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# the TIMBERJAY



Serving the communities of northern St. Louis County since 1989

VOL. 32, ISSUE 25 June 25, 2021 \$1<sup>00</sup>

## CITY OF TOWER

# City, developers wrangle over river docking

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
 Managing Editor

City threatens prosecution if river pilings are removed; jurisdiction unclear

TOWER— Persistence has finally paid off for the developer of a planned RV park here. After six years of on-again, off-again battles with city officials over his proposal, Dave Rose has his final approval in place after the Minnesota Department of

Health signed off on his plans for a 32-unit RV campground, located along the East Two River. Construction on the project has been underway, in fits and starts, for the past several months.

Yet Rose still faces at least one more battle with

**Right: The tattered remains of century-old river pilings have become a sore point between developers and the city of Tower.** photo by M. Helmberger

city hall. Rose and an adjacent developer, Geoff Griffin, have expressed their intent to remove about 200 linear feet of old retaining wall, or pilings, along the river, that currently prevents access to the river from their property. Both developers say they want to provide docking for future

See...TOWER pg. 9



## BROADBAND

# No easy options for Greenwood

by JODI SUMMIT  
 Tower-Soudan Editor

GREENWOOD TWP- There may be no easy answers on how to get broadband internet service to Greenwood Township, but there will be some options if the township decides to move forward. The lack of decent internet service, let alone high-speed service, is seen as a major issue facing the township in the future, particularly as increasing numbers of residents and new arrivals seek to work from home.

The town board met with Joe Buttweiler, from broadband provider CTC, along with IRRRB staffer Whitney Ridlon and RAMS director Steve Giorgi, during a special meeting on June 15.

CTC did some preliminary engineering work in the township last year and came up with some preliminary figures on the cost to bring broadband to all road-access properties in the township. Total price tag: \$6.3 million.

“You’ve done the survey, we’ve done the preliminary engineering,” said Buttweiler. “This is a common spot to hit a barrier.”

See...BROADBAND pg. 11



Joe Buttweiler



## WILDFIRE

# Quick response saves the day

Aerial assault contains Embarrass blaze despite extreme fire weather

by DAVID COLBURN  
 Cook/Orr Editor

EMBARRASS- It was bad timing for a wildfire. With high winds, low humidity, and tinder dry woods, the 60-acre blaze southeast of the Four Corners intersection, sparked by a downed powerline last Friday, could have been worse— much worse.

Which is why fire offi-

cials unloaded everything they had on the would-be conflagration, with a massive aerial assault that knocked the fire down by later that evening. Fire crews continued to work the site much of this week to put out the last remaining hot spots.

Called the Rakhola Road fire for the small strip of forest between that road and Hwy. 135 where it started, winds gusting in

**Above: A CL-415 drops water on the fire on Friday afternoon.**

**Right: Fire scorches a tree.** photos by D. Colburn

excess of 40 mph contributed to its cause and rapid spread.

“It started from just a small tree on a power line,” Embarrass Fire Chief Tom

See...FIRE pg. 11



## END OF AN ERA

# Ely’s oldest business closing soon

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
 Ely Editor

JD Mills Company clothing store opened in 1901

ELY— Shoppers bustled in and out of the doors of Ely’s oldest retail business last Saturday just as the summer tourist season ramped up. Those days will soon end as the J.D. Mills Company prepares to close for good next month after a

120-year run.

“I remember coming in here a long time ago when we were on vacation every summer and getting our school clothes,” said one out-of-town shopper who reminisced about the good old days. “It just won’t be

**John Mills still uses a vintage cash register in the J.D. Mills Company clothing store on Sheridan Steet in Ely.** photo by K. Vandervort

the same not having this store here in town,” she said, as she scanned the racks for clothing.

John, the friendly

bearded man standing near the vintage cash register, the third generation Mills to own

See...MILLS pg. 9



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## Community notices

### Lake Vermilion Pow Wow, June 25-27

VERMILION RESERVATION- The Lake Vermilion Traditional Pow Wow will be held Friday, June 25 to Sunday, June 27. Grand entries will be at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday and at 1 p.m. on Sunday. 2 Step Championship, winner takes all.

### Babbitt Scholarship Scramble awards \$12,000 in scholarships

BABBITT- The Men's Club of the Babbitt Golf Association has awarded a total of \$12,000 in scholarships to six seniors from Northeast Range High School. Each scholarship is in the amount of \$2,000. The graduates receiving the scholarship are Anne Barich, Oskar Koivisto, Alexia Lightfeather, Phoebe Morgan, Sadie Theel and Jimmy Zupancich. In 23 years of the Men's Club awarding scholarships, they have awarded a total of \$185,500 to 115 graduates. The scholarship money is raised during the annual Labor Day Scholarship Scramble held at the Babbitt Golf Course.

### The Art of Tying Knots: Macramé Take and Make Kits



REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Library System will be providing The Art of Tying Knots: Macramé Take and Make Kits to member public libraries to distribute July 1-31. Learn the basic three knots of macramé and create a trendy micro-macramé zipper pull. This DIY project, created by Minnesota

artist Jen Anfinson, can be used on jackets, backpacks, purses – anything with a zipper! This is a great hands-on opportunity to create an artistic gift or even start a new hobby! This program is geared towards adults and kids ages 10 and up (younger kids may need help from an adult). Kits will be distributed at Babbitt Public Library, Cook Public Library, Ely Public Library, Virginia Public Library, Arrowhead Library System Bookmobile, and Arrowhead Library System Mail-A-Book

Please note each location has a limited number of kits. This program, sponsored by Arrowhead Library System, was funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. To learn more about Arrowhead Legacy Events, please see the calendar at [www.alslib.info](http://www.alslib.info) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/alslibinfo](http://www.facebook.com/alslibinfo).

### Volunteers sought for Local Mental Health Advisory Council

REGIONAL- St. Louis County is seeking several volunteers to serve on the Local Mental Health Advisory Council. Ideal candidates include anyone with professional training related to mental health, or anyone who has lived experience.

The group works to identify existing resources and provide recommendations to St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services regarding changes, additions and improvements needed to local mental health services for children and adults.

The application deadline is Wednesday, June 30. The Local Mental Health Advisory Council meets on the third Thursday of each month from 4:30-6 p.m. Advisory council members are asked to commit to serve on the council for two years. There is a separate advisory council serving the southern part of St. Louis County, though additional volunteers are not needed for this group at this time.

More information about the work of the Local Advisory Council and a link to apply can be found online at [stlouiscountymn.gov/lac](http://stlouiscountymn.gov/lac).

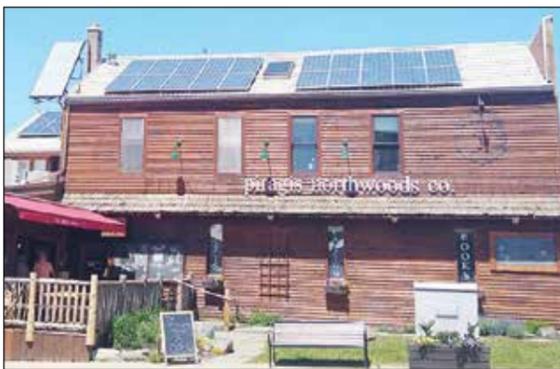
## IRON RANGE PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

# Here Comes the Sun!

IRPS presents a self-guided solar tour of the range

REGIONAL- Here comes the sun. The sun, as you may know, gives its energy freely, everywhere. We and the whole Earth community live by its light. As society approaches the end of the fossil fuel era, we are increasingly turning toward the endless power of the sun to provide electricity.

From Ely to Grand Rapids, solar energy is powering the Range. Across our area, people and communities are turning to the sun for their homes, businesses, public buildings and public utilities. A solar plant is operating at high capacity in Mt. Iron. A new community solar array is currently under construction in Grand Rapids. Businesses in Ely are saving money on energy costs. So are government buildings in Virginia and Mt. Iron. Bois Forte Reservation is turning to the sun's energy for growth, with solar installations on their government buildings and some homes. People are finding cost effective ways to invest in solar for their



Piragis Northwoods Company is one of many local businesses that has installed solar panels and will be featured on the tour. submitted photo

homes. Many more people are asking questions. Does it work? Can we afford it?

### The Tour

This summer, the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability is presenting Here Comes the Sun, A Range Summer '21 Solar Tour. Beginning in Ely in June and ending in Grand Rapids in August, the self-guided tour will spotlight solar power across the Range, at work for homes, businesses, public buildings, and community

utilities. Each phase of the tour will highlight solar projects already working in Range communities, and some that are 'in the works.' Guided solar tours or group events will take place in those communities. People can find out how it works from people who know, either in person or on the [irpsmn.org](http://irpsmn.org) website.

A map of solar energy sites is being created on the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability website, [irpsmn.org](http://irpsmn.org). Each location on the solar tour is providing

answers to important, practical questions, such as their reason for investing in solar, type of solar installation, who installed, cost, time to install, energy savings, any financial incentives used, and any maintenance needed. Posters at each location on the tour provide QR access to the [irpsmn.org](http://irpsmn.org) website with full information. People can visit any of the businesses and public buildings at their convenience. If someone wants to contact a solar homeowner, a connection can be arranged (again, via the website).

Here Comes the Sun is a journey of discovery. Undiscovered solar sites will be identified and added to the solar map of the Range. Solar stories will be told and shared. More hands-on information will be made available throughout the summer. Solar tour partners SUN (Solar United Neighbors), RREAL (Rural Renewable Energy Alliance), and REALSolar will be sharing their resources.

## EDUCATION

### Local students receive Alworth Memorial Scholarships

REGIONAL- The Marshall H. and Nellie Alworth Memorial Fund has awarded its latest round of scholarships to 72 northern Minnesota high school seniors pursuing bachelor's degrees related to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Selected from among 204 applicants, recipients will each receive \$20,000, distributed over eight semesters, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year. Awardees live in the Minnesota counties of Aitkin, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Cook, Crow Wing, Lake, Itasca, Koochiching and St. Louis.

"For more than 70 years, the Alworth Memorial Fund has been proud to assist young people dedicated to making a difference in STEM-related fields," said Patty Salo Downs, Executive Director of the Alworth Memorial Fund. "We're thrilled that this year's impressive

group of scholarship recipients will be furthering their education at post-secondary institutions across the United States."

Since 1949, the Alworth Memorial Fund has distributed more than \$53 million among over 5,300 motivated young people. The fund is available to students in 60 high schools, plus those who are homeschooled, in the 10 northern Minnesota counties listed above. Find additional information about the Marshall H. and Nellie Alworth Memorial Fund at [www.AlworthScholarship.org](http://www.AlworthScholarship.org).

The 2021-2022 Alworth Scholarship recipients in our area included William Davies of Ely Memorial High School, Jasper Johnston of Ely Memorial High School, Oskar Koivisto of Northeast Range High School, and Brynn Simpson of North Woods High School.

### Mesabi Range College Honor Roll

#### High Honors (3.75 - 4.0)

Emma Aluni, Embarrass  
Christian Cersine, Babbitt  
Steven Fenske, Winton  
Dillon Gorsma, Soudan  
Brianna Lehti, Soudan  
Vanessa Little, Babbitt  
Anthony Norcia, Tower  
Derek Phillips, Ely  
Evan Rabe, Winton  
Chevelle Schroeder, Embarrass  
Arija Thompson, Embarrass  
Magnus Trembath, Embarrass  
Brandie Walker, Cook

#### Honors (3.5 - 3.74)

Steven Kerntz, Ely  
Jackson Levens, Tower  
Dustin Moravitz, Ely  
Winter Sainio, Ely  
James Towner, Gheen

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<b>ROSSINI'S rollicking comic opera</b> <b>LA CENERENTOLA</b> CINDERELLA in Italian with English supertitles <b>JULY 16 7:00 PM</b> Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>JULY 18 3:30 PM</b> Discovery Center Amphitheater, Chisholm STAGE DIRECTOR Chia Patiño    CONDUCTED BY Gavriel Heine    SET DESIGN Angelique Powers		<b>Cinderella</b> A special one-hour adaptation of Rossini's comic opera, just for the children. <b>JULY 15 3:30 PM</b> Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>JULY 17 3:30 PM</b> Discovery Center Amphitheater, Chisholm	
<b>NLMF ORCHESTRA</b> <b>Festive Fourth</b> Festive Fourth! Concerts with the NLMF Orchestra Gavriel Heine conducting Featuring West Side Story and opera arias performed by stars of the NLMF Opera! <b>JULY 3 4:00 PM</b> Discovery Center, Chisholm <b>JULY 4 4:00 PM</b> Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>NLMF ORCHESTRA CONCERT</b> Alexander Markov, violin; Vivaldi's Four Seasons plus Winners of 2021 NLMF Concerto Competition <b>JULY 22 7:00 PM</b> Historic Hibbing High School Auditorium, Hibbing	<b>CHAMBER MUSIC</b> <b>OPENING CONCERT</b> JULY 2 7:00 PM Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>FACULTY CONCERT</b> Brahms Piano Trio, Op. 114; Savijski, Gandelsman, Feigelson <b>JULY 6 7:00 PM</b> Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>JULY 7 7:00 PM</b> B'nai Abraham, Virginia <b>CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT</b> Sharing the Range: Which Side Are You On? <b>JULY 9 7:00 PM</b> Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>JULY 10 7:00 PM</b> B'nai Abraham, Virginia <b>OPERA SCENES &amp; ARIAS</b> Vermilion Comm. College, Ely	<b>CHAMBER MUSIC IN BUHL</b> JULY 12 7:00 PM Buhl Public Library, Buhl <b>CHAMBER MUSIC AT VCC</b> Schubert The Trout JULY 19 4:00 PM Vermilion Comm. College, Ely <b>OPERA SCENES &amp; ARIAS</b> JULY 19 7:00 PM Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora <b>CHAMBER MUSIC AT B'NAI ABRAHAM</b> Schubert The Trout JULY 20 7:00 PM B'nai Abraham, Virginia <b>NLMF CONCERT IN THE PARK</b> Indian Drumming Concert JULY 21 4:00 PM Whiteside Park, Ely <b>FINAL CLOSING CONCERT</b> JULY 23 7:00 PM Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora	<b>SHARING THE RANGE LECTURE SERIES</b> <b>OJIBWE NATION... BEFORE THERE WAS AN IRON RANGE</b> Lecture by Dr. Anton Treuer JULY 1 7:00 PM B'nai Abraham, Virginia <b>THE ETHNICITIES THAT SHAPED THE IRON RANGE</b> JULY 8 7:00 PM B'nai Abraham, Virginia <b>WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?</b> Dr. Gary Kaunonen Music of Social Protest: The Aurora Strike 1916 Music by Christopher Shin and Laurin Plant JULY 9 7:00 PM Veda Zuponic Auditorium, Mesabi East, Aurora JULY 10 7:00 PM B'nai Abraham, Virginia <b>B'NAI ABRAHAM SYNAGOGUE &amp; THE HISTORY OF IRON RANGE JEWRY</b> JULY 25 7:00 PM B'nai Abraham, Virginia

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ACCIDENT

# Car versus building: Vehicle plows into Ely business

by KEITH VANDERVORT  
Ely Editor

ELY—A quiet Father's Day afternoon here was not without a bit of unexpected excitement when a car crashed into a building on the west end of town.

According to the Ely Police Department, a PT Cruiser driven by Jeremy Swanson of Ely was traveling west on Camp Street just after 1 p.m. As he approached the left-hand turn onto Third Avenue at the end of the street, he

failed to negotiate the turn successfully.

The car plowed through the chain link fence of the parking lot at the Custom Theaters of Ely business, clipped the edge of one garage, and drove completely into another garage.

Swanson was suffering a medical emergency at the time of the incident and was transported by ambulance to Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital, according to police.

The Ely Fire Department could not reach the lone occupant of the

vehicle until the car was pulled out of the building by a local towing company.

"The driver must have been traveling at a pretty fast rate of speed to travel into the building that far," said Ely Fire Chief David Marshall.

The Ely Fire Department, Police Department and Ambulance Service were assisted by deputies from the St. Louis County Sheriff's Department and the Lake County Sheriff's Department.



The Ely Fire Department worked to extricate a driver from his vehicle that crashed into Custom Theaters on Sunday afternoon. photo by K. Vandervort

ST. LOUIS COUNTY COURTS

# Linda Keith felony charge dismissed by judge

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

TOWER— Nearly two years to the day after Linda Keith admitted she intentionally destroyed a city laptop computer, the St. Louis County Attorney's Office has dismissed the criminal complaint against the former Tower City Clerk-Treasurer.

The felony charge for the destruction of public

property had hung over Keith's head for more than a year and a half, but her refusal to plead in the case prompted the county to dismiss the charge just days before a jury trial in the case was set to begin.

The case stemmed from statements made by Keith shortly after she was suspended as clerk-treasurer in June of 2019. City officials had demanded that she return a city laptop that

she had in her possession, but Keith never returned the device. Instead, she told a Breitung police officer that the computer had failed, so her son shot the computer and she later drove over the device with her pickup before burning the remains to ash in a fire.

The case had languished in a court system that had struggled to keep up with its caseload as a result of the COVID-19

pandemic. During the year and a half since she was charged, the case had gone to three different prosecutors. The most recent, Chris Florey, an assistant county attorney, received the case about a month ago following the departure of Karl Sundquist, who left the county for private practice.

