

**Vermilion
Pow Wow...**
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**Inside:
Police coverage options... See /3
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the TIMBERJAY

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VOL. 32, ISSUE 26 July 2, 2021

\$1⁰⁰



BUILDING CHARACTER

Lost wooden eagle brings two families together

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

Storm sets stage for teaching a life lesson

REGIONAL- The adventures of a wayward wooden eagle tossed adrift in a lake and the unpredictable circumstances that brought it back home is ultimately a story of strength of character prevailing over the violence of a

summer storm. Kabetogama Fire Chief Bryan Wichner began planning a week-long camping excursion with his wife, Cindy, and their children Bryanna, 16, and Zachary, 12, last November

Ivy and Herb Hanson with their wooden eagle that was lost during a storm and found again. photo by D. Colburn

when he booked reservations for a campsite on Voyageurs National Park's Wolf Pack Islands on Namakan Lake for the

first full week of June this year.

The Wichners were joined

See...EAGLE pg. 9



MINING

More legal setbacks for U.S. Steel and Minntac

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL— U.S. Steel's legal options for avoiding regulation of sulfate pollution the company discharges from its Minntac tailings basin may have finally been exhausted following a decision issued Monday by the Minnesota Court of Appeals. In it, the appellate court found that U.S. Steel has no right to a variance from the 357 milligrams per liter (mg/l) sulfate limit established in a 2018 water discharge permit issued by the state's Pollution Control Agency, nor does the company have a basis for seeking a contested case hearing over the sulfate limit.

That would appear to close the door to further court delays by the company, which the MPCA has accused of deploying foot-dragging tactics for years in an effort to avoid a

See...MINING pg. 9

ISD 696

School officials consider changes to renovations of campus buildings

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY— With numerous questions and feedback in hand, and a recent plea for major adjustments, ISD 696 school board members gathered at a study session Monday night to ponder their next moves for a \$20 million building project that is more than \$4 million over budget.

Following a special study session with district principals and a building facilities committee meeting last week, board members met with the project architect and construction managers to work through the mounting challenges of providing a modern educational facility for the Ely community.

More than \$12 million in construction bids, mainly for the cam-

See...SCHOOL pg. 10

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

Celebrations return to the North Country

Official activities will be held Sunday in Ely

Tower-Soudan party is back on Saturday

Orr's July 3rd Fun Day full of family activities

ELY— The Ely Fourth of July celebration returns to official status this year with a real "parade" and other events on the 245th birthday of America.

An organizing committee, under the leadership of Ely's deputy clerk, has planned a safe, festive, inclusive and traditional celebration on Sunday, July 4. Last year, in place of the city's celebration, a small unsanctioned "patriotic march" was held in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, despite public health concerns over COVID-19.

Confirmed participants, according to Parade Committee Chair Casey Velcheff, include traditional favorites

See...ELY pg. 11

TOWER - Yes, the Fourth of July is back, but for Tower-Soudan this year, it will be celebrated on Saturday, July 3.

Most of the traditional activities are back on track, with a few changes.

The parade starts at 11 a.m., but come to City Hall at 10:30 a.m. for the flag raising and singing of the National Anthem. Float judging is at 10 a.m. at the parade line-up at the Tower Civic Center parking lot.

The Tower-Soudan Civic Club's pancake breakfast has been canceled, due to safety concerns, but most other traditional activities are on the schedule.

There are changes to the Kiddie

See...TOWER pg. 11

ORR - That there would be a July 3rd Fun Day in Orr this year was never in question, but with challenges finding new volunteers, it wasn't clear as planning began just how much of the traditional activities would be back.

However, organizers have put together a day's worth of festivities that will look largely familiar to Fun Day attendees, culminating with the favorite traditional fireworks at dusk over Orr Bay, again sponsored by the Orr Pelican Lake Resort Association.

The Orr Community Center (former American Legion) is the place to be from 7-10 a.m. for a pancake breakfast

See...ORR pg. 11



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Community notices

Correction

TOWER- Last week’s headline regarding former Tower Clerk-Treasurer Linda Keith was in error in that it stated that a felony charge against her was dismissed by a judge. In fact, as the story accurately reported, the felony charge against the former city official was dropped by the St. Louis County Attorney’s Office.

Book signings at Piragis

ELY- Piragis Northwoods Company in Ely is hosting several book signings this summer.

- Friday, July 2, 12-2 p.m.
Mary Casanova, Waterfall
- Saturday, July 3, 1-3 p.m.
Polly Carlson-Voiles and Consie Powell, Big Yellow
- Saturday, July 31, 12-2 p.m.
Cary Griffith, Wolf Kill
- Tuesday, Aug. 24, 1:30-3 p.m.
David Backes, A Private Wilderness

Rolando on display at Art and Soul



ELY- Ely Artist Cecilia Rolando is exhibiting her recent works of painting in acrylic and watercolor at the Art and Soul Gallery and Gift House. The show will also include mosaics, fabric hangings, photographs and jewelry created by the artist. It will run through the month of July, seven days a week, during regular gallery hours. A reception officially opens the show on Saturday, July 3, from 1-3 p.m., when attendees can meet with Rolando regarding her work. Rolando’s subject matter includes landscapes, portraits, and flowers in particular. She also enjoys abstraction and non-representational subjects, using a great deal of color. Most of the work included in the show is from the last one or two years.

Self-guided nature scavenger hunts at Minnesota State Parks

REGIONAL- Visitors to Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park can add some extra fun to their experience this summer with an educational scavenger hunt launched by Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota.

This scavenger hunt is part of a statewide challenge happening at 69 Minnesota State Park locations and five local parks. Each scavenger hunt is tailored to a specific park and highlights 19 different types of birds, mammals, wildflowers, trees and recreational activities that can be found in that location.

The hunts combine online technology with in-person experiences. Participants access the hunts online in the form of an interactive checklist that features a photo of each item along with a brief description or fun fact about that plant or animal. Some items are very common and will be seen by most people who visit the park, such as a black-capped chickadee, while others are more elusive, such as a white indigo flower or a moose.

Participants can submit their hunt into a weekly drawing for a \$20 gift card to Minnesota State Parks. Points are awarded for each item that is found as well as for completing the hunt with children.

An additional prize drawing has been sponsored by Friends of the Lake Vermilion Trail that will be awarded at the end of the season from all entries to Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park. This additional prize is a \$25 gift certificate for Piragis Northwoods Company.

SISU HERITAGE

Diane Jarvi concert, July 11

EMBARRASS- Diane Jarvi will be playing guitar and kantele and singing for people on Sunday, July 11 at the Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church in Embarrass. The concert begins at 3 p.m. The church is located on the hill at 5103 Highway 21 in Embarrass. It promises to be a lovely time and presents the opportunity for folks of all ages to gather, enjoy entertaining music, and visit with friends in a unique community setting.

The early 1900s church will continue to be renovated by Sisu Heritage this summer with roof and foundation repairs and will be used for community concerts and gatherings for people to enjoy.



submitted photo

The wonderful acoustics of the oldest surviving church in Embarrass will provide a venue for the music presented by Diane Jarvi. Admission is \$10 per person at the door, ages 12 and under are free.

Lakeview Cemetery receives \$1,300 donation

TOWER - Pam Lundstrom, Sue Drobac, Barb Lofquist and Cathy Vogh organized a garage sale at the Greenwood Town Hall this past weekend to fundraise for the Lakeview Cemetery in Tower. The women presented a check for \$1,300 to cemetery representatives Tuesday morning. The money was a mix of private and municipal donations and garage sale proceeds. “We want to thank everyone who gave and helped,” said Pam Lundstrom.

“Thank you for all the donations, past, present and future,” said Cemetery Association President Bruce Carlson. Lakeview Cemetery is run by volunteers and



Pictured L to R: Sexton John Zaitz, Pam Lundstrom, Association President Bruce Carlson, Secretary/Treasurer Leonard Stefanich, Barb Lofquist, Sue Drobac and Cathy Vogh. photo by S. Ukkola

relies on donations and fees to operate. Donations are accepted year-round.

To donate, please send a check to Tower Cemetery Association, PO Box 874, Tower, MN 55790.

Look for the Community Health Survey in your mailbox

COOK- Cook Hospital is making health care a local affair by participating in the Community Health Needs Assessment process. This process includes various community engagement activities such as focus groups and key stakeholder interviews, as well as a mailed survey sent to a random sample of homes in the hospital’s service area to identify local health care needs and establish health care priorities. The purpose of the survey is to obtain information from a wide range of participants to assist in planning programs, and services, and identifying community health and wellness needs.

Cook Hospital and Care Center is stroke and trauma certified. Some

of the services provided include Emergency Room, Inpatient, Swing Beds, Outpatient (colonoscopy and EGD procedures), Laboratory, Imaging (X-ray, CT, MRI, Ultrasound, Mammography, Bone Density, EKG), Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Adult Day Services and Long Term Care (care center/nursing home). Cook Hospital partners with a variety of other health care facilities. A few of those partnerships include

Community Memorial Hospital to offer a range of orthopedic services and diabetes education, Twin Ports Dermatology to offer dermatology services, and Fairview to offer cardiac and pulmonary rehab services.

They are pleased to be able to bring some of the best community health resources to the Cook Hospital and Care Center. The goal of this survey is to assist the Cook-Orr

Healthcare District Board to address their present and future needs in the best way possible.

If you have received this survey in your mailbox, your responses will represent others in the community, so it is very important that you complete and return the survey by Aug. 9.

For more information, contact Teresa Debevec, CEO, at 218-666-5945 or tdebevec@cookhospital.org.

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Carissa Rose Harmston weds Bo Robert Simpson

Carissa Rose Harmston and Bo Robert Simpson were united into marriage at 3 p.m. Monday May 3, 2021 on the beach in Cancún, Mexico. The bride is the daughter of Kenneth and Brenda Harmston. The groom is the son of Troy and Dawn Simpson. The newlyweds and their daughter reside in Angola.

Photo by Katrina B Photography & Design of Tower

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police committee presents options during public meetings

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA
Staff Writer

TOWER-SOUDAN-After months of research, the ad hoc Breitung-Tower Police Committee held four open house meetings in Tower and Soudan from June 23 through June 25 to present eight policing options and seek feedback from the about 50 community members who attended in total.

Tower and Breitung Township have been without local police service

since both full-time officers left for other jobs this past winter. The communities have been utilizing random scheduled patrols from the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office ever since.

The Breitung Town Board and Tower City Council established a joint committee to study costs, liability, and needs of the community to determine the best method of policing for the area. The committee began meeting on March 30.

The committee identi-

fied four policing priorities for the Tower/Breitung community:

- Police presence to deter theft and vandalism.
- Adequate response time to an emergency call.
- Positive presence in the community.
- Enforcement of township and city ordinances.

Determining need

In 2019 there were 1,997 calls, an average of 5.5 calls per day, 533 of which were business

checks. Of the remaining 1,464 calls, 63 percent originated in Tower and 37 percent came from Breitung. In 2020, total calls dropped to 1,878, an average of 5.1 calls per day, of which 645 were business checks. Tower accounted for 58 percent of the remaining 1,233 calls and 42 percent were for Breitung.

Committee member Dave Setterberg reported that the majority of calls were low or medium priority. Most calls were to

the following locations: Vermilion Senior Living had 57 calls, Scenic Rivers Clinic had 20 calls, the DNR had six calls and Frandsen Bank and Zup’s Grocery each had five calls. When sorted by types of calls, 114 were medical, 16 were security alarms, 14 were suspicious activity, 13 were breathing emergencies, and 11 were fights.

Reviewing options

The committee identified eight possible policing options:

1. Breitung Police status quo.
2. The City of Tower establishes a police department, and Breitung contracts with them.
3. Contract with St. Louis County for regular patrols for one year.
4. Continue working with the county for random patrol coverage.
5. Contract with Northeast Range Policing
6. Contract with the City of Ely.

See **POLICE...**pg. 5

CITY OF TOWER

Council discusses meetings in a post-COVID environment

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER—In one of their shortest regular meetings in years, the city council discussed how to proceed with its meetings in what now appears to be a post-COVID environment. The council met back in their council chambers on Monday, for the first time since March 2020, and councilors discussed

whether to continue to stream their meetings for remote viewing and whether to record their meetings as well.

Councilors agreed that they like the transparency that casting their meetings on GoToMeeting provides, although they showed mixed feelings about whether the council needs to record its meetings, which creates a data storage issue for the city.

“Even an audio recording is a very large file,” said Clerk-Treasurer Victoria Ranua. “It’s hard to share with the public if someone requests a copy,” she said. The files are too large to email, so it leaves the city to provide a copy on a thumb drive, but Ranua noted that that doesn’t relieve the city of its legal obligation to provide the data if a member of the public requests it. “If you create

the data, and maintain the data, you have to be able to make it accessible,” said Ranua. It also means the city needs a means of storing very large electronic files for an indefinite period.

“I haven’t problem using Zoom or GoToMeeting to cast our meetings, but I’m not sure we need to record them,” said Councilor Joe Morin. Councilor Sheldon Majerle agreed, noting

that the official record for the city is compiled in the minutes, not in meeting recordings. “The minutes are the gospel. We have the opportunity to change them if they aren’t accurate or if they don’t reflect what was said,” Majerle added.

If the council wants to continue to cast its meetings online, Ranua suggested the city may need to invest in some more technology to address the storage issue

and to make the experience more useful for viewers. Ranua noted that because the meetings are cast online from her laptop computer, all viewers typically see is her computer screen or her face, rather than the council. She provided the council with information about a camera system the city could purchase that would show the entire

See **TOWER...**pg. 5

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e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

Editorial

Forget prosecution

Tower officials should find a sensible solution to impasse over river docking

City officials in Tower need to reconsider their threat to prosecute two developers who wish to gain access to the East Two River by removing a portion of century-old retaining wall, or pilings, along the river’s eastern bank.

Both developers have legal rights to access the water, which the city has to find some way to accommodate. What’s more, it’s not clear the city has much jurisdiction over the pilings. The Department of Natural Resources typically has purview over structures located within public waters and state rules generally encourage the removal of manmade structures from lakes and streams. Doing so requires no permit in most cases.

Further, the city has no ordinance in place that defines how landowners with river frontage behind the pilings are to access the river. In the past, the city has allowed property owners to remove some pilings to allow for access, which is both reasonable and a recognition of the rights that owners of shoreline have in Minnesota under common law.

We recognize there are those who remain opposed to one of the proposed developments, the Rose RV park, but the project, much to our surprise, and despite years of resistance from city hall, has its permits in place and is under construction. At this point, the city’s only legitimate interest is to ensure that the project is successful, because its success, ultimately, is the best way to guarantee that the site is well managed and has the least impact on neighbors.

