



**Inside:**  
**Charges files against rodeo...** See /3  
**Outdoor dog care...** See /1B  
**A trip on the river...** See /4B

# The TIMBERJAY



VOL. 31, ISSUE 31 August 7, 2020

\$1.00

## BACK TO SCHOOL

# County schools to resume in person

by DAVID COLBURN  
 Cook/Orr Editor

ISD 2142 board splits as two members vote against proposal

many of the 782 surveys received were duplicates submitted by both parents in a household. After eliminating those duplicates, 696 surveys were tallied.

Sixty-eight percent of parents districtwide said they would be sending their children

See...SCHOOL pg. 7

REGIONAL- St. Louis County ISD 2142 schools will resume full in-person classes in September, but one-third of parents responding to a district survey either won't be sending their children back to class or are

uncertain about doing so.

The uncertainty was reflected at Tuesday's special school board meeting, where board members Chris Koivisto and Christine Taylor voted against resuming full in-person classes

**More coverage**  
 Ely school board meets on Monday night. Page 7

over concerns about the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the

district's ability in that scenario to ensure adequate social distancing and other health measures.

Superintendent Reggie Engebretsen reported on the results of the survey, noting that

## ELECTION 2020

# A flood of mail-in ballots

County elections supervisor explains why mail-in balloting is secure

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
 Managing Editor

REGIONAL— St. Louis County elections officials are preparing for a deluge of mail-in ballots for next Tuesday's primary election. In fact, the flood is already lapping at their feet.

According to Phil Chapman, the county's elections supervisor, the county had already received over 9,200 mail-in ballots as of this past Monday, with eight days to go until the Aug. 11 primary.

Normally, they would have received about 1,500 ballots by now, said Chapman, and the previous record was 3,600 at this point in the election process.

"We're a little crazy right now," said Chapman.

St. Louis County is not alone. Statewide, Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon reports



Ely Deputy Clerk Casey Velcheff scans ballot bar codes Monday as she registers a stack of absentee ballots. photo by K. Vandervort

that Minnesotans had submitted more than 550,000 absentee ballot requests as of the end of July, with 11 days to go until the primary. At this same point in 2016, election officials had received about 25,000 such requests.

The shift to voting by mail has been prompted by public health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly in urban areas, where voters are often required to wait in long lines to cast their ballots, voters are turning to the mail as a safer and more convenient alternative to in-person voting. Indeed,

See... VOTE pg. 10

# More than 350 absentee ballots sent out to Ely voters

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
 Ely Editor

ELY—Local election officials were busy this week preparing for the Aug. 11 state primary, which features a \$10 million school district bond issue and party races for U.S. Senate and

Representative.

Some 350 absentee ballot applications have been processed and sent out since mid-June by the absentee ballot board, and just about half of them were returned by early this week, according to Casey Velcheff, Ely deputy clerk and head election judge.

"I anticipate a busy week," Velcheff said, "as we receive, record and secure each ballot." Absentee ballot counting, by law, cannot begin until after the polls close next Tuesday.

In-person voting will take place

See...ELY pg. 10



## HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

# Prep football and volleyball seasons moved to spring

League board votes divided on COVID-19 adjustments

by DAVID COLBURN  
 Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL— The Minnesota State High School League board of directors voted Tuesday to move junior and senior high football and volleyball seasons to the spring in response to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic.

Seasons for both sports will be reduced to 12 weeks in length, with fewer games played primarily within district and sub-district schools.

The vote to move volleyball to spring initially failed on a tie vote, but after a motion to start in the fall was defeated, the board reconsidered a spring start and passed it 11-7.

An initial motion to have football in the fall was defeated 12-6, as board members noted that the sport has the highest risk of contact and COVID-19 transmission among all fall sports. A subsequent motion to move football to the spring passed 13-5.

Concerns for student health and implications for how sports-related COVID-19

See...SPORTS pg. 7

## CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

# Thistledeew Camp closure will impact 48 workers

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
 Managing Editor

The Minnesota Department of Corrections facility known as Thistledeew Camp is scheduled to be closed. *Timberjay file photo*

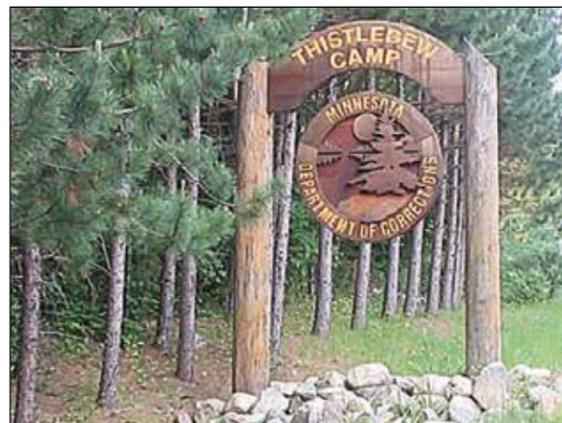
TOGO— The state correctional facility known locally as the Thistledeew Camp has been tapped for permanent closure due to budget constraints.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections made the announce-

ment this week that it will close Thistledeew, known officially as Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-Togo, to help address a \$14 million budget shortfall in the current fiscal year.

The closure will impact 48 workers currently employed at the facility. Most of the positions will be eliminated, while a handful will

See...CLOSURE pg. 10



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## Community notices

### MDHA Sturgeon River meets Aug. 12

BRITT- On Wednesday, Aug. 12 the MDHA Sturgeon River Chapter will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Pike-Sandy-Britt Fire Hall located at 8229 Hwy. 68 in Britt to discuss the budget. Masks are to be worn and social distancing observed.

### Ruby's Pantry, Aug. 13 in Cook

COOK- The next Ruby's Pantry will be a drive through food distribution at the old Cook School parking lot on Thursday, Aug. 13 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. A \$20 cash donation at the door buys an abundance of food. For safety reasons, no one over 60 years of age will be asked to volunteer. Sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango.

### Readers and Rappers to meet Aug. 11

COOK- Current members of Readers and Rappers book club will meet at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 11 at the gazebo in Cook City Park. Members are asked to bring their own chairs and refreshments. Discussion of the book, "The Hidden Life of Trees" by Peter Wohlleben, will be moderated by Liz Storm. Please plan to wear a mask, social distance, and abide by state guidelines.

### St. Louis County Plat Book to be available in September; pre-orders recommended for print book

REGIONAL- As it does every four years, St. Louis County will be publishing a new plat book this fall. For anyone interested in purchasing the traditional printed version of the 2020 St. Louis County Plat Book, pre-orders are recommended to ensure availability. The county will be printing fewer copies this year because demand for the printed version has decreased in recent years as more people have sought online versions.

No advance payment is necessary to pre-order. St. Louis County will set aside a quantity of books for a limited period of time based on pre-orders and will notify those who have reserved a copy when the printed books are available. The cost for the printed plat books is \$30. To pre-order, or for more information and pricing, visit [stlouiscountymn.gov/platbooks](http://stlouiscountymn.gov/platbooks).

New this year, the 2020 Plat Book will be available from a mobile app for smart phones and tablets. Users will be able to locate their position on the map, draw and measure, record GPS tracks, and more. People will have the option to purchase maps for the entire county, by region, or by individual page.

The printed Plat Book and the mobile app are expected to be available in September.

### Thousands of food boxes distributed; more distributions planned to come

REGIONAL- More than 3,000 boxes of free food were distributed throughout the region during last month's United Way of Northeastern Minnesota (UWNEMN) and Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) joint distribution.

The organizations distributed boxes of frozen taco meat and cheese, boxes of frozen barbecue pork patties and cheese, and boxes of fresh produce in partnership with Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Farmers to Families program.

All-told, 1,914 frozen protein boxes, totaling 38,280 pounds of protein, and 1,560 fresh produce boxes were distributed throughout the region. Many of those were brought to different cities around the region by AEOA.

UWNEMN distributed 557 frozen protein boxes and 420 produce boxes from their site in Chisholm, where there were no income requirements to receive the boxes of food.

"We are thrilled to be able to get that amount of food out into our communities, especially at a time like this," said UWNEMN Executive Director Shelley Valentini. "We couldn't have done it without the help of our volunteers who worked so incredibly hard all day."

AEOA and UWNEMN are already in discussion about bringing more frozen food distributions to the area in the near future.

## FUNDRAISER

# Ride, Raffle n Roll for ALS, Aug. 15



submitted photo

EMBARRASS- The Fifth Annual Ride, Raffle, n Roll for ALS will be held on Saturday, Aug. 15 at the Timber Hall in Embarrass. Registration is from 8:30 – 10:15 a.m. with kickstands up at 10:30 a.m. There will be a dice roll, 50/50 pot, lunch, quilt raffle, and rider raffle.

Breakfast is open to the public and will be from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. for \$5. Registration for the ride is \$25 per rider and \$15 per passenger. Proceeds benefit Never Surrender a Ride to fight ALS through the Black Woods Blizzard Tour, [www.BlackWoodsBlizzardTour.com](http://www.BlackWoodsBlizzardTour.com). For

more information, text Lisa Myers at 218-742-6272 or Aaron Wright at 218-780-4286. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the ride may feel a bit different in 2020, but the fight against ALS will continue.

## ENTERTAINMENT

# Bands, Brews and BBQ back at MDC

CHISHOLM- The Minnesota Discovery Center is bringing back Bands, Brews, and BBQ, a popular outdoor dining experience hosted at the Minnesota Discovery Center by The Rustic Pig. Throughout the month of August, Bands, Brews, and BBQ will take place every Thursday from 4 – 8 p.m. with a band performing from 5 – 7 p.m. The special event series will feature a delicious entrée, local band, and 25 percent off a signature cocktail. The Rustic Pig Food Court's full food and beverage menu will also be available and includes vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options. The Rustic Pig Food Court is open Thursday through Saturday from 12 – 8 p.m.

This event will take place outdoors in the

Rustic Pig Food Court, neatly tucked away on the Minnesota Discovery Center's award-winning campus. Safety precautions have been implemented to allow for adequate social distancing. Attendees will be required to wear face coverings, as mandated by the state of Minnesota, in our indoor facilities or outdoors when social distancing cannot be obtained. Please contact us with questions at 218-254-7959.

### Thursday, Aug. 13

The married duo, R&B, have been members of the local music community for parts of the last five decades. Their musical tastes include all styles of music from all eras. Their vocal harmonies have been the foundation of their collaboration supported by Dan's tasteful

and melodic guitar strains over Sharon's rhythmic counterparts. Smoked Cornish game hen served with Southwest quinoa and crispy root vegetable will be the featured entrée. Our featured 25 percent off signature cocktail will be Under the Stars made with Skyy vodka, grenadine, lemon juice, and liquid ice.

### Thursday, Aug. 20

Come enjoy the harmonious sounds of BitterSweet. BitterSweet is an acoustic duo with Mary Jo Grizzard on keyboard and vocal and Jay Hoiland on guitar and vocal. They perform some originals, classic rock, country and blues. Grilled steak kabobs served with vegetable fried rice and a Minnesota bourbon BBQ sauce will be our featured entrée of the night. Our 25 percent off signature cock-

tail will be the Iron Ranger made with amaretto and fresh lemonade.

### Thursday, Aug. 27

Our final performer of this series will be Richie Johnson, The Lone Ranger. Richie will get you to sing along and make you laugh during his set while he sings covers and some originals with his assortment of guitars. We will be capping off the series with our famous Rustic Pig Belly Lollipops served with sweet potato puree, grilled asparagus, and a tasty Cinderella BBQ sauce. Our featured 25 percent off signature cocktail will be Under the Sunset served with Patron tequila, triple sec, simple syrup, lime juice, sweet and sour, and orange juice.

# Book reading on the lake at Tofte Lake Center

ELY- Tofte Lake Center is excited to once again host our longtime artistic collaborator, Stuart Pimsler, artistic co-director of Stuart Pimsler Dance and Theater (SPDT) in Minneapolis, to share his work. An open book reading will happen on the lake at 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 7, and features Pimsler reading from his forthcoming book with the working title "How We Dance with Caregivers". Tofte Lake Center is located at 2209 Fernberg Road in Ely.

BYOB (bring your own boat, kayak, canoe,



Stuart Pimsler submitted photo

paddle board, gear, beverages and food) to the Tofte Lake Public Landing and float at a distance while

Pimsler reads. Please plan to arrive early to handle the logistics of getting your boat launched and car parked. There is a suggested donation of \$10. Please call 218-365-7769 to reserve your spot on the lake.

Pick up a flyer at the landing when you arrive for information about the performance of SPDT's acclaimed *Out of This World/The Life After Life Project* which is available for your viewing online. The links for *Out of This World*, one of the chapters in Pimsler's book, will be listed for your

reading enjoyment and for the full-length version of *Rooms of Disquiet*, filmed at Tofte Lake Center during our inaugural season in 2008. *Rooms of Disquiet*, a dance-theater performance, was the first event that brought a local audience to TLC and Norm's Fish Camp. It was staged inside TLC's cabins and around the property as the audience walked from place to place.

SPDT's residency will continue virtually later in the summer with additional yoga workshops.

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COVID-19

# Attorney General takes action against North Star Stampede

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

## Rodeo supporters rally online to protest government overreach

EFFIE- Operators of the North Star Stampede rodeo in Effie are facing the possibility of thousands of dollars in fines after Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison filed a court action on Friday alleging multiple violations of Gov. Tim Walz's executive order regarding outdoor entertainment venues at last week's event.

The complaint, filed in Itasca County District Court, alleged ten separate violations of the order, including such things as failure to limit occupancy to 25 percent of capacity, failure to provide for assigned seating to ensure proper social distancing, allowing the rodeo clown to engage in demonstrations and activities, and failure to ensure social distancing was maintained between household groups.

Ellison is asking the court for civil penalties of up to \$25,000 for each violation specified in the complaint. Ellison is also

seeking to recover all costs associated with bringing the court action. An email inquiry to the attorney general's office by the *Timberjay* about whether the complaint seeks penalties for violations on separate days of the event or for the weekend as a whole was not returned.

The complaint states that on July 22, representatives of the Attorney General's office and the state Health Department contacted Cimarron Pitzen, owner, president, and manager of North Star Ranch, to discuss Pitzen's plans for complying with the required guidance for outdoor events. Pitzen allegedly became angry during the call and hung up. The complaint states that Pitzen did not respond to additional attempts to contact him.

The complaint provides detailed descriptions of alleged violations for each of the three official days of the event, and

includes multiple photos taken each day to illustrate them.

### COVID-19 exposure

The Department of Health issued a release last Friday indicating that an individual who attended the rodeo from July 23 to July 26 was diagnosed with COVID-19 on Monday, July 27, and that those who were in attendance at the event should take appropriate precautions to limit the potential spread of the virus.

"If you attended this event, you should consider yourself potentially exposed," health commissioner Jan Malcolm said in the release.

She advised anyone who attended the rodeo to watch for symptoms of COVID-19. If attendees develop symptoms, they should seek treatment and get tested. She also asked attendees to limit their public interactions



Audience members at the North Star Stampede hold up a sign that reads "God bless the USA and my constitutional right to assemble at a rodeo, park, church, concert." photo by D. Colburn

and activities for 14 days, practice social distancing, and wear masks in all interactions with others.

However, during a press conference on Monday, Aug. 3, Kris Ehresmann, director of infectious disease at the Minnesota Department of Health, said no new cases

of COVID-19 associated with the rodeo had been reported.

"We have not seen additional cases, although we are continuing to monitor for that," Ehresmann said. "We hope that, no matter how people feel about the various guidance that we've put

forth, they would focus on their own health, and knowing that there was a potential for exposure at the event, if they start to develop symptoms we would encourage them to go and get tested for their own sake."

See RODEO...pg. 5

# Norby expected new addition to Tower council

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor



TOWER— The city council here, at a special meeting held Wednesday (after the *Timberjay's* weekly presstime) was expected to appoint Kevin Norby to fill the seat left vacant by the recent resignation of Rachel Beldo. Norby was the only resident of the city to apply for the vacancy.

Norby, a resident of the Mill Point neighborhood, said he feels he can become more involved in city affairs because he's now able to work remotely, from home. Norby is a business technology consultant with a large St. Paul

insurance company, a job that used to include lots of travel. That's changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Norby believes the change is likely to be a permanent one. "It seems like a good time to help out," he said.

Norby said he had planned to retire to the Lake Vermilion area, but that changes in technology made it possible for him to move to Tower while still working,

even though he used to spend a lot of time on the road.

Norby made the move to Tower about six years ago, but his connection to the area runs generations. "My great grandparents settled in Embarrass. My grandfather worked in the mines and my father was a surveyor for the state highway department up here for 45 years."

Norby's stint on the city

council could be short-lived. He said he's yet to decide if he'll run for election in the fall. He'll only have until this coming Tuesday to decide, which is when filings close for the four open seats on the council. Two four-year seats and two two-year seats will be up on Nov. 3.