Florey acknowledged that cases become harder to prosecute as time goes by and he said he questioned

whether the prosecution had sufficient evidence to demonstrate the value of the computer, which was a critical element in the case. The felony charge that Keith faced required prosecutors to prove the computer was worth at least \$1,000. That likely would have proven difficult given that the computer was several years old and that prosecutors had no remains of the computer to counter

Keith's claim that it had stopped working and was beyond repair.

"I didn't think we had a reasonable likelihood of success at trial," said Florey.

Keith's dismissal was the beginning of the end of a city administration that had fumbled numerous issues, including grant mismanagement that could

See KEITH...pg. 5

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# OPINION

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## Editorial

### Can local news survive?

More importantly, will our communities survive as we shift our lives to the virtual world?

Is the death of local news unavoidable? That’s the question that’s on the tongues of many who follow the business of journalism at a time when many small town newspapers are shuttering their doors for the last time. We wrote recently about the demise of the *Journal* in International Falls, just the latest in a string of such stories in Minnesota and elsewhere in recent months.

It’s ironic that in the Information Age, the best, and often only, sources of information about what’s really happening in small towns all across the country, are struggling to survive like never before. The situation has prompted plenty of calls for action from newspaper publishers to members of Congress.

But what if none of the ideas proposed by would-be saviors of small town newspapers will really make a difference? What if the reason that community newspapers are struggling is that the traditional sense of community as we used to know it is disappearing?

We used to define community largely in geographical terms. You were part of the same community if you lived within the same city limits, or perhaps the same school attendance area or some other physical boundary that could be identified on a map.

Being part of that community gave one the incentive to understand its workings. In political terms, that meant understanding how we govern ourselves and how daily life unfolds in our communities, subjects that have long been the raison d’etre of small town newspapers.

Yet, for many of us, the definition of community is evolving as the social media silos many of us have created for ourselves have taken us away from our physical communities. This process was undoubtedly accelerated over the past year as the pandemic canceled the face-to-face gatherings that have long served as the glue of small town life. Community potlucks. School fundraisers. Friday night basketball. Bowling night. These were the regular reminders of our place in a larger whole, one that mattered to us. The faces we saw at these events helped to define our community. We understood that those who attended were our people and we recognized our common cause. We’ve probably all heard that traditional small town social life has been

on the decline for years. The pandemic only helped speed along the continued disintegration.

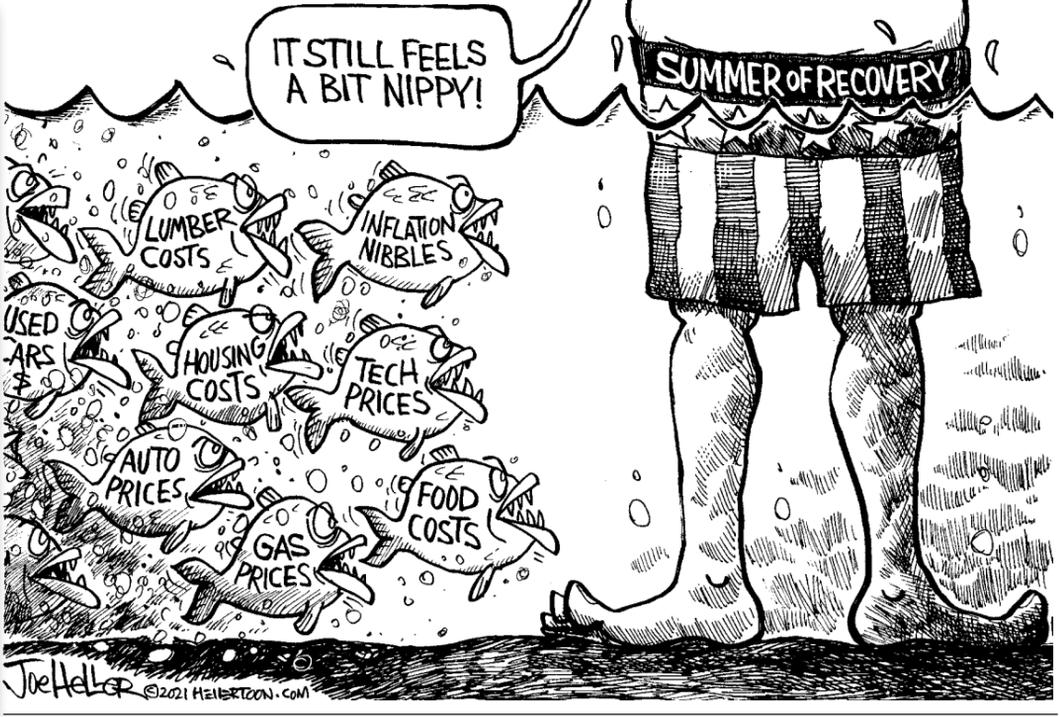
At the same time, social media and the evolution of other forms of media have consumed our time and drawn our attention elsewhere. As of last year, the average American spent just over two hours a day on social media, and that statistic means that many of us are spending much more time than that. Add in the time we spend in other online pursuits and it’s easy to understand how the computer and the online world it spawned are reshaping the way we see the world and our definition of community.

The political polarization we’ve experienced at the national level in recent years has further driven a wedge into our traditional communities, where such differences formerly didn’t matter. In our online world, we can easily isolate ourselves into far more comfortable communities where we can block or unfriend anyone who doesn’t agree with us. Such communities become self-reinforcing bubbles that can easily leave us isolated from those actually around us.

While many prognosticators have bemoaned the death of newspapers for years, there has long been a belief that small town newspapers could weather the seismic shifts posed by the Internet because they were, literally, the only reliable source of truly local news. If you wanted to know what the school board did this week, or if the city council was spending too many of your tax dollars, there was only one place to turn for the real story. That’s as true today as it ever was. This thought pushed many newspapers, even in large metropolitan areas, to shift toward “hyper-local” coverage, in an effort to stay relevant and timely in an era when readers often had instant online access to national or international news.

But what happens if nobody cares about local news anymore? As our attention is increasingly drawn away from our physical communities into often more titillating online alternatives, when do we have time to devote to local news? Perhaps more importantly, when do we have time to engage as actual citizens devoted to the hard work of building community?

These, of course, are questions. If only we had the answers.



## Letters from Readers

### Thanks for the work you do

To the wonderful *Timberjay* staff: This weekly newspaper arrives faithfully every Saturday or Monday and is read cover to cover. This newspaper is exactly what every community needs. In the suburb of Roseville, we no longer have a community newspaper and do we ever miss it. It is so good for us to be able to keep up with the North Country news. Thank you much for publishing the *Timberjay*.

Gus and Anne Haugan  
Roseville

### Dependence keeps Americans from revolution

I read your editorial in your paper this morning and came away with a different conclusion than “we must tax the rich more.” Our forefathers went to war with the British Government at the time over taxes....too many of them. The people who went to war and fought were the same people who always go to war and have to fight....the middle and lower classes. Those are really our forefathers. Of course, Washington, Jefferson, Adams etc.....are called our forefathers because they wrote the Constitution many years after the war and changed the governing institution from a group of individual states acting together voluntarily to a central institution called a Federal Government acting with power over the individual states.

Before the war there were many royalists who had received grants of land and privileges very similar to the tax breaks the wealthy receive now from the Government. In fact, if King George and the Parliament had been smart and just made people in America at that time English subjects instead of colonists and allowed them representation in Parliament instead of just taxing them without representation, there would have been no war. The elite, rich landowners of the time, including Washington, etc. would have never complained or gone to war and the poor and middle class

would have suffered like they did in England with too many taxes but supposedly represented by the elite and rich members in parliament.

My point is, given all the taxes the middle and lower class are paying today as opposed to the elite rich, why isn’t there a revolution going on? Are we different from our forefathers and why are we? The answer lies, I think, in what motivates a man? Does he do things for the interest of others or his own self-interest? Our real forefathers had to work for the elite and rich who had been given land grants and privileges through rents and hourly wages plus British taxes. They came to America with the hope of having their own and the fruits it would provide.

It is easy to see why they finally revolted. So why don’t we, if the ProPublica report is true? My answer is that so many people in America have become so dependent on the government in one form or another, just like the elite and rich, that they have lost their sense of having their own and the fruits it would provide. There are so many things to be talked about here and so little room. Suffice it to close with a quote from Thucydides in describing the Athenians telling the defeated Melians, “There is no morality in people with power... might makes right to them and people with power do what they can and the poor suffer what they must.”

Randy Love  
Cook

### Maybe trade can improve relations

I don’t know if nuclear first-strike capability is possible. We need to determine if an arms race with Russia could lead to our annihilation, and if so, we need to have both countries agree to a freeze on new nuclear weapons (at least if such a freeze is verifiable). There should, of course, be immediate inspection of any suspected nuclear weapon sites. If Russia doesn’t agree to this-and if any diplomatic gesture such as inviting them to join NATO doesn’t work-then we need to have tougher sanctions than we do at present.

We should also (especially if such a freeze is non-verifiable) consider removing the threat by the prospect of increased trade.

Alvin Blake  
Hibbing

### We welcome your letters

The *Timberjay* encourages letters to the editor. You can submit letters by mail at PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790, or email letters to marshall@timberjay.com.

Letters are subject to editing, primarily for length and clarity.



# Taking a solstice trek back in time

Another summer solstice has come and gone without checking off one of the items that’s been on my bucket list for years now – partaking of the celestial event in the grand and mysterious landscape of the ancestral Puebloan ruins of Chaco Canyon, New Mexico.



DAVID COLBURN

is an unfamiliar phrase, perhaps the word “Anasazi” may ring a bell. While first used by archaeologists and popularized in modern days by the supposed

around 1200 A.D., Anasazi is a Navajo word meaning “enemy ancestors” and has never been used by the Indigenous people of current-day pueblos to describe their Chacoan ancestors. Ancestral Puebloan has become the accepted and appropriate term.

In 2005, I was in between professional gigs and living for a while back in my little Kansas hometown. One hot summer afternoon I hopped in my car, popped in my R. Carlos

Nakai “Canyon Trilogy” CD of Navajo (Diné) flute music, and drove out of town headed west. I’d intended to be home by supper time.

Mesa Verde National Park had long been on the list of places I wanted to visit, and as I listened to Nakai’s haunting melodies my thoughts naturally drifted to the Southwest and the Four Corners region. When I reached the town 25 miles down the road where I had thought I’d turn back

toward home, I didn’t. I just kept driving on toward the setting sun and into the night. Thirteen hours and more than 700 miles later, driving nonstop, I was in southeast Colorado at the entry to Mesa Verde.

I spent two fascinating and mildly disturbing days there. Seeing and learning about the impressive ancient architecture and culture was fascinating, but the tourist-driven, museum-like air to the whole experience was unsettling,

unnatural.

It was in the park’s gift shop that I came across a book about Chaco Culture National Historic Park in northern New Mexico. Situated primarily along a broad canyon in the San Juan tablelands of north-west New Mexico, it looked to be a rather different experience just a few hours away, and I had a couple more days to spend on the road if I wanted to.

## COVID-19 PANDEMIC

# County marks positive COVID milestone

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

## Vaccinations lag statewide as new variant causes concern

REGIONAL- A sure and welcome sign that the COVID-19 pandemic is on the wane was found on the St. Louis County webpage on Sunday.

“Very exciting news to share! For the first time since last summer, there are ZERO new COVID cases reported today in St. Louis County!!! (And this follows two consecutive days of just 1 new case each day.)

Thank you to the 111,444 SLC residents who are fully or at least partially vaccinated!”

It had been 362 days since the last COVID case-free day was recorded on June 23, 2020, and last Thursday’s weekly report had more positive news for the North Country region.

Only three new cases, all in Ely, were report-

ed across the Orr, Cook, Tower, Soudan, Ely, and Embarrass zip codes monitored by the *Timberjay*. The Ely cases were the first reported there by the state in five weeks. New cases were last reported for Tower and Orr on June 10, for Cook on June 3, for Soudan on May 27, and all the way back to April 29 for Embarrass.

The most recent figure for the benchmark measure of the seven-day daily case average in northern St. Louis County is 0.9 percent.

With COVID restrictions lifted in late May, state health officials have credited vaccinations as the primary reason that cases, hospitalizations, and deaths have been on a significant and steady decline. Only one death was reported statewide on Tuesday, and

the seven-day case positivity average dropped to 1.3 percent, well below the threshold of 5 percent that raises the concern for community spread.

### Vaccinations

Last week the state achieved a milestone in the vaccination effort when the three-millionth dose was administered, bringing the state’s vaccination rate for the entire population to 54 percent.

However, the “Your Shot to Summer” vaccination rewards program introduced by Gov. Tim Walz at the end of May that promised free admission passes to events and attractions, free fishing licenses, and \$25 gift cards to the first 100,000 people ages 12 and over to get vaccinated by June 30, appears to have

done little to raise interest among the unvaccinated.

The percentage of those 16 and older who had received at least one dose of COVID vaccine was 64 percent on June 1, with a goal of achieving 70 percent by June 30. With a week to go as of Wednesday, the state was still well short at 66.4 percent, and officials now project that it may be early August before the goal is reached.

The total of weekly doses administered fell to its lowest level yet last week, 73,374, which includes people who received second doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Minnesota’s experience with declining vaccination rates mirrors that of

the nation, as President Joe Biden’s COVID response coordinator Jeff Zients acknowledged on Tuesday that the country would not reach the administration’s goal of having 70 percent of Americans 18 and older vaccinated with at least one dose by July 4.

### Troubling variant

Stalling vaccinations and recent research indicating uneven uptake in different regions has some health officials nationwide, including Dr. Anthony Fauci, concerned about the possibility that the Delta variant, a more highly contagious version than any of its predecessors, will become the dominant strain in the U.S. soon.

But a nationally recognized Minnesota expert, Dr. Michael Osterholm, head

of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, urged more restraint in predicting possible impacts during an interview yesterday with St. Paul television station KSTP.

“I do not think we will see a surge across the nation, but this variant is 50 to 60 times more infectious than the last variant that arrived here in the U.S.,” Osterholm said.

He also said that those who received the two-dose Pfizer and Moderna vaccines appear to be doing well against the Delta variant, and that research is being conducted for the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

## Letters from Readers

### Ideas to make peace with gun-toting relatives

I am writing in reply to Mr. Keith Steva’s letter in the June 18 issue of the *Timberjay*.

I have attended and hosted family shooting parties for the last sixty years and not heard of this new fashion of open carry at a family function. A guest would usually bring arms and ammunitions in gun cases and ammo boxes to be opened at the gun range

or the hunting blind. On other occasions unloaded firearms were presented as gifts in fancy papers as a rite of passage or a marking of time. Ammunition was given at leave taking, if at all.

Are there now Westworld and Gunsmoke themed gatherings in vogue? Do families that favor Jacobean tragedies such as White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi replace the dagger and codpiece with a pistol and holster in reenactments? Perhaps invitations are not as clear as they once were

as to dress and deportment.

Are the Daughters of the American Revolution and family heritage groups of the like celebrating the several militias of their ancestors on every occasion? What gives?

I can only offer my response to this new custom. I would adopt a round shield and spear or a crossbow on my back as in the Finnish epic Kalevala. I might try a large revolver in a large caliber such as a .50 Smith and Wesson if the event were held in this summer and in ‘bear country’. If feeling more

self-confident I could strap on a diminutive Freedom Arms .22 Rimfire revolver or a .36 caliber derringer with percussive ignition. For a more irenic presentation, I would have a transparent belt bag with several orange or yellow clay pigeon targets.

The previous only obtain if the invitation had clearly noted Bring Your Own Armaments (BYOA). I would contact the hosts before if I was unsure of the setting of the gathering. On my invitation I would clearly state an alternative to arms for those not

ready to indulge; just as one provides vegan and nonalcoholic choices for guests. A trip to the garden to collect vegetables or a tour of the neighborhood cultural spaces would be in order.

If someone is upsetting or upset, I would discreetly take them aside and ask them to disarm (as if in a saloon in the Old West) or loan them a piece of their choosing. At a later date, I would gently ask them why they carry side arms and if they would be offended if you sent a manual of etiquette for this century.

Offer an upset guest a chance for a private consult to deal with their hoplophobia; or pull some triggers together in confidence.

Mr. Steva is correct that there is no need for arms at family events; one can always cite a previous engagement to avoid the occasion you dread. I can only hope that hosts and guests make use of the rules of good form to gain ease and companionship.

Thank you,  
**Virgil K. Saari**  
**Pike Twp.**

## SOLSTICE...Continued from page 4

It was, indeed, an altogether different experience.

Chaco Canyon is 20 miles off the main highway, the last 13 miles of the drive on rugged dirt and gravel roads. A signature geographical feature, the monolithic Fajada Butte, is visible for miles before reaching the park, adding a sense of anticipation to the gradual descent into the canyon.

A nine-mile loop road provides easy access to five of the intricately constructed stone great houses of “downtown Chaco,” and short and moderate hikes lead to several more. Stunning half-moon-shaped Pueblo Bonito was the largest human-built structure in North America until the late 1800s, a four-story, 600-plus-room marvel constructed of small flat rocks and structural timbers carried to the canyon from the nearest sources of trees 40 to 50 miles away. It’s estimated more than 240,000 trees were used in building the great houses of Chaco.

