in Isabella.

WINTER...Continued from page 4B

the Lost Lake Swamp as well as the Lehtinen Creek area south of Cook are still too soft for groomers, according to Majerus. While those areas are still passable for snowmobilers, Majerus warns that conditions tend to be rough.

It's not clear when those conditions might improve, since the extended forecast includes no sign of the minus-30 or colder temperatures that are necessary to stiffen swamps.

Elsewhere, trail conditions have benefitted from all the snow. With the most recent round of grooming, trail conditions are now rated as fair-to-good in most of the area.

While colder weather might

be needed to improve snowmobile trails, the conditions for folks who prefer silent sports, like cross-country skiing or snowshoeing, couldn't be much better. "We've had really nice snow conditions," said Mary Shedd, president of the Wagoner Trails Club, which recently restored the longtime ski trails located just south of Tower along Hwy. 135. "Tower avoided any significant thaw and the sleet that fell elsewhere, so the snow is light and fluffy and easy to ski," said Shedd. The club has new grooming equipment to set track. That, combined with a noticeable increase in the number of skiers utilizing the trails, has left the trails in good-to-excellent condition in recent days.

Other highlights included two hawk owls on the Cook count, along with six black-billed magpies, and 18 bald eagles. Counters in Isabella counted 11 spruce grouse, well above the long-term average of two, although Wilson noted that four of those birds were tallied as roadkill along Lake County Hwy. 2, which passes through an area with a relatively high density of spruce grouse. The birds, often known as "fool hens" tend to lack wariness around both vehicles and humans. The species is believed to be on the decline in Minnesota, so Wilson said he'd like to explore options for alerting drivers on Hwy. 2 about the frequent presence of spruce grouse on the road. Like many birds, spruce grouse are attracted to roadsides in winter to access the grit they need to assist in the digestion of their food.

Popular ski trails at Bear Head Lake State Park are also rated in very good condition while trails for both classical and skate skiing at Hidden Valley in Ely, are also in great condition.

The snow conditions have also been excellent for activities like snowshoeing, which has become increasingly popular. Giants Ridge, near Biwabik, maintains groomed snowshoe trails, but most snowshoe trails are simply created by users. If you're looking for a place to give snowshoeing a try, Bear Head State Park offers snowshoe rentals at the main office for \$6 a pair.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF ELY Council Minutes - December 17, 2019 Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Novak called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. PRESENT: Council members A.Forsman, Kess, Debeltz, Omerza, Callen, Campbell, and Mayor Novak
ABSENT: None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the minutes from the December 3, 2019 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.

4. ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA:
A. Addition 6.B Approve Council to attend the 2020 Elected Leaders Institute: Foundation Program or the Advanced Program through the League of Minnesota Cities.
B. Addition 8.A Budget Committee Minutes, motions and discussion on the Dump Truck bid/purchase and omit the approval of the 2020 levy since it will be discussed under New Business.
C. Addition 11. D. Invoice #377916 to SEH for \$258.00 for the Prospector ATV Trail
D. Addition 12. A. Sanitation Committee: Citizens at Large: Phillip Hegfors Jr, John Lahtonen and Mike Banovetz
E. Addition 13. H. Resolution 2019-048 Resolution Approving the City of Ely Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020
F. Addition 13. I Resolution 2019-049 Resolution Approving and Adopting Final Tax Levy Collectible in 2020
G. Addition 13. J Resolution 2019-050 Resolution Approving a Modification to the Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Financing District No. 3.
H. Addition 13. K. Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) Ballot for the Communities Under 10,000 Representative for St Louis County - Robert Quade from Rice Lake, MN or Steven B. Johnson from Virginia, MN
Additions and Omissions A-H were added and omitted without objection.

5. MAYOR'S REPORT
Thanks to the City Employees that have been busy with the snow removal and keeping our streets clean.

EMPLOYMENT

Superintendent/Principal Search
Nett Lake Public Schools ISD 707

The Nett Lake School District 707 is seeking applications for a full-time Superintendent/Principal. A complete job description and application can be found at www.nettlake-school.org or you may stop by the Nett Lake School. Compensation package will be based on qualifications and work experience. The district will begin reviewing applications on January 31, 2020.

Questions?
Contact Superintendent James J. Varichak, 13090 Westley Drive, Nett Lake, MN 55772.
Email: jvarichak@isd707.org
Phone: 218-757-3102.