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# OPINION

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e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

## Editorial

### Tower's harbor

City should resist calls to throw in the towel on economic development

Ten years ago, there was broad public consensus in Tower on the future of the city's harbor zone. As we reported two weeks ago, that original vision for the harbor was the culmination of considerable community input, both from a broad-based harbor committee, as well as from the general public, which was able to weigh in during open house events that the city held to take input on the direction of the plan.

Most residents indicated they wanted to see a mixed development, with both traffic-generating retail businesses as well as housing. They also wanted to see a clear connection between the harbor and the city's downtown, located three blocks away. Those elements should continue to be part of whatever plan ultimately comes to fruition at the harbor.

There have been some in the community who have pushed what is essentially a “do-nothing” approach to the harbor. They complain that the city has already invested a lot on the harbor (which is true) and that city officials should simply abandon hopes for development there in favor of minor amenities, like a pavilion and picnic tables.

While there certainly may be the possibility for some green space at the harbor, to throw in the towel at the exact point that development is actually in a position to happen, is reckless and self-defeating for the community. The lack of progress at the harbor over the past decade-plus, isn't due to lack of interest from developers — it's the result of a project that was clearly not ready for prime time. When the city first issued an RFP, before the dredging of the harbor, developers said they needed to see an actual harbor, not the promise of one. Other developers requested market studies, both for a hotel and a mixed commercial-residential development before moving ahead. Those studies are still of interest to prospective developers.

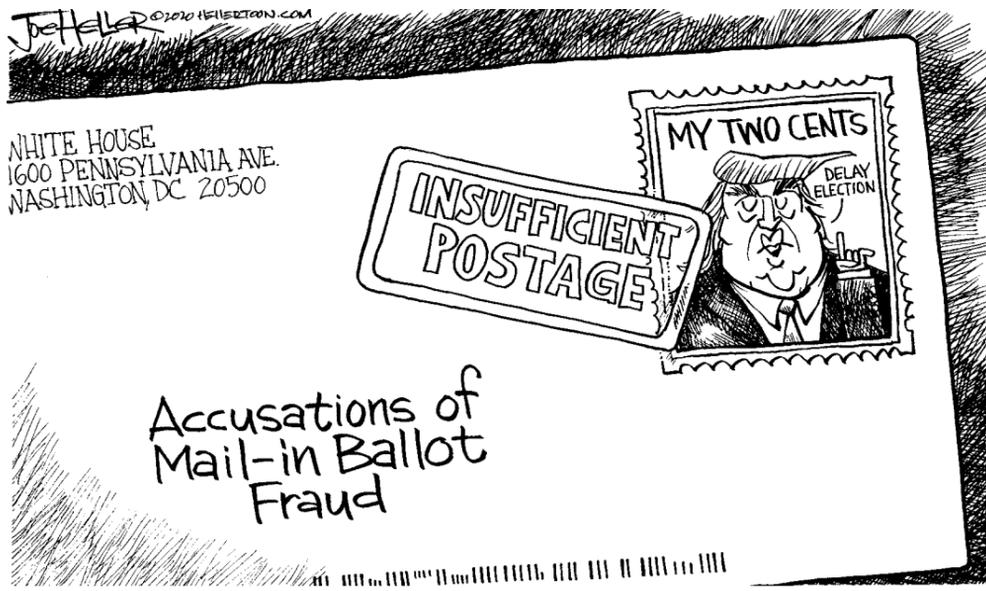
The city spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on engineering and soil testing at the site. And most importantly, the city spent three years developing a plat and addressing a laundry list of restrictions and other deed limitations that had muddied the land title in much of the harbor zone. Developers couldn't have advanced a project until these pieces were in place, no matter how much they might have wanted to do so.

And now that the city, finally, has the key in the ignition, we should throw in the towel and put up a pavilion? Such suggestions ignore the fact that other funding agencies, including the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, have made significant investment in the harbor as well — on the city's promise that it would vigorously pursue economic development there. Tower would be hard pressed to ask for future funds from the IRRR, or other funding agencies, if it backed out of those promises now. What's more, the city of Tower needs to show that it can be a trustworthy partner in economic development, both with public funders and private investors, if it has any hope of a sustainable future.

There's no doubt that the money the city has spent on the harbor over the past several years has contributed to its financial constraints. The way to address that concern is to move forward with a worthwhile development that allows the city to recoup its investment in added tax base, new housing, new employment, and an improved business climate.

The city clearly made false starts and took some wrong turns along the way. Much of that can be chalked up to inexperience and a lack of vision by some prior city officials. The three-person harbor committee that drove the project from 2014 until it disbanded in 2018 failed to follow through on the community's original vision. They made a wrong turn with a prospective hotel development, then turned around and pushed for high-end town homes with no associated retail. It never really fit the needs of Tower — a fact that even the developers who ultimately agreed to advance the project acknowledged.

While we still don't know the future for the harbor, one thing is clear. Any future development needs to be tied to the real needs of the community. That includes additional retail and/or dining that brings people to town and offers connection to downtown. Housing that at least some residents in town might be able to afford. And an attractive, pedestrian-friendly setting that gets people to stop as they drive through on their way to Ely. These are things that drove interest in the harbor so many years ago — and they can restore interest and community support if those same principles are followed today.



## Letters from Readers

### Voting by mail is convenient, secure

We hear a lot these days about cheating in mail-in voting. The statistics, however, do not support the claims of widespread fraud.

A look at data collected in three vote-by-mail states found that officials identified just 372 possible cases of double voting or voting on behalf of deceased people out of about 14.6 million votes cast by mail in the 2016 and 2018 general elections, or 0.0025 percent.

In terms of mail-in voting, the larger issues appear to be mistakes made in completing ballots and getting them mailed back on time. That issue becomes more concerning when the Postmaster General says our mail-in ballots need to be sent fifteen days in advance of the deadline in order to be received in time.

In Minnesota, any registered voter can request a mail-in ballot from their county election office or from the Secretary of State. No reason for the request is required. The request is then checked against voter registration logs and if the information is consistent, a ballot is mailed to the voter.

The ballot, for citizens voting by mail, can be confusing because there are several envelopes and the right paper has to be submitted in the right envelope. Voters are encouraged to read the directions several times and to double check that it is signed in the proper boxes. To be on the safe side, an individual should try to mail it more than fifteen days in advance of the election.

When received in the election office, the ballot is double-checked against the election rolls and if there are any questions at all, the signature is also checked against the signature on file.

For voters who requested a mail-in ballot but who decided to vote in person instead, the absentee ballot should be destroyed. Then, when arriving at the polls, the voter goes through the process as normal. The voter cannot turn in an absentee ballot at the polling place.

For more information on voting, absentee ballots, locating

your polling place, or registering to vote, residents can go to [mnvotes.com](http://mnvotes.com) or call toll free 1-877-600-VOTE (8683).

**Kay Vandervort Ely**

### Denial can't protect you from COVID-19

The first commenter on the story online about the Effie Rodeo [quoting from the First Amendment] is just one of many who are in denial about social distancing and the wearing of masks. It seems that only when it hits home will people realize that this is very a very serious virus. Herman Cain just died after he was exposed to the virus after attending the Trump rally in Tulsa where there didn't seem to be anyone following recommended guidelines for stopping the spread of this virus. So many in this country think that it is an infringement on their First Amendment rights to wear masks and social distance. So many still think this is a Democratic Hoax, too! The virus has spread to all corners of the world and when you look at the film footage of people in different countries you see people wearing masks. We do not have a handle on this virus as the President has said. His administration has not done a good job as he has stated time and time again! There needs to be a national strategy on this. Something this President refuses to implement. To the first commenter: You go ahead and beat the drum about your First Amendment Rights being trampled on if you think this is going to stop the spread of this virus.....

**Brian LaFrenier Embarrass Twp.**

### Conservatives are for the elite

Election coming up. Conservative or liberal — I suspect Ely has Trump-Stauber supporters, i.e. conservatives. In my opinion, you folks are probably going to vote against your own best interests. The conservatives, in case some have

forgotten, have at all levels of government been against measures that would help working families. They have worked to see that the primary beneficiaries of a health-care system would be the insurance industry. Let's face it, they have fought every move to improve wages, provide family leave, Social Security and Medicare as we know it. School choice at the expense of public education. Have no use for worker rights such as union representation. Pensions are now gone for younger workers, as are benefits like health insurance, vacations, personal leave days, and salary negotiation. Now I know conservatives do not like regulations, restrictions or government rules. This gets them a lot of support. So, drain the swamp, let industry get their jobs done — more coal, pipelines fracking, mining, oil drilling, cattle grazing, exploration — any of which can be unregulated and at times on public lands. Parks and public access — who needs it? Jobs and profits count, even for foreign companies. Job talk gets votes, not to mention being pro-life; women cannot have rights. Another vote getter: Stop immigrating foreigners, i.e. build a wall. Some are painting liberals as terrible folks (commercial by Senator Ted Cruz of Texas). It costs us to be for regulations, protecting public lands and waterways. And, yes, we want health care for all. It cost us the Iron Range in 2016. I do believe that conservatives are determined to conserve privileges for the elite at the expense of working people and their families. Let's go play golf at Mar-a-Lago. First make sure we have super voter suppression (some should not count or vote). The market's up, oh happy day. “Know that you must vote against anything, I mean anything, the Dems propose,” said Senator Mitch McConnell. And, can you believe it, Storm Troopers to Democrat states. Holy smokes!!

**Byron Moren Ely**

## Communication is key to bringing us together

Silence can be a gentle, healing balm, a respite from the noise of a chaotic world. Silence can be a razor-sharp sword, the weapon of withdrawal, piercing the fabric of friendship, severing the lifeblood of a partnership. Silence can be a deep well of meditation, reflection, centering, grounding. Silence can be a vacuum sucking



**BETTY FIRTH**

up all the breath in the room.

The same could be said of words, can't it? Words can be gentle and healing, offering kindness and solace or very effective weapons, striking out, causing damage, breaking hearts.

So how do we discern when to speak and when to keep silent? When is it wise

to take the chance to speak up, speak out, reveal our hearts?

Audre Lorde was a poet, teacher, activist, lesbian, black woman who died at the age of 58 in 1992. She said, “I have a duty to speak the truth as I see it and to share not just my triumphs, not just the things that felt good, but the pain, the intense, often unmitigated pain.” She wrote powerful poetry calling for social and racial justice and revealing the reality of queer experience and sexuality. She spoke up about the silence surrounding cancer

and other illnesses. After she had a mastectomy, she decided not to wear a prosthesis, which she said offered the empty comfort that “nobody will know the difference.” She felt that it was important that women with mastectomies be visible to each other, to broadcast the awareness that they have lived with cancer and survived it, to acknowledge and share their strength.

In an article in Minnesota Women's Press, Gaea Dill-D'Ascoli tells of going to Vanuatu in the South Pacific

with the Peace Corps and living in a bamboo hut on the island of Pentecost. An oft-repeated phrase was “storian hemi laef blo yumi,” which means “chatting is our lives,” meaning that communication and relationships are the lifeblood of the culture. “Storian” can mean everything from casual greetings to deep philosophical discussions. To understand the language and the culture more, she learned to storian, spending hours talking

See **TALK...** pg. 5

## Letters from Readers

### Harrassment of clerk has gone too far

I would like to congratulate and thank the *Timberjay* for shining their spotlight on the Greenwood Board for their ongoing campaign of discrimination and harassment of clerk Sue Drobac that at times has created a hostile workplace for her. The clerk is an elected official who is equal to, and not subordinate to, the board members. But even though the board knows that, they still attempt to treat her as an employee. In the private sector, the board would surely be held accountable and suffer the consequences of their actions for this kind of harassment. Unfortunately for the clerk, the laws that protect private sector employees from discrimination and harassment by their employers don't apply to elected officials harassing other elected officials.

There are those of us who have heard and witnessed the board in action. The board members are most certainly aware that there are meeting minutes and audio recordings to substantiate harassment and other claims. Yet they persist, safe in the knowledge that the taxpayers in Greenwood Township, whether they like it or not, will be providing the funds to pay the township attorney to bail them out of any legal action she, or anyone else for that matter, might wish to pursue.

As an elected township official, the clerk should have access to that same legal counsel available to the board, but obviously that can't and won't happen. So, in order to take any legal action and keeping in mind the clerk is also a taxpayer, the clerk would have to use personal funds to take action against those who continue to discriminate and harass her, using her own tax dollars as well to defend themselves as she continues to actually and directly serve those who overwhelmingly elected her. I suspect they have an agenda. They know exactly what they're doing but don't care. They simply don't need to. This has been going on far too long and will probably continue. Unfortunately, I'm afraid an apathetic electorate will probably allow the same board members to continue to be re-elected and as

was once said in a popular song "and the beat goes on."

**Rick Stoehr,  
Lake Vermilion/Tower**

### Ely school referendum doesn't make sense

I don't understand why a \$20 million addition to the Memorial and Washington building is necessary. My first year teaching in Ely, 1968-69, 121 students graduated. My last year teaching in Ely, 1997-98, 83 students graduated, and in spring of 2020 only 45 students graduated. It looks to me like yearly student enrollment is nearing rock bottom.

I don't understand why two school buildings, Lincoln and Kennedy, have been demolished since I began teaching in Ely in 1968 and one, Old Main, was razed the year before I arrived. Now, for some reason, it is necessary to spend \$20 million to replace what the school district destroyed.

I don't understand why it is necessary to build a new gym. The school district just took a perfectly good one down a couple of years ago and now they want to hit up the taxpayers for a new one which will not be any better than the one they razed.

I don't understand what has happened to the school and community's swimming instruction. Swimming lessons were a big part of the physical education curriculum while I was teaching; now it is non-existent.

I don't understand why the architectural plan shows no evidence of the old pool, instead it shows evidence of an expanded cafeteria. Why do the school board, the administration, the teaching staff, and the community feel it is more important to have more room to peel potatoes than teach the youth of Ely lifelong swim skills? Losing this 100-year-old pool is not only pathetic, it is criminal.

I don't understand why Len Klun's swimmers, Carol Petersen's swimmers, Nancy Smrekar's swimmers, Ely swimmers who are presently swimming in Babbitt, my swimmers, and the parents of all of the swimmers, don't express some displeasure about how a swim program no longer exists in Ely.

I don't understand why the Ely community and the school district can't work together and produce a product that all the citizens of Ely can benefit from. Grand Marais and Virginia-Eveleth appear to be able to do that. As many know, Virginia and Eveleth are planning to build a combined community and school district aquatic center high school complex. The aquatic center plans would include two eight-lane pools, one with water temperatures conducive to competitive swimming, the other with water temperatures conducive to adult and youth swimming.

I don't understand why the majority of school board members are anti-swimming. Case in point, nearly three years ago the Ely Regional Community Complex (ERCC) Board came to a school board meeting to offer five million dollars to partner with the school district in building a recreation aquatic complex on school property. As in typical past fashion, the answer was no, and the ERCC left the room almost as quick as they came in. Apparently, the school board decided it would be much better to hit up the taxpayer than accept a five million dollar offer from the ERCC Board.

I am not saying basketball, hockey and football are not important sports. In fact, they were among my favorite sports to participate in when I was younger and watch now that I am older. What I am saying is, when a person reaches middle age, knowing how to throw a football, bounce a basketball, or hit a hockey puck will no longer be a burning need for them. Having swim skills will continue to be a person's need throughout life.

I do understand that if or when this school addition becomes a reality it is a decision the citizens of Ely will have to live with for the next 100 years. One hundred more years of the community's inability to provide its youth with the opportunity to learn proper swim skills is not good.

**Joe Edlund  
Former Ely art teacher  
and swim coach**

### Democrats reject the Golden Rule

I come to these pages today as a sinner, not a saint, as a peasant, not an aristocrat, and as a lifelong Kennedy, Humphrey Democrat, not as a woke, politically correct, cancel culture activist bent on tearing down America before rebuilding it in some unrecognizable image. I write today in response to last week's spectacle of the House hearing of Attorney General William Barr. That hearing was a nightmare example of the mob justice now roaming the land.

I respect AG Barr as a fine public servant just trying to do his job, guided by his own conscience and his own understanding of the law. The Democrats on that committee see both Barr and his boss as world class villains and have crossed an important bridge to deal with them. A great river divides the land; on one shore the Golden Rule is observed—do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It has served us well. But on the far shore, another rule applies: the end justifies the means. It has a certain appeal but never ends well. Leading Democrat politicians, never-Trump Republicans, deep state activists, and mainstream liberal media mavens have decided Trump and Barr are so evil that any means available are justified to rid the nation of them. They have crossed that ethical bridge and burned it behind them.

So, it is that for the first time in American history, these arrogant antagonists have refused to accept a peaceful transfer of power to the new administration after the 2016 presidential election. They have sought in many ways, day after day, to deny Donald Trump his Presidency, and to deny 62 million Americans our vote which put him in office. That rolling refusal to allow President Trump his first term in the White House is a poison to our political system that will take the nation a hundred years to spit out. I will not wallow in the details of this attempted slow motion, non-violent, coup d'état for we have all lived it for the better part of five years. I will simply note the same dismal tactics were on vivid display in this House hearing.