Rather than an imposition, the request by the RV park developer to remove a portion of the river pilings presents a golden opportunity for the city to fix the errors committed in the past. As we have reported, the city’s previous failure to properly process a conditional use permit application led to the automatic issuance of a CUP without any conditions. That was a major failing, but it’s one that city officials could potentially mitigate now by hammering out an agreement with the RV park developer under which the docking issue is resolved amicably in exchange for his agreeing to some

relevant conditions that could address concerns of neighbors, such as noise, traffic, and visual screening. Perhaps that agreement could include a requirement that Rose bolster the river pilings in places, which could serve as a base for a docking structure that runs parallel to the river channel and which keeps the docked boats inside the current retaining wall, while providing an opening that allows boats access to the river. A meeting between Rose, the DNR, and city officials could potentially hammer out a plan. The current impasse isn’t a solution. It smacks of obstructionism.

The city needs to find a way to work constructively with everyone who legitimately wants to invest money in the community. In the recent past, city officials ranged from indifferent to hostile to new economic activity in Tower. That has changed for the better, and we are currently seeing the most dramatic increase in economic activity in Tower probably since its founding. It’s exciting and, if done right, Rose RV park could help fuel that economic activity by bringing dozens of new seasonal residents to town.

Mr. Rose can be a bit rough around the edges, and occasionally does the right thing only after exhausting alternatives, but the city can’t be making decisions based on personalities. The city has ordinances and the state has laws and rules that apply to such developments and if the owner of a parcel agrees to comply with them, even reluctantly, they can utilize their property as they wish.

Rather than confrontation, the city would benefit from resolving this impasse sensibly. While it’s understandable that city officials want to protect the city’s investment in the river channel, there are almost certainly ways to do that while still accommodating development along the way. Development, after all, was the reason the city invested in the river in the first place. Let’s set aside personalities, roll up our sleeves, and find a solution that all parties can live with.



Letters from Readers

Journalism and local newspapers

Thanks, Jodi, for the good article last week on broadband in Greenwood Township. When I was driving out of the parking lot after the meeting last Tuesday, I noticed that you were outside, interviewing the broadband experts who had presented at the Town Board special meeting. I knew then that there was a thorough article on its way. It sure tied in with the need for local newspapers.

**Lee Peterson
Greenwood Twp.**

We must sit down with those on the other side

When Democracy is slowly slipping away from Americans, most of us do nothing but complain. It needs to be saved.

“We must go on living our lives,” I hear repeatedly. The media reports news in an attempt at saying what is happening, but

in this climate, the news, while it reports controversy and division, has changed from the truth to something to check out. So, we go on, “living our lives” when Americans need to save their democracy.

Much like the German people before World War Two, we have no idea what to do about lies being told so many times that people believe they are true. The ultra-rich are in control and they care little about democracy. America is in great danger of losing its foundation and the American people must not just go on “living their lives” and letting those holding economic power take over our rights. The right to vote has been a mockery for many Americans for many years and today we want to “go on living our lives.” The power of wealth dominates the media. Most Americans go on watching and listening, “living their own lives.”

We must stop it and act. This is a critical time to do something! This is my suggestion; people who believe in self-governing must take their places at the table the God of Peace is setting in the presence of their enemies. We need to sit at tables with people who spoil our

appetite and listen to one another. It is love for God and democracy that has set the table. It is the powerful desire for peace on earth that brings enemies together to “work things out.” Conflict that “does away with the enemy” must stop. We must have conversation.

We must face the truth squarely: The foundations of “who we are” have grown weak and we have lost community in our nation. The truth is, we do not have the essential listening skills to hear our opponents. We need to learn them. The truth is, we don’t know how to harmonize our differences so we can, as neighbors and as a nation, be a choir of people singing the same song with different parts in glorious harmony. We need to learn these skill sets and stop just “living our lives.” We must come together as MAKERS of peace, and experience the joy of doing so. Every generation must do this for themselves. It is time to “wake up and get to work” MAKING Peace and Joy or we will lose it completely. Act. Sit at tables set by the Prince of Peace with your enemies.

**Art Dale
Soudan**

FIRE SAFETY

Panic? Who? Me?

A first-hand account of the Rahkola Road fire

by SUE BEATON
Contributing Writer

EMBARRASS- The Rahkola Road Fire in Embarrass on Friday, June 18, is one for the record books. Not because of its size, but because of the rapid and intense reaction it received.

My husband, Zane, and I live a half-mile east of Four Corners (Highways 21 & 135) and I was home, working on my computer in our office when I heard a helicopter go overhead. Aircraft always capture my attention because it is so rare that we hear them. Then I thought I heard a plane flying low over our house. I thought perhaps some touch-and-go exercises were being performed near Four Corners or the Timber Hall. And then, for a

second, I thought I smelled smoke but immediately thought, “What idiot would be building a campfire in this wind?!” Having never smelled a campfire in our woods other than the ones we had built ourselves, it is now pretty clear who the idiot was.

Zane was over at Peter Mitchell Days in Babbitt cooking pork chops with the Lions Club. At 2:15, I texted him: “I got the mail. Call if you get a chance.” Shortly after that, I realized there must be a fire somewhere nearby because I heard more aircraft and saw their shadows as they maneuvered over our house. So, I checked online (I was on my computer after all) and saw a report that a wildfire was burning about five to six miles north of Aurora on Hwy. 135. Well, we are a good eleven miles north of Aurora, so

again, despite evidence to the contrary, I didn’t consider that the fire affected me. But, because I wanted to keep my husband informed, I texted him: “There is a fire between Aurora and home on 135. Road is closed. I can smell smoke. Helicopters are dropping water!”

The wind was blowing hard. Helicopters and planes flew low over our house.

Around 2:30, the phone rang. It was the Embarrass Township Clerk, Jen Boese. “Sue, do you know about the fire?” “Yes,” I said, “it’s about five or six miles north of Aurora.” “NO,” she shouted, “It’s in your backyard! Your woods are on fire! I have a pickup! I can come and help you pack!” “Pack?!?” “What?” I

See **FIRE...pg. 5**

Unmasked at last! Let’s keep it that way

The month of June marked my reentry into the world without a mask. My friends had mentioned that it felt disconcerting to leave home bare-faced. Last week was my first outing to some of some favorite stops



**KATHLEEN
MCQUILLAN**

in Cook — the thrift shop, the pharmacy, and the café. After 15 months sequestered at home, I felt a nervous, awkward sensation. But it also felt fantastic to see people’s smiles again!

The highlight came that evening when our Northern Progressives group met for dinner at

the Crescent Supper Club. We all agreed we were “Zoomed out” after so many meetings staring at on-line faces framed by neon squares. What a joy to sit around a big table together. I thought, “Maybe things really are getting back to normal?” But once home, tucked snugly in my bed, my mind started spinning. I began to second guess the shoulder-to-shoulder indoor seating with no masks. Were we really safe? I’m fully vaccinat-

ed but I still pay close attention to updates from the Center for Disease Control. They’re telling me I can relax, that the chance of my becoming infected with COVID-19 or infecting someone else is very slim, less than one percent. But despite these low odds, they suggest we remain cautious. 40 percent or more of us aren’t fully vaccinated. As much as we want to return to normal, we haven’t reached the recommended vaccination

rate necessary for “herd immunity”.

Infection rates have begun to decline, but this is the season when we get visitors. Lots of them, from all parts of Minnesota and beyond. National statistics warn us that across the country there are still “hot spots” where very high levels of infection persist. That means that unvaccinated people from elsewhere can act as potential carriers to others. Not a huge worry for those of

us who’ve gotten our shots. But so for those who have not.

Then there are those pesky “variants” creating more risks. Research shows that a complete dose of the vaccine will likely protect us from the most harmful effects of even the new Delta variant that has recently arrived on our shores. It is estimated to be 50 percent more infectious and cause more severe

See **SAFETY...pg. 5**

TOWER...Continued from page 3

council and even zoom in on individual council members when they’re speaking.

But council members weren’t sure if they wanted to go that route, given the limited number of people, mostly residents of Greenwood, who actually utilize the streaming of their meetings.

“I want to be sure it’s worth it before investing in all this technology,” said Morin.

In the end, the council

offered no direction, so Ranua said she’d continue with the currently-established process for now.

In other business, the council:

►Took no action to change the current status of city lease lots. Ranua had added the issue to the agenda and prepared an agenda memo on the subject, but Councilor Dave Setterberg said he and Councilor Morin were working on the issue, so the council never really took up

the agenda item.

►Heard a report from Setterberg on the police committee public meetings. “Turnout was a little low,” noted Setterberg, who pointed out that surveys on the issue have been widely disseminated in the community. He said those surveys can be filled out by residents, anonymously, and returned to city hall.

►Took no action following Ranua’s presentation on the need for a technology replacement

schedule and capital improvement plan. She noted that the League of Minnesota Cities has a proposed replacement schedule the city could adopt if it decides to move forward with a more systematic approach to technology replacement. Ranua said her presentation was informational only but could be incorporated in the city’s budget planning for 2022.

►Approved a donation of \$1,000 to the Joint Powers Recreation Board.

Ranua noted that the city has historically donated \$500 a year to the board but did not make a contribution in 2020 so the larger donation this year would make up for that failure to donate last year.

Under the consent agenda, the council:

►Appointed Victoria Meloche to an open seat on the Tower Economic Development Authority Board, replacing Dick Larmouth, whose term was set to expire at the end of

2021.

►Approved a resolution ending the local emergency declaration stemming from the COVID pandemic.

►Approved annual cigarette and liquor licenses for local establishments.

►Approved the use of the city’s public works garage for D’Erick’s July Fourth beer garden, set to be held on July 3 this year. For the first time, the city will be charging (\$50) for the use of its facility.

POLICE...Continued from page 3

7. 911-service only.

8. Hiring one full-time Breitung Chief supplemented by other scheduled departments.

The committee made comparisons with other nearby towns. Cook, Orr and Greenwood all rely on 911 service only. Ely (pop. 3,460) has its own police service. Mountain Iron (pop. 2,853) and Rice Lake (pop. 4,149) are the only communities in the region who pay the St. Louis County Sheriff’s

Office for patrols.

The Breitung Police department had been running a full-time service on \$274,000 per year, mainly from tax levy income, \$121,000 from Tower and \$133,965 from Breitung. Breitung also received \$19,400 in state aid for maintaining their own department but those funds would not be forthcoming if they opt to contract with another department.

To contract for a

St. Louis County officer to patrol 40 hours per week would cost between \$130,000 to \$154,000, depending on the rank of the officer who would be assigned. Contracting for two officers for 80 hours per week would cost roughly the same as funding the Breitung Police Department.

Random coverage from the county costs \$70 per hour. 911-only has no cost.

The committee was

unable to determine costs for contracting with Ely or Northeast Range. For option eight, costs would begin at \$136,000 per year and go up depending on what other patrol option the board would supplement with.

At the end of each meeting attendees were given a survey asking them to indicate their preference and why they support that option. No names are requested on the surveys, which were to be returned

to either the Breitung Town Hall or Tower City Hall this week.

The police committee will meet to review the survey results and develop a final recommendation to present to the Tower City Council on Monday, July 12 at 5:30 p.m. and Breitung Town Board at a special meeting on Tuesday, July 13 at 12:30 p.m.

Members of the Breitung Tower Police Committee included from Breitung, supervi-

sor Charles Tekautz and clerk Dianna Sundahl, former Breitung officer Jim Battin, deputy clerk Renee Pearson and residents Denise Osterholm and Stephanie Ukkola, and from Tower, council members Dave Setterberg and Joe Morin, ambulance director Dena Suihkonen and business owner Randy Semo.

FIRE...Continued from page 4

don’t even remember how the call ended as I stepped out onto our deck and saw the smoke that was definitely in the back 40 of our property. HOLY CRAP!

Now I panic. I am usually calm in a crisis, but with no one around, I went into full panic mode and could not compose a clear thought in my head. So, I called Zane and shouted into his ear, “OUR WOODS ARE ON FIRE! COME HOME RIGHT NOW!” He shouted back, “I’M ALREADY ON MY WAY!” Jen had called him before she called me.

I have to leave my house. What do I take? I grab a suitcase out of the closet and throw all of the clothes I can into it, open the back of my Outback, and put the suitcase in. Now what? Standing alone in my living room, I scream to the walls, “What should I take?!” Realizing there is no way to narrow it down, I decide there is nothing I can take. I know there is not enough time. So, I go outside and decide to hose down the ground around the house. As I am unwinding the hose, Zane pulls in fast. I run toward him screaming, “I don’t know what to do!

I don’t know what to do!” He later told me that I reminded him of someone who had one foot nailed to the floor and could only run around in circles. In our thirty years of marriage, he had never seen me quite so out of control. I returned my focus to the hose. I ran back to the outside faucet as a U.S. Forest Service vehicle pulled in. A young man jumped out and headed toward me saying, “You need to leave.”

“I know,” I said, “but I thought I would water down the ground.”

“No,” he said calmly, “you have to leave right now. Go into the house and pack any medications you have, then leave. Is there anyone else in the house?”

“Yes, my husband.”

“Tell him to get his medications and you both need to leave. Are there any pets?”

“No.”

I stopped unwinding the hose and headed into the house as Zane came out carrying boxes. I yell to him about the medications and that we need to go. He makes another trip inside the house and comes out with another box and his medications.

We decide to rendezvous at Timber Hall, hop into each of our vehicles, and drive away. It was surreal to turn out of our driveway and wonder what would be here when we were allowed to return. I noticed a bright orange ribbon had been tied on our fire number, communicating to other firefighters that this property has been checked and the residents have vacated.

Viewing the western sky from Timber Hall (a distance of about three miles), the smoke did not look too daunting. So, we decided it was safe to get closer and headed to Four Corners. That is where the action was. Highway 135 was blocked off and Four Corners was teeming with Embarrass residents watching planes and helicopters dump water on the land and our house. We were told 6 or 7 aircraft were involved in fighting the fire. The air show was spectacular.

I felt calm as we stood there watching the show. I realized that everyone was doing the best they could as quickly as they could and if we lost everything, we’d still be okay. We were safe. We talked with a conser-

vation officer who said we should go get some dinner and he would call us when the “all clear” was sounded. We can strongly recommend the new Neighbor’s BBQ (the old Black Bear Café). He called before we even ordered our food. But that was fine with us.

As soon as we got home, Zane said, “I’m going to hop on the 4-wheeler and see what I can see,” and off he went. The sound of his engine wasn’t even out of hearing range when I heard him roaring back, “CALL 911! The woods are still on fire!” he shouted. He grabbed a shovel and headed back into the woods. Within two minutes of the call, a pickup truck pulled in and I pointed him to the back of the property. And then, it started to rain. A bigger truck with more people pulled in right behind him and I waved them through to the back. The rain didn’t last, but it helped.