Chaco Canyon was the

center of a complex cultural system that stretched throughout the Southwest. Archaeologists have discovered a 180-mile network of excavated roads, 15 to 30-feet wide, thought to be as much for religious symbolism as for transportation. Pueblo Bonito functioned as a trading and spiritual center, as well as an storage facility for food. Turquoise and skeletons of scarlet macaws found there provide evidence that the Chacoan trading network spanned nearly a thousand miles. An intricate irrigation system collected and stored rain water from the surrounding mesas and distributed it to the canyon floor for agriculture.

And while still the subject of debate in some circles, there’s strong evidence to support the theory that the Chacoans were attuned to the stars and the calendar of nature, including winter and summer solstice.

The “Sun Dagger” is a rock and petroglyph calendar far up the side of Fajada Butte, with rocks

positioned in such a way that a slim sliver of light falls on specific spots of the petroglyph behind them on the winter and summer solstice. At Casa Rinconada, a great kiva 60 feet wide and 15 feet deep, a ray of sunshine streaming through its one window illuminates a niche on the opposite wall on the morning of the summer solstice, and no other.

While I’ve been back to Chaco several times and have explored many of the other associated ancestral Puebloan sites throughout the region, I haven’t yet timed my trips to scratch that item off my bucket list of being at Casa Rinconada to witness the wisdom of the ancestors play out in light on the kiva wall. Given my own sense of spiritual connectedness to the Southwest, it is surely an experience I would someday like to have.

My initial visit to Chaco Canyon left my head spinning as to why we studied the great Mayan and Incan civilizations in school but never learned

about the rich and complex Chacoan civilization right at home that began in the mid-800s and lasted for more than three centuries. It’s really not surprising at all, I guess, given that throughout our history as a nation we have valued Indigenous civilizations mostly for what we could take from them and have at times actively sought to eradicate their history, culture, and identities.

So, the summer solstice is always a time for me to revisit Chaco, if only in my mind, but it’s been in my thoughts recently for another reason as well.

It is generally accepted that the sudden decline of Chacoan culture and the “disappearance” of its people was due to a prolonged drought that began in the late 1100s that made continued life in the arid canyon untenable. Recent news has been filled with stories and images of the devastating and prolonged drought in the western U.S., with key reservoirs dropping to historic lows. If recent years indeed rep-

resent a trend and the influence of climate change, there soon won’t be enough water to go around, and

we could well see another drought-driven migration that dwarfs the numbers from 900 years ago.



## the TIMBERJAY

Copyright © 2021 by *The Timberjay*. *The Timberjay* (PN 16025) is published weekly on Fridays, 51 weeks per year, by *The Timberjay Inc.*, PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Business/Editorial Office at 414 Main St., PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790. Call (218) 753-2950 to subscribe. E-mail address is editor@timberjay.com. Periodicals postage paid at Tower, Minnesota.

**POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Timberjay, PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790.**

This award-winning community newspaper published each week serves the communities of Tower/Soudan, Cook/Orr, and Ely.

Publisher	Marshall Helmlinger
General Manager	Jodi Summit
Cook/Orr Editor	David Colburn
Ely Editor	Keith Vandervort
Staff Writer	Stephanie Ukkola
Office Manager	M. M. White
Graphics/Ad Sales	Scarlet Lynne Stone
Ad Sales/Sports	Jay Greaney

### Official Newspaper:

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

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

### Subscriptions Available:

St. Louis County: \$39 year Elsewhere: \$54 year. We accept VISA/Mastercard/Discover/AmEx. 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.

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

## Eastern Orthodox Christianity focus of Ely history night

ELY - Dr. Steve Matthews will give a talk about the history of Eastern Orthodox Christianity on the Iron Range for Ely-Winton Historical Society History Night on Wednesday, June 30 at Vermilion Community

College in lecture hall CL 104 at 7 p.m.

Dr. Matthews is an associate professor of history at University of Minnesota-Duluth, where he teaches history of Christianity, European history, history of science, and museum

studies. His talk will focus on the history of Eastern Orthodoxy Christianity on the Iron Range through Serbian, Russian, and Greek immigration, the major figures involved in the formation of their parishes, and the Eastern

Orthodox Christian communities in the area today.

Admission to all History Nights is free. A freewill donation is greatly appreciated.

TOWER-SOUDAN CIVIC CLUB

Week of June 28

**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. at the Tower Civic Center on June 28

**Tuesday**  
Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:00 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is July 20.

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

**Wednesday**  
Tower AA- Open Basics- 7 p.m. at St. James Presbyterian Church. Questions, call 753-2332.

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

**TSHS aluminum can drive fundraiser**  
TOWER-SOUDAN- The Tower-Soudan Historical Society is starting an ongoing "Aluminum Can" collection drive. Funds from the cans donated will go toward projects and the work of the Historical Society.

A fenced-in trailer is behind the Historic Fire Hall located next to the Tower Post Office on Main St. Please place your aluminum cans inside a garbage bag and place them in the fenced trailer. Other donations or memberships can be sent to TSHS, PO Box 465, Tower, MN 55790.



**Tower-Soudan Civic Club keeps Tower blooming...**

Karel Winkelaar and Steve Abrahamson (pictured) are once again the volunteer plant waterers for the hanging baskets on the Highway 169 bridge. Pauly Housenga, Jaynee Yocum, and Sue Ellis are taking turns watering and caring for the planters at the Civic Center. The hanging baskets and the flowers at the Civic Center have been donated by the Tower-Soudan Civic Club to help beautify our community.

photo by J. Summit



TS Elementary students had a fun day outdoors their last week of school during Track & Field Day, playing silly games and participating in individual and cooperative activities. Students earned tickets that they placed in raffle boxes for the chance to win fun outdoor toys. Pictured above: Lily Russell and Zaija Schroeder. Middle: Kija Chosa. Right: Emmett Flood and Shaye Isham. photos by J. Summit

TOWER-SOUDAN ELEMENTARY



NORTHEAST RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

**Northeast Range Fourth Quarter Honor Roll**

**A Honor Roll**

- Grade 12**  
Oskar Koivisto  
Phoebe Morgan  
Ethan Zaitz  
James Zupancich
- Grade 11**  
Audrey Anderson  
Erin Backe  
Joscelyn LaSart  
Markus Maki  
Rylan Poppenhagen  
Hannah Reichensperger
- Grade 10**  
Mariah DeJoode  
Logan Meskill  
Kassidy Turner

**Grade 9**

- Aubree Gerlovich
- Grade 8**  
Luca Brown  
Adeline Klatt  
Danica Sundblad
- Grade 7**  
Hannah Aldrich  
Nevaeh Evridge  
Tuuli Koivisto  
Mabry Ohm

**B Honor Roll**

- Grade 12**  
Anne Barich  
Christopher Ferguson  
Isaac Hendrickson  
Luther Johnson

- Ariel Kalinowski  
Alexia Lightfeather  
Bralyn Lislegard  
Gracie Sperling  
Sadie Theel
- Grade 11**  
Wyatt Gorsma  
Amara Lampton  
Ryan Milton  
Calvin Winger
- Grade 10**  
Michele Buckanaga  
Layne Kaufenberg  
Jacob Mackai  
Jennie Nelson  
Emily Westvik  
Jonathan Zaitz

**Grade 9**

- Natalie Backe  
Zander Lislegard  
Ruby Milton
- Grade 8**  
Noah Backe  
Joshua Burton  
Alexus Childs  
Kyle Kratz  
Chelsey Nelmark  
Maizy Sundblad  
Ian Sundahl
- Grade 7**  
Chloe Adkisson  
Avery Buschman  
Brody Lindquist  
Jada Medicine

COMMUNITY NEWS

**Greenwood rummage sale fundraiser for Lakeview Cemetery**

GREENWOOD TWP- Volunteers in Greenwood Township are holding a rummage sale fundraiser to benefit the Lakeview Cemetery in Tower. The sale is set for Saturday, June 26 from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tables are still available for \$10 each (with all tables fees donated to the cemetery). Call Pam at 218-753-3006 to reserve a table. Coffee and will be available.

**Old Settlers set for the third Saturday in July**

BREITUNG TWP- The 107th Vermilion Range Old Settlers Annual Reunion and Picnic is back on track for Saturday, July 17 at 12 noon at McKinley Park Campground.

Last year's picnic, which would have been the 106th year, was canceled due to the pandemic, but this year the committee feels they can safely serve up booyah to all who attend.

Membership is \$8 in advance by June 30, and \$10 the day of the picnic. Pre-registrations are greatly appreciated and can be mailed to: Vermilion Range Old Settlers Association, PO Box 724, Tower, MN 55790.

Steve Solkela, the one-man accordion band, will be this year's entertainment. If you haven't seen Steve in action, check him out on YouTube; he is definitely fun for all ages and a unique musical talent. Steve is no stranger to Old Settlers. He has family in the Tower-Soudan area, and he sang the National Anthem one summer when he was a youngster.

**Morgan Hensley named to Dean's List for spring semester at UW-Eau Claire**

EAU CLAIRE, WIS.- The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire extends congratulations to the 2,816 students named to the spring 2021 Dean's List. Their academic performance has been outstanding, and we recognize these students with

pride. Morgan Hensley, of Embarrass, was named to the 2021 Spring Dean's List. She is a student in the College of Education and Human Sciences.

**Travis Vogh named to 2021 spring semester Dean's List at Central Lakes College, Brainerd and Staples**

REGIONAL- Travis Vogh, of Soudan, has been named to the Dean's List at Central Lakes College, which includes 325 students who earned a grade-point average of 3.25 to 3.74. Central Lakes College is a comprehensive community and technical college in the Minnesota State System. The college serves about 5,500 students annually in liberal arts and career education programs.

**Fourth of July Donations**

The Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board would like to thank the following individuals and families for their do-

nations this year.

**Donations are still needed and can be mailed to: PO Box 461, Tower, MN 55790.**

- Thank you to:  
Richard & Sandra Kitto  
Peter & Colette Johnson  
Robert & Theresa Holmes  
Richard & Kay Hanson  
Mark Werner  
Town of Kugler  
Embarrass-Vermillion Federal Credit Union  
Dave Joki  
Molly Korpi  
Tim & Nancy Kotzian  
Delores Branville  
Richard & Peggy Peyla  
Boulder Busters  
James Chiabotti  
Myre Construction  
Aronson Boat Works  
Tower-Soudan Agency  
Terry & Donna Mosher  
Waschke Family  
Chevrolet  
Lamppa Manufacturing  
Pike Bay Lodge  
Northern Lights  
Dental Care  
Gruben's Marina  
Lynn & Muriel Scott  
Frank & Jorgine Gornick

**Tower Cemetery Association is asking for your continued support.**

**THANK YOU**

**Checks are to be made out to:**  
**Tower Cemetery Association**  
**PO Box 874, Tower, MN 55790**

Thank you,  
The Tower Cemetery Board

Published in the Timberjay, May 21, 28, June 4, 18 & 25, 2021

SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH

# Ely Youth Golf Camp returns for 2021

ELY – The Youth Golf Camp, sponsored by the Ely Golf Club, returned this year after a COVID pause in 2020.

Four levels of instruction are being held during the weeks of June 14 and June 21 for 39 registered Ely-area youth, ages 8-14. A beginner's class started on Tuesday. Two intermediate-levels and an advanced class are also offered.

A new golfing opportunity is being offered to the advanced class this year. Students, and parents as chaperones, spent one day golfing at the Wilderness at Fortune Bay.



least 15 volunteers helping with the golf camp, said, "We hope to teach these kids to love and enjoy golf and to return to the golf

course every year. We hope we can help many long-term golfers enjoy the game for a long time."

**Ely-area youth returned to the links this month for the annual Youth Golf Camp hosted by the Ely Golf Club. Four levels of instruction were offered for young golfers ages 8-14.** photos by K. Vandervort

Higher Ed

**Schwamm honored at Bethel University**

ST. PAUL- Ely's Abigail Schwamm, a senior at Bethel University in St. Paul, has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence for the spring 2021 semester. She is the daughter of Rebecca Zwolinski and Stephen Schwamm.

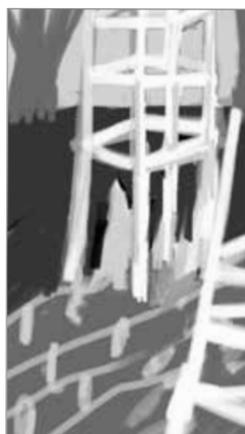
**NER grad honored at Mount Mary**

MILWAUKEE, Wis.- Shawna Butler, of Babbitt, a graduate of Northeast Range High School, was named to the Mount Mary University Spring 2021 Dean's List. Butler is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology,



**Breathing Out**

by Cecilia Rolando © 2021



wood cages secured tomato plants bursting up soon yellow blossoms

OUR COMMUNITY

## Hidden Valley mountain bike trails take shape

ELY - Ely's Hidden Valley Recreation Area is expanding outdoor recreation opportunities this summer with the addition of nearly 10 miles of single-track mountain bike trails. Completion is slated by October.

The new trail system, designed by Minnesota-based Dirt Candy Designs, consists of six loops ranging from beginner to advanced level.

The first loop, a progressive skills loop for riders to practice and hone bike handling techniques, was completed in 2019, just south of the Hidden Valley Chalet.

Since then, the city of Ely has contracted with Kay-Linn Enterprises of Boulder, Colo. to oversee the project, and signed a lease with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to include the existing Nordic ski trails as well as the new mountain bike loops.

"The Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, city of Ely, and the ski club have worked hard to make these trails a reality. They will be used by visitors, kids, and adventurous adults," said former Ely dentist, Dr. Scott Anderson, who spearheaded efforts to develop and secure funding for the project.

Grants from the Federal Recreation

Trail Program and the Iron Range Resource and Rehabilitation Board total \$340,000 to date. While Minnesota-based Pathfinder Trail Builders came in with the low bid on the project, the funding comes up around \$60,000 short of completing the sixth and final loop. That's where the Ely Nordic Ski and Bike Club's 225 Project comes in.

"It occurred to me that if 225 people each contributed \$225, that would put us over \$50,000 toward completing the project," said Wayne Pasmick, lead groomer and treasurer for the Ely Nordic Ski and Bike Club. "We will use \$30,000 to secure a matching grant to complete construction."

The remaining \$20,000 will be used for informational signage, new maps, trail marking, website upgrade and a winter bike fat bike trail groomer, making these bike trails available for year-round use, he said.

The ENSBC has started a Go Fund Me site to receive donations. A link to the page can be found on the vclub website, elynordic.org. Donations can also be mailed to PO Box 346 Ely, MN 55731. "So, donate now, a full share or partial. Full shares will be honored on the 225 Project Board or existing wood sign-board," Pasmick said.



**Smokey the Bear, the fire safety mascot of the United States Forest Service, visited the Ely Public Library last Thursday to greet young visitors, including Kaylee and Emma Mestan, of Chicago, who were touring the Ely area with their parents. USFS rangers also distributed tamarack and white pine tree seedlings to those who wanted them.** photo by K. Vandervort

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** OPEN AA - 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely. **ELY WOMEN'S OPEN AA** - Every Monday at noon at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, 231 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., at Woodland Presbyterian. **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. Call 218-365-3359, 218-827-3232, or 1-800-662-5711. **CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS:** Babbitt: 3rd Monday of Month: 6-7:30 p.m. at Carefree Living Ely: 4th Monday of Month: 10-11:30 a.m. at Ely-Bloomenson Hospital Conference Room B

## Ely Police Department Activity Report - June 1-15, 2021

**Arrests/Citations**

- Traffic Stop- Individual issued a citation for Drivers License violation and no seatbelt.
- Traffic Stop- Individual issued a citation for driving without a valid license.
- Domestic Assault- Individual arrested for Domestic Assault and 5th Degree Assault.

**Complaints**

- Burglary- Officers were contacted about a burglary that occurred overnight. This case is under investigation.
- Alarm- Officers were dispatched to an alarm at a local business. The alarm was set off by an employee.
- Smoke- Officers were contacted about smoke near a residence. Officers determined the fire to be legal size and was not a hazard.
- Traffic Stop- Individual warned for speed.
- Public Assist- Individual let back into their residence.
- Public Assist- Officers brought an individual back to their residence.

- Traffic Stop- Driver warned for speed.
- Animal Disturbance- Officers located a dog that ran away. The dog was brought to doggy jail where the owner later bailed them out.
- Theft- Officers were called about a driver that did not pay when getting gas. This case is under investigation.
- Public Assist- Officers were contacted to walk through a vacated residence. Officers did not locate anyone inside.
- Check Welfare- Officers were contacted to check on an individual that was making self-harm comments. Officers determined that the messages were taken out of context.
- Security Alarm- Officers were called to a local business for a security alarm. The alarm was caused by construction workers.
- Found Property- Officers located property that was lost. This case is pending owner pickup.
- Check Welfare- Officers were requested to check on a group of people in a canoe without life-jackets. Officers educated the people about lifejacket laws.