One mob tormentor after another took the political stage on national television before millions of viewers to level the most vile accusations against this good man while never giving him the opportunity to respond. And that is the trademark of the cancel culture mobs now running loose in America. These people think they have a monopoly on truth and that entitles them to silence anyone who disagrees with them. They define the rules and set themselves up as judge, jury and executioner. There is no due process, no avenue of appeal and no standard applied to make the punishment fit the crime. Say the wrong thing on the wrong day in the wrong place and the punishment is always the same: total destruction of someone's life, the ending of their career, and being buried under the utter contempt of the so-called "elites," who turn out to just be one more mob who defend their actions by the classic cry of all bullies: the object of their wrath "deserves it."

I found it particularly disturbing to see that the most vile Barr tormentors at that hearing were congresswomen. These were the people who seemed to take particular satisfaction in using every moment of their five-minute allotment of time to hurl the most viciously cruel and cutting accusations while "reclaiming their time" to deny Mr. Barr even a second to defend himself. These were women not simply exercising their hard won equality but using their day in the sun to exact revenge on one man in their sights, for the sins of all men going back ten thousand years. I refuse to believe that is what most women want. I challenge anyone to watch all five hours of that Barr hearing and conclude that is how you would like to be treated. If you think that spectacle does represent you perhaps you too have crossed that great ethical bridge and are now camped out on the far shore of the river Justice. I urge my Democrat friends now dancing around those distant campfires to sober up, build yourself a raft and paddle on back to this shore. Just sayin'.

**Hans Olsen  
Ely**

### TALK...Continued from page 4

about "everything and nothing," and she felt she became part of the village.

Seven years after she returned to the U.S., she was living in South Minneapolis when George Floyd was killed. In the midst of the protests, her community organized, fought fires, kept neighborhood watches, made phone trees and connected with each other. When things calmed down a bit, she and her mom decided to try to nurture those new acquaintances and invited people for cookies and tea. They shared resources and found out about how everyone was doing. Engaging in the art of storian. I'm guessing and hoping that during this time of COVID people have had more time to talk with each other because they are in less of a hurry to run off to a tight schedule of activities.

Audre Lorde also wrote out against our tendency to label people, putting them in separate

categories such as "lesbian" and "black woman," saying it marginalized people and keeps them apart. She encourages us to not isolate out of fear, "for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken."

Alma Silver, a disabled woman who just graduated from St. Catherine University, was inspired by Audre Lorde when she read her essay, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action." In her own essay in Minnesota Women's Press, Alma said she had learned that we all need to tell our stories, speak our truths, and listen to the others around us in order to become conscious and global citizens. She said that dialogue is more than being physically together and more than just having a lot of voices in one place, but that "true conversation stirs something deep inside us,

and leads to a new way of seeing, understanding, thinking, being or doing." Although she deplors the policies and attitudes that treat disabled people as less worthy, she says, "I believe the beacon of hope lies in the power we hold to break our silences, express our outrage and share our visions for change. Hope lies in the conversations that embolden our collective spirit. Hope lies in the moments in which our silences blaze into action."

Years ago, when I and others had spoken up against the threatened invasion of Iraq before the weapons inspectors were given a chance to complete their job, a woman approached me outside the post office. She said, "I heard you speak at the city council meeting and I want you to know that there are a lot of people who agree with you, but we stay silent. I don't know why. Maybe because we're busy

with children and taking care of parents. But there's a silent majority here, and I wanted you to know that and thank you for speaking up."

Sometimes we keep silent because we fear what those people closest to us will think or say about it. Sometimes we're afraid of what it might mean in terms of commitment. Sometimes we're just too tired. But it's good to remember that our speaking may embolden others while it keeps us true to ourselves. Audre Lorde said, "We can sit in our corners mute forever...and we will still be no less afraid."

The Ely Folk School will be holding monthly storytelling sessions via zoom, check their website at [www.elyfolkschool.org](http://www.elyfolkschool.org) for details.

### RODEO...Continued from page 3

#### Supporters react

Shortly after Ellison's action was announced, the North Star Stampede Facebook page was teeming with comments from people condemning the action and offering to help the Pitzen family cope with any upcoming litigation and possible fines.

Numerous posts reinforced the notion of rodeo attendance being a form of protest and decried that the rodeo would be targeted while protests in the Twin Cities following the murder of George Floyd were allowed.

One person suggested state officials were hypocritical for not stopping the rodeo, reasoning that if it posed such a significant health risk they were failing to protect the people who attended.

Facebook posters debated ways to provide financial support for legal expenses and possible fines, with most arguing against a national crowdsourcing site like GoFundMe, and instead promoting donations to a fund at an area bank. Three small businesses promised that proceeds from sales of items, and a party

to be hosted by one, would be donated to the ranch.

However, one person did set up a GoFundMe campaign, with a goal of raising \$50,000. As of Tuesday, after three days online, the campaign had received only one \$50 donation.

A Change.org petition supporting the ranch against Ellison's actions was faring better than the GoFundMe page. A goal of 7,000 signatures was eclipsed on Monday, and the number of signers was nearly 8,000 by early Tuesday after-

noon.

Reinforcing numerous comments directed at Gov. Tim Walz, one person posted a video of South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem riding a horse and carrying a flag at a jam-packed rodeo arena in Deadwood, S.D., on July 25, which was also opening night for the North Star Stampede.

However, the outcry online will likely have little effect on Ellison or the enforcement action, as his statement released after the filing on Friday indicates.

"My office also is charged with enforcing the law and the Governor's executive orders when need be if we cannot gain compliance. We also take that duty seriously," Ellison said. "Business owners and event operators need to know that they are not above the law. If they risk the health and safety of our communities, my office will take strong action, as we are doing today."

**Week of Aug. 10**

**Monday**  
TOPS - Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tower, at 9 a.m. Canceled until further notice.

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

Tower City Council- 5:30 p.m., see cityoftower.com for meeting details.

**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 August 18.

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.

Greenwood Town Board- 6:30 p.m. of Aug. 12. See greenwoodtownshipmn.com for meeting details. Note change from regular meeting date due to primary election.

**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 vermillioncountry.org.

TOWER SOUDAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**TSHS hoping for \$380,779 grant for fire hall restoration**

Group also needs to raise \$20,000 for local match for roof replacement project

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- “The best part of grant writing is clicking ‘submit application’,” said Nancy Larson, who just submitted a \$380,779 grant request to the Minnesota Historical Society for the Tower Soudan Historical Society’s (TSHS) historic fire hall project. Larson is a board member for TSHS, and also works as a grant writer.

The grant would pay for exterior rehabilitation of the brick structure, built in 1895, and would also replace the parapet flashing.

A second smaller grant request to Iron Range Resources will pay for fixing the roof. TSHS needs to have a \$20,000 local match for that project, and then can access an additional \$20,000 in grant funding.

The restoration of the fire hall building was always going to be a long-term project that depended mostly on grant funding, and while the initial grant for the first phase was funded, in the last two years, grants had been denied.

Larson said the group had been using a northern Minnesota-based architectural firm, but she realized they needed to be working with a firm that had dedicated expertise in historical restoration projects.

“The MHS review committee told us we didn’t have the level of detail and information they needed,” she said. “I was thinking the project would never get funded.”

But Larson started doing some research and found a Minneapolis-based firm, McDonald and Mack Architects, with a proven track record in restoring old buildings. She then applied for and received a small grant, to fund preliminary work with the new firm.



The old fire hall is on the National Register of Historic Places, but needs significant work on both the exterior and interior to preserve the building. photo by J. Summit

She sent them the information she had on the building and potential project.

“They told me we can save this building,” she said.

The firm did a detailed assessment of the project, to make sure it was worth moving forward, and then figured out how to do the work in phases.

The first phase, which is the current \$380,779 grant request just submitted, is to get the exterior of the building restored.

“McDonald and Mack did everything that the Minnesota Historical Society asked of us,” Larson said. “It is still a very competitive round, but they were very pleased with our application during the review process.”

If the grant is funded, McDonald and Mack will man-

age the project, Larson said. Grant awards are announced in November of 2020, and work would be done in the summer of 2021. Future phases of the project include installation of a heating system, interior renovations, interior masonry work, and electrical work.

Once restored, the fire hall will be a museum as well as a gathering spot for historical, educational, and community events.

**Pledges needed**

TSHS is now raising funds for the local match for the roofing project. Larson said to check with your employer to see if they provide matching funds for employee donations. TSHS is a 501c3, so donations may be tax-deductible. Donations can

be made through PayPal on the TSHS website, www.towersoudanhs.org, or can be mailed to PO Box 465, Tower, MN 55790. Donations of all sizes are appreciated, and multi-year pledge forms are available online.

**Historic Fire Hall**

The historic fire hall at 504 Main Street in Tower is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the oldest community fire hall on the Iron Range. It is now owned by TSHS and is undergoing a multi-phase restoration process to make the building usable for various public functions, as well as displaying the 1891 horse-drawn Ahrens steam pumper “James Tippet” and other historical memorabilia.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

**TEDA to demo tax-forfeit house on South Second Street**

TOWER— The demolition of a mold-infested house on South Second Street here is expected to get underway in the coming week. The Tower Economic Development Authority acquired the tax forfeit residence, located at 510 S. Second St., from St. Louis County earlier this year and TEDA officials intend to redevelop the site once the demolition is completed.

Funding from the Department of Iron Range Resources and Re-

habilitation’s Residential Redevelopment Program will pay approximately two-thirds of the cost of the project, while TEDA will finance the remainder.

A two-car garage at the site, which is still in serviceable condition, will be retained, to be part of a future residence at the site.

**Heiam Medical Foundation hosting online auction fundraiser**

COOK- Many things have changed since the foundation began in 1992, but our commitment to supporting local

health care continues! Over \$658,000 has been given in support, along with growing an endowment for the future. The foundation has recently updated our logo, mission statement, and website. Check out the changes at www.heiamfoundation.org.

The WC Heiam Medical Foundation has decided to not hold a live benefit this summer. In its place we invite you to check out our virtual event and auction online at https://heiamfoundation.org/ (click on 2020 fundraiser for a link to the silent auction).

You can register for a sponsorship, donate an item, or check out the items that will be in the auction. The online auction is set to open on Aug. 1 and will close on Aug. 15. Items include golf packages, aerial trips, spa baskets, and gift certificates to local businesses with more being added daily.

Sponsorships are available at six levels this year: \$100 Bronze, \$250 Silver, \$500 Gold, \$1,000

Platinum, and \$2,000 Diamond. Each level of sponsorship includes a special gift. Check out the event link for more information or contact Tiffany at 218-750-1352.

Thank you for showing your continued support for the WC Heiam Medical Foundation and helping us to uphold our commitment to local health care.

**Julie Suihkonen filing for Kugler Supervisor seat; clerk seat open**

KUGLER TWP- With township filings closing on Tuesday, Aug. 11, no one has yet filed for the open clerk seat in Kugler Township. Long-time clerk Julie Suihkonen is filing for one of the two open supervisor seats. There is also still an open supervisor seat to fill. Neither of the two incumbent supervisors have files. One, Jack Brandt, has announced his retirement.



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NOTE: Changes of address must be sent or called in to the Tower office. Out-of-state delivery may take 2-3 weeks. For prompt out-of-state delivery try the First Class Subscription: \$100 year or \$10 per month.

Read the entire paper on-line every week. On-line subscriptions cost \$29.95/year; details at www.timberjay.com.

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

**St. Louis County Solid Waste Facility Area site hours**

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

Summer hours effective April 15th through September 30th  
For solid waste and recycling information go to www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle

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

**TOWER FARMERS MARKET**

VARIETY LOCAL FRESH

**Rag Rugs  
Clothing  
Wool Slippers  
Masks**

**Fridays 4-6 PM**

**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

**ELY WOMEN'S OPEN**

AA - Every Monday at noon at Ledgerrock Community Church, 1515 E. Camp St., 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., upstairs 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 218-365-3359,

**Flag retirement set for Sunday**

ELY - An flag retirement event will be held on Sunday, Aug. 9 prior to the championship playoff baseball game at Veterans Memorial Field.

The event will be held on the field at approximately 3 p.m. before the start of the title game of the Senior Babe Ruth League Eighth District playoffs.

Organizations involved are VFW, American Legion, Ely Veterans Memorial, Ely Area Honor Guard, Ely Baseball Association, Ely Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.

Only American flags and military branch flags (Navy, Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard) are included. Flags can be dropped off at the Veterans Memorial Baseball Field, Zaverls Bar, and the lobby of County Commissioner Paul McDonald's office.

**Breathing Out**

by Cecilia Rolando © 2020



trying to comply maintaining a safe distance hope to stay healthy

OUR COMMUNITY

Veterans honored at Ely's Memorial Field

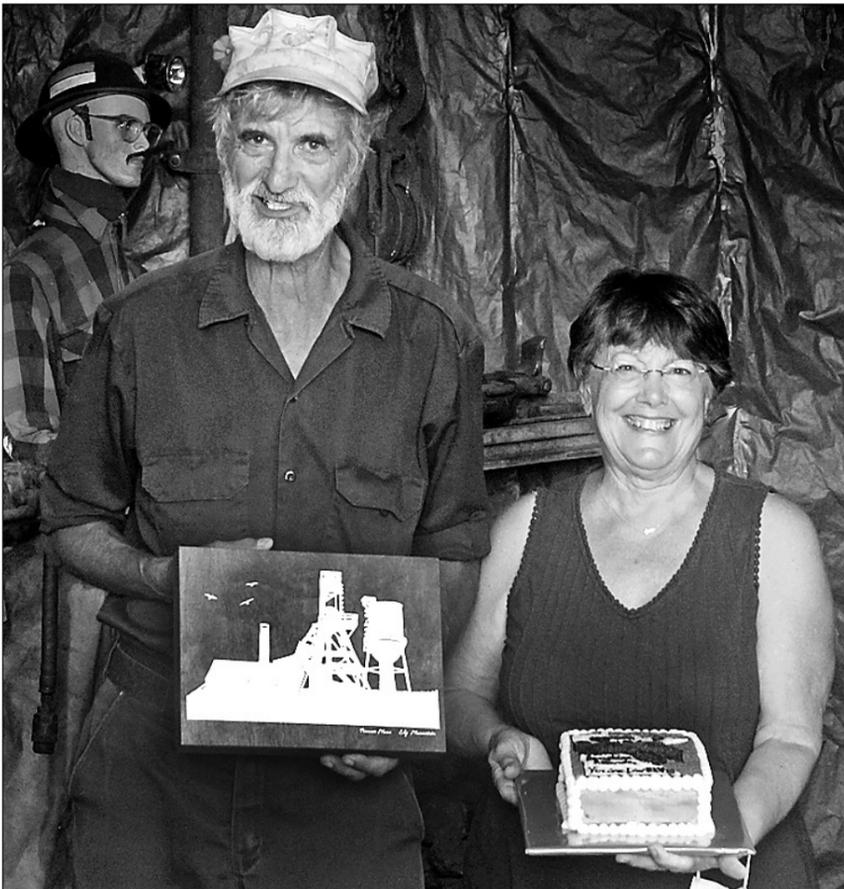


Area military veterans were honored last Saturday at Veteran's Memorial Field prior to Ely's first game in the 2020 8th District Senior Babe Ruth League playoffs. The Ely Veterans Day ceremonies at the ballpark have been held since 2005 and this year's event was part of a full day of baseball action. All veterans received free admission as well as a free hot dog and beverage, courtesy of the Ely Baseball Association. Veterans were welcomed on the field for the playing of the national anthem. photos by K. Vandervort



Birthday cake surprise for Seraphine Rolando

Ely's resident mining historian, Seraphine Rolando, received a special surprise last week for his 74th birthday in the form of a LovELY cake, and a commemorative plaque for the Pioneer mine museum. He celebrated the occasion with his wife, Pat. Susan Laine presented the gifts. "Thank you for keeping Ely's rich mining history alive and for being Ely's 'Guy in the Jeep,'" she said. "And thank you for giving back to the town you love." photo by K. Vandervort



*the* **TIMBERJAY**

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

**Forsman burnout event gets a flat tire for this year**

ELY - Because of statewide public health protocols recently put in place to help slow the spread of the coronavirus, the annual Jake Forsman Memorial Car Show and Burnout Competition here is canceled for 2020.

"After observing recent governmental mandates and the Walz administration's response to other events, we realize there is no hope of our community being allowed to gather for this show," said organizer Albert Forsman. "Thank you all for your past support. We look forward to seeing you through the smoke in 2021."



**St. Louis County Area Solid Waste Facility Site hours**

<b>Northwoods Transfer Station</b> 9384 Hwy 21 N. between Ely and Babbitt Summer Hours Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am-3pm Tue: 9:30am-3pm Wed: noon-6pm	<b>Aurora Transfer Station</b> 5910 Hwy 135 N. Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
<b>Embarrass Canister Site</b> 7530 Koski Rd. Hours Thur: 10am-5pm Sat: 12:30-4:30pm	<b>Soudan Canister Site</b> 5160 Hwy 169 Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am-5pm
<b>Household Hazardous Waste Facility</b> 5341 Regional Landfill Rd Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	<b>Regional Landfill</b> 5341 Regional Landfill Rd (east of Virginia) Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

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

Higher Education

**Local students honored**

MINNEAPOLIS / ST. PAUL - The following local students have been named to the 2020 spring semester Dean's List at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities: Megan Robbins, senior, College of Biological Sciences; and Shane Spangler, sophomore, College of Science and Engineering.