Published in the Timberjay, Jan. 10, 17, 24 & 31, 2020

Reporter/Editor

The Timberjay has an immediate opening for a full-time editor/reporter who has experience and interest in serious, independent community journalism. Wide-ranging community beat provides opportunity for a reporter to pursue their journalistic passions. We do everything from environmental and investigative reporting to local human interest to high school sports. See recent feature in Columbia Journalism Review for more: https://www.cjr.org/united_states_project/timberjay-helmberger-trump-stauber-mining.php.

In addition to reporting and editing, job will include pagination (InDesign), photography, web content management and social media.

Join our small but dedicated crew covering life in the North Country. Competitive salary and benefits. Send resume and clips to Marshall Helmberger, The Timberjay Newspaper, PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790, or email to marshall@timberjay.com.

Building Maintenance Worker- Environmental Services
Apply by 1/21/20

www.stlouiscountymn.gov
or call 218-726-2422

Equal Opportunity and Veteran-Friendly Employer 1/10

Sanitation Committee.

4. Approved payment of the EUC Bills List for November, 2019 for \$324,022.76.

5. Approved payment of CIP Rebates for Dollar General \$1,603.05 and Razor Edge Systems \$1,195.57.

Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the EUC Consent agenda items 1-5.

A.Forsman indicated that the CIP rebates are still going strong and available. Forsman encourages businesses to take advantage of this program.

Langowski indicated that he just had a meeting with Energy Insights and they are working on some rebates and energy options for 2020. Motion Carried Unanimously.

B. Fire Chief
Debeltz/Called moved to hire Louis Gerzin as a firefighter pending background check, drug test, and physical. Motion Carried Unanimously.

C. Library Director
Library Director Heinrich gave an update on the upcoming events at the library and the holiday hours which can be located on the Library website.

D. Police Chief
Chief Lahtonen indicated that the new Police truck is on the road.

E. City Attorney

F. City Engineer

10. COMMUNICATIONS: Matter of Information
A. Thank you from Incredible Ely
B. Correspondence from the St Louis County Fair
C. Thank you from the Ely Chamber of Commerce for the Christmas Parade and tree lighting ceremony.

11. CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:
A. City and EUC claims for December 17, 2019 – \$321,011.23
B. Invoice 1912-09 to Benchmark Engineering, Inc for \$595.00 for the Bridge 601 Trail Improvements
C. Invoice 1912-12 to Benchmark Engineering, Inc for \$85.00 for the Quad Cities

ATV Trails
D. Invoice #377916 to SEH for \$258.00 for the Prospector ATV Trail
Callen/Omerza moved to approve the Claims for Payment A – D. Motion Carried Unanimously.

12. OLD BUSINESS:
A. Forming a Sanitation Committee – 3 Council Members, 1 EUC Member, 1 Planning & Zoning Member, and Advertising for 2 Citizens at large.
Planning and Zoning recommended Mauro Caruso
EUC recommended Warren Nikkola
Kess/A.Forsman moved to approve Warren Nikkola as the EUC Representative and Mauro Caruso as the Planning and Zoning Representative on the Sanitation Committee. Motion Carried Unanimously.
2 Citizens at Large – Phillip Hegfors Jr, John Lahtonen, and Mike Banovetz
A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve Phillip Hegfors Jr. and John Lahtonen to be on the Sanitation Committee as Citizens at Large.
Mayor Novak indicated that he will be voting no on this motion because one of the individuals on this motion, he believes, has a personal agenda.
Roll Called: A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-No, Omerza-No, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-No. Motion Carries 4-3 with Debeltz, Omerza and Mayor Novak voting No.
3 Council Members – Mayor Novak indicated he has heard from Omerza and Callen that they would like to be on the Sanitation Committee.
Kess indicated that he would like to be on the Sanitation Committee. He feels like the three people (A.Forsman, Callen and himself) that did the heavy lifting to this point should be on it.
A.Forsman indicated that he would like to be on the Sanitation Committee.
Omerza indicated that there would not have been any heavy lifting had we not gone this route in the first place. Omerza stated that she has stated her side of

EMPLOYMENT

Office Manager

Flexible hours. Competitive pay. Experience using QuickBooks, Excel and Microsoft Word. Bookkeeping experience required.