- Drug Incident- Officers were contacted about drug use in a public building. This case is under investigation.
- Neighbor Trouble- Officers were contacted about a neighbor dispute. This case is under investigation.
- Check Welfare- Officers were contacted to check on an individual that was not answering their phone or door. Officers located the person safe and sound.
- Traffic Stop- Individual warned for speed.
- Public Assist- Individual let back into their residence.
- Public Assist- Officers assisted a driver that was stuck in the car wash.
- Assist Other Agency- Officers assisted a neighboring agency with a fire.
- Parking Complaint- Officers located a vehicle that was parked in the same spot for several days. The owner moved the vehicle.
- Fire Alarm- Officers responded to a fire alarm that was determined to be a false alarm.
- Hot Dog- Officers were called about a dog

- that was left in a vehicle. Officers did not locate the vehicle or dog.
- Hotter Dog- Officers were contacted about a dog that was left in a vehicle. Officers located the owners who turned on the vehicle.
- Gas Leak- Officers assisted the Ely Fire Department with a propane tank that was leaking.
- Fire- Officers assisted the Ely Fire Department with a fire that was left unattended.
- Vehicle in the Ditch- Officers were called about a

- vehicle that was in the ditch and the people left. Officers located the driver who did not judge the turn correctly. There was minimal damage on the vehicle and no injuries.
- Smoke- Officers were called about large amounts of smoke in town. Officers were not able to locate the source of the smoke.
- Unknown Trouble- Officers were contacted about an open line with 911. Officers determined it to be phone problems.

### Happy Days Preschool

## REGISTRATION

**for 2021-22 School Year IS NOW OPEN!**

3/4 year old class- Tuesday & Thursday AM  
4/5 year old class- Monday, Wednesday & Friday AM or PM

**Deadline is Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup>**

Forms are available online at [happydaysely.com](http://happydaysely.com), Zup's, and Ely Northland Market

**Scholarships are available.**  
Child needs to be 3 years old by September 1st.

Questions? Contact Mandy at [mandyjpetersen@gmail.com](mailto:mandyjpetersen@gmail.com)

that was left in a vehicle. Officers did not locate the vehicle or dog.

➤ Hotter Dog- Officers were contacted about a dog that was left in a vehicle. Officers located the owners who turned on the vehicle.

➤ Gas Leak- Officers assisted the Ely Fire Department with a propane tank that was leaking.

➤ Fire- Officers assisted the Ely Fire Department with a fire that was left unattended.

➤ Vehicle in the Ditch- Officers were called about a

vehicle that was in the ditch and the people left. Officers located the driver who did not judge the turn correctly. There was minimal damage on the vehicle and no injuries.

➤ Smoke- Officers were called about large amounts of smoke in town. Officers were not able to locate the source of the smoke.

➤ Unknown Trouble- Officers were contacted about an open line with 911. Officers determined it to be phone problems.

COOK YOUTH BASEBALL

# Teams roll into final games of a normal season



Top left: Members of the Cook Blue T-Ball team pictured include, front row, from left, Lucy Norup, Sullivan Roesch, Sebastian Larson and Jaxson Boettcher; second row, Daniel Hartline, Ilee Antus, Ryker Nurmi, Elizabeth Nuthak; third row, Ladd Pretti, Luke Pretti, Landon Nuthak, Emma Nuthak, Silas Nurmi; back row, assistant coaches Kylee Lang, Sonja Hartline, Kelly Hams, and coach Chris Nuthak.



Top right: Members of the Cook Green T-Ball team pictured include, front row, from left, Sawyer Quam, Dexter Sherman, Addisyn Bakk, Abriana Budreau, Iley Murray, Kensie Herdman; second row, Joselyn Pascuzzi, Chester Talberg, Charlotte Pascuzzi, Jayson Fredrickson, Lucy Talberg; back row, assistant coaches Josh Sherman, Amanda Pascuzzi, and coach Tony Pascuzzi.

Right: Members of the Cook PeeWee team include, front row, from left, Brian Hannine, Savannah Villebrun, Peyton Swanson, Silas Budreau, Gunner Fultz; second row, Brady Swanson, Jordan Herdman, Weston Quam, Hunter Lange, Reece Whitney; third row, Daniel Zupancich, Vincent Pascuzzi, Jack Hampson, Cedar Holman, Cooper Long, Ogimaa Benner; back row, assistant coach Matt Zupancich, coach Randy Long, and assistant coach Doug Lang.



COOK- The end of the school year and the elimination of COVID-19 restrictions gave rise to a unison chorus of "Play ball!" from kids and parents alike and Cook Youth Baseball was more than happy to oblige.

Forty-two players, three head coaches, and seven assistant coaches have been practicing and playing since mid-May. Cook's PeeWee team and two T-Ball teams, Cook Green and Cook Blue, have one final home stand

on Monday before closing out the season on the road later in the week. Cook Blue will host Clinton Blue, Cook Green will tackle Cherry Orange, and Cook PeeWees will try to knock off Clinton White.

all photos by B. Smith



Alberta Whitenack created this fabric-on-canvas artwork titled "Sauna" submitted photo

## Canvas art event approaches

COOK- Small art is big again at Northwoods Friends of the Arts with a new edition of a popular fundraiser from last year, this time called "A Canvas and You - Two." Prospective artists have two options for participating. The first is to pick up an 8x10 canvas from the NWFA Gallery at 210 S River Street, which is open Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The canvas is the

base for creating art using any combination of media from paint and paper to photographs and yarn, all subject only to an artist's personal vision. The second option is to submit a favorite piece of art you have created other than on canvas that is no bigger than 12 inches square. It may be a weaving, a photo, a quilt, a sculpture, or something else. The entry fee for each piece of art submitted is \$10, and the deadline for

entry is Wednesday, June 30th at the NWFA Gallery. You may enter as many pieces as you like. As a fundraiser, canvases and small artworks will be priced at \$50, with the artist taking home 50 percent of their sales. The exhibit and sale will run through July at the NWFA Gallery during regular open hours. Contact Alberta Whitenack at 218-666-2153 or nwfamm.org@gmail.com for further information

## Three Amigos to play in park

COOK- Cook's free "Music in the Park" concert series will welcome "The Three Amigos" to the gazebo in the city park for a 6 p.m. performance on Wednesday, June 30. Robert Walker, Todd Olson and Sonny Glass, together known as the Three Amigos, will bring raw traditional and out-

law country music with a twist of Southern rock. In case of a rainy Wednesday evening, the concert will move to the Cook VFW. Grab a blanket or a lawn chair or sit in your car to hear a different sound of music each Wednesday with a total of nine different groups performing for 11 more weeks. St. Paul's

(Alango) Lutheran Church will have burgers, brats, root beer floats, and more for sale. Music In The Park is made possible by multiple community organizations and businesses and free-will community donations.

**ORR'S**

**JULY 3RD**

**FUN DAY!**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

7-10 a.m.  
Pancake Breakfast-Orr Community Center

9 a.m.  
5K Walk/Run  
(Registration 8-8:45 a.m., tennis courts)

11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Craft Fair-Orr Community Center

11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Luke's 3rd Annual Antique Tractor & Joker Show

11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Willow River will be performing

Noon  
Children's Parade Ages 0-12 years  
Get your floats ready!  
(Winners announced after parade)

1 p.m.  
\$300 Silver Dollar Sawdust Dig

5:30 p.m.  
Bean Bag Tournament at the Orr Muni  
(Registration, 4:45-5:15 p.m.; \$20/team; cash prizes)

8 p.m.-Midnight  
Street Dance-Orr Muni featuring Nightshift

**FIREWORKS AT DUSK OVER ORR BAY**  
(Orr Pelican Lake Resort Association)

Pony Rides & Petting Zoo throughout the day

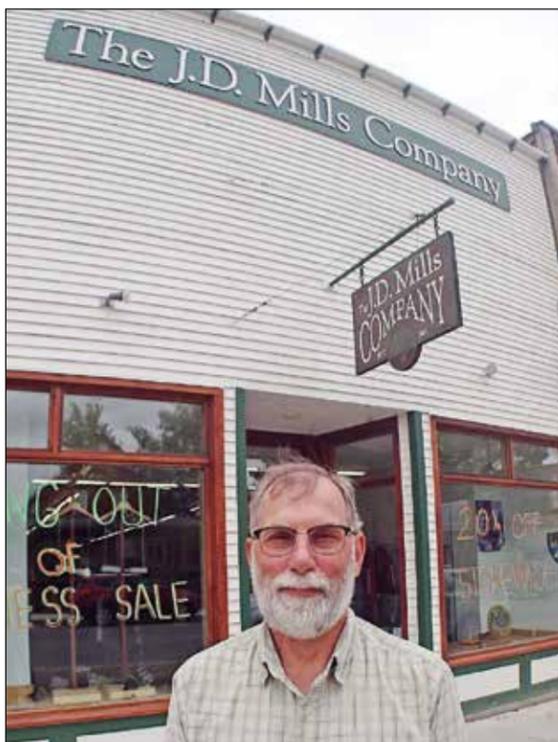
## MILLS...Continued from page 1

the store, told a visitor, "The customers. That's what I will miss the most. I built many nice relationships with so many people over many years. I appreciate all of those who supported us."

J.D. Mills is in the midst of a liquidation sale. John listed many reasons for the change—the chance to retire, an offer he couldn't refuse to purchase the building, as well as the changing retail landscape, not only in Ely but around the nation, as personal service-clothing stores and other retail businesses are replaced with online shopping and bigbox stores.

The J.D. Mills Company clothing store has outfitted generations of Ely residents and visitors since 1901 and will close its doors for good by the end of July. "My grandfather bought the store from Abe Bloomenson in January of 1922," John said. "We still have the official document showing the sale."

The business was originally located on Central Avenue, at a location that now houses part of Piragis Northwoods Company, from 1901 until 1956. "They moved over to Chapman Street, in the building that now houses Serena's Carpet Shop, but at the time it was the First National Bank," he said. "We moved here (230 E Sheridan Street) in April



**John Mills is the fourth owner of the 120-year-old Ely clothing business. The store will close by the end of July.** photo by K. Vandervort

of 1994."

John started the process of buying the business from his father in 1983.

Clothing stores, like many other retail shopping businesses, are slowly eroding on the downtown landscape. "There are very few towns of this size today that have a clothing store," John said. "Sales have been dropping for a number of years. There's competition with the internet, regional shopping and big box

stores."

The types of clothing worn by men and women has transitioned over the years. "In the early days of the business, we sold all the apparel that a guy would need for work and dress. There was no such thing as sport casual. It was either work or dress," he said.

By the early 1970s, the J.D. Mills Company began moving into women's clothing when Lee Company added jeans for women.



**J.D. Mills Company, at its original location in the early 1900s. Original owner, Abe Bloomenson is shown at the right. John Mills' grandfather, William Mills is shown in the middle.** photo courtesy of J.D. Mills Company

"We transitioned into women's casual apparel along with men's casual clothing," he said. "The last time I ordered men's suits was the year before 1993 when I moved the business. We carried sport coats for another 10 years. About seven years ago I stopped ordering dress pants, dress shirts and ties." He stopped providing tuxedo rentals about five years ago.

John admitted that he had been thinking about retirement for a number of years. "With owning the building, I wasn't going to end the business until I sold

the building. I never listed it, but earlier this spring, a party came in and asked if I was interested in selling, so I'm taking advantage of it," he said.

"The new owners want to take occupancy by the first of August," according to Mills. He did not reveal the name of the owners or the type of business that will be in the building. "I'll be here, depending on the inventory, until about Blueberry/Arts Festival next month," he said.

Don't plan on any celebration. One day soon the doors will just stay locked.

"I've known for a long time that the days of businesses like this were numbered," he said.

Retirement is next for John. "I plan to enjoy myself," he said. "Mary (his wife for 41 years) and I plan to stay right here in Ely," he said. "Both of us like winter too much to leave for half a year. We want to take a few more trips that we can actually schedule and I know that I will be able to go on."

## TOWER...Continued from page 1

users or owners of their property, yet city officials contend that the removal of the pilings would hasten sedimentation into the river, undermining the city's efforts to maintain a clear channel along the river, which connects Lake Vermilion to the city's harbor.

City officials recently threatened the two men with prosecution if they move forward with their plan to remove the pilings, which were installed about a century ago. "Any developer or contractor who

engages in any efforts to remove the pilings, without government authorization or clearance, will be subject to criminal prosecution for the offense of intentional damage to public property," wrote City Attorney Mitch Brunfelt in a May 27 email.

Yet, it's not clear on what basis the city could charge the two developers, since the city lacks an ordinance that addresses the issue. What's more, officials with the Department of Natural Resources contend that the retaining wall itself

lacks a permit and that it likely would not receive a permit were the city to seek to build it today. And the city, as recently as last year, granted permission for another nearby property owner to remove a smaller portion of retaining wall to provide boat access to the river, setting an uncomfortable precedent.

Jurisdiction is also in question. Griffin notes that while the city has zoning control over land within its boundaries, the DNR has jurisdiction over public waters beyond the ordinary high water mark, which would seem to apply to the river pilings, which are located more than a dozen

feet off shore.

According to DNR Area Hydrologist Kim Boland, neither Rose nor Griffin would likely require a permit under state rules to remove the pilings. That's a view that's been challenged by Brunfelt, who cited a provision in state rules that require a permit to remove a water level control structure. Brunfelt contends in a June 11 email to Boland that the retaining wall meets the definition of a water level control structure because it does "play a positive role in being able to maintain a sufficient water depth in the river channel for motorized boat traffic."

Boland is skeptical of that argument but indicated that the DNR is in communication with the city to resolve the dispute. "We are currently working with the city of Tower to get a better understanding of the situation and are awaiting additional information from the city in order to evaluate what state public waters rules will apply," she wrote in a June 17 email to the *Timberjay*.

State rules generally encourage the removal of manmade structures "which do not serve the public interest" from public waters. Brunfelt contends that the retaining wall serves the interest of navigation in the river.

"Obviously, this motorized boat traffic on the East Two River is very important to the tourism and outdoors-based economy of the city of Tower," Brunfelt wrote in his response to Boland. "These piling structures constitute public infrastructure and serve an important public purpose. Any future decisions that may permit or allow for the removal of these structures should not be done arbitrarily or capriciously."

At the same time, both Rose and Griffin have an interest in gaining access to the river, something that is currently blocked by the pilings, which form a barrier about 15 feet offshore.

Rose said he spoke to the U.S. Army Corps and the DNR more than a year ago about installing a canal and a small harbor, which would allow the users of his property to dock boats outside the river channel. Rose said the two agencies denied his request, indicating that there was sufficient room in the river for him to install docks. But city officials have been cool to the installation of docks within the river channel. And Rose and Griffin can't make use of shoreline dockage unless a stretch of the pilings are removed.

For now, both developers are holding off, as city and state officials try to determine who really has jurisdiction over the pilings and what, if anything, can be done to provide the developers with access to the river.

Rose isn't letting the dispute get in the way of his efforts to complete his RV park, which he is calling the Tower RV Resort. Among the amenities he is currently touting on his website is protected docking, "that will be the perfect spot to dock your boat when not in use."

That perfect spot, it seems, remains a work in progress.

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CenturyLink participates in a government benefit program (Lifeline) to make residential telephone or qualifying broadband service more affordable to eligible low-income individuals and families. Eligible customers are those that meet eligibility standards as defined by the FCC and state commissions. Residents who live on federally recognized Tribal Lands may qualify for additional Tribal benefits if they participate in certain additional federal eligibility programs. The Lifeline discount is available for only one telephone or qualifying broadband service per household, which can be on either wireline or wireless service. Broadband speeds must be 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload or faster to qualify.

A household is defined for the purposes of the Lifeline program as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline service is not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in the program. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain a Lifeline discount can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from the program.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, please call 1-800-201-4099 or visit [centurylink.com/lifeline](http://centurylink.com/lifeline) with questions or to request an application for the Lifeline program.





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**Sunday, July 4, 2021**  
**Miner's Lake Trezona Trailhead**  
**4 Mile Run and Walk**

**8 AM Fast Run / 8:05 AM General Run**  
**8:10 AM Walk**

Parking and registration will occur in the parking lot at the corner of Central Avenue and Miner's Drive

Online registration is available at [active.com](http://active.com).

Day-of-race is available. Payment via cash or check only.

Questions can be emailed to: [jkduinn@hotmail.com](mailto:jkduinn@hotmail.com)

**Race day July 4th**  
**registration**  
**opens 6:40 AM**  
**closes 7:40 AM**

All proceeds go to fund the Ely Track Club.



## Ely-Winton Historical Society

### Summer History Nights Programs

History Nights are held in Vermilion Community College Classroom 104. All programs are on Wednesdays and begin at 7 p.m. While FREE of charge, donations are always gratefully accepted.

**June 30: Eastern Orthodox Christianity on the Iron Range - Dr. Steven Matthews**, professor of History at University of Minnesota-Duluth, will provide a look at the history of the Orthodox faith in the area through Serbian, Russian, and Greek immigration.

**July 14: Karelian Fever and Peacemaking - Dr. Thomas Morgan**, professor of Russian at the College of St. Scholastica will explain the "Karelian Fever," a period when Finnish Americans immigrated to the Soviet Union in the 1930s with the promise of a "workers' paradise," only to face persecution and seek passage back to America.

**July 28: Northern Bedrock - Jill Baum**, from Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps, will discuss the Corps and the projects they have worked on in the area.

PUBLIC SAFETY

# Effie rancher settles COVID lawsuit with state

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook/Orr Editor

**EFFIE-** The only clouds hanging over the head of Cimarron Pitzen as he prepares for the 66th annual edition of the North Star Stampede next month will be the ones nature sends his way, as Pitzen and Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison's office reached a settlement last week in the COVID-related civil lawsuit Ellison filed against Pitzen after last year's event.