To qualify for the Dean's List, a student must complete 12 or more letter-graded credits while attaining a 3.66 grade point average.

**Ely students honored at BSU**

BEMIDJI - Local students, Kaitlyn Lakner and Anna Urbas, of Ely, have earned Dean's List honors from Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Minn., at the conclusion of the Spring 2020 semester.

To be eligible for the Dean's List, BSU students must be enrolled for at least 12 credits and earn a 3.5 GPA during the semester. A total of 737 students earned Spring 2020 Dean's List honors from the university, and an additional 356 students earned President's List honors for earning perfect 4.0 GPAs.

# Security camera provides big clue in thrift store heist

## Public responds to social media post to identify man in photo

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Last week the Cook Area Healthcare Auxiliary Thrift Shop got a little help from its friends after someone broke into the shop's donation storage shed.

Auxiliary president Kirsten Reichel manages the thrift's Facebook page, and at 5:44 p.m. on Thursday, July 30, a new post appeared with a black-and-white security camera image of a man wearing a ball cap, glasses, and a light-colored t-shirt and sporting a pony tail walking in front of the storage shed that was time-stamped at 2:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 25 and a request for help.

"Can anyone identify who the person is in this picture? Our security camera at the Thrift Shop caught this picture of him," the post said. "He cut the padlocks off of the back door of the donation bin and stole donated items from the bin. Both bin doors were locked."

The post noted that it was not the first time the shed had been targeted.

"We used to keep the donation bin unlocked all the time so people could come by and donate things when it was con-

venient for them," Reichel said. "There were some occasions when we would pull up and somebody was in the bin going through stuff. People did that quite a bit."

Reichel said that the shop has had a security camera in front for about six years, and they had identified some people in the past through that. Because the bins were unlocked, the sheriff's department said they couldn't do anything, but personal phone calls to possible suspects asking them to stop seemed to work, Reichel said.

Still, an increasing volume of donations made it prudent to put locks on the storage bin, and a security camera to monitor the bin was recently installed.

"This is the second or third time the lock had actually been cut," Reichel said.

While shop volunteers had been able to identify previous suspects, no one had any idea who the person in the July 25 photo, so Reichel decided to try Facebook.

One person who saw the post noted how good the quality of the photo was.

"The picture is so clear ... someone will

know him!" they wrote.

In just over three hours, several people had already commented that they believed they knew who the man was. As it was requested that responses be anonymous, specific details were relayed through messaging.

Tips kept flooding in, and with people sharing the post on their own Facebook accounts, the request was viewed by more than 17,000 people.

In less than 24 hours, the shop posted an update.

"There was an overwhelming number of responses identifying this man - the vast majority giving us the same name - so we feel very comfortable that we have positively identified him," the post said. "We can now use this information to proceed with law enforcement."

While numerous people left comments hoping the alleged criminal would be caught, several also included a compassionate tone, offering hopes and prayers that the man would get whatever assistance he needed in order to turn his life around.

The thrift shop post reinforced that they are there to help those in



**A photo from a security camera trained on the donations storage bin at the Cook Area Hospital Auxiliary Thrift Shop show a man in front of the bin at 2:30 a.m. July 25, well outside normal business hours. He was identified by Facebook viewers after the picture and a plea for help were posted online.**

Cook Hospital Auxiliary photo

need. "If a person is in dire need of goods because of difficult circumstances, we would be open to working with them in some way to help them out - there is no need to steal," the post read.

And the shop expressed gratitude to those who had helped to identify the man.

"Thank you so much for all your help! We were overwhelmed by how many people shared, commented, or messaged us to help us out," they

said. "As most know, we are a non-profit, volunteer-based entity which keeps going on our donations and the shoppers who frequent our store. All proceeds go toward supporting our local hospital and care center."

Reichel said on Tuesday that she filed a report with the sheriff, and that hopefully others will be deterred by knowing they're on camera if they tamper with the storage bin.

"And we put on super heavy-duty padlocks,"

she added.

The thrift shop is open to customers from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays, Fridays, and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month. Masks are required. Donations are accepted at those times, and also on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hours are subject to change depending on the availability of volunteers.

# NWFA ramps up for garage sale and open studio

COOK- August promises to be a good month for area art enthusiasts at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts gallery in Cook, with a garage sale and ongoing exhibits on tap, as well as open studio resuming in September.

The second annual "Arts and Antiquities Garage Sale" will be on Saturday, Aug. 29, beginning at 9 a.m. Donations of used art, crafts and antiques will be welcome on Aug. 27 and 28 during regular gallery hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Donations may also be made by appointment by calling 218-780-7130 during gallery business hours.

Dual exhibits "A Canvas and You" and "Hearts for Humanity" continue through Aug. 22.

The mixed-media exhibit "A Canvas and You" is in its second month, and offers patrons the chance to buy unique canvases created with paint, objects, fibers, and photography. Proceeds from the sales are split between artists and NWFA.

"Hearts for Human-

ity" is a collection of thought-provoking special paintings created by the members of the Lyric Art Colony in Virginia. The traveling exhibit is a visual fine art project that gives voice to the voiceless with images that recognize a problem and suggest a solution or hope.

Curtailed when COVID-19 precautions were enacted back in mid-March, "Open Studio Art" is set to resume at the gallery on Sept. 5 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. People are welcome to bring their projects to the gallery each Saturday to work with other artists. The gallery has sufficient room to provide for appropriate social distancing, and masks are required.

At present and always at Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery, the diverse creations of over thirty Minnesota artists are on exhibit and sale year-round from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. The gallery is located on the main street

of Cook at 210 S. River Street in the DreamWeaver Spa and Salon complex.

Find more information by emailing NWFA at nwfamn.org@gmail.com, or on the NWFA website at nwfamn.org, or on Facebook.

## Walker returns for park concert

COOK- Local favorite Robert Walker will again perform for "Music in the Park" from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 12 at the gazebo in the park on River Street.

Burgers and brats will be available from St. Paul's (Alango) Lutheran Church food stand. Patrons are encouraged to practice social distancing while enjoying the concert from lawn chairs, picnic blankets, or from their cars.

Music in The Park is made possible by the Cook Chamber of Commerce, Cook VFW Post 1157 and Auxiliary, Cook Lions Club, Northwoods Friends of the Arts, and freewill community donations.



**Hank Halverson, of Orr, takes off on a wild ride in the saddle bronc riding competition on July 24 at the North Star Stampede rodeo in Effie. The rodeo has garnered national attention for its "protest" against the state's restrictions on outdoor activities.**

D. Colburn photo

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<b>Orr Canister Site</b> 4038 Hwy 53 Summer Hours Tue: 9am-1pm, Thu: 2pm-7pm Sat: 8am-noon, Sun: 10am-2pm	<b>Portage Canister Site</b> 6992 Crane Lake Rd. Summer Hours Mon & Tue: 2pm-6pm Thu: 10am-1pm, Sun: 3pm-6pm	<b>County 77 Canister Site</b> 2038 County Rd. 77 Summer Hours Tue: 1-6pm, Thu: 8am-1pm Sat: 8am-5pm, Sun: noon-6pm
<b>Cook Transfer Station</b> 2134 S. Beatty Rd. Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm	<b>Regional Landfill</b> 5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm	<b>St. Louis County Environmental Services Department</b> 1-800-450-9278 Office hours 8-4:30 Mon. thru Fri. stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle
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Summer hours effective April 15th through September 30th

# Ely schools use new guidance to plan for re-opening

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

Details expected to be discussed at Aug. 10 board meeting

ELY – Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz revealed a plan last Thursday for all state school districts to approach the 2020-21 school year, using the prevalence of new coronavirus cases in each county as a starting point for school leaders as they consider a broad range of factors to determine which models of instruction they'll employ this fall.

With those marching orders in hand, ISD 696 officials issued a statement later that evening to update district families on how the district's administration team is preparing for school this fall. Details will be released at the Aug. 10 Ely school board meeting.

The district's administration team said, "Gov. Tim Walz and Education Commissioner Mary

Cathryn Ricker, in consultation with Commissioner Malcolm and the Minnesota Department of Health, have announced that all Minnesota public schools must adhere to parameters determined by MDH in implementing or shifting between the three learning models laid out in the 2020-21 school year planning guidance: in-person learning, hybrid learning, and distance learning.

"To begin the 2020-21 school year, MDH has developed parameters using county public health data to support the determination of learning models for each school district and charter school. A localized, data-driven approach to the 2020-21 school year will put student and staff safety first.

"Experts at the Departments of Health and Education will partner with local school districts and charter schools to help determine which learning model they should use to start the school year. While there are many factors to take into consideration before opening our schools, the decision-making process will center on local data indicating the prevalence of COVID-19 in the surrounding county.

"Throughout the school year, we will need to be flexible and adapt to the fluid nature of this pandemic. The Departments of Education and Health will work with school districts and local health professionals to consistently track the virus to determine if and when a school may need to

adjust our learning plan. School districts and charter schools will be required to ensure all families have the option to choose distance learning for their students, no matter where they live.

"As our school leaders review the new guidance from the Department of Education and Health, the Ely Public School District will have more information about what the three models will look like in our schools after Aug. 10.

"These plans will be communicated to families via email and posted on the Ely Public School website. We will then be asking families and staff to self-identify their health risks related to COVID so that we can accurately and effectively create learning plans for all students.

"Our district will con-

tinue to carefully consider the needs of students in a variety of areas, including students receiving special education services, mental health services, students experiencing homelessness, and students who rely on meals served at school. We will continue to keep you informed as we navigate COVID-19."

According to data from the Minnesota Department of Health, the 14-day rolling average of new cases for St. Louis County was low enough as of last Friday for ISD 696 leaders to include a return to full in-class attendance as an option, although other issues related to physical facilities, staffing, transportation, and more must be considered to determine if a more restrictive approach is

more appropriate. Health department figures also showed the county 14-day rolling average has been steadily increasing since June.

Walz's announcement came on the same day President Donald Trump re-emphasized his call for schools to fully re-open, continuing to maintain that the risk to children is minor.

"Young people are almost immune to this (COVID-19) disease," Trump claimed. "If you look at the percentage, it's a tiny percent of one percent. It's a tiny percent of one percent. So, we have to have our schools open. We have to protect our teachers. We have to protect our elderly. But we do have to have our schools open."

## SCHOOL...Continued from page 1

back to school, and 15 percent were undecided.

But 118 parents, 17 percent, said they would not be sending 182 children back to school when it resumes. That included 128 children in Kindergarten through sixth grade. Under state guidelines, the district will have to provide distance education to those students, unless parents choose an alternative option such as homeschooling or sending their children to private schools.

A separate survey of teachers drew 139 responses. All but seven said they intend to return.

"Even teachers who have underlying conditions are willing to teach from home," Engebritsen said.

Engebritsen recommended the in-person option over two other models, full distance learning and a hybrid combining in-class and distance learning, after learning the 14-day average for new case numbers per 10,000 people in St. Louis County fell well within the state-prescribed range for resuming full in-person classes.

"Right now, our rate is at 5.5, which means if we're between zero and nine that would be in-person learning for all students," she said. "If the rate was ten to 19, it would be in-person learning for elementary students and hybrid learning for secondary."

Engebritson reviewed basic elements of the district's plan for ensuring

the health and safety of students and staff, including daily health screenings, enhanced sanitation and personal hygiene procedures, meal service, transportation, and more.

"We are putting things in place," she said. "We're still planning.

Each school will have its own planning committee, Engebritsen said, so that district practices could be fine-tuned for each facility.

"The entire district would be on the plan, but it would look different at each school," she said.

If a COVID-19 case is identified at a school, the district will work with a regional service cooperative of education and health officials to determine the steps necessary to respond, Engebritsen said. Contact tracing in isolated cases would be the district's responsibility, but Engebritsen said the health department would assist with the process if situations involved larger numbers of students and staff. When testing is deemed necessary, the district would refer parents to community-based testing options.

### Board input

All board members took turns asking questions and commenting, with varying levels of concern expressed.

Board member Troy Swanson had reservations about social distancing but noted that while the district will start out with in-person instruction, they had the option to make alter-

ations as needs dictate.

"Obviously I worry about the separation problems," he said. "Any school is packed. It makes me worry. But if we stay by these standards, I mean we can make a change at any time."

Swanson also asked about the district's liability in the event someone contracts COVID-19. Engebritsen said that she hadn't yet received any direction about that from the state or the state school board association.

Koivisto also was concerned about social distancing, and suggested planning should go beyond the basic guidelines.

"I'm concerned with those minimum requirements," he said. "If we're going to go to in-person, perhaps we want to do more than the minimum requirements on the governor's list."

Koivisto said he supported using a hybrid model of in-person instruction for elementary students and a combination of limited in-class instruction and distance learning for secondary students, noting that the average case number has increased significantly in recent weeks.

"I actually lean towards moving to in-person elementary and hybrid secondary just based on that we are increasing so much in three weeks, and we're on a trend now," he said. "I could see going back the other direction to completely in-person if we see the trend goes back down."

Taylor was even more emphatic in her objections to in-person classes.

"I am absolutely opposed to doing a 'let's go back to normal,' which in my opinion is putting all human beings back in a single concentrated location," she said. "Who knows about masks being on faces, off faces, on noses, off noses?"

"If you look at the chart of cases per 10,000, that when the state reopened, which was what, mid-June, and a little after that, we had been at one, and now we're at 5.5. So, in three weeks it's gone up fourfold. And as we know how this works, it spreads rapidly."

Taylor said that in looking at classroom spaces and transitions where students were moving throughout the school, she believed it wasn't possible to protect the health and safety of students by ensuring appropriate social distancing.

"It's completely confusing to me," she said, "and until proven otherwise with some kind of chart, I don't think anybody can argue that we can manage that. Unless you can show me what that looks like, I don't understand how any of us can say that will happen."

Taylor also cited concerns about having fall sports. Earlier on Tuesday, the Minnesota State High School League moved shortened football and volleyball seasons to the spring while allowing for practices in the fall for both

and also for spring sports. Taylor noted that even with extensive precautions professional baseball and basketball leagues are having COVID-19 outbreaks.

"I'm definitely opposed to any kind, especially football," she said. "I don't think we should be supportive of having sports."

When board chairman Dan Manick asked for a motion about the in-person option, Taylor questioned why the board had to act without having more thorough discussions about the plan.

"We have spent more time debating busing software as a board than we have this issue," she said. "These are people's lives we're talking about. We're not talking about software to make bus routes. I think we've spent maybe three different board meetings on that. I don't understand why we would do any vote at this time when it's not required and everybody keeps saying we can change at any time." Manick responded that it was essential to make a decision so that parents and staff could plan.

"There are very, very anxious parents out there – I hear from them all the time," he said. "Our survey kind of shows that the majority of parents are interested in sending their kids back to school. Just as we owe it to the staff, even more so we owe it to the parents and students. We owe it to our parents to make a decision tonight, and our staff, too."

Following the vote approving the in-person instruction plan, Engebritsen noted that the next regular board meeting would be Aug. 25. Taylor expressed disbelief that the board wouldn't have another working session before then to receive updates on the planning process.

"How do we not need a special working session to discuss whatever you guys are going to be talking about?" she said.

After Manick expressed confidence in the planning process, Taylor continued.

"How can you make a decision if you don't know the process they're going through," she said. "The meeting started an hour ago and Reggie did a summation, but that's a 30-trillion-mile-above-the-earth overview of what she knows, what she's considered, who she's talked to, what the plans are. We have special meetings for all sorts of, in contrast, trivial issues. I would personally ask if we could get a special meeting to discuss and get an update on how the planning is going and see where our numbers are, and maybe to hopefully put Chris and I more at ease."

Engebritsen readily agreed.

"We can certainly find a date that works to have a special meeting," she said. "We'll have a meeting. I want you to know what we're doing."

## SPORTS...Continued from page 1

cases could affect general education in districts weighed heavily on those voting to push football and volleyball to the spring. A number of board members noted that shifting the two sports to spring would decrease the possibility of teams having to cancel games and possibly seasons if a player or coach contracted COVID-19.

Executive Director Erich Martens also noted that schools that start the year under mandatory distance learning would not be able to participate in interscholastic sports. Schools that start the year with a different learning model, but that might subsequently have to move to distance learning because

of increased COVID-19 cases in their counties, also would have to terminate their seasons, Martens said.

Individual fall sports, such as swimming and diving, girls tennis, and cross country were approved to begin Aug. 17, and likewise will have shortened seasons and restricted competition.

In order to provide opportunities for activities and contact between students and coaches, the board voted to direct the league eligibility committee to develop a proposal to allow fall and spring sports to have additional practices outside of the designated seasons.