That was a lot of excitement for one day and we went to bed early and slept surprisingly well.

Crews of firefighters and heavy equipment arrived Saturday morning and the last of them left

Tuesday evening. From time to time, we heard airplanes circling overhead and I understand drones were also used to detect hot spots. What an amazing coordination of effort and communication! Our woods are changed. But all is well.

Several videos of the planes filling up on area lakes have been posted online. It is amazing to realize that the very water from these planes was being dumped on our house, our land, and our neighbor on Highway 135. About 20 acres of this 60-acre fire were ours. We are very fortunate that it was called in so quickly and that the response was immediate.

We would like to thank the many agencies that kept this fire from

burning out of control: Embarrass Volunteer Fire Department, the Minnesota DNR, U.S. Forest Service, Conservation Corps, Bridger Aerospace from Montana, Northeast Fire Cache (out of Grand Rapids), Tower Ambulance, St. Louis County Sheriff’s Department, a crew from Connecticut (one member had worked on the Pagami Creek Fire in 2011), teams from Northome and Bemidji, and who know where else? Any omission is unintentional. There were a lot of people working together and we only had direct contact with a few. You know who you are. We are grateful for the work you do, the risks you take, and your level heads in a crisis. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

SAFETY...Continued from page 4

symptoms than the coronavirus we first encountered in early 2020. India, Brazil and England have reported surging infection rates from the Delta variant that have overwhelm their medical systems. Scientists warn that without greater investments to improve vaccination rates worldwide, the coronavirus will continue to morph into variants, keeping the U.S. at risk for similar spikes. We now know that unvaccinated people act as “hosts” where the coronavirus can grow and mutate into new genomic variants that will present new challenges to our immune systems, thus moving the goalpost of “herd immunity” further away.

Efforts are ramping up to address “vaccine hesitancy”, a major barrier to “herd immunity”. For some, the barrier is getting access to the vaccine. Some have fear. Others defend strongly-held beliefs that keep them from seizing an opportunity to better protect themselves from infection while also helping put an end to its spread. Reasons aside, vaccinations remain a necessary ingredient to ending the pandemic.

eventually getting us back to our daily routines and improving a disrupted global economy.

Now that it’s here, medical experts predict the Delta variant may reach its highest infection levels this fall, just when students will be returning to school and parents returning to work. Studies suggest that people are more accepting of medical information when it comes from a trusted source, like a family physician or people they know and trust. We’re being asked to reach out to family and friends who may not yet be vaccinated. Offering details of our own experiences may help reduce their fears. Sharing examples of those who we know suffered with symptoms of COVID-19 may help them realize that the risks of the disease are far greater than those of the vaccine. And referring to our nation’s previous experiences with polio, diphtheria, measles, and other diseases that once threatened severe disability or death, but do so no more. These are examples of the enormously beneficial results due to the development of safe and effective vaccines! Conversations

like these can help the hesitant.

Vaccines are designed to stimulate our body’s natural defenses against “foreign invaders” like the coronavirus. They teach our immune system to recognize a live version of the virus when it enters the body, and then stage an effective attack. Previous immunization success stories with other serious diseases should give us hope that we can beat this one as well. With over 600,00 deaths in the U.S. alone and millions of cases worldwide, it’s time to conduct an all-out community effort to reach as many people as we can, to keep our region as safe as possible, and move our country closer to “herd immunity”.

People between the ages of 18 and 39 are said to be the most hesitant. Youth are another difficult group to reach. Medical experts warn that not only will children and younger adults become the most likely primary hosts and carriers, but they will also be the most vulnerable to serious infection from these new variants. We are only beginning to understand

the long-term effects of the coronavirus. The future well-being of our country rests firmly on the future well-being of our young. We should do whatever we can to protect them.

Granted, it’s difficult to overcome our fears, and even harder to question our core beliefs. But from experience, we know that increased understanding, courage and success build with time. The first half of this journey toward full vaccination was swift. Many of us had seen or heard enough about COVID-19 that we were ready for the vaccine the minute it was available. But rates have now slowed. The next phase in the fight against COVID will be harder as healthcare providers must reach the most remote and reluctant communities. The sooner we reach that elusive goal of 70 percent fully vaccinated, the safer we all will be.

It’s certainly a goal worth supporting. We all have a part to play in putting this pandemic behind us. We’re told we’re almost there. But it’s only possible if we choose to make it so. It’s time. Let’s do this!



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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 Helmberger
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 Lynn Stone
Ad Sales/Sports	Jay Greeney

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

Week of July 5

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.

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.

NEW BUSINESS
Happiness by the scoop

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER- Tim and Brittany Bastron would like to sell you some ice cream, in your choice of 16 Cedar Crest flavors.
Tower's newest business, South Shore Creamery, opened its doors on June 25 and spent its first weekend scooping up more ice cream than they had ever imagined.
The couple purchased an older building on Tower's Main Street this year and spent the spring renovating both inside and out. Renovations took a little longer than expected, due to contractor delays, but the building, which last housed an electrical contractor, has been totally transformed.
"I was looking for a cabin to buy earlier this year," Brittany said, "and I came upon the listing for this building. My wheels started spinning and I told Tim it would be the perfect spot for ice cream."
"Our family loves to travel," she said, "and often the highlight of our trips is checking out different ice cream shops."

The new shop is bright and airy, with seating indoors and out. The exterior is now a cheery "vanilla" white. The menu, at least to start, is relatively simple, once you have decided which flavor of ice cream you want. Cones and cups, single or double scoop, along with hot and cold beverages are available. They also offer ice cream takeout, that is, pint or double pint portions to bring home. Next year, Brittany said, they plan to expand the menu with additional ice cream specialties, but to start they wanted to keep it simple and get things right.
Most of the couple's six children have been helping out, with two younger boys waving "Open" signs on Main Street to flag down customers and opening the door for entering customers on their first weekend, and older children working behind the counter. The kids are treating their jobs seriously and were clearly having a good time interacting with customers and the many family friends who travelled to Tower to visit the new shop.
They have also hired several local employees to keep the shop going during the week, since currently the family lives quite a way south of Tower in St. Michael and has been travelling up for weekends.
"Our dream is to help people experience fun and happiness one scoop at a time," said Brittany.
Tim is an outreach and care pastor for the Converge Conference, and one of his coworkers was also up to work at the shop

South Shore Creamery ice cream shop now open in Tower



Above: The ice cream counter was busy on opening day. Below left: Tavery Bastron waved a flag to welcome customers to the family's new shop. Below right: Three-year-old James Donahue had a cone with his grandmother Amy Hinkel, aunt Paige Olson, and cousins Abriana and Harper. Bottom: Bastron kids help keep the shop clean for the next customers, and Harper Olson enjoys her cone. photos by J. Summit



this weekend. Ian Banker, whose regular job is in IT, was right at home scooping up cones instead of tending to the technology needs of his church.
The shop also offers several varieties of Minnesota-grown

beans and grains, and Brittany said they will be expanding the offerings in the gift shop area soon.
Brittany said the shop was busy all weekend, and they were ready to do an ice cream reorder

more quickly than they had planned.
Now that the ice cream shop is open, the family is working on renovating the upstairs into an apartment. They are also looking into the possibility of offering recreational equipment rentals, such as paddleboards, in the future.
The shop will be open daily this summer from 11 a.m. – 8 p.m. Find out more on their facebook page.

Breitung Community Picnic
Sunday, July 4 • Noon to 3 PM



Please join us at the Breitung Recreation Area in Soudan. Sponsored by Breitung Township.
Free community picnic, hot dogs, popcorn, root beer floats, games and fun for all ages!

The 4th of July F-16 fly over is courtesy of the "Bulldogs" of the 148th Fighter Wing, Minnesota Air National Guard located in Duluth. The 148th flies the Block 50 F-16CM, the most capable F-16 in the U.S. Air Force Fleet. When called upon, the Airmen of the 148th provide diverse skills and capabilities to support federal and state missions.

The 1,000 Bulldogs of the 148th Fighter Wing wish you a happy and safe Independence Day.

**The fly over in Soudan will be ...
12:08 PM - 12:18 PM.**



Vacation Bible School in Tower, July 5-9

TOWER- VBS is back in Tower this summer and sure to be a great time. This year's theme is "On Earth as in Heaven" and will explore The Lord's Prayer as well as five different countries around the world. There will be singing, games, crafts, snacks, and story-time! VBS is open to all children ages four to grade six. Families can register their children ahead of time by stopping at Immanuel Lutheran

Church Tuesday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. to pick up a registration form, or can register on Monday, July 5 between 9 - 9:30 a.m. VBS will meet each day from 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon and begin at St. James Presbyterian Church. On Friday, there will be a short VBS program starting at 11:15 a.m., concluding with a hot dog picnic lunch. Any questions, please call Immanuel at 753-2378 or St. James at 753-6005.

Volunteers needed for July 3 traffic control in Tower

TOWER- The city of Tower is looking for six volunteers to help with traffic control on Saturday, July 3 from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. They will help with routing traffic in Tower before and during the parade. Call Mayor Orlyn Kringstad at 218-290-5582 or email orlyn@cityoftower.com.

Fourth of July Donations

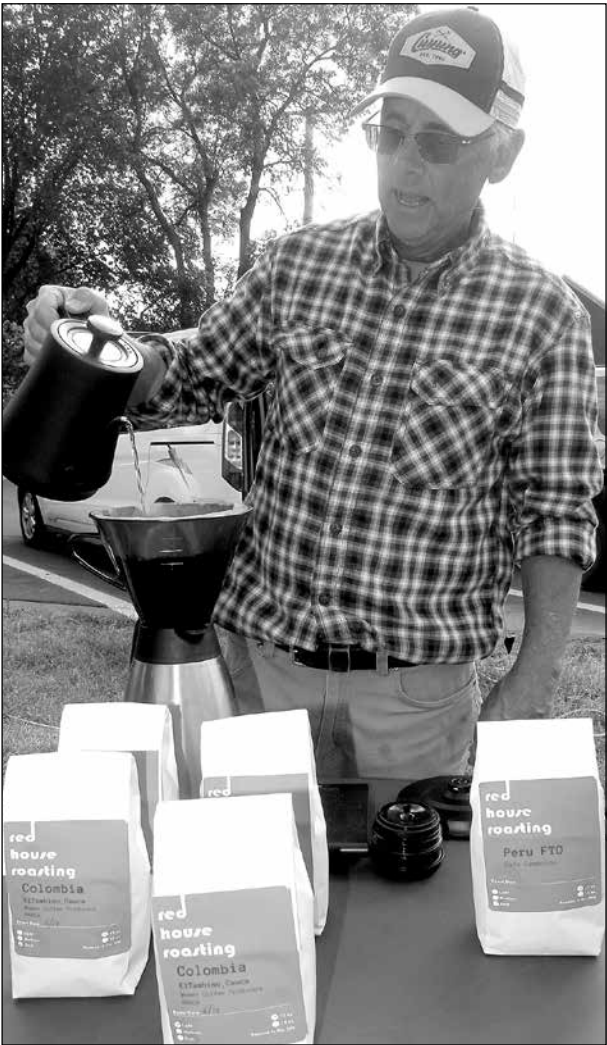
The Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board would like to thank the following individuals and families for their donations this year.
Donations are still needed and can be mailed to: PO Box 461, Tower, MN 55790.
Thank you to:
The Tellepsen Family
Jim & Cathy Wright
In Memory of Donald (Windy) Ronkanian- from

Vance & Molly DeLong
Peter Esala
Vermilion Storage
Eddie Udovich
Delores Clark
Tom & Peggy Brula
Donald & Beverly Reed
In Memory of Rodney & Wesley Anderson and Tom Lakoskey- from Robert & Judy Posch
Lee Branwall
Bernie & Laura Zollar
Linda Morcom
D'Erick's Tower Liquor
Kenneth & Mary Danz
George Stefanich
Ken & Amy Hinkel
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Zup's of Tower
Sunny Hill Distributors
Vermilion Fuel & Food
Soudan Store
Jim & Jill Berg
Moccasin Point Marine
Barbara Thiede
Steve & Amy Majerle
The Tower News
John & Kara Kerber
Don & Diane Childs
Rolf & Laurie Anderson



NOW OPEN
Fridays
4-6 PM
at the
Train Depot

ELY FARMERS MARKET



Home Grown Pottery, made by Nancy Hernesmaa, above, includes clay she harvests locally around Ely. Tom Benson, of Ely, left, brews a pot of coffee at his Red House Roasting Co. stand at the Ely Farmers Market. The gathering of vendors is held from 5-7 p.m. every Tuesday all summer long in Whiteside Park.

photos by
K. Vandervort



CB Handwovens are handmade by Cathy Bell of Ely.



Anika Boerst, left, and Sadie Nelson went into business for themselves this summer with their Bubble Pop Slime. They have at least nine varieties available at the Ely Farmer Market. “You play with it,” they said.

Tuesday Group

ELY – The Tuesday Group community educational lunch gathering meets every Tuesday at the Grand Ely Lodge. Participants have an opportunity to order lunch. For those interested in being a host, or who have a speakersuggestion,contact Lacey Squier by email at ElyTuesdayGroup@gmail.com or by phone at 218-216-9141.

Upcoming speakers:
► July 6: New Elyites. A recurring presentation of folks who are new to town.
► July 13: Bill Rom, Climate Change and Global Public Health. Dr. William Rom graduated from Ely and teaches Climate Change and Global Public Health at New York University School of Global Public Health.
► July 20: Todd Heiman, Ely Rotary Club

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2021



bird's eye advantage
high up on the chimney grooming
all in perspective

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

ARRL FIELD DAY

Ely ham radio operators connect with the world

ELY - Ham radio operators from the Vermilion Range Amateur Radio Club here participated in the American Radio Relay League Field Day national amateur radio exercise for 24 hours last weekend.

The event is an annual amateur radio activity organized since 1933 by ARRL, the national association for amateur radio in the United States.

Hams from across North America ordinarily participate in Field Day by establishing temporary ham radio stations in public locations to demonstrate



Ely Ham radio operator George Burger uses a computer to log his contacts Saturday at the American Radio Relay League's annual Field Day event. photo by K. Vandervort

The Vermilion Range Amateur Radio Club showcased 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.

“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. “Ham radio functions completely independently of the internet and phone systems and a station can be set up almost anywhere in minutes. Hams can quickly raise a wire antenna in a tree or on a mast, connect it to a radio and power source, and communicate effectively with others.”

their skill and service. Ely hams were set up at the city's public works facility, and operated in a series of shacks with portable power. Field Day highlights ham radio's ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent, wireless communications network.