"Today we have reached a settlement with the state of Minnesota in the ridiculous lawsuit it brought against us," Pitzen said in a statement posted to Facebook on June 17. "We admitted NO GUILT WHATSOEVER. With the minimal amount we have to pay and our defense fund being exhausted, it made sense to settle the case now."

The controversy erupted from discussions between Pitzen and state officials last July about how the three-day event that typically draws thousands to the tiny Itasca County community of Effie could proceed. Pitzen was told he had to limit daily attendance to fewer than 150 spectators to comply with a

25-percent capacity limit in Gov. Tim Walz's executive order detailing mandated COVID-19 restrictions for large entertainment venues and events.

The news didn't sit well with Pitzen, whose family has staged the annual rodeo since 1955. In response, he turned the event into a protest.

"The North Star Stampede will take place with no spectators," Pitzen wrote on the rodeo's Facebook page. "If people would like to come and protest against this ridiculous Government Over Reach, feel free to do so, I will not stand in the way of people's 'Right to Assemble.'"

Hundreds of people, many with protest signs, filled the stands of Pitzen's arena all three days of the event, not to capacity but well in excess of the limits established by Walz's order.

State officials were there, too, and on July 31, 2020, Ellison filed a 26-page civil lawsuit against Pitzen's North Star Ranch LLC in Itasca County District Court, alleging 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. Violations of Walz's executive order carried with them the potential of a \$25,000 fine.

Pitzen's supporters quickly rallied around him, setting up donation sites and a GoFundMe site online to collect contributions for a legal defense fund. The GoFundMe site alone raised \$22,410 from 347 donors.

Pitzen enlisted the services of Minneapolis attorney Paul Dworak, of Newmark Storms Dworak, a recognized and successful expert in free speech and civil rights cases.

"Cimarron and I were hoping for a jury trial," Dworak told the *Timberjay* on Monday. "We wanted the people of Itasca County to let the state know what they thought of its lawsuit."

However, after dragging on for nearly a year, with limited financial resources remaining and COVID restrictions no longer an issue, Pitzen and Dworak decided to pursue a settlement.

"Unfortunately, it



Cimarron Pitzen leads the opening cavalcade at last year's North Star Stampede in Effie.

Timberjay file photo

costs a lot of money to get a civil case to a jury," Dworak said. "Thus, once it became clear the executive orders were no longer going to affect this year's rodeo, we negotiated a settlement wherein North Star paid a small fine, which was about as much as the cost of one deposition. North Star did not and would not admit any wrongdoing."

"Not surprisingly," Dworak added, "the state never produced any evidence showing that any person contracted COVID-19 because of this outdoor rodeo protest."

Pitzen's statement included expressions of gratitude for the support he received.

"I would like to thank

the hundreds of good people who donated to our fight against the state and have stood with us," he said. "I would like to thank our attorney, Paul Dworak, and especially our local law enforcement, Itasca County Sheriff (Vic) Williams and his staff and Aitkin County Sheriff (Dan) Guida for their support over the last year. It is nice to know we live in an area where we don't defund our LEO's, but rather defend them and support them. I am looking forward to seeing all of you July 23-25 for the 66th annual North Star

Stampede."

While the Attorney General's office issued a lengthy announcement of its lawsuit on their website on July 31, 2020, no similar announcement regarding last week's settlement agreement had been posted as of Wednesday morning. The *Timberjay* attempted to contact the AG Deputy Chief of Staff John Stiles via email this week to comment on the settlement, but no response had been received by Wednesday's press time.



## Night on the Patio with live music!

June 30th - September 1

Wednesday Nights

June/July 5PM-9PM | August/September 4PM-8PM

Dinner feature each night. While supplies last!

June 30th Music by Bittersweet

July 7th Music by Pat Surface

July 14th Music by Ron E. Cash

July 21st Music by Pat Surface

July 28th Music by Bittersweet

August 4th Private Event. Closed 3pm - close

August 11th Music by Pat Surface

August 18th Music by Ron E. Cash

August 25th Music by Pat Surface

September 1st Music by Bittersweet

No reservations on patio. First come, first serve. Inside reservations are highly recommended! Call 218.753.7804

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# I'm Hungry LET'S EAT! A Summer Restaurant Guide

	<b>THE GOOD OL' DAYS</b> 316 Main St, Tower • 218-753-6097 Daily Meal Specials Homemade Soups & Chili, Friday Fish Fry Pool Table, Dart Board, TVs <i>Enjoy historic 1930's atmosphere, nostalgic pictures, wood floors, tin ceilings with a train!</i> <b>Best Bloody Mary In Minnesota!</b> See our MENU at <a href="http://www.goodolddaystower.com">www.goodolddaystower.com</a>	<b>Hours:</b> Mon-Sat: 6 AM-Close 6 AM Breakfast  Sun: 8 AM-Close 8 AM Breakfast
	<b>FRONT PORCH COFFEE &amp; TEA CO.</b> 4th & Sheridan St, Ely • 218-365-2326 Fresh Burritos, Quiche, Coffee, Espresso, Tea Smoothies, Desserts, Outdoor Seating. WiFi	<b>Hours:</b> DAILY: 7 AM
	<b>THE VERMILION CLUB</b> 3191 Old Hwy 77, Tower • 218-753-6277 No frills eatery/bar featuring jumbo & specialty pizzas, steaks, seafood in a rustic interior.	<b>Hours:</b> Tues-Sun Noon-1 AM Closed Sun

	<b>THE CRESCENT BAR &amp; GRILL</b> 9257 E Olson Rd, Cook • 218-666-0100 Full Menu, Full Sports Bar, Game Room 2 Private Dining Rooms, Catering, Receptions Outdoor Patio, Volleyball, Bean Bags, Off-Sale	<b>Hours:</b> DAILY: 11 AM-Close
	<b>MONTANA CAFE</b> 29 S River St, Cook • 218-666-2074 Breakfast & Lunch, Take & Bake Items: Pasties & Chicken Pot Pies	<b>Hours:</b> Sat & Sun: 8 AM-3 PM M-F: 9 AM-5 PM Tues: Closed:
	<b>NORTHERN DIVIDE BAR &amp; EATERY</b> 1308 18th St N, Virginia • 218-748-7534 Brunch, Lunch, & Dinner. Menu changes seasonally. Larger dining room for parties. Reservations recommended for large groups.	<b>Hours:</b> Tues-Sun: 11 AM-8 PM Mon: Closed:
	<b>BAYVIEW BAR &amp; GRILL</b> 2007 Co Rd 77, Tower • 218-753-2964 Brunch, Lunch, & Dinner. Great atmosphere, full bar, outside tiki bar and decks for relaxing.	<b>Hours:</b> DAILY: Wed-Sun Noon-11 PM M,Tu: Closed

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**FIRE...**Continued from page 1

Martin said. "Because of the winds it blew up pretty quick. Once it got into the forest on the other side of the highway, east of 135, it got nasty in a hurry. That's the point where it was getting near structures, so residents were evacuated."

While Embarrass and Pike-Sandy-Britt firefighters worked to protect out-buildings and homes from catching fire, responders from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Forest Service started in on the main fire and, given the low humidity and high winds, the call for air support went out almost immediately, Martin said.

"I've actually never seen that number of aircraft on one fire before," he said.

Two helicopters were the first to arrive, followed shortly by white-and-red Fire Boss water tankers, eventually four in all. Right on their heels was the first of four huge CL-415 "Super Scooper" aircraft which filled their 1,400-gallon water tanks on the fly while skimming the surface of Lake Vermilion. Flying in tandem as close as 15 seconds apart, the Super



**Left: Flames reached into the canopy last Friday in Embarrass.**

photo by J. Boese

assumed command of the response from DNR on Saturday, the fire was still considered to be only 20 percent contained. Public information officer Sarah Shapiro explained why.

"Although a dozer line or state highway encircle the burned area of the Rakhola Road Fire, a significant portion of the dozer line is 'indirect fire line,'" she said. "This means that there is unburned fuel (grass, brush and timber) between the burned area and the dozer line. Until the fire is extinguished in these areas of indirect control line and the fire is unlikely to spread this fire will not be considered 100 percent contained."

Between 50 and 60 people worked each day from Saturday through Tuesday to patrol the scene and search for heat pockets to extinguish. They also had air support from a plane with infrared heat-detection equipment that flew reconnaissance flights to direct firefighters to hot

spots. Light rain that fell throughout the day on Sunday aided their efforts.

"After Friday it was mostly mop-up," Martin said. "They were making sure it didn't get down into the root systems and peat, because then you would have a super long-term fire instead of a short-term event."

With the fire considered to be 95 percent contained on Tuesday, Shapiro said MNICS would be transferring command to the Tower DNR Forestry office on Wednesday.

This isn't the first wild-fire Embarrass firefighters have tackled this year, and while he would be glad if it were the last, Martin said dry conditions won't likely disappear any time soon.

"This is a big area, and every time the wind blows up all it takes is one tree to touch a line," Martin said. "Everything looks nice and green, but we didn't get much snow last winter, so soil moisture is really lagging behind, and we went into the winter dry. It doesn't take much to get a fire going."

**BROADBAND...**Continued from page 1

The barrier, of course, is money.

"How do we pay for it?" he asked.

Buttweiler said if a private entity could have funded the project, it would have already been completed.

"These projects require either local funding or outside grant funding from state or federal sources."

But the awarding of Rural Digital Opportunity Funding (RDOF) has put a monkey-wrench into broadband project planning in the area, with the possible awarding of a huge amount of federal money to a small internet company with no experience putting in fiber optic-based systems, let alone doing projects nationwide.

"The problem is," Buttweiler said, "nobody believes they can do what they said they would do. It costs too much."

Currently the FCC is vetting the company, LTD Broadband, but there is no timeline for the process, and Buttweiler said he did not expect a decision until a new FCC commissioner is installed. LTD could possibly receive \$312 million for projects throughout Minnesota, not just for this area.

While this is underway, most other state or federal grant programs are unwilling to fund projects in the RDOF area, which includes huge areas of St. Louis County.

Buttweiler said there are other options for bringing in broadband, but they would involve a major investment from the township, though that investment could be paid back by the provider over the course of several years.

CTC is a co-op, he said, and doesn't have access to huge amounts of capital. In other areas they have done arrangements where

Scoopers made drops on average about every eight minutes throughout the late afternoon. Another small plane constantly circled high above the fray to coordinate efforts.

The air show drew about a dozen vehicles full of amazed spectators to a Four Corners parking lot, and another crowd assembled at Hoodoo Point on Lake Vermilion to watch the planes swoop in for fresh loads of water. Social media sites were soon

awash in pictures and video of the effort.

But not all of the water needed to suppress the fire could be dumped from the air, and Embarrass crews moved into support mode, repeatedly filling two tenders by pumping water from the Pike River to refill three 2,100-gallon portable pools set up to support the ground efforts. Martin estimated that his crews transported between 15,000 and 20,000 gallons of water on Friday. They

transported an additional 5,000 to 8,000 daily from Saturday through Monday.

Meanwhile, bulldozers also established a fire line around the perimeter of the blaze. All of the focused effort in the air and on the ground paid off, as the Rakhola Road fire was under control by 10 p.m. Friday and no longer posed an immediate threat, Martin said.

However, when Minnesota Incident Command System Team C

the local governmental unit comes up with the capital costs up front, and then enters into a construction agreement with CTC who would then lease the fiber from the township, including responsibility for maintenance and operational costs. This agreement could include giving CTC the option to buy back the fiber network from the township, once the costs are paid off by their annual lease payments.

"We've done this before," he said.

Another option would be to have CTC finance a smaller portion of the project up front, possibly bringing in other partners and grant dollars, along with funding from the township.

Greenwood has applied for \$110,000 in federal funding, which isn't tied to RDOF. There is also funding available from the IRRRB that could be accessed. Whitney Ridlon, who works on broadband issues for the IRRRB, said they have \$2 million for local matches for broadband projects, but would probably only award up to \$750,000, or up to 25 percent of a project's cost.

"We want to be a partner and we want to help," Ridlon said.

Steve Giorgi, who has been leading the regional effort through the RAMS group, said they are also putting pressure on St. Louis County to use some of the federal rescue plan money for broadband grants. Currently, Giorgi said, the county only seems interested in funding studies about broadband, something he said has already been done and isn't needed.

Giorgi also said there

are investment groups that are looking to fund broadband projects at reasonable interest rates.

The township could also work with a company that sells government bonds, and Chairman Mike Ralston said he had already contacted someone from a Duluth-area firm that handles this type of bonding to see what options would be available for the township if they decide to move forward.

"They would develop a plan and then reach out to financial institutions to develop a loan that could be paid back over 20 years."

The meeting was purely informational, and no board action was taken.

**How you can help**

Greenwood residents are encouraged to complete a survey on the CTC website, to indicate any interest in broadband internet service. CTC also offers television and telephone service in bundled packages. CTC is currently adding broadband service in Cherry Township (rural Hibbing), and offering broadband-speed service at approximately \$60/month.

Anyone with an address in Greenwood Township is asked to fill out the survey at [https://join.connectctc.com/front\\_end/zones](https://join.connectctc.com/front_end/zones).

The township's broadband committee is

also looking for volunteers willing to go door-to-door in their neighborhoods to do an in-person survey. To volunteer or for more information contact Sue Drobac at [sue.drobac@greenwoodtownshipmn.com](mailto:sue.drobac@greenwoodtownshipmn.com), or Barbara Lofquist at [barbara.lofquist@greenwoodtownshipmn.com](mailto:barbara.lofquist@greenwoodtownshipmn.com).

Talk to your county commissioner about the importance of funding local broadband projects, and to your state representative and senator about securing additional dollars for state broadband matching grant programs. Also, talk to

your state representative about changing the rules to allow utility poles to carry both electrical service and fiber optics. Current rules mandate a large space separation between the two, meaning that new larger poles would need to be installed to use this method to bring fiber optic cable closer to homes.

**About CTC**

CTC was formed in 1950 as a rural telephone cooperative. Today, CTC continues to set the standard in telecommunications for the Brainerd Lakes area and beyond, with new

projects bringing service to many areas in northeastern Minnesota including Ely, Tower, and the Bois Forte Reservation. As rural communities rely on higher speeds and more reliable internet services for communication, entertainment, and conducting business. CTC remains committed to current and future demands. As a cooperative, CTC is owned by its members.

CTC currently serves some governmental customers in Tower, including the city of Tower, Hoodoc Point Campground, and the Vermilion Country School.

**Plant Sale**

<b>Perennials</b>	<b>Shrubs</b>	<b>Tiny Asiatic Lilies</b>
Gallon & 6"	Buy 3 Get 10% off	5 bulbs per pot
\$7.99	Buy 5 Get 15% off	\$9.99
3/\$21.00		3/\$27.00
5/\$30.00		5/\$40.00

<b>Fairy Garden Items</b>	<b>Supplies &amp; Seeds</b>
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 AICHO  
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 Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging  
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 Aurora Food Shelf  
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 Big Woods Transportation  
 Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN  
 Bois Forte Band of Chippewa  
 Bougalis Construction  
 Bright Spot Nutrition - Virginia, MN  
 Chisholm Food Shelf  
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 City of Gilbert  
 City of Hibbing  
 City of Hoyt Lakes  
 City of Virginia  
 Community Agencies & Organizations  
 Community Neighbors  
 Community Volunteers  
 Crossroads Convenience - Iron, MN  
 Dollar General - Aurora, MN  
 Dollar Tree - Virginia, MN  
 Duluth HRA  
 East Lake Community Center  
 Ely Food Shelf  
 Embarrass Town Hall  
 Eveleth HRA  
 Family Dollar - Aurora, MN  
 Finland Community Center - Finland, MN

Finland Co-op  
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 Fraboni's Sausage Co. - Hibbing, MN  
 Gilbert HRA  
 Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa  
 Hibbing Community College  
 Hibbing HRA  
 Hibbing Police & Fire Departments  
 Hope Lutheran Church - Floodwood, MN  
 Hospitals & Health Care Facilities  
 Hoyt Lakes Arena  
 Hugo's Bar - Brimson, MN  
 Hunger Solutions Minnesota  
 Keewatin Community Center  
 KOOTASCA Community Action - Grand Rapids, MN  
 Lake County HRA  
 Lee's Business Center - Hibbing, MN  
 Lenci Enterprises - Virginia, MN  
 Local Media Partners (Radio, TV & Print)  
 Loon Lake Community Center  
 Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd - Duluth, MN  
 McGrath Fire Department  
 Mesabi East School - Aurora, MN  
 Mesabi Range College  
 MnDOT - Hibbing, MN  
 Moose Lake Arena  
 NERCC  
 North Woods School - Cook, MN  
 Old School Lives - Cotton, MN  
 Quad Cities Food Shelf - Mountain Iron, MN  
 Rainy River Community College - International Falls, MN  
 Salvation Army - Hibbing, MN  
 Salvation Army - Virginia, MN

Silver Bay Food Shelf  
 Second Harvest North Central Food Bank  
 Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank  
 Semi Drivers delivering food  
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 St. Mary's Church - Cook, MN  
 Sullivan Candy and Supply - Hibbing, MN  
 Super One Foods - Hibbing, MN  
 Super One Foods - Virginia, MN  
 The HUB/Grand Marais Senior Center  
 United Rentals- Hermantown, MN  
 United Rentals - Hibbing, MN  
 United Way of Carlton County  
 United Way of Northeast Minnesota  
 Unity in Christ Church - Finland, MN  
 Upper Lakes Foods - Cloquet, MN  
 Virginia HRA  
 Virginia Police & Fire Departments  
 Volunteer Services Carlton County  
 Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center - Finland, MN  
 Zoar Lutheran Church - Tofte, MN

Chris Wolf  
 Jeremy Cole  
 Kim Dickey  
 Mike Ralston  
 Mike Zakrajshek  
 Mrs. Perrella  
 Rich Lees  
 Thomas and Nancy Gustafson  
 Burlison, Koshiol, Stocwell, Berg, Ahlert, Saarela, Checco and Peterson  
 Families and everyone who gave free will donations at the events!