The MSHSL board

made no decisions this week on postseason competition such as sectional and state playoffs, meets, and tournaments. Those schedules will be determined later, taking into

consideration future developments in guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and Department of Education regarding the coronavirus pandemic.



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## SOCIAL MEDIA

# Controversy swirls over inflammatory restaurant post

## South Switch Bar and Grill Facebook page scrubbed after controversial sentiments expressed

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

ANGORA- Last Thursday, the Facebook page for the South Switch Bar and Grill in Angora was filled with pictures and comments dating back years. By early Sunday evening, everything, even the site's profile pictures, was gone, the site stripped clean in the aftermath of an incendiary post targeting COVID-19 restrictions that was posted Thursday.

A mobile phone screen shot of the offending post obtained by the Timberjay, with a time stamp of 2:29 p.m. Thursday, immediately takes aim at "the clueless politicians in St. Paul who are doing their very best to destroy the 'rocks and cows.'"

The phrase "rocks and cows" comes from a statement made several years ago by now-Gov. Tim Walz in which he referred to a map depicting Republican-leaning rural areas and reportedly said that mostly all that was in those areas was "rocks and cows." Rural conservatives at odds with Walz have adopted the phrase as a rallying cry.

"The South Switch

Bar & Grill is open for business," the post continues. "If you feel you need to wear a mask for your health please do not come to our restaurant. We will not serve alcohol to any person that hides their identity. Our constitution is the very protection from 'internet Karens'. If you are sick, ill, democrat/liberal...stay home! We cannot meet your Socialist demands. If you cannot be a reasonable human being ... please learn how to cook, clean, and stay home! We are not here to support delusions or mental defects. Please consult your therapist for clarification!"

The post also complained about "poor mannered children" and encouraged people to "Have a nice day and be responsible human beings."

Curtis Dehn, who works at the South Switch, was contacted both Thursday and Tuesday by the Timberjay, and steadfastly denies that anyone associated with the restaurant put up the post.

"To the best of my knowledge, absolutely not," Dehn said. "How it got there, that we don't know. This is not something the

South Switch would ever put on Facebook. If you want to lose business, that would be a good way to go about it."

Dehn said that the restaurant doesn't post anything of a personal, political, or religious nature on the restaurant page.

"Race, religion, color, creed, everybody is welcome here," he said. "This is not a representation of our business."

While the original post had been deleted by late Thursday afternoon, another Facebook user had attached a screen shot of the offending post to other South Switch posts dating back to mid-2019, and numerous additional users and customers were hotly disputing Dehn's claim that the site had been hacked. The post was consistent, some said, with past posts that they alleged had been scrubbed from the site, and therefore believed the restaurant had posted it. The Timberjay could not confirm the existence of any additional posts.

### Fallout

Some commenters, who believe that restaurant staff may have been responsible for

the Facebook post, said they would never dine at the South Switch again because of the sentiments expressed.

Several people claimed Dehn would have received a notification from Facebook if someone had hacked his account, and suggested he post that message to verify his claim. However, a check of Facebook's help section reveals that such messages are not automatic — a user has to go into their Facebook settings and manually choose to receive them. An account set up by the Timberjay to verify this process revealed that the default setting for receiving notifications of logins from Facebook is off, just as described.

Following up on a suggestion that he check his logon activity, Dehn said he did so.

"I went through the account log-ins and checked the locations," he said. "I had a couple of logins that were from the Britt area, and one from somewhere in Chicago."

Dehn wasn't certain how those could happen but did suggest they could be a result of the fact that he uses his mobile phone to access his account and

update the page.

"I don't know if that's just how the phone updates," he said.

By Friday, many of the South Switch's posts had been taken down, a fact not lost on some visitors to the page who commented on their absence.

Dehn said he had identified "between five and seven fake accounts" that had been used to repost screen shots of the message, and that he had banned them from the page and reported them to Facebook. The Timberjay independently confirmed one account making posts as an actual Facebook user, and identified a second account that posted to the page that had no personal information and no pictures. That user reposted the screen shot and also provided a link to a post on Reddit, where the screen shot had been shared.

Additional postings were found on the South Switch listings on popular review sites Trip Adviser and Yelp.

Meanwhile, Dehn worked through the weekend to take down everything else on the South Switch Facebook page, until the page was virtually empty on Sunday

afternoon.

"It started with all the community posts and then got into the bar posts, so we had to delete everything," he said.

However, later Sunday night, two signs of life on the restaurant's page were to be found in the "visitor's posts" sidebar, including one that said they had seen the controversial post and would be coming to the South Switch soon in a sign of support.

*Editor's Note: The Timberjay posted an earlier version of this story online late Thursday afternoon, July 30, but removed it later that day based on reader feedback that the story neglected to report details that called into question the claim that the site had been hacked. The Timberjay strives for accuracy and fairness in reporting and it was determined the story, as initially posted online, did not meet the newspaper's standards. After further investigation and reporting, the story has since been reposted at timberjay.com and published in this week's edition.*

## THE CORONAVIRUS

# City of Ely using CARES Act funding in response to COVID-19

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY — City officials reviewed expenses incurred so far this year in responding to the coronavirus pandemic and the various executive orders associated with the public health protocols put in place, in order to accurately account for spending of more than \$250,000 in CARES Act funding.

City Clerk Harold Langowski provided an accounting of the funding utilization to city council members Tuesday night. A total of \$256,910, based on per capita, was recently received from the federal government as authorized by the state legislature.

About half of the funds have been used so

far. CARES Act money must be used by mid-November.

From early March through the end of July, according to Langowski, the city incurred \$43,451 in COVID-19 response expenses, including the purchase of three electrostatic disinfectant spray machines for \$12,670 and supplies to be used in city facilities and vehicles and tenant-occupied city and EDA buildings.

Other expenses incurred include staff overtime for surface sanitizing, increased trash disposal, additional restroom supplies in the city's parks, and additional staff time used to provide for social distancing of work areas.

"The approach we are taking is to look at the

equipment we require to respond to COVID-19 and how we separate to keep employees safe in case there was an outbreak," Langowski said.

The police chief has worked extensively in his office area to allow for increased efficiency and employee segregation.

"They have just two or three desks for seven staff members which obviously can be an issue," he said.

Chief Chad Houde prepared a proposal to purchase additional desks and an additional computer at a cost of \$5,800.

Purchasing electronic devices for the clerk's office and city council to conduct required remote meetings during the pandemic accounts for more than \$25,000, including

ten Microsoft Surface devices, five laptop computers, support technology and additional tables to allow for social distancing.

"A year ago, who would have thought we would be conducting (remote) meetings on a regular basis," Langowski said. "When we remodeled City Hall several years ago, we remodeled it to be flexible but we didn't anticipate that everyone would have to sit six feet apart and use wireless microphones and those types of things."

New technology will allow for some council members to remotely participate in meetings, if necessary, while others are in chambers.

Langowski described the increased cleaning and sanitizing of city parks since they were reopened.

"We have seen a big increase in usage with more traffic in town," he said. "You can see that with the amount of trash disposal, at least three or four times what we typically see. That has been a struggle. These changes have added to additional costs. We are two people short in the public works department and we are doing the best we can with our staff."

He noted that the as many as 12 garbage cans

in Whiteside Park typically are filled each day. A dumpster will be located at the park starting this week.

"Please be aware that this is not to be used for household trash or by those coming back from a camping trip," he said. "Please respect the fact that it is intended for those people using the park."

Since the COVID-19 emergency declaration in March, the Ely Fire Department has been using the department's brush-fire response truck, intended to be used for wildland fires, as a first responder vehicle.

"Our concern has been that our first responders have typically used their own vehicles to make those calls, and if they do come in contact with COVID-19 patients, that vehicle would have to be quarantined and cleaned. We don't want to risk exposing our first responders and their families," Langowski said.

He noted that the brush truck is part of the fire department's fleet of emergency vehicles and should be used for that purpose.

He proposed the purchase of a four-door, four-wheel-drive pickup truck to be rigged as a first responder vehicle.

"Our auditor has determined that this is a justifiable expense in our COVID-19 response and would be covered under our CARES Act funding," he said. He estimated as much as \$50,000 would be used for the new first responder vehicle.

More than \$100,000 would remain in the emergency fund, Langowski added, but the expenses related to responding to COVID-19 could be continued for an undetermined time. "We could be sanitizing, using PPE (personal protection equipment) and working overtime for who knows how long," he said.

Langowski is also considering how the city can assist local businesses that have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and emergency shutdown orders.

"You can see the impact on our bars and restaurants," he said. "Some of the bars are still closed and restaurants are at limited capacity and still struggling."

One option is to offer a rebate on liquor license fees since March 1 for city businesses.

"It is not a big amount, just about \$1,200, but that could be a way to provide them with a subsidy," he said.

City staff is also studying the possibility of distribution of grants to those businesses affected by the COVID-19 emergency orders.

"I'm not ready to make a recommendation quite yet but we are working diligently to get that money to the folks who need it most while taking care of our expenses at the same time," he said.

Langowski was encouraged by the mayor and council members to move forward with developing a plan to utilize the CARES Act funding.

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CITY OF TOWER

# RV park project still under fire from neighbors

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- City residents could get another chance to weigh in on a proposed RV park proposal depending on which direction the developer, Dave Rose, chooses to go in the days ahead. Rose has sent shifting signals to city officials, having recently proposed applying for a planned unit development for his project, which would require another public hearing.

Some residents near the proposed location of the RV park have expressed strong opposition to the plan. Several of those residents, from nearby Mill Point Plat, were at the Planning and Zoning board meeting on July 28 to voice their concerns about the conditional use permit, or CUP, that the city recently awarded to the project over the failure of former city officials to properly handle Rose's applications for the permit. Rose first applied for a conditional use permit for the park in 2015, but city officials blocked his progress for years. The city attorney recently determined that the city's failure to act within the legally-required 60-day period set in state law,

## More uncertainty over the direction of the project

meant that Rose's CUP should have been awarded automatically.

The RV project is located alongside the East Two River, and the land is adjacent to some of the landowners in the Mill Point Plat.

Seven Mill Point Plat residents attended last week's planning and zoning meeting, and resident Joan Broten read a letter from residents, which she then submitted to the board, outlining their concerns and requesting a written response.

In the letter, the residents contested whether the CUP should be awarded on several grounds, including their claim that the CUP application was submitted when the property was still zoned residential, and had not yet been rezoned to allow for an RV park. They also raised concerns because the total land area for the project has changed after Rose swapped some land with an adjacent landowner. A portion of that land he acquired may have been part of a former city dump, which could limit his ability to excavate there.

Mill Point residents are also concerned that

current construction underway for a driveway is being done without a permit.

"We feel very frustrated that he has been allowed to go forward with a CUP without any conditions," said Broten. "We just want our due process."

Planning and Zoning Chair Mary Shedd said the city has already asked Rose to stop all construction until a plan is submitted and then approved by both the city and the city engineer.

"I can't hide that as zoning administrator the driveway went in," said Shedd, who is also the city's volunteer zoning administrator. "There should have been a driveway permit."

Shedd said it was Rose's responsibility to get that permit.

"The way to address this is to ask him to stop all development and construction at this time," Shedd said. "I notified him on some of those issues last week."

Shedd said that Rose needs to submit a construction plan, which will include where the roads will be, elevations, fill areas, entrance setbacks,

and other information.

"Largely he is in compliance," Shedd said. "His setbacks are good."

She also said that Rose is now aware of potential issues with digging on the former dump site, and said he would adjust the RV lots if needed to prevent disturbing those areas.

Shedd said Rose's initial application was for land use, not the actual number of RV sites.

"Those details will come in the approved plan," she said.

Shedd said Rose's initial EAW showed that an environmental impact statement was not required. Rose is completing an updated EAW, and then the city would decide if an EIS is required.

### Rose requests PUD permit

Rose submitted a letter to the board stating he was officially applying for a planned unit development permit process and asked for guidance on the next steps. Rose has recently informed the city that he intends to sell the lots in his RV park and Shedd had informed him that the change would require a

PUD process. Under the city's ordinance, the PUD process is handled as a conditional use, and in that case there would be a public hearing, and the city would be able to place conditions on the PUD.

"One thing that might give you some satisfaction tonight," said board member Marshall Helmberger, speaking to Mill Point residents, "is that this process is not at an end." He added: "I think there is going to be a second bite at the apple."

Helmberger noted that such a planned unit development would require that each individual site be platted and get a legal description. In addition, such a plan would require a homeowner association agreement, which the city would also get a chance to review. Helmberger also said that such a plan appears to be more financially feasible than a regular RV park, due to the upfront construction costs.

Yet, as has been the case since the beginning, Rose's plans have been in constant flux. In communication with the city in the wake of the July 28 meeting, Rose has suggest-

ed he might go a different route, such as forming a co-op, which would allow him to move forward under his existing CUP, without the need for a PUD permit.

### Other business

The board heard an update from Helmberger on the work being done to revise and simplify the city's three zoning ordinances. A committee consisting of Helmberger and Joe Morin has met three times and is working to craft a single ordinance that adopts many of the processes employed by St. Louis County, while maintaining the zoning standards already established for the city.

The board agreed not to use the county's performance standard system, which would add a layer of complexity for the user and would give the city a little less oversight than it currently has.

Helmberger said the work is ongoing and will take considerably more time before a full draft version is ready for review by the board, and then by the city council. Any changes to the ordinance will receive a public hearing at the both Planning and Zoning level, and then at the city council level, before being adopted.

THE INTERNET

# Broadband coalition rolls out speedtest mapping initiative

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A regional pilot test to develop location-specific internet speed maps is being deployed statewide as only the second such state-level initiative in the country to gather specific site data to bolster development of broadband services in rural areas.

The Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition, a group of nearly 100 local and county governments, agencies, philanthropies, businesses, and service providers, held an online teleconference on Monday to announce the initiative.

What makes this different from surveys done by towns, townships, and service providers is that the test is done sitting at a home or business computer or on a mobile device connected to the internet and takes less than two minutes to complete. An individual enters a full or partial address where their device is located, then clicks a button to connect to a server that determines the speed of the internet connection. The results are immediately transferred to a mapping program, and participants can view their results on the map right after the test is completed.

"The appeal of this particular test is it's so easy to do," project director Nathan Zacharias said. "It's as easy as copying and pasting the link and going there."

The Range Association of Municipalities and Schools was the driving force behind creating the pilot project, which has already generated over 7,000 responses in St. Louis, Itasca, and Koochiching counties. RAMS Executive Director Steve Georgi said the data gathered at the house-to-

house level is essential to challenge maps that only show internet access by zip code or census tracts.

Zacharias said that 18 percent of rural Minnesotans do not have access to broadband, and that changes in usage patterns driven in part by adaptations in education and commerce driven by the COVID-19 pandemic have heightened the need to tackle that deficit.

Getting broadband to unserved areas likely won't happen without government support, and the new site-specific maps generated by the speed test initiative will provide the granular data planners and advocates need to garner funding from legislators and agencies, Zacharias said.

"We know what's under the topsoil on the

Range—it's a lot of rock in a lot of places," Zacharias said. "The low-hanging fruit has already been picked. The easiest places to serve have already been served."

While towns and townships have partnered with potential service providers to survey their communities for interest in broadband, Zacharias noted that that information isn't shared with the rural broadband coalition unless a company, town, or township decides to make the results public.

"They're not required in any way to share those sorts of surveys," he said.

The speed test initiative gets around a common problem with service maps when it comes to rural areas, Zacharias explained. Rural areas typically have large census tracts, and

maps showing broadband access at that level will show there is service in the tract even if only one household is receiving it.

Glenn Fishbine of GEO Partners, the Minnesota-based company that is providing the mapping tools, said that the system allows people to see service gaps anywhere, even in supposedly well-served communities where some people still have trouble

connecting to broadband.

"It becomes a very simple and very valuable tool for determining resource allocation," Fishbine said.

As project director, Zacharias is tasked with getting the word out statewide about the speed test. He said he would be working with various stakeholders, including the Minnesota Association of Counties and local school

districts, to promote the test. Working directly with existing internet providers is also a possibility, he said, although they haven't been approached yet.

"That might be something they're receptive to," he said.

To participate in the speed test initiative, go to <http://mnruralbroadband-coalition.com/speedtest>.

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**ELY...**Continued from page 1

on Tuesday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Ely Senior Center. Voters must mail absentee ballots this week, or ballots can be dropped off at the Ely City Clerk's office in City Hall, 209 E. Conan St. The clerk's office is open daily 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Extended hours will also be available on Saturday, Aug. 8 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. In-person voting at City Hall is also available until Monday at 5 p.m.

Velcheff said the primary vote is a good test on what to expect for the general election on Nov. 3. The clerk's office anticipates receiving as many as 600 absentee ballot requests this November. "Usually we get 50 or 60 mail-in ballots for a

primary and for the 2016 general election we processed about 400 mailed ballots," she said.