OUR COMMUNITY



Amelia Strom, of Ely, tends to the wild strawberry patch at the Ely Community Resource Community Garden. photo by K. Vandervort





Ely Choose Love rally set for July 6

ELY - The third Choose Love Campaign rally will be held in Whiteside Park on Tuesday, July 6 from 5-7 p.m.

This Ely original campaign, launched earlier this year, is an opportunity for participants to share messages of hope, peace and love with the Ely community, visitors and neighbors.

Attendees are asked to bring signs with encouraging words or messages. No political signs please.

For more information, contact Dayna Mase at daynamase@gmail.com.



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 10th

Forms are available online at 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

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Rain no hindrance to hospice run/walk event

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Saturday’s rains couldn’t dampen the rays of hope shining from the faces of more than two dozen runners, walkers, and volunteers who turned out for the first-ever Hope for Hospice 4K Run/Walk, a benefit for Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners.

“COVID hit us kind of hard this last year,” board chairman Ivette Reing said. “(This year) we’re hoping to bring things that energize people and motivate people. People want to get out. They’re itching to do something. So we’re doing the 4K. It’s raining, but we got a good turnout.”

VHHP ensures and facilitates access to quality hospice and palliative care services for eligible patients in central St. Louis County, but they go beyond typical hospice programs by providing additional kinds of support for families.

“We try to be there when Medicare can’t cover something, or something that a hospital or insurance doesn’t cover, something like an airplane ticket for a family member out of the area or region who wants to come say their goodbyes,” Reing said. “We have gotten a lazy chair for somebody who just wants to be living in comfort and quality in their last days. So, we do anything we can do to supplement what insurances don’t cover. We are so unique. This is like no other program. I come from California, and I’ve never seen anything like this.”

VHHP also had never seen anything like the crowd assembled for the



Above: Reflecting the VHHP motto "Support when it's needed," board member Emily Koch takes care of little Remington Reing as the 4K run/walk is in progress.

Right: First place finisher Nathan Skon leads the pack down rain-spattered Ashawa Road while pushing his son Sebastian and nephew Anders.

4k on Saturday, although there clearly were no strangers there. Everyone had some connection, be it through family, board service, volunteerism, or being on the receiving end of VHHP services for a loved one. That included Shannon Martin, whose family became part of the VHHP family when they received services from the program during her husband David’s illness. David passed away May 6, and the inaugural Hope for Hospice 4K was dedicated to his memory.

Board member Barb Hegg smiled broadly as

she surveyed the group before they headed off west on Ashawa Rd.

“The weather’s not so good, but it’s a nice turnout. Everyone’s got a smile on their face,” she said. “I think this will be an annual event.”

Hegg also commented about the heightened need for fundraising after the pandemic.

“It was a tough year on all of us, tough on programs like ours because we couldn’t do any fundraising,” she said. “We need to fundraise now, more than ever with COVID, there’s the need.”



Running through intermittent light rain and pushing his son Sebastian and nephew Anders in a running stroller ahead of him, Nathan Skon, of Tarrytown, NY, easily outdistanced the field with a time of 15 minutes, 30 seconds to claim first, even though Sebastian and Anders crossed the line ahead of him.

“My sister and brother-in-law, Cara Skon and A.J. Hegg, live in Duluth, and so we’re out visiting them for a couple of weeks,” Skon said. “We originally came out to do the Garry Bjork-

lund Half-Marathon at the Grandma’s Marathon last weekend, and then we added this race in this weekend. It’s so fun to be at a small event like this where everyone’s in good spirits and happy to be out, even though we’re in the rain.”

But this event wasn’t as much about competition as it was camaraderie, as the final recorded time on the results list wasn’t an individual, it was a group: “Hegg Family – 45:08.”

Other participants included Cara Hegg, 18:36; Dan Reing, 25:13;

Kassie Lucas, 25:23; Isaiah Briggs, 32:81; Levi Chaulklin, 32:19; Kohen Briggs, 32:20; Heather Chaulklin, 35:00; Becky Smith, 35:01; Shannon Martin, 35:02; Laura Bergman, 35:04; Susan Gustafson, 35:35; Tiffany Briggs, 35:35; Theresa Nystrom, 42:30; and Connie Larson, 42:30.

To learn more about Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners or to make a donation, go to their website at vhhp.org.

COOK CITY COUNCIL

CHRA board opening tossed a mayoral curve ball

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- The drawn-out process to fill the vacant resident member position on the Cook Housing and Redevelopment Authority took an unexpected turn last Thursday when Mayor Harold Johnston proposed to reappoint the person who created the vacancy in the first place.

The position became vacant in April when the Cook City Council received a letter of resignation from CHRA resident board member Sharon

Ratai.

“I find it impossible to continue in this position,” Ratai wrote. “In my 2-1/2 years on the board I had hoped to make our buildings a better place for our residents to live out their lives. But that has not happened. My hope is that a new board member will have the knowledge and courage to make that happen.”

Confusion reared its head at the May board meeting when the city received a letter from CHRA Executive Director Reed Erickson indicating that a new resident repre-

sentative had been chosen and that the mayor should appoint them. While CHRA board members are appointed by the mayor, the council expressed discomfort with Erickson naming Ratai’s successor and instead discussed the possibility of having a monitored election to select the new board member. However, the CHRA bylaws do not provide for an election as an option to choose a resident board member.

So applications were sought from residents, and the city received four names. It was expect-

ed that Johnston would choose from among those, and Ratai apparently had a change of heart.

“All of the applicants seemed well qualified for the position,” Johnston said. “One of the applicants was Sharon Ratai, who decided she wants to go back on the board, and I would like to appoint her.”

City administrator Theresa Martinson interjected that the city had also received a letter from Erickson dated June 23 stating, “Ms. Therese Cheney will be the new HRA resident board mem-

ber effective at the July 2021 board meeting. In accordance with HUD regulations, please confirm this appointment at the June 24, 2021 city council meeting.”

“It’s not Erickson’s job to tell us what to do,” Johnston said.

“I’m just noting that because that’s what’s been shared,” Martinson said.

But council member Jody Bixby was quick to question Johnston’s recommendation of Ratai.

“I just think that’s a stretch because nothing’s changed on the board,” Bixby said. “If the differ-

ence was a whole year or something has majorly changed, but it has been a very short time. I’m just looking at her health and the stress level she lived through.”

More discussion ensued, with the end result being that Johnston did not appoint anyone to fill the position. Instead, the council will schedule a special meeting to consider all the applications, including Erickson’s nominee, and try to reach consensus on a candidate for Johnston to appoint and the council approve.

FINE ARTS

NWFA hosts photo tribute

COOK- The life and photography of Julie Fogelberg, of Cook, who passed away in March, is being honored at the Northwoods Friends of the Arts Gallery during the month of July.

The exhibit, titled “Through Julie’s Lens: A Tribute to Julie Fogelberg,” will be in The Wolf Den, NWFA’s classroom and extra exhibit hall.

“Julie Fogelberg was rarely seen without a camera by her side,” said her daughter Katie Lorenz. “Those who knew Julie know that she refused to let her battle with cancer steal the beauty of life. Her photography is a reminder of the way that she found beauty in God’s gifts that can so often go unnoticed. Some of her



Julie Fogelberg

favorite things to photograph include birds, Lake Vermilion, her flowers and animals that visited her house.”

Julie’s children have gathered up some of their mother’s dreamy photographs to create the exhibit.

A reception honoring Fogelberg’s life and

work will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, July 18 at the gallery. Patrons are encouraged to drop in for refreshments and celebrate Julie.

The NWFA Gallery at 210 S River Street 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 gallery is full of original artwork displayed by NWFA members.

A concurrent exhibit and sale of small art, “A Canvas and You —Two,” begins on Thursday, July 8.

More information is available on NWFA’s Facebook page, on the website nwfamn.org, or by emailing jgtulseth@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

R&B duo to perform in park on July 7

COOK- It’s time to enjoy the rhythm and blues music of “Rowbottom & Boyer” at Cook’s Music in the Park on Wednesday, July 7.

Sharon Rowbottom and Dan Boyer are popular on the Range and have appeared at The Rustic Pig at the Chisholm Discovery Center and on PBS WDSE and WRPT on the Play-List program in 2016.

Performances are in the gazebo in the city park on River Street. In case of rain the concert will move to the Cook VFW.

St. Paul’s (Alango) Lutheran Church will again provide food and beverages.

The music series will continue throughout the summer with nine differ-

ent groups performing for ten more weeks.

Class of 1971 to hold 50th reunion

COOK- The Cook High School Class of 1971 will celebrate its 50th class reunion on Saturday, July 31 at the Crescent Bar and Grill, 9257 E Olson Rd. in Cook.

A meet-and-greet will begin at 5 p.m., with dinner to follow at 6 p.m. Classmates and their guests will be able to order off the menu.

Class members are asked to please pass the word about the reunion to any other classmates they are in contact with to ensure as many are present as possible to enjoy the camaraderie and share stories.

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SUPPORTING THE ARTS

Aspiring Ely teen writers join celebrated authors on Atsokan Island

RAINY LAKE – Fourteen Ely teen girls recently participated in the second annual writers retreat on Rainy Lake’s Atsokan Island. They were joined by authors Mary Casanova and Margi Preus to enjoy both solitude and fellowship as they honed their writing skills.

“Students walked away from this retreat with renewed energy to follow their dreams, the skills to both take and give constructive criticism, and a supportive sisterhood of fellow writers,” said Heather Cavalier, middle school language arts teacher at ISD 696. She was joined by fellow teacher Molly Olson

“The island stay was extremely special because it is the setting for Casanova’s historical fiction novels Frozen, Ice Out, and her newly published third book in the series, Waterfall,” she said.

Cavalier noted that because



so many girls participated this year, they were able to invite Preus, a *New York Times* bestselling

Rainy Lake’s Atsokan Island was the setting for a writer’s retreat for several Ely teen girls. submitted photo

author of the Newbery Honor book *Heart of a Samurai* and other notable books for young readers, including the Minnesota Book Award-winning *West of the Moon*.

Preus’ books have been honored as ALA/ALSC Notables, selected as an NPR Backseat Book Club pick, chosen for community reads, and translated into several languages. New titles include *Village of Scoundrels*, *The Littlest Voyageur*, and *The Silver Box*, part of the *Enchantment Lake* mystery series. Before writing full time, Preus taught Fiction Writing at UMD and Creative Writing at the College of St. Scholastica.

The local girls who participated in the retreat included Esther Anderson, Evelyn Cavalier, Zoe Devine, Sydney Durkin, Margaret Fetterer, Abigail Johnson, Morgan Lassi, Morgan McClelland, Ella Nappa, Cora Olson, Abigail Rehbein, Lauren Rehbein, Sylvia Shock and Juliet Stouffer.

During the five-day retreat the girls enjoyed both solitude and fellowship.

“In the mornings the authors met with each girl individually to conference about writing,” Cavalier said. “When not meeting, the girls spread out across the island to write (on porch swings, on the dock, in the historic lodge, or in nature). The afternoons were spent together as a whole group, sharing inspirations and learning new techniques. Our group meals were full of lively conversation and bonding laughter. In the eve-

nings we played improv games, found more time to write, and continued conversations around the campfire or in the sauna.”

Cavalier has hopes to make the writing retreat a tradition for Ely teen girls who love to write.

“The girls all enjoyed it so thoroughly that they will return again next year, along with six more teen girls in grades 8-11. I plan on taking up to twenty girls next year,” she said.

The endeavor received generous support from the Ely community.

“The Ann Bancroft Foundation awarded three of the girls a \$500 Dare to Dream Grant,” she added.

Donations toward next summer’s trip can be sent to Camp Atsokan, c/o Story Portage, PO Box 286, Ely MN 55731, or made online at www.givemn.org/organization/Story-Portage.

EAGLE...Continued from page 1

by three of Bryanna’s friends for an overnight stay at their camp on Tuesday, June 8, and they all piled in the Wichners’ boat the next evening for the trip to the Ash River Visitor Center to reunite Bryanna’s friends with their parents.

“And that’s when we got caught in the storm,” Bryan said.

They were at the Ash River dock when the storm front blew through with reported wind gusts exceeding 60 mph as it doused the area with heavy rain and small hail.

“We waited for the main part of the storm to blow over, and as the sky lightened up, I figured we’d be able to go back, although it was still pouring rain,” Bryan said.

Keenly aware of the danger of added debris in the lake from the violent storm, Bryan proceeded cautiously, and sure enough, as the family was motoring in the main channel of Namakan nearing Wolf Pack Islands, he spotted a large object floating in the water ahead.

“I asked my daughter, I said ‘What is that?’ She said, ‘It looks like a log,’” Bryan said.

Eagle adrift

A little less than a mile northwest of the Wolf Pack Islands, and about 1,000 feet from the border with

Canada, is Twin Alligator Island, the summer home for retired teachers Ivy and Herb Hanson. Ivy’s grandparents bought the island in the 1930s and built the cabin there in 1939. In 1976, as she was four years older than her brother, Ivy’s father, conservation officer Bill Callies, gave her and Herb a choice – they could either have the cabin on Twin Alligator Island or another three-bedroom cabin her parents had built elsewhere on Namakan.

“It took us a long time to decide which one,” Ivy said. “My grandparents had huge gardens up here, and we thought because we were teachers, we could live up here in the summer and take care of the gardens. My brother couldn’t, so we picked the island.”

For the couple’s 50th wedding anniversary seven years ago, their daughter, Calisa Karst, gave them a gift befitting their Twin Alligator Island home, a chain-saw-carved wooden alligator. And two years ago, when the artist, Ben Semler, of Brainerd, was selling off some of his display pieces, the Hansons picked up a bald eagle carving.

“It’s been sitting out on the dock,” Ivy said. “It’s heavy, really heavy.

We never thought it would ever leave the dock.”

Then came the June 9 storm that knocked over trees on the island “that you cannot reach around,” Ivy said.

“Our daughter was up here, and she and my husband went walking around to see what damage was done, and that’s when they realized the eagle was gone,” she said. “Our daughter took the boat out to see if it was maybe in the area or onshore on an island near us, but she couldn’t find it. We finally decided it was gone.”

Eagle recovered

As the Wichners eased up on the large object they’d spotted ahead of their boat, Bryan noticed something odd.

“The closer we got to it, you could see white on it,” he said. “I thought no, that isn’t a log. We got closer and I said ‘Gee, I think that’s a bald eagle carved out of wood.’”

Knowing that its owners would be “heart-broken” to lose it, the Wichners plucked the bird out of the water with a collective mission to eventually find the owner.

But first, they had to continue on to their campsite, and it was a complete wreck.

“There was no way

we could stay there that night,” Bryan said. “We grabbed all our important stuff and headed back to Ash River, loaded up the boat, and then drove home.”