Our sincere apologies to anyone we have missed. We do thank you!

**AEOA FOOD EVENTS**  
**USDA CORONAVIRUS FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CFAP)**  
**FARMERS TO FAMILIES FOOD BOX PROGRAM**  
**AND**  
**AEOA SHELF STABLE MEAL KITS**  
**MAY 2020 - MAY 2021**

**OUR DISTRIBUTORS:**

Capital City Fruit - Norwalk, IA  
 Good Source - Ontario, CA  
 Perfect Pact - Byron Center, MI  
 Russ Davis Wholesale - Wadena, MN  
 Tom Maceri & Son Produce - St. Claire Shores, MI

**IMPACT...**

89,724 boxes  
 2,130,986 pounds

95,165 individuals  
 35,499 households  
 65+: 20,475  
 18-64: 42,327  
 18 & under: 26,646

**DONATIONS...**

**MONETARY DONATIONS HELPED US SECURE**  
 Turkey Breasts at Thanksgiving  
 Hams at Christmas  
 Extra produce boxes

**ADDITIONAL DONATIONS:**  
 Juice Boxes - United Way of Northeast MN  
 Pumpkins - NERCC  
 Zucchini - Mike Zakrajshek

**...BY LOCATION**

**7 COUNTIES:**

Aitkin	Ely	Hermantown	Nett Lake
Carlton	Embarrass	Hibbing	Orr
Cook	Eveleth	Hill City	Palo
Itasca	Finland	Hoyt Lakes	Silver Bay
Koochiching	Greenway	Int'l Falls	Tofte
Lake		Iron	Tower
St. Louis		Keewatin	Two Harbors
		Marble	Virginia
		McGrath	
		McGregor	
		Meadowlands	
		Moose Lake	
		Mountain Iron	

**...MORE NUMBERS**

**VOLUNTEERS**  
 303 volunteers  
 164 outside volunteers  
 139 AEOA Staff & Retirees  
 1,822 volunteer hours

**46 FOOD EVENTS**  
 May 28th, 2020 was the very first event  
 May 27th, 2021 was the most recent event

**AVERAGE EVENT IS 4.5 HOURS**

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## STATE GOLF TOURNAMENT

# North Woods golfers take fourth at state meet

### Freshman Olson takes part in girls tournament

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- In what North Woods Head Golf Coach Will Kleppe termed “the cherry on the top” of a better-than-expected season, the Grizzlies claimed fourth place in the team standings of the Class A state golf tournament last week on the Pebble Creek Golf Club course in Becker.

The Grizzlies’ hopes of a

higher finish in the eight-team field largely disappeared on the first day of the 36-hole event when they found themselves trailing third-place Legacy Christian Academy by 23 strokes at the end of the round. Kleppe said the biggest challenge his team faced was getting used to the greens.

“We don’t get a lot of practice on greens like that – they were extremely fast with a lot of breaks and undulations to

**Right: North Woods golfers at the state golf meet in Becker last week.**

photo by B. Smith

them,” Kleppe said. “It certainly took some adjustment from our guys to figure out where to land their shots and hit some putts outside of six feet.”

Senior Sam Frazee was the one who saw the adjustments

See **GOLF...**pg. 2B



## LOCAL FOODS RETURN

# Farmers market vendors agree it's good to be back

by DAVID COLBURN  
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- With overcast skies and cool temperatures, business wasn’t booming at the start of Saturday’s Cook Farmers Market for first timers Vanessa Burdine and Lauren Eggert.

“We’ve each made \$5,” Burdine laughed. “That’s not bad. It’s been a little slow start. It’s mostly for fun.”

“Yeah, it’s for fun and getting out,” Eggert said.

Originally from Maple Grove, Burdine has been coming to Cook most of her life because her

grandparents have a cabin here, but recently she and her husband bought a little “hobby farm” in the area where they have chickens and eggs and, it turned out, an abundance of rhubarb.

“It just sprung up,” Burdine said. “And then there were big gardens, so I felt like I had to plant stuff in them, so I just decided I’m going to be a farmer and go to the farmers market.”

Not surprisingly, there was fresh rhubarb, rhubarb jam, and rhubarb syrup at the stand, but there were also loaves of asiago

See **MARKET...**pg. 2B



**Top: Min Baker, of Side Lake, has been a regular vendor at the Cook Farmers Market for the past 8-9 years.**

**Above: Elizabeth Schmitt, of Ely, displayed some of her lush hydroponic lettuce at the Tower Farmers Market.**

**Right: Kelly Dahl, of Linden Grove, sets up his display at the Cook market held last Saturday.**

**Tower vendor Mickey White chats with customers Ron and Sue Norha.**

photos by Timberjay staff



# It was a busy first day at Tower's farmers market

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- High winds couldn’t dampen the enthusiasm of the vendors during opening day of the Tower Farmers Market on June 18. The market opened with quite a few new vendors, as well as many returning favorites. The market, which is open on Fridays from 4 – 6 p.m. in the parking lot by Tower’s train, was busy all afternoon, and many vendors had sold out by the time the market closed.

Fire-fighting aircraft crossed back and forth over the market all afternoon, creating quite a sight for visitors. The planes were scooping water from Lake Vermilion to dump on a wildfire about 10 miles away in Embarrass.

Shelby Vaske’s pies have been a favorite of local market shoppers for several years. She was warning customers to be careful because her pies were literally still hot from her oven.

Sharon Legg had

See **BUSY...**pg. 2B



## MILESTONES

# Local runner honored at Grandma's



**Mike Korpi (right) received a distinctive belt buckle last Saturday after qualifying for the Grandma's Marathon 1,000-Miler Club.**

## Mike Korpi joins Duluth marathon's 1,000-miler club

REGIONAL- More than four decades after he ran his very first Grandma’s Marathon, Mike Korpi, of Soudan, has joined an elite group as one of the newest members of the event’s 1,000-Miler Club this year.

Korpi, a Soudan native, ran his first Grandma’s Marathon in 1980 in a time of 3:26:59 and has been back every year since. This will be his 42nd consecutive year at the event, meaning he will have logged more than 1,100 miles on the course from Two Harbors to Duluth.

“The recognition means the world to me,” Korpi said of entering the 1,000-miler club. “I feel extremely blessed to have run every Grandma’s Marathon since 1980. It’s such a wonderfully organized race, and the volunteers and spectators make me want to return each and every year. I just love being part of Grandma’s Marathon and its history.”

Larry McNichols, of Morris, also ran his 42nd Grandma’s Marathon this year. Korpi and McNichols were the ninth and tenth recipients of the Grandma’s Marathon 1,000-Miler Award, which requires participation in a minimum of 39 lifetime events.

## EVENTS

# Ely ham radio operators prep for national event

ELY - Ham radio operators from the Vermilion Range Amateur Radio Club will be taking part in a national amateur radio exercise here this weekend, from 1 p.m. Saturday until noon on Sunday, at the St. Louis County public works facility. The event, American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Field Day, is an annual amateur radio activity organized by ARRL, the national association for amateur radio in the United States.

Hams from across North America ordinarily participate in

See **HAM RADIO...**pg. 2B

**GOLF...**Continued from page 1B

pay off the best. Sitting in a five-way tie for 21st after a disappointing first round of 81, Frazee carded the third best score of the second round, a one-over-par 73 that vaulted him to 12th place overall.

"To bounce back and go one over on the second day on that course was fantastic," Kleppe said. "He got some shots to drop and his short game was working well."

Frazee, Ian Olson and Davis Kleppe were the team's strongest trio

throughout the regular season, and they were again at state, all finishing in the upper half of a competitive field. Olson was runner-up to Frazee this time with a two-day total of 169 to tie for 35th, and Kleppe was just one stroke behind at 170, placing 40th. Beyond their scoring, seniors Frazee and Olson and junior Kleppe were vital to the overall success of the team this season in how they mentored younger and/or less experienced teammates, Coach

Kleppe said.

"I'm super proud of Sam, Ian, and Davis," he said. "They've done a great job of talking kids through course layouts. They always spend a lot of time walking the less experienced guys through the course, telling them what to avoid and what shots to play. I think that was valuable to a guy like Eli Smith - he had a pretty good idea of what the (Pebble Creek) course was going to be. We super appreciate their willingness to do that, because at the

same time they have their own games to think about. It's something we relied on, and for Sam and Ian it's definitely something we're going to miss."

Only a sophomore and the youngest player on the Grizzlies' state squad, Smith's 182 total was fourth best on the six-man team. Junior Ty Fabish carded an even 200 for the tourney, followed by senior Brant Boutto's 233 to round out the individual scoring.

Kleppe said the whole team appreciated their state tourney appearance.

"Getting there is always the biggest goal, of course," Kleppe said. "It was just great for the kids to get to a tournament like that where things were about as normal as you can get. There were fans there. There was a gallery. We played in a group with eventual state champion Fertile-Beltrami, so there was a lot of enjoyment with that."

**Olson competes**

The Grizzlies had one player in the field for the girls Class A state tourna-

ment, freshman Tori Olson.

Playing on the same Pebble Creek layout as the boys, the course proved to be a tough challenge for the youngster, but she was consistent throughout the tournament. She carded identical front-nine scores of 50 over two days and shot 51 and 52 on the back nines to finish in the middle part of the pack at 46th with a two-day total of 203.

The Grizzlies did not qualify as a team for the event, which was won by Lac qui Parle Valley.

**HAM RADIO...**Continued from page 1B

Field Day by establishing temporary ham radio stations in public locations to demonstrate their skill and service.

Field Day highlights ham radio's ability to

work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent, wireless communications network.

The Vermilion Range Amateur Radio Club will

showcase their new communications trailer at this year's event. The trailer was funded by grants from Twin Metals Minnesota and Lake Country Power along with donations from

community groups and individuals.

The club will demonstrate a variety of communications methods including two-way communication using satellites orbiting

earth. "Hams have a long history of serving our communities when storms or other disasters damage critical communication infrastructure, including cell towers," said George

Burger of the Vermilion Range Amateur Radio Club.

**BUSY...**Continued from page 1B

quickly sold out of her pecan caramel and cinnamon rolls, but she was still busy selling her "grown-up size" chocolate chip cookies.

Karl Jonas was back with his sourdough breads, which as usual quickly sold out.

Hydroponically-

grown lettuce, and several varieties of living basil plants were a big draw. Elizabeth Schmitt, of Ely, has taken over her father-in-law Paul's growing operation. Depending on how cooperative her plantings are, she said she hopes to be a regular in Tower this summer.

New this year is Brooke Gruba, of Babbitt, who is selling homemade gluten-free, dairy-free desserts, including brownies, banana and other sweet breads, and fruit crisps, in both individual and family-size servings.

"It's going great," she said. She hopes to also start

selling her own gluten-free flour blend.

Another new vendor was Sarah Wallert-Ramponi, who was selling homemade soaps and hand-spun wool yarn.

There were plenty of sweet treats available for sale, to the delight of the children brows-

ing along with their parents and grandparents. Bear Creek Acres, of Embarrass, was back with their locally-raised pork and sausage.

As far as homegrown vegetables, mostly salad greens were available, but many local gardeners also were offering home-canned

delicacies from last year's harvest.

Other items regularly offered at the market include homemade rag rugs, intricately-pieced wooden cutting boards, homemade barbecue sauce, leather totes and purses, jewelry, and other handmade items.

**MARKET...**Continued from page 1B

bread, cookies, containers of playdough for kids, and specially-formulated lip balm made by Eggert.

A few spots away, veteran market participant Min Baker, of Side Lake, was doing brisk business. She's been coming to Cook for nine or ten years, she said, to peddle a wide variety of fresh produce, baked goods, salsas, jellies, and her own family recipe of kimchi, a staple of Korean cuisine. She didn't participate in last year's COVID-dictated online

sales, and her respond to what it was like to be back after such a long absence was simple.

"Life," she said. "I see people, I see friends. Much happier."

Baker has been baking and cooking for decades, working for 25 years at the hospital in Hibbing before venturing into gardening and baking on her own. And although she enjoys turning out the many different items she sells, customers appear to have a clear favorite. "Kimchi is our most

popular thing," she said.

Organizer Kelly Dahl had his regular tent pitched and stocked with fresh and canned produce items from Aspen Falls Farm, and he was clearly delighted with the opening day turnout of vendors and patrons.

"It feels great," he said. "We really missed last year when we were doing it all online. That worked out fairly well, but obviously didn't get us the social aspect. The great thing about the farmers market is that you see the same

people every year and you get to interact with new people. It's a fun, festive atmosphere."

Cook Farmers Market patrons will have the best of both worlds, as many vendors will continue to sell online and package their items for pickup on Saturdays, Dahl said.

It's been a challenging year so far for growers, Dahl said, which hasn't affected the variety of what's available as much as it has the amounts.

"We had a hard freeze at

the end of May and it was down to 20 degrees at our farm and that knocked off about all the flowers off our apple trees and did a lot of widespread damage," Dahl said. "Then immediately the heat came, 100, nineties and so forth. All your cold weather varieties, heads of lettuce and so forth, they'll bolt in the heat, so this yo-yo effect is really challenging for growing. And the drought doesn't help."

Still, there was plenty to choose from on Saturday among the items of produce, baked goods, arts and crafts, and business had picked up significantly by mid-morning. And that was good not only for vendors, but for Cook businesses as well, Dahl said.

"People come and they say where do I get a cup of coffee, where's a place to get lunch?" he said. "Somebody came and their shoe came apart and they needed a pair of shoes, so I sent them to the Comet. They didn't want to abandon their old pair of shoes, so I sent them to the hardware store to get some tape to put on it."

And with the uptick in traffic, Burdine's \$5 lament was long gone, as items on her table had been shifted to fill in the blank spots where many of her goods had been.

The Cook Area Farmers Market is held every Saturday until October from 8 a.m. to noon in the Cook City Park on River Street.

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**SUMMER WELLNESS SCHEDULE**

**Weekly Medical Clinics and Fluoride Clinics**  
 Ely Community Health Center • 111 S 4th Ave. E  
 Every Thursday Evening • 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.  
 A 2-minute fluoride varnish treatment can help protect your teeth between dental visits. No appointment required. No one is turned away and services are FREE.  
 2nd and 4th Thursday  
 COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics • 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.  
 Come after work and before dinner for your COVID-19 Vaccination. Anyone 18 or older who has not completed their vaccinations is invited. No reservation required.  
 If you get vaccinated you will receive a \$10 Ely Chamber Bucks redeemable at numerous locations throughout Ely per poke.

**Wednesday Wellness**  
 Ely Senior Center • 27 S 1st Ave E  
 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month • 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
 Free blood pressure clinics, No appointment required, Services at no cost.  
 1st and 3rd Wednesday • COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics • 9 a.m. to 12 noon  
 Come after work and before dinner for your COVID-19 Vaccination. Anyone 18 or older who has not completed their vaccinations is invited. No reservation required.  
 If you get vaccinated you will receive a \$10 Ely Chamber Bucks redeemable at numerous locations throughout Ely per poke.