Voters planning to cast their ballot in person on Tuesday can expect some changes due to public health concerns of the coronavirus. A one-way traffic pattern will be established with voters exiting out the side door. Plexiglass shields will be in use.

"Wear your face mask," Velcheff said. "We will have face masks available. We will also adhere to social distancing protocols. Please follow directional arrows stickers on the floor. Each voter will get their own pen to use. We will be sanitizing

each voting station after each voter."

**School referendum**

Voters in the Ely school district will be asked to approve or disapprove an increase in property taxes for the next 20 years to help pay for a \$20-million project that will improve the Ely school buildings by connecting the campus into one safer facility, adding more space for learning, and improving the overall condition of the 100-year-old buildings.

For more information on the referendum and school facility project, call Superintendent Erik Erie at 218-365-6166. Details are also available on the ISD 696 website, www.ely.k12.mn.us.

**Filing period closing for Ely school board election**

ELY- Potential candidates for three seats on the ISD 696 School Board that will be on the November general election ballot are running out of time to register affidavits of candidacy, as the filing period ends on Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 5 p.m.

Seats currently occupied by James Pointer, Heidi Mann and Tom Omerza will be contested, although Mann has chosen not to run for re-election. Those elected in November will serve four-year terms.

Mann told the *Timberjay* last week, "I do not plan to seek reelection to the school board. It has been a privilege to serve in this way and I have been glad to do my part as a member of the community. But my editorial business has grown

recently to the point where I need to free up some time. I will continue to be a strong supporter of Ely Public Schools, and I thank everyone who shares in this mission."

To be eligible, candidates must be at least 21 years of age on assuming office, must have been a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the election, and must have no affidavit on file for any other office in the same election.

Affidavits for candidacy are available by calling 218-365-6166, ext. 1727, emailing mwognum@ely.k12.mn.us, or by downloading the form from the school website, www.ely.k12.mn.us, or the Secretary of State website, www.sos.stat.mn.us. The filing fee for this office is \$2.

**VOTE...**Continued from page 1

nearly half of the absentee ballot requests made to date have come from Hennepin County, which includes Minneapolis and its suburbs.

This year, because of the pandemic, Secretary of State Simon has made it easier for people to vote by mail, having waived the requirement for a witness signature, which has made voting by mail less inconvenient for those who live alone. Simon is also allowing county election officials to begin processing their mail ballots two weeks ahead of the election, rather than the usual one week.

St. Louis County officials are preparing for the onslaught by deploying county workers from other departments to help process the mailed ballots. In St. Louis County, mailed ballots come in two types— absentee ballots for which voters must fill out an application, and regular mail-in ballots for sparsely-settled parts of the county where there are no local polling places.

Thousands of St. Louis County residents have used mailed ballots for years, notes Chapman, without incident. He said that's true for many rural counties in the state where, in some cases, more than half of the ballots cast come by mail.

Mail voting has been largely non-controversial for years, but that's changed in recent months after a campaign by President Trump to discredit mail-in ballots, which he claims, without evidence, provide an easy opportunity for organized fraud. Attorney General William Barr, also without evidence, recently suggested that foreign countries could forge large numbers of mail-in ballots to try to tilt the election one way or another.

Chapman, who is intimately familiar with mail-in balloting, said that would be virtually impossible given the many checks in place. For one thing, he notes, the labels that election officials affix to the mail-in envelopes

they send out to voters have a unique bar code that they cross-check as part of the review of each ballot that comes by mail.

"They would have to somehow forge a bar-code with the correct information and forge a signature envelope," said Chapman. "We would detect those differences."

What's more, he said, county election officials keep track of the number of ballots they send out. If more came back than what they sent out, they would know that immediately. "As far as Minnesota, there are a huge number of checks and balances in place that would prevent fraud," said Chapman.

Those checks are virtually the same, notes Chapman, regardless of whether a mailed-in ballot is from a regular vote-by-mail voter or an absentee voter. "With mail balloting, everyone who is a registered voter, we physical mail them a ballot," said Chapman. "To vote absentee, they have to fill out an absentee ballot

application. That's the biggest difference."

Those who vote by mail do have additional steps they must take. The ballot comes with three separate envelopes. A brown manila envelope in which the voter inserts their ballot, is known as the secrecy envelope. It's unmarked and once it's added to the balloting system there's no way to connect the name of the voter to the ballot they've cast.

The secrecy envelope is placed inside a signature envelope, which the voter must fill out with their address, driver's license number or last four digits of their Social Security number, and sign attesting that they are qualified to vote. The signature envelope goes into a larger envelope for mailing to county offices.

"It's a lot of paperwork," acknowledges Chapman.

But that paperwork all has a purpose, he notes, which is to ensure the integrity of the system.

Once a mail-in ballot packet arrives at the county office, election officials open the outer envelope and review the signature envelope to make sure the information is consistent with county records, assuming the voter is already registered. If they are not registered, the voter will need to submit a voter registration form along with their ballot. If there are discrepancies, or errors in any of the paperwork, county officials contact the voter to let them know they need to take additional steps for their vote to count. If not, the signature envelope is opened and the ballot, still in its secrecy envelope, is added to the pile of ballots approved for counting. Once a voter has voted by mail, their name is checked off on the official voter list, so they won't be

allowed to vote a second time, by showing up at the polls on Election Day.

This Tuesday's primary election will be a good dry run for county officials, to help them gauge their staffing requirements for processing all the additional mail-in ballots. Statewide, turnout for the primary looks like it may be extremely high, according to election officials. In a normal primary, about 25-30 percent of voters cast ballots. That's a far cry from the 80 percent that turn out in Minnesota for a typical general election, but it should be enough to help election officials get a taste for what's to come in November. Even so, Chapman wants Tuesday to run smoothly. "It's a good test run, but it's one that we don't want to make mistakes on," he said.

**CLOSURE...**Continued from page 1

be relocated to other facilities to help operate what's known as the Challenge Incarceration Program at other minimum custody prisons.

The department will also close a second minimum security correctional facility, in Willow River, affecting 51 workers. Combined, the two facilities— which are the smallest in the state— cost the department \$11 million annually to operate.

The news came as a shock to staff at the Togo facility. Gino Anselmo, who has worked at the facility for 26 years and has served as warden since 2011, said he and his staff first learned of the decision on Monday, when the department issued a press statement. "It's a sad day for all of us," said Anselmo. "This has been a great facility that has operated with excellence for so many years. This decision certainly wasn't due to poor performance."

The department had requested supplemental funding in the recent special session, which adjourned without action on the agency's request. In the next biennium, the department's budget shortfall is expected to be \$25 million.

The decision comes as an economic blow to the area. Anselmo notes that employees at the facility

came from a 35-40 mile radius, including Cook, Hibbing, Bigfork, and Effie, all places where good-paying jobs with benefits are often in short supply. At the same time, the camp relied on a number of local vendors to provide supplies and services to the facility. "It's a hit to our region, that's for sure," said Anselmo. At this point, Anselmo said he hasn't been told exactly when the facility is scheduled to close.

The Department of Corrections is already facing some opposition to the closure plan. In a statement issued Monday, AFSCME Council 5, which represents rank-and-file officers in the Department of Corrections, announced that they will oppose the plan. "The Legislature must pass deficiency funding for the department and we will continue pushing our members to advocate for this funding, as well as passage of the federal HEROES Act which contains \$1 trillion for state and local governments," said Max Hall, public affairs and political action director with AFSCME Council 5. "We will continue to mobilize our members to take action to prevent further layoffs or service delays. These workers are on our front lines and deserve our thanks and admiration for their work, not lay-off

notices."

**Background**

The Thistledeew facility opened in 1955 as a camp to teach troubled youth practical skills to help them lead productive lives. The facility's mission changed in 2015 to focus on adult males convicted of non-violent offenses, mostly property or drug crimes, who qualify to earn early release through the Challenge Incarceration Program. Phase I of the program an

intensive six-month training for up to 90 offenders. Programming includes education, critical thinking skills development, chemical dependency programming, rigorous physical exercise, restorative justice work crews, and firewood preparation and bundling for state parks. Following the six-month program, most participants are transitioned back into their communities through supervised release.

*Reflections*  
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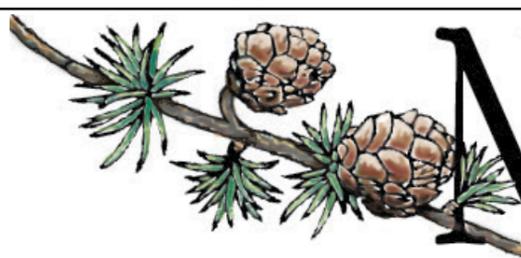
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 2014 CHEVY MALIBU LS.....GREAT VALUE..... **\$13,990**  
 2013 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY...LOW MILES..... **\$11,990**  
 2002 CHEVROLET SILVERADO HD...ONLY 49K MILES..... **\$10,990**

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

# ATV group downshifts on Ely convention

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

COVID-19 forces adjustments as ATV owners to gather next month

ELY – The Minnesota ATV Association’s annual convention here next month has been forced to downshift because of public health concerns due to the expanding coronavirus pandemic gripping the state.

The local Prospector Loop ATV Club’s Ride and Rally event, scheduled for Sept. 18-19, will be more focused on the “riding” and less so on the “rallying,” according to convention organizers.

With the pandemic,

organizers are focusing on having a dozen different rides to choose from and are planning for ATVAM members to return for a full Ride and Rally in 2021, according to Prospector President Nick Wognum, as stated on the club’s Facebook page last week.

The traditional VIP Ride will take place on Friday, Sept. 18, with everything being held outside. Participants will start from the fairgrounds at Timber Hall in Embarrass, ride to

Tower for a lakeside catered lunch and then take the trails back afterward.

“This is a nice ride that will give people a first look at Prospector, plus they’ll get to enjoy a catered lunch on the shores of Lake Vermilion,” said ATV Minnesota President Ron Potter. “Luckily we were able to find outdoor areas with plenty of room for people to spread out. Both Timber Hall and McKinley Park have plenty of space for social distancing.”

The Prospector Loop trail system, on the drawing board for more than seven years, is in the midst of a \$2 million construction project, with money coming from state bonding dollars, the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, the state ATV fund (license and gas tax money) and grants from two of the largest ATV manufacturers, Polaris and Yamaha.

See ATVs...pg. 2B



ATV enthusiasts gathered on the streets of Ely last month for a rally and ride to Babbitt. Plans for a state ATV convention here, set for September, will be adjusted to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19. photo by K. Vandervort



## VETERINARY SERVICES

# Ely’s new outdoor exam room

Newly-built gazebo adds capacity, responds to COVID-19

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY - The Ely Vet Clinic recently opened an outdoor Wellness and Vaccination Clinic at the Miner’s Drive facility, to help alleviate the overwhelming backlog of client needs for pet care brought about by the coronavirus.

Last month, Dr. Chip Hansen completed construction of a gazebo in the woods adjacent to the clinic to give the staff another exam and basic care area to help catch up on the backlog. Because of the legal and medical protocols in place due to COVID-19, the flow of work was diminished, and the continuing demand for services challenged the clinic’s ability to get all the work done.

Since mid-July, veterinarians have staffed the outdoor clinic on Fridays to provide basic canine care.

“We are out here only on Fridays for now,” Dr. Allie Pace said as she updated clinic records on a laptop computer in the open-air workstation. “It is quiet and serene out here, and rather peaceful. I believe our clients like it, too.”

She noted that because of COVID-19 protocols, the Vet Clinic maintains a curbside pet drop-off and pick-up procedure

**Above and right: Ely Vet Clinic’s Dr. Allie Pace checks Buck, a German Shepherd and Eva, a Border Collie puppy.**

photos/K. Vandervort

for all services.

“Out here the owners can bring their dogs and sit on a nearby (socially distant) park bench to be near their canine and converse with us,” she said. “We are using this space only for dogs. Cats are cared for inside the building. We plan to maintain a Friday schedule for as long as the weather cooperates.”

During the initial COVID-19 shutdown, the Ely Vet Clinic was allowed only to provide emergency services, but when the state of Minnesota eased some of the restrictions regarding elective procedures, the backlog of appointments grew quickly.

The outdoor clinic features an exam table and scales, a cooler, and a computer work station. Fencing keeps the customers (the dogs, not the people) from bounding into the woods to go after a squirrel or other woody visitor.

“We give vaccines and take blood draws,” Dr. Pace said, “and do general wellness checks. We can weigh them, check teeth and ears and coat and other basic



checks. Any diagnostics or sick dogs need to be cared for inside the clinic.”

She said appointments are booked up to four weeks out right now. “We have an incredible

backlog of work to do, and this extra space out here is really helping.” Five clinic doctors rotate currently through the Friday outdoor clinic.

## GRANTS

# TEDA awarded IRRR grant to help local businesses

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER—Grant funding from the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation should help participating small businesses here begin to recover from the impacts stemming from efforts to halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The Tower Economic Development Authority applied for the funds as part of the newly-created Taconite Area Community Relief Program and was awarded \$50,000 to provide low interest loans to assist businesses in the community. The IRRR issued a total of \$2 million in grant funds to area cities and economic development authorities for the program.

TEDA is earmarking \$12,500 of its own funds toward the effort, providing a total of \$62,500 for loans under the program. TEDA was forced to trim the size of its request due to limited funds available for meeting the program’s 1:4 matching requirement. The city’s storefront loan account, which TEDA dedicated for its matching funds, was among a long list of city accounts that were drained by the prior city administration in order to pay the rising tab for city projects and operations.

The funds will be available for a wide range of uses by businesses, making it different from the commercial rehabilitation or storefront program, which was largely limited to facility improvements. Once the loan funds are distributed and repaid, they will become part of a revolving loan program managed by TEDA.

The program will require a 1:3 match from participating business, meaning that the business will need to provide at least one dollar in private investment for every three dollars in loan funding.

“We’re encouraging businesses in Tower to contact TEDA if they need assistance as they address the uncertainties posed by the current pandemic,” said TEDA executive director Marshall Helmberger.

As the Timberjay previously reported, the city of Ely received a \$125,000 grant from the program. The city of Babbitt received \$50,000.

BASEBALL

# Ely Babe Ruth team on a hot streak

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

Senior Babe Ruth team riding a 17-2 record into "final-four" action

ELY – The Ely Senior Babe Ruth League baseball team improved their season record to 17-2 last weekend during the Eighth District playoffs here at Veteran's Memorial Field. They defeated Eveleth 12-4 on Saturday and beat Taconite 7-3 on Sunday to advance to Final Four competition.

In the Ely win over Eveleth, Cam McRoberts was the winning pitcher, and Bryce Longwell pitched three innings of



Left: Nils DeRemee, hat falling off, runs down an Eveleth player caught in a hot box.  
photo by K. Vandervort

scoreless relief. Trevor Mattson had a big game with three hits, and five RBIs, including a three-run double to cap off a seven-run fourth inning. Ryan Quick and Zach Cheney each had two hits.

Against Taconite on Sunday, Dalton Schreffler

scattered nine hits and struck out five for his sixth win of the season. Ely scored five runs in the third inning to take a 5-1 lead. Schreffler added two hits, including a run-scoring single in the third. Mattson had two RBIs. Tyler Housey scored twice.

"We had big innings in both games over the weekend which gave us some breathing room and took a little of the pressure off," said coach Tom

Coombe. "We're hitting better as the season goes on and we got some clutch hits in both games, especially against Eveleth."

Ely was set to host Cook County on Thursday night. Playoff action moves to Aurora on Saturday and the title game back in Ely starts at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday. Unlike a typical season, there is no state tournament this year due to the coronavirus, so the district playoffs mark the end of the shortened

THE ECONOMY

# COVID paycheck protection now fading away

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL - The federal government funneled millions of dollars to hundreds of area businesses through its coronavirus-induced Paycheck Protection Program in recent months, all in an effort to keep hundreds of people working as the economy plummeted and consumer spending took a historic tumble during lockdowns and limited operations.

Fifteen businesses, 11 in Ely and four in Cook, received loans in excess of \$150,000. Meanwhile, 235 businesses in Ely, Tower, Cook, and Orr got loans under \$150,000.

While the Small Business Administration doesn't disclose the exact amount of loans over \$150,000, it does provide amounts for smaller ones while keeping the business names confidential. The SBA also reveals the number of jobs those loans

protected, although the data for some lenders is incomplete.

In Ely, 132 businesses received \$4.2 million in loans under \$150,000, protecting an estimated 900 to 1,100 jobs. Twenty-six businesses in Tower received \$807,000 to preserve 149 jobs. A total of \$1.65 million went to 50 businesses in Cook to support 271 jobs, while 27 businesses in Orr received \$867,000 to support 176 jobs.

But the PPP money was limited to only six weeks of support, and the clock has run out for most if not all of the forgivable loan recipients who must now go back to relying on their own business acumen in the midst of a fitful and uncertain recovery.

**Performance**

The *Timberjay* talked with two of the area's leading PPP lenders to find out how the program worked and their thoughts about the prospects for

businesses to continue on without the additional support.