The next day they returned, collected the rest of their gear, and left. The camping trip was done.

Searching anew

While the Hansons had resigned themselves to the likelihood that the eagle was gone for good, Ivy hadn’t completely given up hope.

“On an outside chance, I thought ‘I’ll put it on Facebook,’” she said. “I thought it couldn’t hurt. I got a lot of comments. People felt badly and hoped we could find it. A lot of people said let us know when the eagle has landed.”

The Wichners had also started putting out feelers. That’s when one of Cindy’s friends let them know that she saw Ivy’s Facebook post about her missing eagle.

“So, we had the person’s name, looked her up, and found out that she was friends with one of our friends, Jill Kiner, so we contacted her. She called Ivy Hanson, and within about 15 minutes she was calling us and couldn’t believe that we had her eagle.”

Ivy told Bryan that they would come in from the island to pick up the eagle, but Bryan instead wanted his family to deliver it, and made arrangements to do so.

Eagle returned

The lake was too rough for boating on the first day the Wichners had intended to go deliver the eagle, but the Hansons were waiting outside the next day when the Wichners pulled up to their dock with the precious cargo.

“They had it wrapped in a Carhart jacket,” Ivy said. “It only got a couple of scratches on it. We put the eagle back on the dock, and that’s when I took a picture of the whole family.”

Actually, it was a picture of the Wichners plus one, the Hansons’ 11-year-old dog, Jake, who took an immediate shine to Zachary.

“Their son really liked our dog,” Ivy said. “He was throwing things for him, and Jake was so happy to have a little boy to play with.”

“They connected right away, and they started playing,” Bryan said.

And the warmth was shared all around.

“They were so grateful to have the eagle back,” Bryan said. “They

welcomed us into their cabin and showed us around the entire place and told us we’re always welcome to come back.”

“They were just so delightful,” Ivy said. “It was so nice that they were willing to return the eagle. He really is a beautiful bird.”

The picture will hold special meaning for all after what happened too soon after the Wichners left. Perhaps Jake sensed that the happy reunion with the eagle and a little time frolicking with a young boy was a moment too good to ever be topped; but for whatever reason, the beloved member of the family just laid down and died the very next day.

Afterthoughts

When asked what he hoped people might take away from this lost-and-found adventure, Bryan didn’t have to think twice for an answer.

“Could we have kept that eagle and said nothing about it? Yes, we could have,” Bryan said, “but that’s not the right thing to do, and that’s what I wanted to teach my kids. We found this, it doesn’t belong to us, somebody is devastated that they lost it, and we’ve got to try to get it back to them. I think the most important thing is to be honest.”

MINING...Continued from page 1

clean-up of its sulfate-tainted tailings basin water.

The latest decision came after the third go-round in court. The Supreme Court had remanded three issues back to the Court of Appeals, after the high court had ruled largely against U.S. Steel’s claims earlier this year. The appellate court, in turn, ruled against U.S. Steel on all three of the remaining issues.

“I think this is really good news,” said Paula Maccabee, legal counsel for Duluth-based Water Legacy, which has pushed in the courts for years to address Minntac’s discharges.

The 8,000-acre basin, located just north of Virginia, discharges millions of gallons a day of contaminated water into the Dark River and the Sand River, which is a tributary to the Pike River and Lake Vermilion. Sulfate pollution is linked to the reduction of wild rice and

is also known to facilitate the uptake of mercury into the aquatic food chain.

U.S. Steel had sought to eliminate the sulfate limit in its permit, which would require the company to cut the sulfate level in its tailings basin water by about two-thirds. A U.S. Steel-commissioned study conducted several years ago had determined that the company could meet a 250 mg/l federal sulfate limit in groundwater below the tailings basin by lowering its sulfate level in the basin water to 357 mg/l. Currently, sulfate levels in the basin are around 1,000 mg/l and the company contends that reducing sulfate levels by two-thirds isn’t economically feasible.

U.S. Steel had wanted a contested case hearing to challenge the findings of the study, yet the court noted that it was U.S. Steel’s own consultant who had done the analysis and that the company had presented no evidence that

countered the findings of its own study. “On this record, the MPCA properly denied U.S. Steel’s request for a contested-case hearing,” wrote the court in its ruling this week.

The court was equally dismissive of the company’s challenge of the MPCA’s decision to deny a variance from the sulfate limit in the tailings basin. While the company argued that requiring sulfate reductions would present an “undue hardship” on the company, the court found that U.S. Steel “has not argued, much less substantiated with the required information,” that it would be unduly harmed by the requirement to invest in

clean-up.

The court also reiterated its previous finding that the MPCA had erred when it failed to include water quality-based effluent limits, or QWBELs, in the new Minntac permit. That means the MPCA will need to provide better rationale for how its failure to set pollution limits for Minntac complies with the federal Clean Water Act, or the agency will need to incorporate limits into the permit.

And, finally, the appellate court, as directed by the Supreme Court, remanded the Minntac permit to the MPCA to determine whether groundwater seepage from under

the Minntac basin’s dikes is the “functional equivalent” of a direct discharge.


The MPCA had determined that those discharges weren’t subject to regulation under the Clean Water Act, but a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *County of Maui v. Hawaii Wildlife Fund*, determined that the Clean Water Act does apply to pollution discharged through groundwater if it is the “functional equivalent” of a direct surface discharge. The MPCA will now need to

determine whether the Minntac discharges meet that definition.

Maccabee had predicted the Maui decision could have major repercussions for mine tailings basins in the state by upsetting what she views as a longstanding agreement between the MPCA and the mining industry. “They’ve had a quiet agreement for years that they wouldn’t regulate seepage through groundwater,” said Maccabee. “Now, this likely reverses that.”

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EDUCATION

ISD 696, superintendent ink new two-year contract

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – ISD 696 Superintendent Erik Erie met or exceeded “most” of the school board’s expectations during the previous two years, however, there were also “major concerns” voiced in the recent evaluation. A list of goals and expectations was included with a new two-year contract for the school district’s part-time administrator. Board chair Ray Marnik quoted a performance evaluation summary during a special meeting on Monday night. A feedback survey that focused on the main areas of performance common to the position was used in the evaluation. All staff who report directly to the top administrator also participated

in the survey. “The evaluation showed that Erik met or exceeded most of the board’s expectations,” Marsnik said. “Being open, upfront and approachable, providing for the educational needs of all children, participating in school and community activities and maintaining good working relationships with staff, government officials and the media stood out as strengths. Erik is a hard worker and is someone who is knowledgeable, committed and passionate about education.” Marsnik continued, “Delegating responsibility and authority to school district employees as appropriate was a major concern. Making informed decisions in a timely manner, time management and meeting

preparation were discussed.” A list of goal and expectations for 2021-22 were included in the evaluation summary and contract extension: ➤Create a system to improve organization skills that allow for tracking and completing day-to-day tasks and timely decision-making. ➤Oversight and awareness for the district’s budget, including preparation, presentation and recommendation of all budget needs. Monitor district spending and support the fund balance policy approved by the board which helps the district remain viable. ➤Maintain and improve all district relationships including but not limited to building principals and the facilities director. Delegating responsi-

bility to employees as appropriate, empowering employees to excel, follow-up to ensure timely completion of duties, projects or tasks. Improvement is necessary to make sure all methods of communication are timely, including but not limited to responding to emails, phone calls and meetings. Quarterly administrative meetings will be held with an agenda for monitoring, tracking and acknowledging progress improvement, specifically in the areas that require opportunity for improvement. The extended superintendent’s contract runs two years, from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2023. Some changes were made. For the first year of the contract, Erie will work at a .70 FTE (Full Time Equivalent), or 3.5

days per week. For the second year of the contract, Erie will work at a .60 FTE, or three days per week. Duty days shall not consist of anything less than 144 days per contract year. Erie will also begin earning six vacation days per contract year. Vacation days will not be allowed to be carried over at the end of the contract year. Erie will not be paid for four holidays as in the previous contract. Erie’s annual salary will increase by one percent. He will be at \$88,375 for the 2021-22 contract year and \$76,508 for the 2022-23 contract year. With the new contract, Erie will also begin receiving a matching district contribution of up to \$2,000 per year for an approved retirement account plan.

SCHOOL...Continued from page 1

pus’s new building, were approved earlier this spring. A second bid package, primarily for the renovation and modernization of the district’s existing Memorial and Washington buildings, was budgeted at about \$4 million but came in at \$8 million. The bids of the second construction package were rejected last month and officials hope to rebid that project scope at a smaller scale later this year. During the bid process, school officials were assured that despite the separation of the construction process into two parts, the entire project would be treated as one entity. However, any project cuts will have to be made from the planned renovations of the existing buildings. When it comes to trimming as much as \$4 million, the first bid contracts are already signed, approved, and apparently offer limits to any adjustments. Losing any classroom or learning space modernization did not sit well with the two district principals, Megan Anderson and Anne

Oelke. They requested a special study session with the school board last week and pleaded with them to allow the proposed renovations for the existing learning spaces to remain. Adding additional cost to district taxpayers, lawyers are getting involved in the conversation. ISD 696’s lawyer was asked to provide a legal opinion on whether or not the district can make adjustments to any of the 36 individual construction contracts signed in the first package as a way to get the entire project back within budget. I S D 6 9 6 Superintendent Erik Erie indicated Monday night that the legal opinion from the district’s lawyer, Kelly Klun, is coming later this week. “We have an opinion, not in writing yet, but she acknowledged that we have signed contracts,” he said. “Can you get out of a signed contract? Sometimes you can, but it will be at a cost.” The project construction manager, Kraus-

Anderson, sent two representatives to the study session Monday night. Mike Dosan stated matter-of-factly, “We typically don’t go backward with those (signed) contracts.” He renewed his push for the \$4 million in project scope reductions to come from the second bid package. Air quality upgrades Cost overruns are also cropping up in another aspect of the renovation project, the upgrading of the campus HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) system. The modifications can likely be mostly paid for through the district’s long-term facility maintenance (LTFM) account where the funding, some provided by the state, is spread out over many years. Board and facilities committee member Tony Colarich said the original ventilation systems were installed in 1903. “We need to replace everything, especially now with COVID (concerns),” he said.

Nine air handling units need to be replaced and new duct work and controls installed. Even with the existing LTFM funding of just over \$1 million, there will be shortfall, according to Colarich. “We are going to be in need of additional funding for that, unless we take it out of the project, but it would be nice to have additional funding,” he said. He introduced the possibility of a federal COVID relief funding plan that could be tapped by ISD 696. “The American Rescue Plan granted Minnesota \$1.38 billion, and of that St. Louis County receives \$54 million,” Colarich said. He described a specific line item on the funding plan that addresses “school ventilation upgrades.” School district officials were set to meet this week with St. Louis County Commissioner Paul McDonald to write a funding application for the specific needs for ISD 696. “We are hopeful we can get a portion of that \$54 million,” Colarich said.

Moving forward Dosan updated the board on the project as June draws to a close. The Industrial Arts building is demolished and scrap materials are being removed. “The boiler building will come down next, along with part of the (Memorial building) media center,” he said. “We will be digging footings and putting in foundations to meet the schedule of the arrival of precast (components) in August.” Plans are being created with Kraus-Anderson, Architectural Resources, Inc., and district officials for the new second bid package scope and budget. Bids could possibly go out as early as October, he said. Meanwhile, students and staff will be returning to the school campus in late August with the expectation of having an effective learning environment in the midst of a construction zone. The two school principals recently voiced detailed concerns over

several educational space challenges for the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, and Erie provided a bulleted list of responses. ➤Locker rooms: The plan is to price the boys locker room as designed in bid package two to be ready for the second quarter of the upcoming school year. Locker room contingencies for fall classes and sports will be similar to those used at the end of the 2020-21 school year. ➤Band: There are currently 68 students enrolled in each section of the middle school and high school band classes, and with no dedicated band room, the plan is to use the Washington building auditorium. Choir classes will be held in the renovated Memorial building media center. ➤Industrial Arts: The Memorial building choir room was taken over by shop classes at the end of the 2020-21 school year and will continue to be used in the new school year. Administration is exploring other options, such as using Northeast Range facilities, Vermilion Community College space, or some other vacant commercial space in the city of Ely.

➤Early Childhood Family Education: The ECFE center’s permanent home will be relocated to the existing Washington building media center and will be ready for occupancy by the start of the new school year. ➤Indian Education: The former ECFE classrooms in the Memorial building, other spaces in the Memorial building, or the third floor of the Washington building will temporarily be used. ➤Washington building “perch:” This space on the east side of the building will be renovated and available for use at the start of the new school year. The bay window will be removed and replaced with a wall. ➤Other spaces: The Head Start program, Kindergarten classrooms, elementary school office and intervention area will stay in their current spaces at the beginning of the new school year. Karl Larson, of Architectural Resources, said work is ongoing to develop and maintain a “disruption avoidance plan” as the new school year commences. “We will focus on safety for students and anybody who enters and leaves the school,” he said. Board member Rochelle Sjoberg noted, “Obviously, this is not an ideal roll out. Emotions are high. Communication is going to be the biggest gap to close with some of these frustrated emotions that are going on.”



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CHAMBER MUSIC AT B'NAI ABRAHAM
Schubert The Trout
JULY 10 7:00 PM
B'nai Abraham, Virginia

CHAMBER MUSIC IN BUHL
JULY 12 7:00 PM
Buhl Public Library, Buhl

CHAMBER MUSIC AT VCC
Schubert The Trout
JULY 19 4:00 PM
Vermilion Comm. College, Ely

CHAMBER MUSIC AT B'NAI ABRAHAM
Schubert The Trout
JULY 20 7:00 PM
B'nai Abraham, Virginia

NLMF CONCERT IN THE PARK
Indian Drumming Concert
JULY 21 4:00 PM
Whiteside Park, Ely

FINAL CLOSING CONCERT
JULY 23 7:00 PM
Veda Zuponic Auditorium
Mesabi East, Aurora

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THE ETHNICITIES THAT SHAPED THE IRON RANGE
JULY 8 7:00 PM
B'nai Abraham, Virginia

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?
Dr. Gary Kaunonen
Music of Social Protest:
The Aurora Strike 1916
Music by Christopher Shin and Lourin Plant
JULY 9 7:00 PM
Veda Zuponic Auditorium
Mesabi East, Aurora

B'NAI ABRAHAM SYNAGOGUE & THE HISTORY OF IRON RANGE JEWRY
JULY 10 7:00 PM
B'nai Abraham, Virginia

ART EXHIBITS
Ojibwe Faces and Stories:
A Photographic Exhibit
and Return to the River
Installed in the lower level of B'nai Abraham Cultural Center; exhibits rotate with Mesabi East Lobby



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2021-2022 SEASON



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A three-man painting crew from Champion Tank Services, of Clitherall, returned to Ely this week to complete the city water tower painting project. The tank was re-painted white a couple of weeks ago, and the project was delayed as the painters waited on delivery of the colored paint for the new logo. The logo on the west side of the tower was completed on Monday. The crew began work on the east side logo Tuesday morning. Incoming storm clouds and rain showers arrived just after noon and the painters returned to the ground to wait for the brief shower to pass. They finished the nearly \$80,000 job later in the day. photos by K. Vandervort



ELY...Continued from page 1

like the Shriners’ Dune Buggy brigade and the Ely Klown Band.