To apply: Send resume to Immanuel Lutheran Church PO Box 466, Tower, MN 55790 1/24

POSITION OPENING
ELY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ISD No. 696
PARAPROFESSIONAL (2 positions)
PLACE OF WORK: District; RATE OF PAY: \$16.40/hr.; HOURS: 6.5 hours/day, 5 days/week, student contact days; QUALIFICATIONS: AA Degree or two years of college required. Include district application and transcripts; background check required. Application (non-licensed) available at www.ely.k12.mn.us or in the District Office. Send materials to: ISD #696, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731. Deadline for application: Monday, January 13, 2020.

Published in the Ely Timberjay, Dec. 27, 2019 & Jan. 10, 2020

Looking for steady employment as a truck driver?

Edwards has openings for good driving candidates that have at least a Class B license and 20,000 miles in a larger straight truck/dump truck or 50,000 miles in a tractor trailer and a Class A license. We offer 40+ hrs. each week with some OT available, year-round job on a regular schedule. Steady paycheck, full insurances, maintained equipment. 4 positions to fill close to Ely, Babbitt, Tower area.

Apply soon to: Edwards Oil and Propane, 820 Hoover Road North, Virginia MN 55792
OR Edwards Oil and Propane, 620 E Sheridan, Ely, MN 55731. 1/31

Super Crossword

Answers

M	A	S	T	S	B	R	I	D	E	M	I	C	R	S	H	U	T
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this issue from the start and she has heard from many people that have supported her; she feels that the people that have the same views as her need to be represented on the committee. Callen indicated that he would like to be on the Sanitation Committee. Kess/Callen moved to have A.Forsman, Kess, and Callen on the Sanitation Committee as the Council representatives. Motion Carried 6-1 with Omerza voting No.

13. NEW BUSINESS:
A. Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve the Employment Agreement between the City of Ely, MN and AFSCME Local 1490 – Essential Unit January 1, 2020- December 31, 2022. Motion Carried Unanimously.

B. Omerza/Debletz moved to approve the Employment Agreement between the City of Ely, MN and AFSCME Local 1490 – Base Unit January 1, 2020- December 31, 2022. Motion Carried Unanimously.
Kess indicated that he appreciates all the work the negotiating committee and AFSCME groups' puts into the negotiations.

C. Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve the updated job descriptions for Meter Reader, Electric Lineman Foreman, and Electrical Line Worker 4. Motion Carried Unanimously.

D. Debeltz/Callen moved to approve the in-kind services and the Obstruction in Public Right of Way Permit for the WolfTrack Classic Sled Dog Race on February 22 and 23, 2020. Motion Carried Unanimously.
Ellen Cashman the Event Coordinator for the Ely Chamber of Commerce indicated that this will be the 50th year that a Sled Dog Race has been held in Ely. They have a couple people that will be here from the 1st race that will be at the Mushers

Dinner.
A.Forsman thanked the chamber for stepping forward and taking over this event.

E. Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Commercial renovation loan for 141 N Central Ave to replace floors, replace windows, apply 1" of foam insulation and fiberglass, etc for \$17,500, pending proper paperwork and fees and to direct Attorney Klun to work with the applicant and to proceed with loan processing. Motion Carried Unanimously.

F. Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve the League of Minnesota Cities Liability Coverage Waiver Form with Does Not Waive checked. Motion Carried Unanimously.

G. Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Resolution 2019-047 Resolution Authorizing Temporary Deputy Clerk for Election Purposes. Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously

H. Callen/Omerza moved to approve Resolution 2019-048 Resolution Approving the City of Ely Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020. Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously

I. Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Resolution 2019-049 Resolution Approving and Adopting Final Tax Levy Collectible in 2020. Mayor Novak stated that our preliminary levy was at 2.62% and the final levy is at 1%.
A.Forsman indicated that the City of Ely continues to do major infrastructure projects. In 2020 the major project is the James Street project. Omerza indicated that we have an excellent staff and

employees that make sure the taxpayers money is spent properly.
Debeltz stated that the City of Ely has a good staff working in the field doing some of the things that used to be contracted out, that makes a big difference when doing these major projects.
Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously

J. Omerza/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2019-050 Resolution Approving a Modification to the Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Financing District No. 3. Langowski thanked ISD 696, the County Board and Commissioners for signing the waiver.
Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously

K. Kess/Campbell moved to approve the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) Ballot for the Communities Under 10,000 Representative for St Louis County Steven B. Johnson from Virginia, MN. Motion Carried Unanimously.