In the rush to implement the CARES Act, the coronavirus relief bill that created the PPP, the process for applying loans was often confusing to lenders and borrowers alike.

Frandsen Bank and Trust in Ely financed the majority of loans in that community, and president Tom Omerza said they benefitted from being part of a larger banking system.

"Gearing up was easy because I had a corporate office that provided us with what we needed," Omerza said. "The time-consuming part was getting what we needed from the applicants."

American Bank is a system with nine branches, and the one in Cook financed the majority of loans in that area. CEO Ray Marwick, who lives on Lake Vermilion, said that they found the process a bit more challenging.

"All of our business bankers and credit analysts were basically working remotely from home," Marwick said. "It was kind of a frantic rush. I think our bankers worked very well with customers in their time of need."

Both executives believe the PPP accomplished its objectives for their borrowers.

"I think it's been a big benefit for those businesses who didn't have to lay off people," Marwick said.

"The majority of businesses suffered from being totally closed," Omerza said. "A lot of the astute ones realized they needed to keep their employees somehow. The overwhelming number of loans I did were under \$150,000. I think everybody whether they got \$2,000 or \$20,000 were very appreciative."

The CARES Act also provided \$1,200 checks to millions of Americans and \$600 in additional weekly unemployment benefits, but when all but essential

businesses closed down and consumers didn't have places to spend their money, much of it went into banks.

"I can tell you that deposits are up significantly in our bank and the whole banking industry," Marwick said. "For a lot of folks, they couldn't go anywhere, they couldn't spend, and as a result they kind of sat on the funds."

That's become a boon for the business community as commerce has opened back up, and many businesses that survived with the aid of PPP loans are seeing better days, Marwick said, particularly in the retail and home improvement sectors.

"What we're seeing with a lot of the businesses we work with across the Range is that they're having record years," Marwick said. "They have a tremendous amount of demand out there."

**Prospects**

Now that the PPP

support is gone, both bankers tempered cautious optimism with a dose of concern for the future.

"No one can predict an end to what's going on here," Omerza said. "There's certainly concern out there. My corporate office is signaling there is trouble on the horizon. It's hard to see because it's the middle of tourist season. My take is that the restaurants are going to struggle after tourists go home."

The best route to preserving local businesses through tough times is for people to keep their business local, Omerza said.

"We are way more than tourist-driven up here," he said. "We need people using the hardware stores, the grocery stores. Businesses are the lifeblood of the community. Our local businesses in Ely make great donations to local entities. Shop local and support what's here."

## Residents & Parents of Ely Public Schools

# REMEMBER TO VOTE

### Vote Early: 4 Options



**Online (All Residents):**  
[www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org)



**In-Person (City of Ely Residents):**  
At the Ely City Hall Deputy Clerk's Office  
**In-Person (Other Residents\*):**  
At the Virginia Government Services Center or at the St. Louis County Auditor's Office



**Email Return (City of Ely Residents):**  
[deputyclerk@ely.mn.us](mailto:deputyclerk@ely.mn.us)  
**Email Return (Other Residents\*):**  
[elections@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:elections@stlouiscountymn.gov)



**U.S. Mail Return (City of Ely Residents):**  
To the City of Ely Deputy Clerk  
**U.S. Mail Return (Other Residents\*):**  
To the St. Louis County Auditor

Once the City of Ely Deputy Clerk or Virginia Government Services Center/St. Louis County Auditor's Office receives your Application to Request an Absentee Ballot Form, they will then mail your physical absentee ballot and paperwork to you. Complete your absentee ballot and paperwork as directed in the instructions and return your physical ballot via U.S. Mail, or return it in-person no later than Monday, August 10, 2020 to the City of Ely Deputy Clerk or Virginia Government Services Center/St. Louis County Auditor's Office using the in-person instructions.

### VOTE ON ELECTION DAY:

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 11**

Hours: 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM

City of Ely Ely Senior Citizens Center 27 S. First Avenue East Ely, MN 55731	Town of Morse Morse Town Hall 911 S. Central Avenue Ely, MN 55731
Unorganized Township 61, Range 12 & 13 (North One-Half) - Precinct 9 Mail ballot from St. Louis County Auditor's Office, Duluth	Unorganized Township 64, Range 12 & 13 Morse Town Hall 911 S. Central Avenue Ely, MN 55731
City of Winton Winton Community Building 102 N. Main Street Winton, MN 55796	

## Ely Public Schools Referendum • Frequently Asked Questions

• How has the community been involved in this decision?  
• In the spring of 2019, a community-based task force made up of members from diverse backgrounds - parents, non-parents, business owners, and district staff - worked with an educational consultant to help identify the deficiencies in our existing school buildings and proposed solutions to meet future needs. A community-wide survey was then conducted in the fall of 2019, which indicated there was support for more than just linking the buildings with secure entrances. The School District approached the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRRB) and secured a \$7 million grant, contingent on voter approval of a bond referendum in 2020. Based on the support communicated in the survey and the IRRRB funding, a proposal was developed to address two issues: connecting the two buildings with a new addition; and making much-needed renovations, upgrades, and repairs to the existing facilities. In May 2020, the School Board adopted a resolution calling for the referendum to be held on August 11, 2020.

• What projects are included in the referendum?  
• The projects include renovating the existing Washington Elementary and Memorial High School buildings that are approximately 100 years-old, re-purposing part of the Industrial Arts Building that is over 100 years-old, and replacing it with a new approximately 35,000 square foot (SF) addition, which will connect the Washington Elementary and Memorial High School buildings. Not only will the project provide additional learning opportunities and programs for students, but it will also provide a central secure entry, and eliminate the need for students to walk outdoors to go to their next class across uneven surfaces, alleviating safety, security, and efficiency concerns. New and renovated learning spaces will be provided with improved finishes, infrastructure, indoor air quality, lighting, plumbing and electrical systems, and an additional multipurpose gymnasium.

ONE BOOK, ONE MINNESOTA

Minnesota 'One Book' event to feature authors in statewide conversation on race

REGIONAL- The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library, as the Minnesota Center for the Book, announce the culminating event in the second chapter of the statewide book club, One Book | One Minnesota. The event will feature Sun Yung Shin, editor of the summer One Book title, "A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota", in conversation with many of the book's

contributors. The One Book | One Minnesota statewide author discussion will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 20 via Zoom. The event is free; registration is required.

This statewide virtual event will feature Sun Yung Shin in conversation with book contributors Taiyon Coleman, Shannon Gibney, David Lawrence Grant,

Carolyn Holbrook, IBé and Andrea Jenkins.

"A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota", published in 2016 by the Minnesota Historical Society Press, is a series of essays in which 16 of Minnesota's best writers provide a range of perspectives on what it is like to live as a Native person or a person of color in Minnesota. With unflinching generosity,

these authors take readers into their lives, sharing experiences that we all must understand if we are to come together in real relationships.

"A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota" is available on multiple platforms. Readers can access the digital book for free on Ebooks Minnesota for ten weeks, until Aug. 23. Hard copies of the book will be

available through the Minnesota Historical Society Press and independent bookstores across the state, as well as public libraries as social distancing allows. Libraries across the state are convening local book discussions for their communities. Links to resources for libraries and schools and more information about the program can be found at [www.thefriends.org/onebook](http://www.thefriends.org/onebook).

Obituaries and Death Notices



Onnalee A. Graham

Onnalee A. Graham, 88, of Ely, died of natural causes on Wednesday, July 22, 2020, at St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth. A memorial art show of "Waterworks by Onnalee" is planned for the summer of 2021.

Onnalee was born on Aug. 11, 1931, in Rochester, N.Y., to Dorothy and Victor Bergseth. She grew up in Minneapolis, where she lived with her husband and family for most of her life. In 2009, she moved to Ely to enjoy her retirement years closer to her two daughters.

A prolific and award-winning watercolorist, Onnalee enjoyed both painting and teaching throughout her life. Onnalee's work was a

fixture at Ely's Blueberry/Art Festival for over a decade (1996-2007). Onnalee enjoyed conversation, music, and every dog she ever shared her life with.

Onnalee is survived by her two daughters, Robyn Bertelsen of Ely and Valerie Carlson of Encinitas, Calif.; two granddaughters, Kasey Bertelsen and Abby Carlson; and two great-grandchildren, Wesley and Coraline Lisk.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and sister, Lynn Norwood.

Joanne K. Thompson

Joanne K. Mattson Thompson, 80, of Lino Lakes, formerly of Babbitt, passed away on Friday, July 31, 2020, at Lino Lakes Assisted Living. Graveside services will be held at 1 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 10 at Argo Cemetery in Babbitt with Pastor Erik Roth officiating. Arrangements are with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her daughter, Jodi (Shane) Johnson of Maple Grove; grandchildren, Griffin and Gabriel Johnson of Maple Grove; sister, Linda (Bruce)

Goodnough of Phillips, Wis.; sister-in-law, Linda Mattson of Shoreview; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Roger and Kathy Thompson of Ely; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Marjorie and Victor Tellez of Johnson City, Texas; sister-in-law, Maxine Swenson of Foley; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Beverly Lewis

Beverly Lewis, 94, of Ely, passed away at her residence on Thursday, July 30, 2020. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, Aug. 5 at First Lutheran Church in Ely. Family arrangements were entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

Darrell D. Williams

Darrell Dean Williams, 52, of Embarrass, died on Friday, July 17, 2020, at Essentia Health-St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

He is survived by his wife, Christina Vancamp Williams; children, Loni Jean, Sheena and Drake Williams; granddaughters; mother, Arvilla Elg; brothers, Kenny Hendricks,

George Williams and Dale Williams; sisters, Betty Burke and Pam Johnson; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Benjamin R. Kaiser

Benjamin R. Kaiser, 37, of Gilbert, died on Monday, March 30, 2020, from injuries sustained in a utility side-by-side vehicle accident near his home. A memorial service was held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church on Friday, July 31 with Rev. Father Brandon Moravitz as celebrant. Inurnment followed in the Eveleth Cemetery on the Matos family plot with his grandmother. Family services were provided by Bauman-Cron, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his children, Joseph, Jack and Sophie, who reside with their mother, Katie, in Eveleth; parents, Bob and Theresa of Crane Lake; sister, Megan (James) Devine of Ely; niece and nephews, Zoe, Otto, Wyatt and Boden of Ely; aunt, Barbra Kaiser of Virginia; uncles, Bill Kaiser of Woodbury and Bill Matos of Eveleth; and cousin, Ashley Leonard of Waconia.

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good-sam.jobs and search "International Falls"



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EEOAA

PUBLIC NOTICES

Orr EDA - TIF 1-1 EDA - 2019 Annual Reporting Form

Home Overview District Info Debt Interfund Loans PAYG Project Costs Transfers Rev & Expr B:

2019 Annual Disclosure Statement

1 Name of Development Authority: Orr EDA

2 Name of Municipality: Orr

3 The Timberjay (Name of the Newspaper) 8/7/2020 (Date of Publication)

The following information represents the annual disclosure of tax increment districts for the year ended December 31, 2019.

TIF 1-1 EDA	
4 Current net tax capacity	\$ 4,419
5 Original net tax capacity	\$ 189
6 Captured net tax capacity	\$ 4,230
7 Principal and interest payments due in 2020	\$ 0
8 Tax increment received in 2019	\$ 6,069
9 Tax increment expended in 2019	\$ 5,951
10 Month and year of first tax increment receipt	5/1999
11 Date of required decertification	12/31/2024
12 The total increased property taxes to be paid from outside the district if fiscal disparities Option A applies*	\$ 0

\* The fiscal disparities property tax law provides that the growth in commercial-industrial property tax values is shared throughout the area. In a tax increment financing district, this value sharing can either result in a decrease in tax increment financing district revenue or a tax increase for other properties in the municipality depending on whether the tax increment financing district contributes its share of the growth. Amounts displayed here indicate that the district did not contribute its growth in commercial-industrial property tax values and represent the resulting increase in taxes on other properties in the City for taxes payable in 2019.

Additional information regarding this district may be obtained from:

13 Name:	Cheri Carter
14 Address:	PO Box 237
15 City:	Orr
16 State:	MN
17 Zip Code:	55771
18 Phone:	(218) 757-3288 Enter as 6512962551.
19 Email:	orrnmn@centurytel.net

Enter 'none' if no email address.

Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 7, 2020

PUBLIC NOTICES

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business. Assumed Name: Touched by a Starr PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 304 Alder St., PO Box 463, Tower, MN 55790 NAMEHOLDER(S): Gina Marie Empey, 304 Alder St., PO Box 463, Tower, MN 55790

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has

authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

Dated: July 2, 2020 SIGNED BY: Gina Marie Empey MAILING ADDRESS: PO Box 463, Tower, MN 55790

Published in the Timberjay, August 7 & 14, 2020

KUGLER TOWNSHIP

Kugler Township will hold their Public Accuracy Test for the AutoMark elections machine on Sunday, Aug. 9, 2020, at 6 p.m. at the Kugler Town Hall.

Julie Suihkonen, Town Clerk

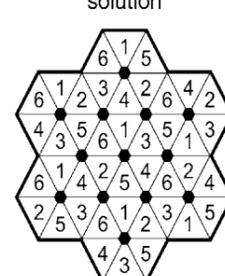
Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 7, 2020

King Crossword - Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

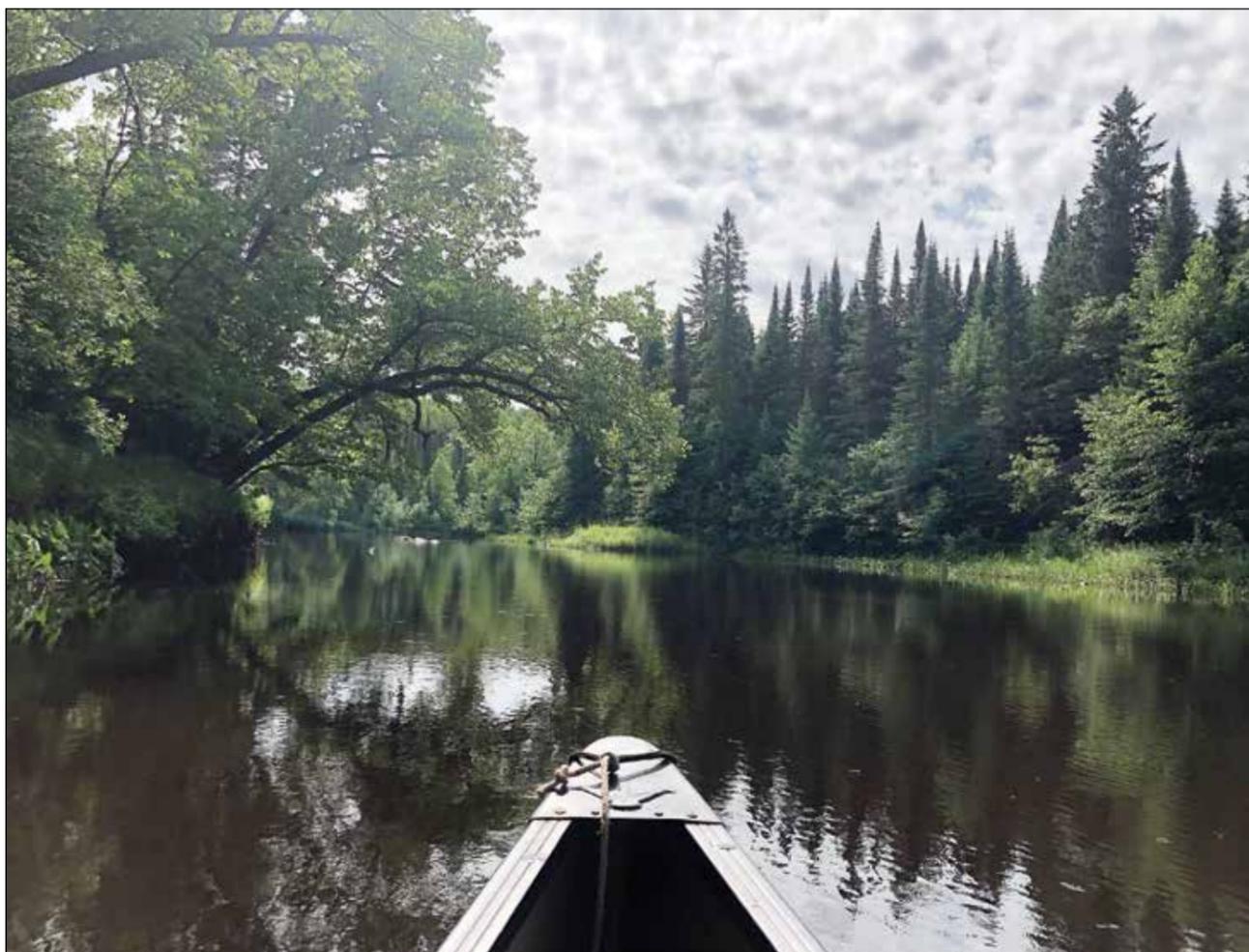
SNOWFLAKES solution





# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
Northwoods



ADVENTURES

## Down the Little Fork

The right canoe, a bit better planning, provides redemption on the river

**L**ITTLE FORK RIVER— A 20-mile paddle down this (mostly) lazy river recently was a journey of redemption, of sorts.

It had been at least 15 years since the last time I'd traveled this same stretch of river with a friend and the first attempt had plenty of memorable moments. I thought it was great fun, but my friend was less impressed by the misadventures that came along the way, mostly in those brief moments when the river turned from placid to turbulent.