The Ely High School Marching Band won’t be in the parade because COVID-19 health protocols prohibited band classes during the school year. However, the Northeast Range High School Band from Babbitt will participate.

Politicians rarely miss an opportunity to participate in Fourth of July activities and U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar, who has roots in Ely, is planning to be here,

according to the parade committee. Congressman Pete Stauber, St. Louis County Commissioner Paul McDonald, and one of two Ely mayoral candidates, Roger Skraba, was signed up to participate as of the *Timberjay’s* deadline. Ely City Council members, riding in the back of a public works truck, typically follow the Ely Honor Guard in leading off the parade.

Organizers hinted at the possibility of a flyover by F-16 Fighting Falcons of the 148th Fighter Wing

out of Duluth.

Miss Ely and Little Miss Ely will add some royalty to the procession, riding in a 1969 Chevy Impala convertible. The Ely High School Dance team, Little Miss Babbitt, Team Rubicon, Saddle Club, Your Boat Club, and a host of area businesses and organizations will also participate.

Zup’s Market associates typically distribute copious amounts of candy and treats along the parade route. Some lucky parade watchers may even get a

package of ladies underwear.

As usual, opposing sides of the sulfide mining debate will be represented by the Save the Boundary Waters Campaign environmental protection advocate organization and Fight for Mining.

More parade entrants will likely sign up at the last minute, according to committee officials, as well as some unsanctioned participants.

Parade lineup begins at 10 a.m. on Fourth Avenue on the west side of the ISD

696 campus. The parade will begin at 1 p.m. and follow the traditional route through the city: west on Harvey Street to Second Avenue, then north to Sheridan Street, then east through the city’s downtown district, past Whiteside Park, to Eighth Avenue.

The city-wide Fourth of July celebration will also include the following events:

➤ Raising of the American Flag at the Veterans Memorial (Trezona Trail parking

lot), 7 a.m.

➤ Janet Gensler Memorial Ely 4 on the 4th Run and Walk on Trezona Trail, 8 a.m.

➤ Picnic and family games in Whiteside Park, with lunch in the pavilion, sponsored by Young Life, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

➤ Family Friendly Music Event with Van and the Free Candies playing at Semer’s Park, beginning at 4 p.m.

➤ Fireworks, shot over Miners Lake, will put a patriotic cap on the day at dusk.

TOWER...Continued from page 1

Parade. Children will be lining up on the side street between U-Betcha and Jeanne’s Card Shop. There will not be costume/float/bike judging this year, but all children who participate will receive \$5 and a flag. Decorated bikes, wagons, etc. are still welcome, but all children are urged to march along and help lead the parade.

This year’s Parade Grand Marshals are Mary Batinich and Linda Haugen,

both being recognized for their long-time volunteer efforts in the area.

If you are up for a challenge, the Vermilion 5K and 10K gets underway at 8 a.m., by the Tower Fire Hall. Both runners and walkers are welcome. You can register in advance at www.rangerunners.org, or on July 3 from 6:30-7:45 a.m. Cost is \$20, with a special family rate available for the 5K. Children 12 and under run or walk for

free with a paid adult. The one-mile kids fun run takes place once the 10K and 5K racers are off. The kids run is free of charge.

There will be food vendors and craft booths set up Main Street.

At 12:30 p.m., children are invited to the football field by Tower Elementary School for the sawdust scramble and races.

Good Ol’ Days is offering free hot dogs and pop for children after the

parade. There will be beer gardens set up at Good Ol’ Days, D’Erick’s, and Benchwarmers. Live music at Good Ol’ Days starts at noon, with “Ely Ed” from noon-3 p.m. and “Elvis” playing two sets from 3-5 p.m. and 8 p.m.-dusk. The Inspiyre Fire Dancers will perform at dusk.

Fireworks begin at 10 p.m. off the north hill in Tower.

The activities are sponsored by the Tower-Soudan

Lake Vermilion Events Board.

On Sunday, July 4, Breitung Township is hosting a free community picnic from noon-3 p.m. at the Recreation Area

(skating rink area). There will be hot dogs, popcorn, and root beer floats. There will be plenty of fun activities for children at the picnic.

ORR...Continued from page 1

served up by the Sons of the American Legion. Those who eat early enough can burn off some of those extra pancake calories by participating in the 5K Walk/Run at 9 a.m., with registration starting at 8 a.m. at the tennis courts.

Activities aplenty begin at 11 a.m. with an arts

and crafts fair, Luke’s Third Annual Antique Tractor and Joker Show, and performances by Willow River that are scheduled to run through 3 p.m.

Everyone will want to take a break at noon to cheer on the children’s parade for youngsters up to age 12. Parade winners will

be announced at the end of the parade.

At 1 p.m. there will be a sawdust dig to unearth \$300 in silver dollars. There will also be pony rides and a petting zoo available throughout the day.

The Orr Muni will be the focal point for two popular evening activities.

A bean bag tournament with cash prizes begins at 5:30 p.m. for teams that register between 4:45-5:15 p.m. A street dance featuring Nightshift will kick off at 8 p.m. and run until midnight for dancing under the stars and fireworks.



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Have a safe & happy 4th
Wishing you and your family the best holiday weekend!





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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.org

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
Bauman's Vermilion
Funeral Home
Bayview Bar & Grill
Benchwarmer's Grille
Bob's Service
& Towing**

**Breitung Township
Broten Construction
Como Oil & Propane
David Lanari- Keller**

**Williams Realty
D'Erick's Tower
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Edina Realty -
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**Embarrass-Vermillion
Federal Credit Union
Fortune Bay Resort
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**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).**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Former county garage eyed for new business

Former Cook resident plans to purchase Linden Grove site for new custom countertop workshop

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- If all goes well at a July 8 county permit hearing, the former St. Louis County Public Works garage in Linden Grove will become the eventual home of a new business turning out custom countertops, and a homecoming of sorts for a Cook native son.

Darrel Kaml is a 1985 Cook High School graduate and his father, Frank, still lives in Cook.

He also has a couple of brothers who live nearby. And while life long ago led him to California’s Central Valley and a successful business career in the custom tile and construction industry, he’s had an eye on finding his way back to the area for several years. Buying the former county garage building provides an opportunity to take a big step in that direction.

“The main reason for doing it there is coming home,” Kaml said. “I’ve actually been looking at it for some time thinking I can make

Right: The main building at the former Linden Grove public works garage owned by St. Louis County.

submitted photo

it work, and I can’t plan anything else until I have a facility.”

County commissioners approved Kaml’s offer of \$297,000 for the property at their June 6 meeting, contingent on conditional use permits being granted

See **GARAGE...**pg. 2B



DEVELOPMENT

Public hearing set for new RV park proposal

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER— The city’s planning and zoning commission here has set a public hearing for Tuesday, July 20, at 5:30 p.m. to take input from residents on a proposed new RV park located on Pike Bay.

The commission, on Tuesday, determined that a conditional use permit application filed by developer Justin Renner was “substantially complete,” and was ready to take to a public hearing.

The proposed RV park would be accessed off of Marina Drive, located just west of the Standing Bear Marina. The previous owners of the 58-acre property, Gary and Charity Ross, had sought for years to create an RV park on the site, but had run into roadblocks from city officials at the time and eventually gave up on their plans.

Renner is now picking up where the Rosses left off and has made substantial progress in advancing his concept, which will include 49 sites potentially installed this year, with the remaining sites slated for construction in 2022 to be available for the 2023 camping season. Renner hopes to also install boat slips for 20 watercraft.

Final approval of a CUP can’t take place until a public hearing is held. Ultimately, the approval will need to come from the full Tower City Council. Under state law and city ordinance, Renner will also need to complete an environmental assessment worksheet before construction can get underway. He said he has hired Benchmark Engineering to complete that work.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Tower man injured in truck crash

PIKE TWP- A Tower man was injured Saturday afternoon in a one-vehicle accident on Hwy. 169 in Pike Township.

Ronald Scott Childs, 58, was driving northbound in a 2000 Dodge Ram in the vicinity of the County Road 26 intersection at about 4:45 p.m. when the truck veered off the road into the east ditch and struck some trees, according to the Minnesota State Patrol report.

Childs, who was wearing a seat belt, experienced non-life-threatening injuries and was taken to Essentia Hospital in Virginia.

St. Louis County Sheriff’s deputies and the Virginia Ambulance Service assisted with the call.

INTERNATIONAL WOLF CENTER

New wolf pup makes its debut

Newest pack member named Rieka

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – The newest addition to the Ambassador Exhibit pack at the International Wolf Center Interpretive Center here received her new name last week.

Meet Rieka (pronounced Rye-kuh). Her name means “power of the wolf, peaceful ruler, power of the home,” according to IWF staff.

Her name was chosen through an online naming contest as she was introduced to the fans and supporters of the Ely wolf exhibit

and education facility.

Rieka turned 40 days old on July 1. She weighs just over eight pounds and is gaining about one-third of a pound per day, according to IWC wolf curator Lori Schmidt.

Rieka is in a socialization period and is kept in an indoor/outdoor enclosure fenced off from the Exhibit Pack enclosure that holds the five-year-old Arctic wolves, Axel and Grayson.

Rieka began to show signs of guard hair, or her adult hair

See **NEW PUP...**pg. 2B



Top: The new wolf pup, Rieka, seems to smile from all the attention.

Above: Members of the public gather round to check out the center’s latest resident.

photos by K. Vandervort

OFF BEAT

Cantankerous pig blamed for llama trauma

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Little can cause more frantic anxiety than losing an adoptee on their very first day in their new home, even when that adoptee is an 18-year-old llama.

But that’s the predicament Lois Pajari of Cook’s Country Connection found herself in last week after playing Good Samaritan by taking in two llamas and a goat about to be displaced from The Hills Youth and Family Services juvenile justice and youth treatment program in Duluth.

While hoping to keep its day services going, The Hills recently announced it was closing its residential programs, which included

Right: Two rescued llamas, Cleo and Mocha, at Cook’s Country Connection. Mocha, right, created a bit of excitement after escaping her enclosure on her first day at the farm.

submitted photos

an animal husbandry program to give youths the opportunity to care for a variety of animals, Pajari said. Upon learning from a contact there that the animals had to be gone by the end of last week, Pajari went to Duluth on Thursday to get 18-year-old Mocha, 23-year-old Cleo, and a little goat named Oliver.

“We kept them in the exhibit

See **TRAUMA...**pg. 2B



GARAGE...Continued from page 1B

for a custom countertop fabrication shop as well as storage and maintenance uses.

Three utility shop buildings totaling approximately 15,000 square feet and a separate 7,200-square-foot Morton post-on-ground warehouse building would give Kaml more room than he anticipates needing for his countertop operation, he said, so he plans to offer some of that space for storage and use by other businesses. “I’ve talked to several people and I’m going to rent out probably half of it,” Kaml said.

Central to the success of Kaml’s proposed business is the word custom. “I’ve been doing this for 35 years and it’s always been custom installation,” Kaml said. “Up there [northern Minnesota] in that part of the country, the people who are doing construction want the best.

If I’m going to be doing that kind of stuff there, I want it to be custom. So, with that, it requires good machinery, quality guys, and I’d like to expand on that and train more people in the industry.”

If all goes according to plan, Kaml could take ownership of the property by mid-August, but there’s much left to do before custom countertops come rolling out the doors.

“I’m going to set aside a year of planning and setting this stuff and do an analysis of what the need is to bring in the right machinery,” Kaml said. “I want to be sure we’re doing everything safe. Safety is the number one concern for me.”

And while Kaml doesn’t yet know how many employees he might need, when the time comes to hire he’ll be looking for people with the same solid work ethic he learned working

at another local company, Hill Wood Products.

“I worked for a couple of years at Hill Wood Products,” Kaml said. “Dad retired from there. He told all of his children, ‘You can do whatever you want, but every one of you are going to work at Hill Wood Products and you’re going to learn how to work. They worked hard.” Kaml said most of his California employees have been with him for 25 to 30 years, and he expects to draw on their expertise when training new staff.

“I apprenticed for four years before making a business out of it; I learned the trade right,” Kaml said. “I want to use those guys to train other people to treat it like it’s a real trade. I’ve really been a promoter of treating construction like a real trade.”

And when it comes to the new fabrication equipment he will need for the

facility, Kaml said he plans to stick with the company here in Minnesota that’s furnished all the equipment for his California operation, St. Cloud-based Park Industries.

Good timing

Several factors have come together to make this the right time to pursue this opportunity, Kaml said.

While the economy in general was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, construction was one sector that kept on booming, Kaml said. With more and more people choosing to work from their homes, they’re willing to invest in making those homes more livable, he said. He anticipates that trend will continue, while acknowledging that there’s no crystal ball to predict the industry’s future.

“It’s construction – anything can change at any time, and you’ve got to look at it from that angle,”

Kaml said.

Kaml’s company in Modesto, Calif., Specialty Tile, is thriving, he said, providing a secure financial base that will allow his new venture to get established and build its niche in the local marketplace. And with connections across the country, countertops produced at the Linden Grove facility could make their way into other markets, Kaml said.

“That’s why I’m not going to shut down my business in California,” Kaml said. “That particular business has always done well. I hope that will help this one get going. It does seem like there’s enough need to make it successful. I hope it is, just for the community.”

The timing was good, too, for Kaml and his wife to buy a cabin on Susan Lake that suits Kaml’s desire for a little more isolation than a place on Lake Vermilion.

The couple recently made the drive from California to spend three weeks in their new cabin.

“I used to fish Susan Lake as a kid,” Kaml said. “We were just so happy with that purchase. We haven’t been back in the summer in a long time and that place was absolutely beautiful. I’m definitely going to work myself back there. It’s going to take me a bit, but I’m going to get back there.”

The St. Louis County Planning Commission will consider Kaml’s conditional use application at 9 a.m. on Thursday, July 8 in a meeting at the Government Services Center in Virginia. For information about making public comments or participating in the meeting online, contact Jenny Bourbonais, St. Louis County Land Use Manager, at bourbonaisj@stlouiscountymn.gov.

NEW PUP...Continued from page 1B

growth, over the weekend and she is raising her ears as she responds to various sounds.