14. OPEN FORUM
Mayor Novak wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

15. ADJOURN
Mayor Novak adjourned the meeting at 6:05pm without objection.

Casey Velcheff, Deputy Clerk

Published in the Ely Timberjay, Jan. 10, 2020

EMPLOYMENT

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Laboratory
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PT Nursing Assistant (sign-on bonus- wage starting at \$15.88/hr.)
PT Restorative Nursing Assistant (sign-on bonus- wage starting at \$15.88/hr.)

Adult Day Services
Casual ADS Director

Rehabilitation
FT Physical Therapist (sign-on bonus)

Dietary
Full & Part Time Dietary Aide/Cook (Wage starting at \$12.80/hr.)

Imaging
Full Time Radiologic Tech (sign-on bonus)
Full Time Imaging Manager (sign-on bonus)

Environmental Services
Casual Housekeeper & Laundry Aide (Wage starting at \$12.80/hr.)

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More Info? Contact Human Resources
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humanresources@cookhospital.org

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ 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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HANDYMAN/REMODELING

MURRAY'S QUALITY SERVICES- Handyman/ Remodeling • Saunas • Custom Built-Ins • Woodworking • Insured. Call Andrew at 218-750-7136. 2/7v

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. 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, CDL/ Motorcycle/ Drivers Manuals. Now accepting Visa/MC/ Discover/AmEx. Questions call 218-666-6199. tfn

REAL ESTATE

Search ALL MLS listings at www.pfremmerrealty.com. tfn

SNOW REMOVAL

VERMILION SNOW MANAGEMENT- Serving the entire Lake Vermilion area. Roads, Driveways & Sidewalks. Free estimates, insured. tj@vermilionsnowmanagement.com or 218-290-0966. Online at vermilionsnowmanagement.com. tfn

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WANTED

SELIGA CANOES WANTED: We'll buy old Seligas in Good Shape. Turn your classic canoe into cash. Call Steve at 365-6745. tfn

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

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.

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

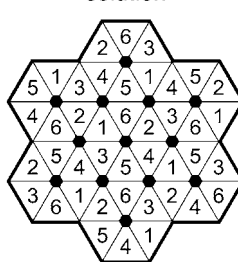
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP- Are you troubled by someone's drinking? Al-Anon Family Group is a community-based mutual support program for the friends and families of alcoholics. It is confidential and open to anyone affected by someone else's drinking. Hope Lutheran Church in Embarrass hosts an Al-Anon group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

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

HELP WANTED

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS interested in Public Relations. Become acquainted with publicizing events online, newspapers and radio for the non-profit arts organization, Northwoods Friends of the Arts, in Cook. Call Judith at 218-750-4304. 1/10

SNOWFLAKES



SCRAMBLERS

solution
1. Series; 2. Stigma;
3. Period; 4. Gentle

Today's Word
DESSERT

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

7	1	9	8	2	5	6	4	3
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6	5	2	1	3	8	4	9	7
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Classifieds run in all 3 editions of the Timberjay.

Line classifieds cost 30¢/word, \$6.00 minimum. Classified ads can be run a second time at half price (private parties only). We now accept payment by Visa, Mastercard and Discover. Call your ad in to 218-753-2950. Display (boxed) classifieds are billed by the "inch"- please call for prices and information on discounts. Call Today – 218-753-2950 or 218-365-3114

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Tower MN 55790



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Lake Vermilion
218-753-3319

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Service/Repairs/Sales
Mechanic on Duty

moccasinpointmarine.com



SUPPORT GROUPS

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.

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

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.

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

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

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. A message from The Timberjay and the FTC.

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timberjay.com
218-753-2950

Super Crossword

APT OCCUPATIONS

ACROSS

- Ship parts
- One in a veil
- Very small: Prefix
- Sealed, say
- Early TV's Stu
- Posteriors
- Stick — in the water
- Songwriter's creation
- Martin the ticket collector?
- Actor Bana or Stoltz
- Pay to play poker
- Game with Wild cards
- Clinton the doctor?
- Caught at a rodeo
- Pollen lover
- Hardly fresh
- Worldwide
- Ellington the Peppermint Pattie factory worker?
- More greasy
- Ending for Israel
- Ilk
- Car owners' org.
- Kelly the minister?
- "Let's go!"