Shortly after that trip, I purchased a canoe better designed for rapids but, not surprisingly, had never found a partner willing to repeat the trip. Apparently, the word had spread. The lost paddle in the rapids, which left me paddling with a board that we had managed to find downstream. The full immersion at the bottom of the ledge drop at Samuelson Park. We had used a straight-bottomed Wenonah and it submerged like a submarine into the backroller at the base of the drop. Not that a swim felt too bad after 20 miles of paddling!

So, when another friend indicated interest in giving the Little Fork a try, I jumped at the chance before either one of us could change our minds.

It was the first time my no-longer-new canoe had seen rapids and it performed as well as I could have hoped. The rapids were still there, but this time we negotiated them without major incident. We nearly took a bath when the right side of the canoe lodged on a rock in Class II rapids, but we managed to right the ship just before taking on water. We took out at Samuelson Park but not before we made it through the ledge drop with nothing but a few whoops and hollers



**Top: A view down river, demonstrating the difference between the west side, dominated by deciduous forest, and the east side, which was much more coniferous.**

**Above: The Class II rapids at Samuelson Park near Rauch.**

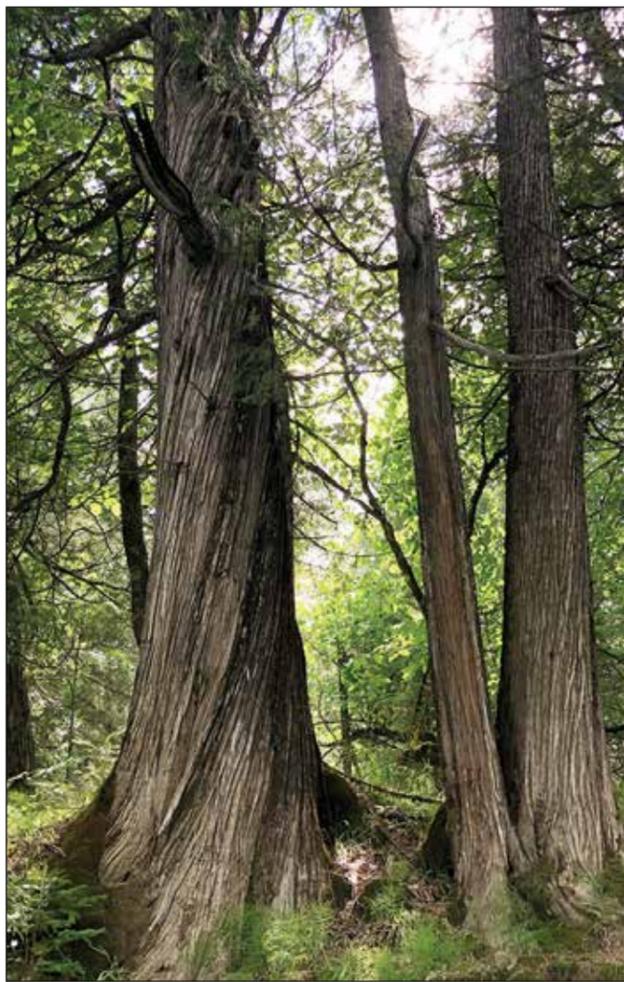
**Right: Large white cedar lined the banks in many locations along the river.**

all photos/M. HelMBERGER

as we bounced right over the backrollers at the bottom. Few things can make you forget everything and just live in the moment like running a robust rapids, preferably in the right kind of canoe.

Of course, on the Little Fork, those moments of excitement are interspersed with long stretches of mostly languid water, which give you time to consider how the Little Fork serves as a kind of demarcation on the landscape— a divide between a more deciduous

See **LITTLE FORK**, pg. 5B



### Wildflower Watch

This week's featured flower  
**INDIAN PIPE**



It appears to be a good year for **Indian Pipe**, also known as Ghost Pipe, *Monotropa uniflora*, which is in bloom in abundance right now, particularly in piney woods.

This plant's ghostly appearance is due to the lack of chlorophyll. Rather than producing its own food from sunlight, this deep-shade-dwelling plant feeds through a beneficial relationship with certain fungi that derive sustenance from surrounding trees.

Unlike fungi, however, which reproduce through spores, Indian Pipe is a perennial flowering plant, which produces seeds.

It's a member of the Ericaceae family, which includes blueberries.

### Outdoors in brief

#### Apply now for special youth deer hunts

**REGIONAL**— Minnesota has special hunting opportunities for youth deer hunters. There is a limited number of permits for each hunt, with the individual hunts taking place on various dates during the fall in state parks and a state wildlife area. Adults must accompany youth during these hunts. Hunters may apply for special youth hunt permits through Friday, Aug. 14. More information is available on the DNR website.

Special youth deer hunts are different from the statewide youth deer season that does not require an application and takes place Oct. 15-18.

#### Waterfowl regulations now available

**REGIONAL**— Hunters looking for duck and goose season dates and regulations can find the information they need in the 2020 Minnesota Waterfowl Hunting Regulations handbook, available on the Department of Natural Resources website at [mndnr.gov/hunting/waterfowl](http://mndnr.gov/hunting/waterfowl) or wherever DNR licenses are sold.

The early Canada goose season begins Saturday, Sept. 5, and the regular duck and goose season opens Saturday, Sept. 26.

The new waterfowl hunting regulations for this year are:

The bag limit on scaup will be one per day through Oct. 22 and two per day the remainder of the season.

Waterfowl hunting licenses are on sale and are available at any DNR license agent, by telephone at 888-665-4236, or online at [mndnr.gov/buyalicense](http://mndnr.gov/buyalicense).

See us at  
[timberjay.com](http://timberjay.com)

**WILDLIFE**

**LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST**

from NOAA weather

**Did I miss Blueberry Fest?  
Bear in the park causes a stir in Ely**

by **KEITH VANDERVORT**  
Ely Editor

ELY—A bear that spent part of its day in Whiteside Park caused a bit of a ruckus here last Wednesday evening.

That's when calls came into the Ely Police Department reporting a bear that had climbed up one of the trees at the park. The event caused a traffic hazard as drivers stopped in the roadway to watch the bear, according to Ely Police Chief Chad Houde. Others approached the tree to take photographs.

Police eventually taped off the area, and established traffic control with assistance from the Lake County Sheriff's Department and the Ely Public Works Department.

After a brief time without disturbance, the bear climbed down and left the park. Soon after, law enforcement received a call that children followed the



**A young bear climbed a tree at Whiteside Park last Wednesday evening as onlookers gathered.**  
submitted photo

bear and caused it to climb another tree. Eventually the bear came down and reportedly left the area.

"A good lesson here is to leave the bear alone and watch from a distance," Chief Houde said. "This will keep everyone safe."

Friday		Saturday		Sunday		Monday		Tuesday																
<b>79</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>53</b>															
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.
07/27	82	53	0.00		07/27	82	52	0.00		07/27	80	57	0.00		07/27	77	55	0.43		07/27	81	59	0.00	
07/28	77	50	0.00		07/28	77	52	0.00		07/28	77	55	0.01		07/28	73	54	0.00		07/28	77	52	0.00	
07/29	77	46	0.00		07/29	77	45	0.00		07/29	75	55	0.00		07/29	75	48	0.00		07/29	76	46	0.00	
07/30	76	46	0.00		07/30	77	45	0.00		07/30	75	55	0.00		07/30	79	48	0.00		07/30	76	46	0.00	
07/31	81	47	0.00		07/31	79	46	0.00		07/31	79	56	0.00		07/31	82	48	0.00		07/31	80	45	0.00	
08/01	83	49	0.00		08/01	83	51	0.08		08/01	83	56	0.00		08/01	77	55	0.00		08/01	82	53	0.00	
08/02	75	53	0.03		08/02	75	50	0.25		08/02	73	55	0.16		08/02	70	50	0.00		08/02	75	53	0.15	
Total				11.64	YTD Total				11.68	YTD Total				15.68	YTD Total				NA	YTD Total				11.93

**LITTLE FORK...**Continued from page 4B



**Left: The largest drop on the Little Fork River, known as Hannine Falls, is located near Meadowbrook. The falls create a Class IV rapids that is best portaged rather than run.**

photo by M. Helmberger

around the world. We did have one unusual reminder that at least a bit of agriculture, and some astonishingly outdated practices, still live on in the valley, however. While crossing under the Range Line Road bridge, we watched as a local "farmer" shoveled a heaping trailer of manure-and-urine-soaked straw right off the bridge into the river. We called up to him, at first to avoid being hit by the debris, then to point out that such disposal was clearly illegal and that it would be far better to compost the material on land where it would actually be useful in improving his soil. He seemed bewildered that anyone would think his actions were unusual and he kept shoveling away as we paddled past the floating remnants of what appeared to be an earlier trailerful of manure-encrusted straw that was still floating on the water. We could hear the loud splashes as forkfuls of the sodden straw hit the water as we rounded a corner and lost sight of the bridge.

As we pulled in after a long day of paddling, I felt a bit of satisfaction, suggesting I had learned from the mistakes of my first attempt to negotiate the river's rapids. This time, we had the right canoe and, yes, I had remembered to bring a spare paddle. That we never needed it, was just icing on the cake.

forest to the west and the start of the more boreal woods to the north and east. Along our way, we made note of the fact that the western shore of the river was dominated by large deciduous trees. Basswood, black ash, and even some silver maple. We noted that the eastern shore holds considerably more conifers, particularly very tall white spruce that stand far above the rest of the canopy in many places.

On both sides, in places, the silty clay grow giant white cedars—trees that have clearly been growing for centuries. It's no surprise that the state's largest white cedar grows in the rich soil of the Little Fork Valley, somewhere on the Nett Lake Reservation. As of 2018, that tree measured 186 inches (or 15.5 feet) in circumference.

These old trees were, no doubt, growing back in 1937, when the last of the old-time loggers conducted Minnesota's final log drive on the Little Fork. For about a quarter

century before that, loggers had used the river to transport millions of cords of pulpwood and as many board feet of sawtimber to mills downstream, scouring the clay banks as they did. Today, it's believed that the river's turbid water is due, at least in part, to the damage done by that early industrial era.

More than 80 years later, at the height of summer, the riverbanks show little sign of any damage done. The water near shore was lined with vegetation, like broad-leaved arrowhead, also called duck potato, which was mostly in bloom. Up on the shore, the forest edges were lush and overgrown with blooming hedge bindweed, bur cucumber, Virginia creeper, and other vines.

The verdant banks were a reminder of the richness of this valley, which supported a prosperous agricultural economy for decades until the introduction of industrial agriculture wiped out small-scale farming operations

**Fishing reports**

**Ely area**

Walleye - Crankbait bite for walleyes has been excellent this last week, as several groups reported catching nice limits of walleye while crankbaiting. Crankbaits that dive 15-30 feet of water and trolled over large flats, during the evening hours, has been the ticket. Other anglers continue to report catching walleyes with spinner rigs, tipped with crawlers or minnows, worked around sunken islands in 15-25 feet of water now. Many of the anglers catching fish out here have reported that walleye are there one day, then gone the next, so anglers should stay mobile to keep catching.

Panfish- Crappie anglers have been finding crappies suspended out over deep water 15-20 feet below the surface. Good electronics are key to finding these scattered,

suspending fish. Crappie minnows suspended under a bobber has been very effective in catching crappies. Sunfish continue to be found in weedbeds and particularly on weedlines. Small jigs tipped with either a wax worm or small angleworms, have been very effective on them.

Lake trout - Lake trout fishing has improved this last week. Anglers have been catching lakies 20-30 feet down, over deep water. Crankbaits fished behind planner boards have been most effective. Blood nose colored crankbaits have been very effective.

*Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors of Ely.*

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**DRAIN**

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- Remove drain plug and open all water draining devices
- Trash unused bait

**DRY**

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**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**MORCOM TOWNSHIP**

Morcom Township will hold their Public Accuracy Test for the AutoMark elections machine on Sunday, Aug. 9, 2020, at 6 p.m. at the Morcom Town Hall. Masks will be required.

Sasha Lehto, Town Clerk

*Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 7, 2020*

**Town of Embarrass  
7503 Levander Rd.**

A public accuracy test for the Election Optical Scan Equipment and AutoMark will be held at the Town Hall on Monday, August 10 at 8:30 a.m. The public is welcome.

Jennifer Boese, Embarrass Town Clerk

*Published in the Timberjay, Aug. 7, 2020*

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Temporary Nurse**

Qualifications include:

- Valid RN or LPN License
- Experience preferred
- Experience in working with school health services preferred

Application available at: [www.ely.k12.mn.us](http://www.ely.k12.mn.us)

A complete application must include the following:

- District Application
- Resume
- College Transcripts
- 2 letters of recommendation

Return materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email [mwognum@ely.k12.mn.us](mailto:mwognum@ely.k12.mn.us)

Starting Rate of Pay: \$28.95/hour  
Hours: 6-8 hours/day  
Deadline to apply: August 10, 2020; open until filled.

*Published in the Timberjay, July 31 & Aug. 7, 2020*

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Qualifications include:

- High school diploma, with post-secondary training in facility maintenance preferred
- Ability to read basic operating instructions and write reports
- Demonstrate aptitude for successful completion of the tasks assigned
- Such alternatives to the above qualifications as the supervisor, administration, and board finds appropriate and acceptable
- Prior work experience demonstrating positive and effective interpersonal skills in the work place
- Demonstrated ability to perform assigned tasks without direct supervision

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONAL CAPACITIES:**

- Ability to lift a minimum of 50 pounds
- Ability to climb ladders (at least 10 feet)
- Ability to withstand heights (up to 30 feet)
- Ability to climb 3 flights of stairs in 1 minute
- Pass physical exam per doctor's statement
- Visual and auditory acuity, corrected or non-corrected, at standard levels as established by appropriate medical standards
- Any other qualifications as deemed appropriate by the school board

Application available at: [www.ely.k12.mn.us](http://www.ely.k12.mn.us)

A complete application must include the following:

- District Application
- Resume
- College Transcripts
- 2 letters of recommendation

Return materials to: Ely Public Schools, Attn: Superintendent, 600 E. Harvey St., Ely, MN 55731 or email [mwognum@ely.k12.mn.us](mailto:mwognum@ely.k12.mn.us)

Starting Rate of Pay: \$19.63/hour  
Hours: 8 hours per day/40 hours per week  
Deadline to apply: August 10, 2020; open until filled.

*Published in the Timberjay, July 31 & Aug. 7, 2020*

**Super Crossword**

**Answers**

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

**King Crossword**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Autumn mo.
- 4 "— Breckinridge"
- 8 Drag along
- 12 That girl
- 13 Quite some time
- 14 Shrek is one
- 15 Remiss
- 16 Flattery
- 18 Eye-related
- 20 Marry
- 21 Hen pen
- 24 Famous
- 28 Flowering vine
- 32 Clinton veep
- 33 Standard
- 34 Billow
- 36 Watch chain
- 37 Sister of Osiris
- 39 Grump
- 41 Eighth Greek letter
- 43 Rip
- 44 Historic period
- 46 Healthy
- 50 Dairy item
- 55 Aye opponent
- 56 Heap
- 57 Carte
- 58 Conk out
- 59 Choir member
- 60 Vail gear
- 61 On in years

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12				13					14				
15				16				17					
18			19				20						
				21		22	23		24		25	26	27
28	29	30					31		32				
33				34				35		36			
37			38		39				40				
41				42		43							
				44		45			46		47	48	49
50	51	52				53	54				55		
56						57					58		
59						60					61		

**DOWN**

- 1 Norway's capital
- 19 Lemieux milieu

- 2 Fellow
- 3 Libretto
- 4 Team animals?
- 5 Evergreen type
- 6 Caviar, really
- 7 From the start
- 8 Frank
- 9 — Khan
- 10 Web address
- 11 Albanian money
- 17 Coffee break hour
- 19 Lemieux milieu
- 22 Piece of work
- 23 1992 presidential candidate
- 25 Bean curd
- 26 Cupid's alias
- 27 Society newbies
- 28 Skewer
- 29 Laundry
- 30 One of HOMES
- 31 Chills and fever
- 35 Dutch Renaissance scholar
- 38 Audiophile's setup
- 40 Expert
- 42 Joan of —
- 45 Weaponry
- 47 Loosen
- 48 Catch red-handed
- 49 Changed the color
- 50 Hot tub
- 51 Painter's medium
- 52 Last (Abbr.)
- 53 "A mouse!"
- 54 Blackbird

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**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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

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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦**

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

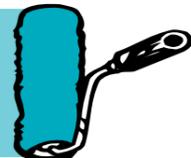
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