“She is also doing some growling and shaking her head as she plays with her toys,” Schmidt told a visitor Monday morning. Rieka scurried for cover when “the boys (Axel and Grayson)” began howling just outside her enclosure.

Rieka will remain isolated from her two pack mates until she reaches about 30 pounds and is big enough to handle the playful behavior of Axel and Grayson. For the next three months she will have constant human interaction

with Wolf Center staff, as well as daily viewings from visitors to the Wolf Center.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 precautions, some restrictions will remain in place for Wolf Center visitors to view Rieka this summer.

“Outdoor viewing opportunities will require

pre-registration to participate in a 15-minute pup viewing opportunity,” said Interpretive Center Director Krista Harrington. “We will do our best to accommodate everyone, but the safety of our guests, our staff and the wolves is paramount, and opportunities may be weather

dependent.”

A one-hour behind the scenes tour is only available for Wolf Center members.

Everyone who visits the Wolf Center this year must purchase advance tickets. To get tickets, click the Book Now button on the lower right-hand side of the page at wolf.org. Tickets

are free for Wolf Center members, but they are also required to book tickets in advance so that they can ensure everyone’s safety, Harrington said.

“Obviously, we’ll be sharing more photos of Rieka as she matures and, later this year, joins our pack,” she said.

TRAUMA...Continued from page 1B

pen all day to get used to the sights and sounds of the farm, and then that evening let them out to have an opportunity to graze in the small pasture,” Pajari said. “I’m not going to let them loose in a 40-acre field, but we let them in the small patch and thought they would get a chance to get acquainted with the smaller animals.”

Believing the trio to be adapting well, Pajari turned herself to another animal emergency. A mother pig had died and left six orphan piglets, causing Pajari to spend the night administering droplet feedings every two hours to the babies.

And sometime during the night, between 9 p.m. and 7 a.m., Mocha disappeared, nowhere to be found on the property.

The search began immediately. Pajari alerted a friend at Canadian National Railroad, since the tracks run behind the farm. She contacted a couple of people she knew who worked for Lake Country Power to be on the lookout. She called St. Louis County Sheriff’s deputies.

“I said he’s a bright brown llama, and I added ‘wearing a blue halter’, as if that would distinguish my missing llama from all the other missing llamas,”

Pajari laughed. “I did that about a half a dozen times and then I thought, ‘Any llama walking around anywhere in the 55723 zip code is probably going to be my llama.’”

Pajari and others searched snowmobile and deer trails, unsuccessfully, until it was time to open the farm for the day’s visitors. But that didn’t stop the search from continuing in another odd fashion.

“In my mind, I’m thinking what familiar noise would keep her close or draw her back in,” Pajari said. “At The Hills they had peacocks, and so the only thing I could come up with

was the peacocks. So, every so often Jill would walk by with a hammer because any loud noise makes the peacocks holler.”

No one will ever know if it was squawking peacocks or missed companionship or a dwindling sense of adventure that tugged at Mocha, but by early afternoon the wayward llama was back.

“Somebody from the petting zoo pointed out into the field and said, ‘Is that the llama you’re looking for?’ Sure enough, it was,” Pajari said.

While no one saw Mocha escape or knew why she bolted at the time, the reason became glaringly

obvious to Pajari the next day when she let Mocha out for a walk.

Mocha had been victimized, nay, bullied, by none other than Penelope the Pig, an ill-tempered, curly-haired Mangalitsa variety that Pajari called “the funniest looking thing on the planet.” Mocha wasn’t a curious llama in search of adventure; she was a terrorized llama fleeing in fear.

“When Penelope has discovered that she can mess with somebody, it’s game on,” Pajari said. “She came out of the flue like this big scary blob monster running, and that poor llama, her eyes got huge

and she was foaming at the mouth and running. She wanted to launch herself over the fence again.”

The problem has been solved by moving Penelope farther away, out of sight from Mocha, and Pajari suggested the llama shouldn’t take the porcine assault personally.

“Penelope terrorizes the whole farm,” she said. “She’s just a brat.”

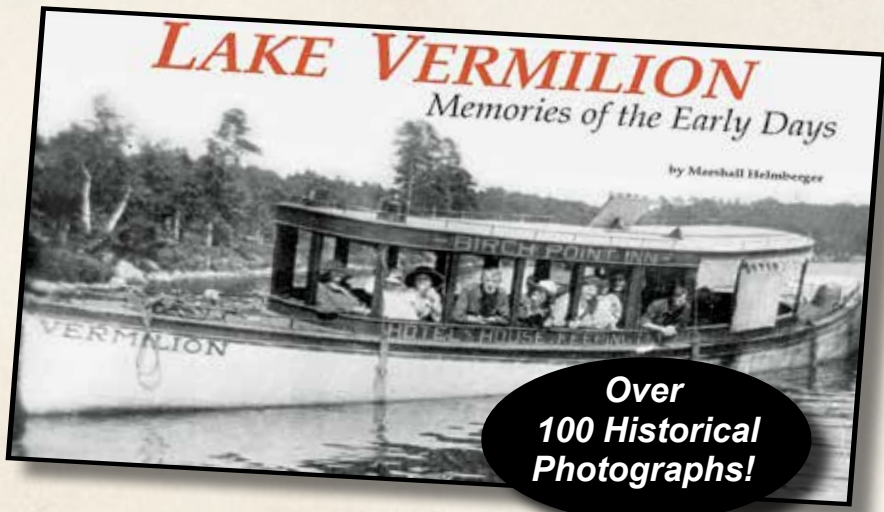
“If anyone would like to purchase a Mangalitsa pig, they should just reach out,” Pajari added, with a chuckle too subtle to determine if she was serious or not.



Memories of the Early Days

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

Written by Marshall Helmberger • Published by the Timberjay



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BOIS FORTE

Lake Vermilion Traditional Pow Wow



The Lake Vermilion Traditional Pow Wow was held June 25-27.

Pictured clockwise from top left: Kayla Drift in her new regalia; five-year-old Adrian Savage, from Fond Du Lac, gets an eagle-eye view from the top of the bleachers; the Grand Entry; Aiesah Benner danced in the Grand Entry; Jacque Love Jr. gets his headpiece adjusted by his mom Nikki Pieratos; Virgil Sohm; beautiful regalia; placing tobacco on the cedar tree before entering the pow wow grounds; Paloota Coolidge, age 3, from Sisseton, S.D., twirls around before entering the Grand Entry; Aniyah Two Crow enjoyed a fresh lemonade.

photos by J. Summit



We want to hear from YOU



If you received a Community Health Needs Assessment in the mail, your response is important to improving the health care needs of our community. Please respond to the survey by:

August 9, 2021

For more information please contact:

Teresa Debevec

CEO/Administrator

218.666.6209 | tdebevec@cookhospital.org



Scenic Rivers
— Clinics —

COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments Available

Scenic Rivers is now scheduling appointments for individuals to receive COVID-19 vaccinations at our medical locations following state eligibility guidelines. Supply is limited and call volumes are high, so we appreciate your patience. If you believe you meet the MN state vaccine eligibility requirements, please call the number below to schedule an appointment.

**Cook Medical
Vaccine Scheduling**

20 5th St SE

(218) 361-3297



**Tower Medical
Vaccine Scheduling**

415 N 2nd St, Suite 2

(218) 753-2405



1-877-541-2817
www.ScenicRiversHealth.org

24 Hour Emergency Care
Available Through
Cook Hospital

COOK

TG’s Creative Collections gift shop now open in Cook

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Shoppers at TG’s Creative Collections, Cook’s newest boutique-style shop located in the familiar old cabin on 2nd Avenue SE just east of River Street, may well find themselves leaving with the perfect vintage item to brighten up their home or delight their fashion sense. But if they leave the shop that has “a little bit of everything” without a good dose of laughter, they’d best go running back, because owner Myranda Grecinger and her mother, Debi Traut, stock as much of that as anything, and it’s free.

“We laugh a lot,” Debi said. “We sit out at the table a lot with friends and drink a Coke during the day and we have people that will come and sit in the rocking chairs and sit and talk for a while. That’s what you want. That’s community. They don’t have to buy anything, just come and visit us.”

Community is as important to Myranda as what she collects and sells, which is why she’s returned to Cook after many years living in Lawton, Okla. near her parents and the Fort Sill Army base.

“My brother was in the Army and he was stationed overseas,” Myranda said. “His wife was home alone with the kids, so my husband David and I moved down there to be closer to them. That worked out really nicely for a little while, but after about, I guess, eight years, my husband said, ‘That’s

enough, I’m ready to go back home.’ So we started working our way back towards Cook. We were busy and involved in the community when we were up here, and that sense of community is something that no matter where we’ve moved, we haven’t found. That’s why we knew that this was where we were going to end up being again.”

Inevitable, too, was that Myranda would open her own collectibles store one day. It’s a dream that took root in her childhood. “My mom and dad collected antiques since I was a kid,” Myranda said. “Some of the most fun we had was traveling to different places and finding interesting pieces in whatever flea market or shop we could find, so I had an appreciation for these things.”

The desire for her own store was stoked even more while working alongside her mother at a store in Lawton.

“My mother and I worked for a place called Antiques by Helen for a wonderful woman named Helen Jones, who I just love,” Myranda said. “And she really helped me learn about antiques and vintage items. Working for Helen, we began collecting, because Helen had such a love for old things. And she’s very good at selling.”

Myranda and Debi also started hitting estate sales and store closings, buying up as much of the “good stuff” as they could, and filling up multiple trailers with their treasures.

Myranda also pre-



Above: When it’s not raining, many of TG’s items will be displayed outside to encourage people to stop and visit. Below: TG’s Creative Collections owner Myranda Grecinger and her “partner in crime” Debi Traut, her mother, strike a happy pose in the new Cook business.



pared by getting a bachelor’s degree in cultural anthropology, and has since added a master’s degree with a dual focus on American history and business that she received from Liberty University last year. She’s also completed the final steps to become a certified appraiser.

The Grecingers took a giant step back toward Cook two years ago, but not a complete one, as David transferred to a store manager position with Tires Plus in Rochester. Myranda went to work at the History Center of Olmstead County, but her position was eliminated last year due

to some restructuring. She had been traveling back to Lawton often, spending more time working at Antiques by Helen and collecting even more items, and she and David agreed that it was time to start looking for a place in Cook for her business. “I didn’t want to go work for somebody else again when the ultimate goal was to have my own space, and it didn’t do me any good to open a place (in Rochester),” Myranda said. “So we started looking in Cook for a place and came across this, and it was in our budget and we would have enough money to make the change

es we wanted to make.”

From November through May, Myranda, Debi, and David worked on consolidating all of the scattered inventory in Cook as preparations on the building continued. And there’s no question that while it’s Myranda’s shop, she and Debi are equal partners, whether together or apart.

“We’re partners in crime in everything, everything we’ve ever done,” laughed Debi.

Distance won’t be an obstacle to the partnership when Debi returns to Lawton, as she and Myranda have already made extensive use of FaceTime to discuss and design the store’s layout and assess possible additions to its eclectic inventory.

So, is TG’s Creative Collections an antique shop, a collectibles shop, or none of the above?

“We try to carry a little bit of everything,” Myranda said. “We’ve got a little bit of home décor, a little bit of jewelry and accessories, we’ve got a little bit of cooking utensils and kitchen needs, linens,

fabrics, books. Definitely cabin décor. Yeah, we try to have a little bit of everything. And it’s constantly changing the cause of that. When I set out to do this, my mindset was to make it an eclectic collection of things that we appreciate.”

“It’s a creative collection of household goods,” Debi said.

For the time being, David is still commuting to Rochester during the week for work, a bit of security that will give Myranda the time to see what items move more than others and tailor her inventory to the interests of shoppers in the North Country. Doing estate sales, appraisals, and family genealogies are all in the business plan, too, and she’ll ease into those as time goes on. But the dream is in motion, and it’s just going to keep growing from here.

“By the time I’ve been here several years, I certainly hope that we’ve established our presence and have a strong base of return customers that come to us, knowing that we will always carry that certain something that they’re looking for,” Myranda said.

“And the people who come in and say, ‘Hi, guess what just happened to me,’ just to talk,” Debi added.

“What’s really been nice is that we’ve already had a little bit of that starting,” Myranda said. “To have that presence in the community is the most important thing to me.”

TG’s Creative Collections is open Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. More information is available by visiting their Facebook page, or calling Myranda at 507-319-7983,

Janet Gensler Memorial
ELY 4 on the 4TH

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](#).
Day-of-race is available. Payment via cash or check only.
Questions can be emailed to: [jkduunn@hotmail.com](#)

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



All proceeds go to fund the Ely Track Club.