**Tasty Tuesdays**  
 Ely Senior Center • 27 S 1st Ave E  
 3rd Tuesday of each month • 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 Come to our new class offering nutritious cooking tips for you and your family. We've partnered with the University of Minnesota and a local cook to show you how to prepare tasty meals on a budget. Participants get free tastings in class and a grocery bag of ingredients to take. The class is free however registration is required. Call our office @ 218-365-5678 to register or for more information.  
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2018 RAM 1500 Crew Cab 4x4.....Hemi Power!.....	\$40,990
2018 Jeep Compass Trailhawk.....29K Miles!.....	\$25,990
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2016 Chevrolet Impala LT.....Fresh Trade-In!.....	\$14,990
2014 Chevrolet Silverado LTZ Crew 4x4.....Loaded!.....	\$29,990
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# Saturday, JULY 3 **Spend July 3rd in Tower-Soudan**

**Celebrate our Nation's Birthday in Tower-Soudan This Year**

## Parade – July 3rd

*Judging begins at 10 a.m.  
at Tower Civic Center parking lot*

### Parade Marshals:

*Mary Batinich & Linda Haugen*

### Flag Raising at 10:30 a.m.

*at Tower City Hall.  
Come join us and sing along as the  
Star Spangled Banner is played.*

### Parade starts at 11 a.m.

#### NEW THIS YEAR

**Kiddie Parade lines up between UBetcha and Jeanne's Cards** (across from City Hall)  
*All participating children will receive \$5 and a flag.  
All children welcome to come march in the parade.  
Decorations welcome but not required!*

#### Adult Parade Prizes-

*Best of Show \$450  
1st \$350 • 2nd \$250 • 3rd \$150  
Best Family Float \$100 • Most Patriotic  
Float \$100 • Best Business/Commercial \$100*

**Please Pre-Register Parade Floats/Entries with  
Julie Johnson (218) 750-7242 or  
tseventsboard@gmail.com**

## July 3rd

**Fireworks at 10 p.m.**  
from the North Hill in Tower

## July 3rd

**FOOD, FOOD, FOOD...and more!**

### Benchwarmer Grille-

*Outdoor food and beverage trailer  
featuring cheeseburgers & fries  
(Full Menu Indoors)*

*Green Machines, Strawberry Daquiris,  
Special Drink Prices  
\$1 off malts & shakes*

### D'Erick's Beer Garden

*Pulled Pork and Buffalo Chicken Sandwiches,  
Hot Dogs, Green Machines, Beer, Pop & Water.  
Bloody Mary Garden. Beanbags all week.*

### Good Ol' Days Live Music, Food & Beer Garden

*Free Hot Dogs & Pop for  
children after the parade!  
Burgers, Pickle-on-a-Stick. Free Giant Slide Bouncer  
for the Kids. Beer Tent. Bloody Mary Window.  
"Ely Ed" playing 12 - 3 p.m.  
"Elvis" playing from 3 - 5 p.m. & 8 p.m. - dusk.  
Insphyre Fire Dancers at dusk!*

### Sulu's Espresso Cafe

*9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Vermilion Cooler Juice  
Drinks outdoors, Coffee drinks indoors*

### Jeanne's Cards & Gifts

*Selling Fourth of July Novelties on the sidewalk.*

**Kettle Corn • Shaved Ice  
Plus Food Booths on Main St.**

## Saturday, July 3rd

**38th Vermilion Walk & Run  
Starts on Main Street • 8 a.m.  
(by the Civic Center/Fire Hall)**

*10K Run- 8:00 a.m. • 5K Run/Walk 8:00 a.m.  
1-Mile Kids Fun Run- 8:15 a.m.  
Race will be chip-timed by Range Runners*

**REGISTER ONLINE AT  
www.rangerunners.com**

**Questions, Call Jodi Summit  
at (218) 753-2950**

**Register on race day from  
6:30 a.m.-7:45 a.m.**

*10K or 5K \$20 (\$25 on race day)  
Kids Run is FREE • 5K Family Rate is \$40.*

*Race T-Shirts available for \$20 each  
\$15 if ordered in advance online*

*Sponsored by Friends of Vermilion Country Charter School*

## July 3rd

**Children's Races  
& Sawdust Scramble**

**12:30 p.m. – Sawdust Scramble**  
at the football field (west end)

*Children's Races at the school field –  
following the Sawdust Scramble  
Greg Dostert Family and Helpers*

- 6-yard dash ages 2-3 (boys & girls races)
- 10-yard dash ages 4-5 (boys & girls races)
- 20-yard dash ages 6-7 (boys & girls races)
- 50-yard dash ages 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15 (boys & girls races)
- Backwards Race (boys & girls races) ages 2-3, 4-5, 6
- Wheelbarrow Race (boys & girls races) ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14
- Sack Race (boys & girls races) ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14
- **Adult Races:** Prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, ages 15-25 and 26 & up
- He/She Race, Water Balloon Toss

*Actual races subject to change & new races may be added!*

**Sunday, July 4  
from 12 - 3 p.m.**

**Community Picnic  
Breitung Recreation Area  
in Soudan**

*Sponsored by Breitung Township  
Free community picnic, hot dogs, popcorn,  
root beer floats, games and fun for all ages.*

**4th of July Raffle Drawings at 2 p.m.**

## Laurentian Train Club

*The Laurentian Northern Model Railroad  
Club we be setting up their large working  
display at the Tower Civic Center  
on July 2-4, Friday through Sunday.  
Fun for all ages. Learn about the history of  
railroads and mining in our area.*

**This Tower-Soudan Fourth of July schedule of events has been brought to you by these community-minded businesses:**

**Aronson Boat Works  
Barb's Cutting Edge  
Bauman's Vermilion Funeral Home  
Benchwarmer's Grille  
Bob's Service & Towing  
Breitung Township  
Brotten Construction  
David Lanari- Keller  
Williams Realty  
D'Erick's Tower Liquors  
Edina Realty - Tim Lillquist  
Embarrass-Vermilion Federal Credit Union  
Fortune Bay Resort Casino  
Frandsen Bank - Tower  
Glenmore Resort  
Good Ol' Days  
Gruben's Marina & Village  
Janisch Realty  
Lamppa Mfg.  
Marjo Motel  
Nordic Home North  
No. Pine Embroidery  
Northwoods Land Office  
Northwoods True Value  
Pier 77 Mini-Golf  
Pike Bay Lodge  
Scenic Rivers Medical & Dental  
Sulu's Espresso Cafe  
Sunrise River Boatworks  
Tech Electric  
The Timberjay  
Tower-Soudan Agency  
Ubetcha Antiques & Uffda Thrift  
Vermilion Club  
Vermilion Fuel & Food/  
Soudan Store  
Vermilion Land Office  
Vermilion Park Inn  
Zup's Grocery - Tower**

Handicap Parking Available  
Near Tower-Soudan  
Elementary School  
(see signs).

COMMUNITY GROUPS

# Life getting close to normal for Vermilion Dream Quilters

by JODI SUMMIT  
Tower-Soudan Editor

Quilting guild to resume indoor meetings in Tower on July 8

TOWER- The Vermilion Dream Quilters, an active quilting guild with members from Ely, Tower-Soudan, Cook, and the Iron Range area, is once again meeting in person.

Their first in-person meeting was held outdoors at Hoodoo Point Campground earlier this month, and quilters seemed excited to begin meeting in person. The group normally meets monthly in the basement of St. Martin's Catholic Church but had to stop meeting indoors last spring. They held a few outdoor meetings last summer but stopped once the weather got colder in September.

At their June meeting, members voted to begin meeting indoors once again, starting in July.

Meeting outdoors made it difficult to hold quilting and sewing demonstrations, as members had to deal with issues including noise from campground users and boaters, and the buzzing of mosquitos and biting flies.

Members showed off some of the winter projects, mostly lap quilts which are donated to



Bonnie Harma shows one of the "potato chip" quilts she made to donate to local patients undergoing cancer treatments. photo by J. Summit

hospital infusion center programs in Virginia and Ely.

A favorite pattern for these lap quilts has been nicknamed the "potato chip" quilt, because, I was told, "you can't make just one!"

The quilters seemed to have

weathered the pandemic restrictions quite nicely.

"It helps that most of us are introverted," they told me. And obviously they had plenty of time to work on their quilting creations.

While quilters may say

they are introverted, most are more than willing to share their skills and teach new techniques to others in the guild. About 15 attended the outdoor June meeting, which is about half of the usual pre-COVID attendance. They are hoping that all their

members will feel comfortable to start meeting in person again in July.

"We don't want to talk about COVID anymore," they said. Instead, they talked about plans for upcoming weekend quilting retreats this fall, challenge projects, and new patterns to try.

The quilting group is open to all area quilters, from beginner to expert, and guests are welcome to attend.

The next guild meeting will be on Thursday, July 8, at 6:30 p.m. at St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower. This is a change from the regular monthly meeting date due to the Fourth of July holiday weekend. Masks are encouraged for those not vaccinated and/or vulnerable, and there will be sufficient space for social distancing. No food or beverages will be served, but you may bring your own. In addition to the business meeting, Bonnie Harma and Teresa Dolinar will share information and samples of orphan block and scrap quilts. Please bring your own examples and show and tell items to share with the group.

## ORR BOG WALK

# All-new and open for eager feet

ORR- The nearly 30-year-old rickety structure is gone, and the brand-new Mickey Elverum Bog Walk in Orr is now open for the enjoyment and education of visitors.

City officials and representatives of the project's construction firm, Pember Companies, Inc., of Menominee, Wis., completed the final walkthrough last week and the barricades came down on Thursday. Local patrons were touring the walk by that evening.

The new bog walk follows the same footprint as the original trail, designed by Timberjay publisher Marshall Helmeberg-

er and opened in June 1992. The walk is dedicated to the memory of the visionary who inspired it, former Orr science teacher Michael "Mickey" Elverum. Mickey was known for using the outdoors as a classroom, and the bog was rich with possibilities.

It's been estimated that the bog walk has had 24,000 visitors annually, and it's sure to attract new visitors as word spreads about the all-new structure.

photos by D. Colburn



**38<sup>th</sup> Vermilion Walk & Run**



**Saturday, July 3 • Tower**  
**Main Street/Fire Hall Area**

- 10K Run - 8 a.m. • 5K Run/Walk - 8 a.m.
- 1-Mile Kids Fun Run - 8:15 a.m.

**REGISTER/PAY ONLINE AT**  
**www.rangerunners.org**

Range Runners is providing Chip Timing this year!  
10K/5K-\$20 • 12 & under free w/paid adult • Kids Run is FREE  
Family Pricing for 5K Run/Walk is \$40  
T-Shirts \$15 in advance/\$20 on race day  
Registrations accepted race day 6:30 - 7:45 a.m.

For more information, call or text Jodi Summit at 218-750-3513  
or email [jsummit@vermilioncountry.org](mailto:jsummit@vermilioncountry.org)

Sponsored by the Friends of Vermilion Country School



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[sunrisetowerboatshop@gmail.com](mailto:sunrisetowerboatshop@gmail.com)

**Obituaries and Death Notices**



**Albert O. Zupancich**

Albert O. Zupancich, 74, of Virginia, passed away peacefully on Monday, June 14, 2021, at his home after a courageous 16-month battle with cancer. A Funeral Mass will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, June 25 at Resurrection Catholic Church in Eveleth with Rev. Fr. Charles Flynn as celebrant. Visitation will

be for one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will be in Lakeview Cemetery in Tower at a later date. Arrangements are with Landmark Funeral Home in Virginia.

Al was born in Ely on March 2, 1947, the first child of Albert and Margaret (Owen) Zupancich. He was active in scouting, earning the rating of an Eagle Scout. Al played hockey throughout his high school years and grew up working in the family grocery store. He graduated from Ely High School in 1965, attended Ely Junior College, and graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1969.

After owning several grocery stores, he eventually found his home in Eveleth. He proudly owned and operated Eveleth IGA

for over 35 years. Al had a strong commitment to his customers and was well known for his generosity and kindness to all. He had many valued employees whom he considered family.

Al was an avid sports fan and loved all Minnesota teams. He often attended Twins and Vikings games and loved both UMD and Gopher hockey. He treasured his friends and their annual trip to the "Frozen Four". Al also enjoyed following his nephews and great-nephews at their high school sporting events.

Al was a very avid reader, spending many evenings deep in his books. Until the end of his days he continued to work at the store, giving all he could to keep everything running smoothly. His

dedication and commitment to Eveleth IGA will never be forgotten.

Rest in peace, Al, your legacy will continue. Join your beloved dad and brother in that big grocery store above.

Al is survived by his mother, Margaret Zupancich of Lake Vermilion-Tower; sister, Susan (Jerry) Chiabotti and their sons, Scott (Casie) and their son Brody, Bryan (Nichole) and their children Bria and Jared, and Neil (Nicole) and their children, Dylan, T.J., Brenden and Presley; sister-in-law, Constance Zupancich and her daughter Sarah Zupancich and her children, Beau, Brady and Grant and son, Matt Zupancich and his children, Kaycee and Daniel; numerous cousins; and close friends, Greg

Seraphine, Jon Logar, Tom Berrigan, Larry Majewski and John Homan.

He was preceded in death by his father, "Beanie" Zupancich in 1998; and his brother, "Chuck" Zupancich in 2017.

**Martha C. Kruckenberg**

Martha C. Espey Kruckenberg, 92, of Babbitt, formerly of Embarrass, died on Thursday, June 17, 2021, at Carefree Assisted Living in Babbitt. A memorial service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, June 28 at United Methodist Church in Aurora with Pastor Barbara Hegfors officiating. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the church. Inurnment will be in the Embarrass Cemetery. Arrangements are by

Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home in Aurora.

She is survived by her children, Alice Klaers of Babbitt, Mary (Robert) Wedll of Babbitt, Roger Kruckenberg of Eveleth and Jane Karki of Embarrass; grandchildren, Teresa Fietek, Tamara (Robert) Ellefson, Nicole (Christopher) Erickson, Travis (Hillary) Kruckenberg, Micheal (Marlo) Kruckenberg, Bambi Smith, Michael Karki and Bryan (Celyna) Karki; great-grandchildren, Courtney (Mike), Tyler, Kyah, Hiatt, Carter, Chase, Lane, Riley, Shaelynn, Shantel, Jace and Sonya; and several nieces and nephews.

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THE RAINBOW FISH  
FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE  
AT 7:00 P.M. ON JUNE 25  
AT THE  
NORTHEAST RANGE  
HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM  
FEATURING MIDDLE  
&  
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS  
FROM ACROSS THE IRON RANGE!

**Camp Broadway**

SCRIPT, MUSIC, AND LYRICS BY AUSTIN ZIMBARO  
ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK  
WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY  
MARCUS PRITZER  
PRODUCED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH  
PIONEER DRAMA SERVICE, INC.  
DENVER, COLORADO

Please join us  
for a fun  
family evening!

Brought to you by the Iron Range Summer Institute



**Memories of the Early Days**

A fascinating look back at the early history  
of the Lake Vermilion area

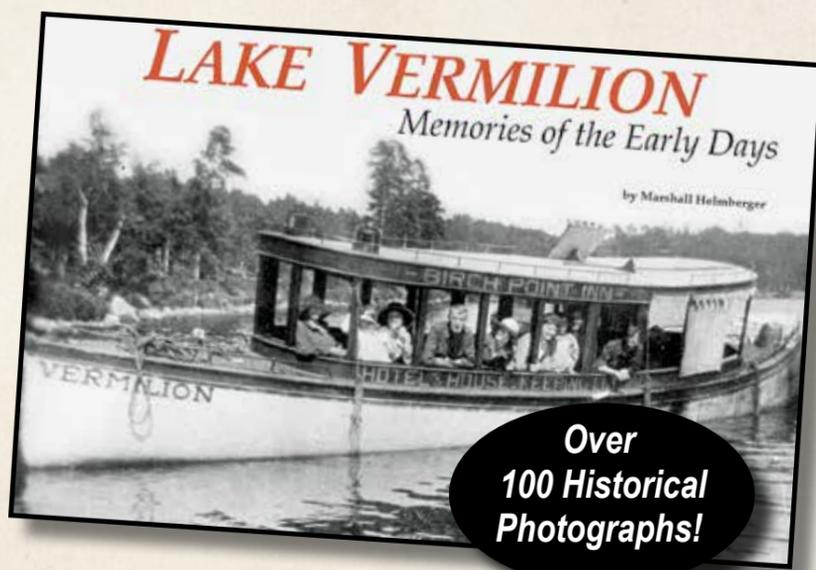
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**BOOK ORDER FORM**

Quantity of Books \_\_\_\_\_

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Credit Card Information VISA MC DISCOVER

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

Billing address if different from above \_\_\_\_\_

**Book Total - Pick Up \$29.95 + tax (\$32.16)**      **Book Total - Mail \$39.95**

Total charged to credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Paid by check \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Pick Up     Mail

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP  
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING**

Eagles Nest Township will hold a special meeting at 9:00 a.m. on June 25, 2021 at the Town Hall. The topic of the meeting will be ATV Routing Through the Township. All who are residents or who are officially responsible for property taxes on land within the township are welcome to attend. A mask is required for anyone who has not had the full dosage of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 weeks before the date of the meeting.

*Published in the Timberjay, June 25, 2021*

**EMPLOYMENT**



**Sewing Staff**

Wintergreen Northern Wear creates quality outdoor apparel on the main street of Ely, MN. We are looking for creative, talented individuals to sew our garments. If you love to sew, we'd love to have you on our team! Sewing experience is required. We'll train you on our industrial machines. Livable wages, a cheery, clean work environment and benefits included. \$16 an hour for skilled work. Call 218-365-6602 or email sola@wintergreen-northernwear.com for more information. Apply by email or at our store located at 205 East Sheridan Street, Ely, MN.

**Retail Staff**

Wintergreen Northern Wear creates quality outdoor apparel on the main street of Ely, MN and is looking for a friendly, outgoing and experienced individual to join our retail team! If you're looking for a dynamic position with competitive wages that will keep you busy full time and year round, email sola@wintergreennorthernwear.com or contact by phone at 218-365-6602. Preferred qualifications: Customer Service or Retail experience, love of the outdoors, and computer-savvy. \$15 an hour minimum after training with benefits included. Feel free to swing by for more information and to meet some of the crew! 6/25

**EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP  
ST. LOUIS COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Township Board of Supervisors of the Township of Eagles Nest, County of St. Louis, State of Minnesota, will meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 13th day of July 2021 at the Eagles Nest Town Hall to consider the alteration of Spruce Street by acquiring additional right-of-way legally described as follows:

The South 20.00 feet of Outlot 5 of the plat of "Rearrangement Eagle Nest" located in Government Lot 2 of Section 22, Township 62 North, Range 14 West of the Fourth Principal Meridian, St. Louis County, Minnesota, as defined by a line parallel with and 20.00 feet from the line common to said Outlot 5 and the North Right of Way of Spruce Street as shown on said Plat. Said parcel contains 0.04 acre, more or less.