- Former Apple messaging software
- See 64-Down
- Primate studier
- Benny the golfer?
- Markey and Bagnold
- Actor Hinds of 2017's "Justice League"
- Negligent
- Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand's purview
- Bailey the philosopher?
- Folder flap
- Meal tie-on
- Rice-based Spanish dish
- Ivory's counterpart
- Benatar the dairy owner?
- Fuzzy stuff
- Departure
- Standoffish
- Karmann — (bygone VW sports car)
- Nolte the clockmaker?
- Skeleton part
- 93 +
- Ariz.-to-Kan. dir.

- Girls in the family
- Liotta the lamp designer?
- Gets dilated
- Basic deg. for designers
- Supermodel Carangi or actress Scala
- End profit
- Behar the chef?
- Airport stat
- Hotel chain
- Morales of film and TV
- Arden the demolition contractor?
- Shady giants
- Get-out-of-jail money
- Super-mad
- "The Flea" poet John
- Blog addition
- Pot for stew
- Lauder of makeup
- Evil smile

DOWN

- Get gold, e.g.
- Target
- Center, e.g.
- Smacks
- Spork parts
- -cone
- "Viva Zapata!" star

- Alter totally
- Reply to "Who's in charge here?"
- Bounced down the court
- Actress Davis of two "Matrix" films
- Spam, say
- Langston Hughes poem
- Athletic team assoc.
- Film anew
- Not wobbly
- Throw
- Troop body
- Pt. of MIT or STEM
- Nuclear reactor tube
- Polar vehicle
- Polar pixie
- Curved arch
- High jump on a skateboard, informally
- Lacking a key, in music
- "Semper Fi" mil. branch
- Weirdo
- Rubik of cube fame
- Aiea's island
- Broccoli —
- Kit — (candy bars)

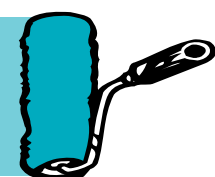
- Poet Nash
- Twisted wit
- lazuli
- Frosted
- Abbr. on a pay stub
- "Please, Mommy, will you let us?"
- "Veni," in English
- Nero's 160
- Villain in Disney's "Aladdin"
- Waitress on TV's "Alice"
- Spruce (up)
- With 57-Across, Ali ring strategy
- Abate
- "Fighting" Big Ten team
- Cut, as pizza
- Cold and wet
- Like poison
- Japanese cartoon art
- Measures of memory
- Scaring cry
- noire
- One of Henry VIII's Catherine
- Et —
- Mug in a pub
- Jamaican citrus fruit

- Mean ruffian
- Wife on "The Addams Family," to her hubby
- Cover for a truck bed
- Crystal rubbers, perhaps
- Jab deliverer
- Control in a clinical study
- Certain wind player
- Very loudly, musically
- 9-to-5er's weekly cry
- Main city
- Art house film, often
- Went aboard
- Nitrogen compound
- Words after all or hole
- San Fran griddler
- All-terrain vehicle
- Fjord city
- Tasty tubers
- Egg-shaped
- Eye, in Paris
- Nut with caffeine
- Rock finale?
- Perched
- LP replacers

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126						127					128						129				



HOME IMPROVEMENT GUIDE



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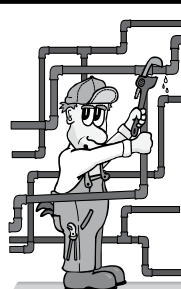
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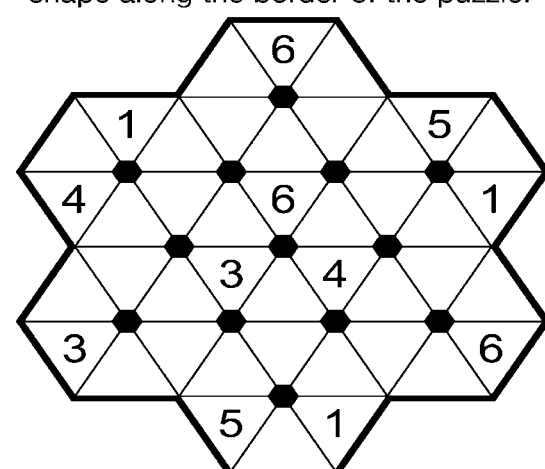
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There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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