AND

The North 20.00 feet of Outlot 7 of the plat of "Rearrangement Eagle Nest" located in Government Lot 2 of Section 22, Township 62 North, Range 14 West of the Fourth Principal Meridian, St. Louis County, Minnesota, as defined by a line parallel with and 20.00 feet from the line common to said Outlot 7 and the South Right of Way of Spruce Street as shown on said Plat. Said parcel contains 0.04 acre, more or less.

The scheduled hearing is for the purpose of determining whether the above-described road rights-of-way should be acquired for the improvement of Spruce Street with a turnaround. Such persons who desire to be heard with reference to this proposed alteration will be given the opportunity to be heard at this public hearing.

Dated this 15th day of June 2021.  
Keely Drange, Town Clerk

*Published in the Timberjay, June 25, 2021*

**King Crossword**

**ACROSS**

- 1 "Sad to say ..."
- 5 Armed conflict
- 8 Folksinger Joan
- 12 Jet speed measure
- 13 Greek mountain
- 14 Big name in scat
- 15 Docking site
- 16 Leftovers carrier
- 18 Screenwriter's creations
- 20 Reddish horses
- 21 "I'm not impressed"
- 22 Martini liquor
- 23 Skilled
- 26 Flood protection
- 30 Gun the engine
- 31 Witty one
- 32 "As I see it," to a texter
- 33 Sleazy hotel
- 36 Be nosy
- 38 Train lines (Abbr.)
- 39 Aunt, in Acapulco
- 40 Part of Hispaniola
- 43 Iced desserts
- 47 Cinched
- 49 October birth-

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53				54				55		

- 6 Big fusses
- 7 Cleaning cloth
- 8 Past
- 9 Jessica of "Dark Angel"
- 10 Flair
- 11 Turns sharply
- 17 Beam
- 19 Favorite
- 22 Joke
- 23 Canine cry
- 24 N.J. neighbor
- 25 First lady?
- 26 Droop
- 27 Life story
- 28 I love (Lat.)
- 29 Republicans
- 31 Existed
- 34 Camelot king
- 35 French cheese
- 36 — Lancelot
- 37 Bigwigs
- 39 Roman robes
- 40 Wasted no time
- 41 Con
- 42 "Suffice — say ..."
- 43 Shopper's delight
- 44 Fencing sword
- 45 London gallery
- 46 Bridge coup
- 48 Inlet

**DOWN**

- 1 Band boosters
- 2 Secular
- 3 Computer brand
- 4 Tempura choice
- 5 Shoebox datum

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**Hospital/ER**  
PT Registered Nurse (Wage starting at \$34.06/hr - Sign-On Bonus)

**Accounting**  
FT Accounting/Benefits/Payroll Specialist

**Care Center**  
PT Nursing Assistant (Wage starting at \$16.36/hr - Sign-On Bonus)  
PT RN or LPN (\$4,000 Sign-On Bonus)

**Dietary**  
PT Dietary Aide/Cook

**Activities**  
Casual Activities Assistant  
**Environmental Services**  
PT Housekeeper  
Casual Laundry Aide  
Casual Housekeeping & Laundry

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The City of Orr is accepting applications for a full-time bartender for the Orr Municipal Liquor Store. This is a salaried position that includes vacation package, health insurance, life insurance, retirement and sick leave. Looking for individuals who can interact with customers in a professional, friendly manner. Must pass background check. The City of Orr is a drug-free work place and Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications may be picked up at the Orr City Hall, 4429 Highway 53, Orr. Call City Hall at 218-757-3288 with any questions. tfn

**City of Tower  
Clerk/Treasurer**  
Salary: TBD  
Application Deadline:  
08/31/2021

Summary of Job Duties (full job description online)  
►See that City Charter, City Ordinances, City Resolutions and other applicable laws are enforced  
►Oversee all departments and employees  
►Recommend to the Council for the adoption such measures deemed necessary for the welfare of the people and efficient administration of the City  
►Keep the City fully apprised of the financial condition of the City

Have Experience in several of the following areas: Government Administrative Activities (Approvals, Public Notices, Minutes, Agenda and Agenda Material Preparation, Proper Execution of Motions, Minutes, and Ordinances); Finance (Budgeting, Claims Processing, Payroll, Contract Making / Bid Letting, Grant Processing, Taxes, Reporting Requirements); Human Resources; Real Estate and Zoning; Grant Processing; Data Practice; Document Retention Policies and Storage; Elections; IT Support (computers, routers, servers, security system, electronic entry); Customer Service

For more information, contact:  
DeputyClerk@cityoftower.com, or online at <https://cityoftower.com/positions-available>

*Published in the Timberjay, June 18 & 25, 2021*

**Bailiff Court Security-  
Hibbing & Virginia**  
Apply by 07/09/2021

**Emergency Communications  
Specialist**  
Apply by 06/30/2021

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or call 218-726-2422

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Virginia 741-1481 Hibbing 263-3276  
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**Super Crossword**

**Answers**

L	A	K	E	F	O	R	E	S	T		A	D	O	P	T	A	T	H	O	N					
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**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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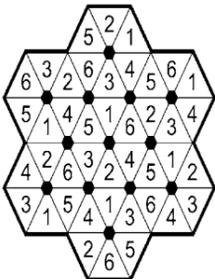
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦**

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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# Outdoors

Our lives in the  
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## SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

### Help wanted to stem illegal dumping

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— For many North Country residents, a backroad journey in the Superior National Forest is a way to explore amidst scenic beauty. But, for a few too many, it's seen as an opportunity to dump the trash.

Now, Forest Service officials are asking the public's help to address the problem of illegal dumping on the national forest.

To understand the scale of the

problem, consider the clean-up effort that workers on the Laurentian District undertook late last month. They selected a three-mile stretch of Forest Rd. 117, located north of Hoyt Lakes. It's a bad stretch, to be sure, but the 2.28 tons of trash that the work crew collected shows just how bad things really are with illegal dumping.

The trash collected included seven TVs, 12 tires, vacuum cleaners, assorted furniture, box springs, beer and pop cans, toys and more. Total cost to dispose of the material was \$181,

paid for by the taxpayers.

"Once you take all the salaries and transfer station bill into account, you realize pretty quickly that illegal dumping on public land is certainly not free," said Kirsten Rosenberger, pre-sale forester on the Laurentian Ranger District, who helped with the clean-up.

Not only does dumping degrade natural resources and the visitor experience but collecting trash takes away

See **DUMPING**, pg. 9B



Tossed appliances, old paint cans, and other junk sits alongside Forest Rd. 757 on the Laurentian District. Illegal dumping is a significant issue on the Superior National Forest. photo by M. HelMBERGER



## LIVING WITH WILDLIFE

# Ringo Redux

Two years ago this month, he was a cause célèbre, but his moment of fame ended in tragedy

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER  
Managing Editor

ELY — Two years ago this month, he was the talk of Ely and beyond.

A young male bear, sporting a round garbage can lid around his neck, had become a cause célèbre, as residents around the White Iron chain of lakes attempted to keep tabs on the bruin, who was quickly and predictably dubbed "Ringo."

The ring made the young bear easy to identify and it revealed that Ringo ran a regular circuit of feeding locations, ranging from garbage cans and dumpsters to bird feeders. News of the bear's troubles soon spread. T-shirts were printed. Facebook groups were formed. Eventually, Ringo's plight made the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. It was Ringo's fifteen minutes of fame, yet it quickly faded as the bear seemed to vanish one day. By early July, reports of Ringo sightings had dried up and it led to speculation that the bear had somehow managed to remove the ring.

Efforts by the Department of Natural Resources to do just that had been unsuccessful.

The DNR, under pressure from the public, tried for weeks to capture Ringo using barrel traps along his regular route, but even though Ringo entered the traps on more than occasion, he never tripped them. The DNR caught other bears, instead.

We now know the real story of how Ringo lost his ring, and that the episode ended just days later with the death of the young bear.

Ray Mair and his wife Paula had known Ringo for some time, although they had a different name for this frequent visitor to their backyard on White Iron Lake. "We called him Percy," said Ray.

Percy regularly visited the Mairs' residence, occasionally grabbing sunflower seeds from their bird feeders. While they occasionally tried to shoo him away, they noted he didn't cause any damage and never seemed threatening. A video security system that the couple installed allowed them to watch wildlife from their home day and night, which was a primary factor in the couple's decision to move to the area.

They had been cautious around bears up until then but after Percy showed up with the ring around its neck, they observed that he was struggling to eat and began to lose weight. After DNR efforts to trap the bear in their yard proved unsuccessful, they decided to try to help on their own. They began laying out sunflower seeds and other treats and worked to gain the bear's trust. At one point, Ray reached out and touched the bear. When it didn't react fearfully, they decided to try to remove the ring by diverting him with treats. In the late

See **RINGO**, pg. 9B



Top: Ringo stops for a meal at the Mair residence. The Mairs fed Ringo for a time to build enough trust to enable them to remove the ring from the bear's neck.

photo by R & P Mair

Second from top: Another view of Ringo.

photo by A. Stewart

Above: A wall display at the Mair residence honors their late neighbor and friend.

Left: A Trezona Trail trash can and its bear-unfriendly lid.

photos by R & P Mair

## Wildflower Watch

This week's featured flower  
**SHOWYLADYSLIPPER**



Minnesota's state flower is in its full glory right now. **Showy Ladyslippers**, *Cypripedium reginae*, are uncommon but are always worth a search this time of year. They are found mostly in wet areas, along swamp or stream edges, or in bogs, although they can grow in a wide and often unpredictable range of habitats. A good bet is a drive along Hwy. 53, north of Ash Lake, where they grow in patches along the grassy ditches.

Don't confuse this flower with the other, far more common orchid, the pink ladyslipper, which tends to bloom a couple weeks earlier. The pink ladyslipper generally grows not more than a foot high, and sports only basal leaves. The showy ladyslipper regularly grows two feet high and has light green leaves running most of the way up the stem.

## Outdoors briefly

Bear nuisance complaints spiking as extreme weather hurts wild foods

REGIONAL — It's looking like another season with limited wild foods, and it appears that's prompting a jump in bear nuisance complaints. The extreme swings in weather this spring and early summer, from late hard freezes, to drought, to extreme heat, haven't been good news for bears again this year, and DNR conservation officers in northeastern Minnesota are reporting a number of bear nuisance calls, particularly at campgrounds.

One Ely family had a surprising encounter when a bear entered their kitchen through an open window while the residents were at home. After exiting the building, they called for help. The bear apparently left on its own and showed little fear of the people or vehicles at the scene.

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**VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK**

**LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST**

from NOAA weather



Ely				Emb.				Cook				Orr				Tower			
Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
06/14	71	42	0.12	06/14	72	41	0.09	06/14	72	53	0.18	06/14	73	52	0.15	06/14	71	53	0.22
06/15	72	41	0.00	06/15	74	39	0.00	06/15	72	51	0.00	06/15	73	45	0.00	06/15	72	51	0.00
06/16	77	44	0.00	06/16	75	42	0.00	06/16	75	49	0.00	06/16	81	52	0.00	06/16	75	49	0.00
06/17	81	49	0.02	06/17	81	45	0.01	06/17	81	49	0.03	06/17	81	59	0.10	06/17	80	49	0.00
06/18	82	46	0.00	06/18	82	49	0.00	06/18	82	51	0.00	06/18	77	52	0.00	06/18	81	51	0.00
06/19	78	46	0.02	06/19	78	41	0.02	06/19	77	51	0.47	06/19	63	50	0.01	06/19	78	51	0.07
06/20	69	47	0.00	06/20	78	41	0.03	06/20	65	52	0.00	06/20	61	50	0.00	06/20	67	52	0.00
Total 6.36				YTD Total 7.02				YTD Total 7.93				YTD Total 10.47				YTD Total 8.70			



A typical Voyageurs National Park campsite

**VNP seeking comment on proposed user fee increases**

by **MARSHALL HELMBERGER**  
Managing Editor

**VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK** — Park officials here are seeking public comment on a proposal to increase park user fees, in some cases significantly.

The proposal would increase fees for campsite reservations as well as for park boat tours during the summer and implement new fees for a wide range of other park uses, including during the off-season. Voyageurs National Park has not proposed increases since tour fees were last approved in 2010 and since camping and houseboat fees were approved in 2013.

As a park that collects less than \$500,000 in fees annually, 97 percent of the recreation fees collected at the park stay at the park, to fund projects that directly enhance the visitor experience and to help fund the reservation system. Recreation fee dollars have funded the cleaning and maintaining of park sites, the ongoing improvement and rehabilitation of campsite structures, and backcountry trail repairs. Recreation fees have also purchased fire rings, picnic tables and bear lockers to replace deteriorating amenities.

Since the implementation of the reservation system in 2014, the park has seen an increase in camping activity of 11 percent per year, although that jumped by 40 percent last year. This trend appears to be

persisting, as camping reservations made on the day they became available for the 2021 season increased 56 percent over 2020. With this increased pressure on park sites comes greater maintenance and resource protection needs throughout the districts, according to park officials.

A sampling of the proposed changes are as follows:

- ▶ Small campsite with a dock: Now-\$20/night, Proposed- \$26/night.
- ▶ Large campsite with a dock: Now- \$24/night, Proposed- \$32/night.
- ▶ Group campsite: Now- \$35/night, Proposed- \$60/night.
- ▶ Grand Boat Tour: Now- \$30/adult, \$15/child, Proposed- \$50/adult, \$25/child
- ▶ Ellsworth Rock Garden: Now- \$25/adult, \$15/child, Proposed- \$40/adult, \$20/child.
- ▶ Primitive camping Oct. 1-Apr. 30: Now- \$0, Proposed \$10/night.

Park staff will host a meeting this coming week at the park headquarters, located at 360 Hwy. 11 E., in International Falls. The meeting is set for Tuesday, June 29, at 6 p.m. A second Facebook Live meeting will be hosted by the Voyageurs Conservancy at noon on Wednesday, June 30.

The public can also email their thoughts to [voyarecfeccomments@nps.gov](mailto:voyarecfeccomments@nps.gov) or leave a voice message at 218-283-6708.

**RINGO...**Continued from page 8B

morning of July 2, 2019, Percy showed up and while Paula distracted him with treats, Ray used a limb cutter to carve away chunks out of the plastic ring. Two hours later, just before noon, Ray was able to wrest it free from the bear's neck. "Ringo" was no more.

Ray said the ring was surprisingly heavy. Though made of plastic, it contained several pounds of sand to help weigh it down against the wind and he imagines it was quite a relief to have the burden removed. The video of the event doesn't show any noticeable reaction on the part of the bear, who was focused primarily on the treats in Paula's hand.

At the time, it seemed like a happy ending for the bear, but it would prove to be short-lived, according to Mair. Just days later, in the wake of a report that a bear had bitten a teenage jogger near White Iron Lake, a local DNR conservation officer shot a young male bear that did not show fear when he approached it at the site of a dumpster owned by a local resort.

At the time, the DNR contended that the bear was the same one that had bitten the young female jogger, but DNA tests on the teen's ripped pants found only evidence of dog DNA. DNR officials say the proximity of the bear to the scene of the reported attack on the jogger strongly suggested that the bear they shot was the animal involved in the reported attack.

Mair said he has no doubt that the bear shot that day was Ringo. Mair said his lake home is just half a mile from the dumpster in question and that the bear was at his residence just hours before. "We actually have video of Percy in the yard around midnight on the night before he was assassinated," said Ray. He said the bear also had a distinctive white chest blaze, which he recognized in autopsy photos which he later



© Paula Mair

"Percy," more widely known as Ringo, during a visit to the Mairs' deck following the removal of his ring. The young male bear was shot by a DNR conservation officer just days later.

photo by P. Mair

different. He was the first bear that made me think they might have some kinds of emotion," she said.

Stewart said her experiences with Ringo, and other bears that have made their way through her yard in the four years she's lived in the area, have changed her understanding and appreciation for bears. "When I first moved here, I was deathly afraid of bears. I thought they would rip me limb from limb," she said. "But I've never had one become even remotely aggressive with me."

When Ringo first appeared with his ring, he would often come to Stewart's house, and sit outside their door, looking in. "It's like he was asking us to do something," she said. She said she could tell that the ring, which Ringo had apparently picked up while raiding a public garbage can along Ely's Trezona Trail, was a significant burden to him. Stewart repeatedly called the DNR, asking for assistance. The agency first deployed the barrel trap at her residence, where they caught two other bears that were later released. When she later learned of how the Mairs had removed Ringo's collar, she was amazed and agreed to keep their experience a secret, until the Mairs revealed it publicly for this story.

While her view of bears has changed, Stewart recognizes that they are wild animals, best observed at a distance. "They're beautiful to watch," she said. "People can learn a lot. Just don't try to pet them."

**DUMPING...**

Continued from page 8B

from other employee duties and costs the national forest in disposal fees and salaries.

Forest Service officials are reminding the public that unauthorized dumping on public lands is illegal, and this includes the dumping of materials like branches, rock, soil, and yard waste, most of which can be disposed of at no charge at area transfer stations.

Forest Service officials are asking the public to help in an effort to reduce illegal dumping by reporting incidents as they occur. According to officials, if you see someone dumping, don't approach the violator. Instead, contact your local Forest Service office with the following information, if possible:

- ▶ Date, time, and location of the illegal dumping.
- ▶ Description of the vehicle and license plate number.
- ▶ Description of the person dumping.
- ▶ What was being dumped.

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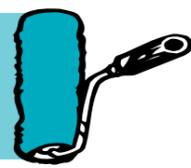
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