St. Louis County

Solid Waste Facility

Area site hours

Northwoods Transfer Station

9384 Hwy 21 N., Ely/Babbitt

Summer Hours

Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8am–3pm

Tue: 9:30am–3pm

Wed: noon–6pm

County 77 Canister Site

2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp

Summer Hours

Tues: 1–6pm

Thurs: 8am–1pm

Sat: 8am–5pm

Sun: noon–6pm

Embarrass Canister Site

7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass

Hours

Sat: 12:30–4:30pm

Thu: 10am–5pm

Household Hazardous Waste Facility

5345 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia

Hours

Tues and Sat: 8am–1pm

Cook Transfer Station

2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook

Hours

Mon: 10am–6pm

Tues thru Sat: 9am–3:30pm

Soudan Canister Site

5160 Hwy 169, Soudan

Hours

Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am–5pm

Aurora Transfer Station

5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora

Hours

Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am–4pm

Tue, Wed: 10am–4pm

Sat: 8am–noon

Regional Landfill

5341 Regional Landfill Rd, Virginia

Hours

Mon–Fri: 8am–4:30pm

Sat: 8am–3:30pm

Summer hours effective April 15th through September 30th

For solid waste and recycling information go to [www.stlouiscountymn.gov/recycle](#)

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department

1-800-450-9278

Office hours 8-4:30 Monday through Friday



38th

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 [jsuomit@vermilioncountry.org](#)

Sponsored by the Friends of Vermilion Country School

ELY FOLK SCHOOL

Birch bark canoe project “refloated”

by KEITH VANDERVORT
 Ely Editor

After a COVID hiatus, the popular folk school class resumes



The partially finished, 20-foot traditional Ojibwe-style birch bark canoe, under construction at the Ely Folk School, was taken out of storage last Sunday as the summer-long project was resumed after a COVID hiatus.

photo by K. Vandervort

ditional Ojibwe-style birch bark canoe, which is in its third and final year of construction,” he said. Simula, a Finnish-American outdoor educator, has overseen the project the previous two summers. “Because of COVID-19 the canoe was stored in the EFS garage for more than a year and is waiting for its day to greet the

water,” he said. A dedicated group of volunteers and new enthusiasts gathered in a steady rain Sunday afternoon to inspect the canoe. “Besides lots of pigeon droppings deposited on the canoe, it looks like it is in pretty good shape,” Simula said. The group’s first task was to carefully carry the canoe to custom-made

cradles outside for a good washing and cleaning. “The rain is actually helping. It is a watercraft, after all, and it will get used to being wet,” Simula said. Simula noted that approximately 90 percent of the canoe was completed back in 2019 before the project was halted last year. “Once we examine the condition of the skin and inventory all the pieces already constructed, we should have no trouble resuming the project where we left off and putting her in the water by the end of the summer.” Folk school students completed a smaller 13-foot Ojibwe-style birch bark canoe under Simula’s guidance during his first summer at the EFS. Simula is also the executive director of the Minnesota Canoe Museum here in Ely, and continues to promote its growth and exposure. With extensive teaching experience at Voyageur Outward Bound School, Vermilion Community College, Ely Folk School, and the North House Folk School, Simula said he enjoys giving back to the community. He lives in Finland, Minn., and spent most of his 50-something years in the northeast part of the state. “Canoeing has always been a big part of my life,” he said. “This community

has great people and I’m glad to be a part of it. Ely has always been a special place for me.” He has experience as a National Park Ranger at Grand Portage National Monument, wilderness mushing guide in Alaska, Lapland, and Minnesota, and as a John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon finisher. In 2009, Erik and his dog Kitigan paddled a solo birch bark canoe around the perimeter of Northeast Minnesota on a four-month, 1,000-mile voyage, and he is currently writing of his travels in Arrowhead Journey, his blog. “I am surprised that many people wanted to build a canoe from start to finish. It has been my experience that you just can’t build a canoe in two weeks,” he said. Centuries ago entire Native American communities would be involved in the construction of their watercraft and the process would take several weeks at best. “It was a family and community endeavor and they were skilled at it. It was part of their life and they were proficient,” Simula said. “There has been a large disconnect in the last 100 years or so, with the loss of many cultural skills and native knowledge.” He added, “We draw a lot of interest. The people

who have helped have great pride in what they are doing. There is a real cultural and community connection to constructing a birch bark canoe.” Ongoing work this summer will include crafting with broad hatchets, draw knives and shaving horses, and using crooked knives to produce cedar gunwale caps, planks, and ribs. He noted that this year, the project is receiving more assistance from class members and interested volunteers harvesting materials needed to complete the watercraft. Bear grease or some other type of animal fat is added to the cooked-down pitch and charcoal is added as a bonding agent, according to Simula. “Even the best spruce pitch erodes and wears away. You constantly have to apply more, so we always need more spruce pitch,” he said. “Seepage is normal on a birch bark canoe. We put the word out and people just bring it in on their own.” As much as five gallons of the “liquid duct tape” will be needed for the project. For those who cannot attend any of the classes, but wish to help support this project, please consider making a donation to the Ely Folk School for the BBCP. For more information, go to www.elyfolkschool.org.

BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

Board calls for bids on sewer project

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA
 Staff writer

nity to replace their own sewer lines while the contractor is available. JPJ Engineering estimated the project will cost \$580,000. The township has received grants from IRRRB for \$145,000 with a match requirement and from CDBG for \$100,000. The township plans to do some of the simpler work themselves as an in-kind match for the IRRRB funding. Bids will be opened at a special meeting on Tuesday, July 13 at 12:30 p.m. In other business, the

board: ➤ Voted to discontinue teleconference meetings. All future meetings will be held in-person only. ➤ Received a thank you from the City of Tower for aiding clean-up of a cement spill on Tower’s Main Street. ➤ Heard that the Breitung Fire Department responded to just two calls in May for mutual aid in

Greenwood. ➤ Accepted a new Breitung Fire Department member, pending background check and physical. ➤ Heard that the maintenance department hired six 14-year-olds for summer work. ➤ Heard that Breitung’s Community Picnic is scheduled for Sunday, July 4 from noon-3 p.m. A lunch including hot dogs, popcorn

and root beer floats will be served. There will be toys and a water slide for kids. ➤ Heard that ten residents will be sent warning letters for failure to comply with the township’s blight ordinance. The board also plans to review and possibly update the blight ordinance at a future board meeting. ➤ Heard that Clerk Dianna Sundahl will serve on a steering committee for the Tower Trails Plan. ➤ Noted that they owe \$6,600 to Mesabi

Bituminous for crushing rock. The board is considering contracting with the company for gravel pit work for a ten-year period. ➤ Approved asking JPJ Engineering for an estimate for work on Stuntz Bay Rd., beginning at Jasper St., including widening the road between Jasper St. and the Soudan Mine to allow safe passage of pedestrians. The next regular meeting of the Breitung Town Board is Thursday, July 22 at noon.

Free online mental health courses available

REGIONAL- NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has set up a wide variety of free online mental health classes for February and March. They include classes such as Eating Disorders, Hope for Recovery, Transitions, Ending the Silence, Understanding Early Episode Psychosis for Families, In Our Own Voice, Family to Family, Creating Caring Communities, a suicide prevention class called QPR – Question,

Persuade and Refer, a special QPR class for Agricultural Communities and many more. The classes are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and the general public. Find a complete listing of these classes and how to join in by going to namimn.org and clicking on “Classes” or go straight to <https://namimn.org/education-public-awareness/classes/scheduled/>.

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Obituaries and Death Notices

Donald Joseph Erchul Sr.

Donald Joseph “Don” Erchul Sr., 90, originally of Soudan, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 23, 2021. Thanks to Kathy and the New Journey staff and the crew from hospice and everyone who visited and cared for Don. Visitation will be from 10 a.m. until the 11 a.m. Memorial Service on Saturday, July 10 at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Virginia with Reverend Brandon Moravitz officiating. Inurnment will be in Calvary Cemetery. Instead of flowers, a memorial to the Mesabi Humane Society would be preferred. Family services are provided by Bauman-Cron,

a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his sons, Don Jr. (Chris) and Steven (Sandra); daughter, MaryBeth; nine grandchildren, Heather, Tara, Lindsey, Sean, Cory, Carly, Jessica, Katie and Mackenzie; nine great-grandchildren, Bailey, Grant, Brookelyn, Bryar, Brynley, Bristyl, Taylor, William and Wesley; brothers, Rod (Joan), Gary (Janet) and Terry (Maree); and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Michael F. Sjoberg

A memorial service for Michael Frank “Mike” Sjoberg will be at held at 11 a.m. on Friday, July

2 at St. Martin’s Catholic Church in Tower. Burial and lunch will follow the service.

Norman Riihiluoma

Norman F. Riihiluoma, 80, of Virginia, passed away on Sunday, June 20, 2021, surrounded by family.

A funeral will be held Friday, July 9, at 11 a.m. with visitation one hour prior at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Virginia, officiated by Pastor Don Stauty. Condolences can be sent to P.O. Box 403, Tower, MN 55790.

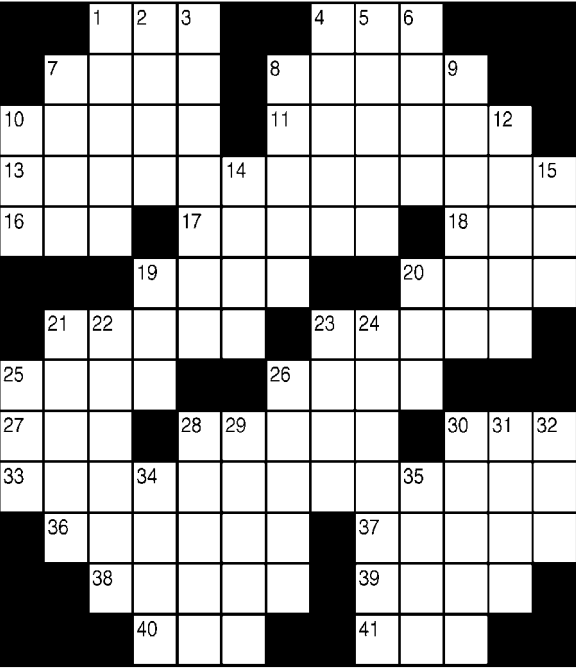
Norman was creative, adventurous, had sisu, and lived out his Christian faith. He was a long-time resident of Lake Vermilion

and Kugler Township. Norman is survived by his wife Nancy, daughters Tiina (Lyle) Eidelbes and Lizana Riihiluoma, sons Paul (Lisa) Riihiluoma and Charles (Kirstie Kern) Riihiluoma, 12 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, brother Ray, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Norman was preceded in death by his parents, brother Robert, sister-in-law Marilyn, granddaughter Amanda, grandson Robb Eidelbes and numerous aunts and uncles. He was a loving, supportive husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, who will be greatly missed.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Choose
- 4 Scale amts.
- 7 Diving duck
- 8 Diner workers
- 10 Dijon darling
- 11 Removes, as a brooch
- 13 Winter Olympics event
- 16 "— Clear Day"
- 17 Bolivian city
- 18 "Ulalume" writer
- 19 Favorites
- 20 Roman emperor
- 21 Drivers with handles
- 23 Battery part
- 25 Persia, today
- 26 "What's — for me?"
- 27 Lincoln or Ford
- 28 Accord maker
- 30 Baseball execs
- 33 2016 Best Picture nominee
- 36 Net defender in hockey
- 37 Separated
- 38 Island near Java
- 39 Apple variety



- 9 Took potshots
- 10 Corp. money manager
- 12 Napper's racket
- 14 Comestibles
- 15 Earth (Pref.)
- 19 Calligrapher's instrument
- 20 Word of denial
- 21 007 portrayer Daniel
- 22 Legendary French actress
- 23 "The King —"
- 24 Falls on
- 25 German pronoun
- 26 Draw a conclusion
- 28 Big wheels at sea
- 29 Leek's kin
- 30 Metric measures
- 31 Simple
- 32 Retired jet
- 34 Lactern locale
- 35 "Once — a time ..."

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PUBLIC NOTICE

KUGLER TOWNSHIP MEETING NOTICE

The Regular Meeting of the Kugler Town Board will be held on Monday, July 12, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at the Kugler Town Hall.

Christopher Suihkonen, Town Clerk

Published in the Timberjay, July 2, 2021

BURNTSIDE LAKE PUBLIC ACCESS NOTICE

The Burntside Lake Public Water Access on Van Vac Rd (County Rd 404) which was expected to be closed for construction starting June 15, will currently remain open until July 8 and then be closed for construction from July 9 to September 15, 2021.

During this time the existing parking at the access will be improved, additional parking for trucks/trailers and single vehicles will be constructed, and stormwater management will be improved throughout the site. Due to the narrowness and steepness of the site, water access at this site will be completely closed during construction. Alternative public water access sites on Burntside Lake can be found off of Wolf Lake Rd, County Rd 489 (Burntside Lodge Rd), Passi Rd, and North Arm Rd. Call Tower Area DNR Parks and Trails at 218-300-7841 with any questions.

Published in the Timberjay, July 2, 2021

EMPLOYMENT

FULL-TIME BARTENDER

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

EMPLOYMENT



Steger Mukluks is Hiring!

Factory Work: FT Year-round
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Competitive Wages & Benefits

Apply at 100 Miners Dr. in Ely
or call 218-365-6553 tfn

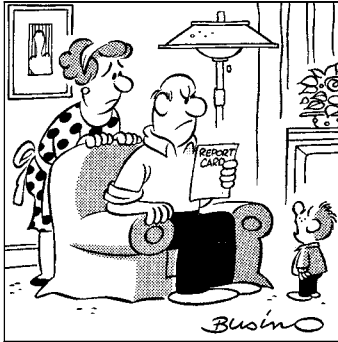


Bailiff Court Security-
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Planner/Senior Planner
Apply by 07/15/2021

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

Equal Opportunity and Veteran-Friendly Employer 7/2



SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

- Puncture CREEPI
- Soft LIPTAN
- Call NECKBO
- Weapon BEARS

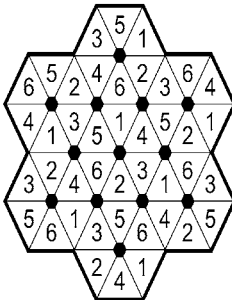
TODAY'S WORD

Super Crossword

Answers

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

ELY AA OPEN GROUP MEETINGS- in person meetings, Wednesdays & Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Babbitt Municipal Building, senior room. Open to all. For information contact Mary at 218-827-8327.

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

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

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

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

BABBITT AL-ANON- meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the upstairs of Woodland Presbyterian Church.

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

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

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

ELY WOMEN'S OPEN AA MEETING- Every Monday at noon at Ledgerock Community Church, 1515 E Camp St., Ely

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

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

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS- East Range meetings and information, call 218-749-3387 or www.district8online.org.

AA FRIDAYS- 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 262 E Harvey St., Ely. Meets in the basement.

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

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SCRAMBLERS

solution
1. Pierce 2. Plant;
3. Beckon; 4. Saber

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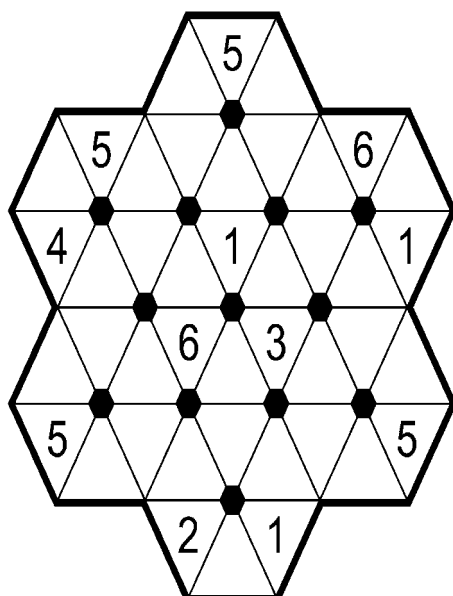
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SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

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



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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Weekly SUDOKU

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ACROSS

1 Livestream annoyances
5 Mark for omission
9 Tennis star Seles
15 Feudal drudge
19 Like — out of hell
20 Special periods
21 Tesla vehicle
22 Court claim
23 THREE OF A KIND
26 Himalayan hoax subject
27 — Lodge (motel chain)
28 British title
29 Yoko who appeared in “Let It Be”
31 Op. — (footnote abbr.)
32 THREE OF A FIND
39 — awkward position
40 Broadcast
41 Severe spasm
42 Chicken, e.g.
45 Destruction
48 Opposite of alway
50 Merits, as an income

DOWN

52 “Put a sock in it!”
53 THREE OF A HIND
57 Pro at alterations
59 Way out
60 British title
61 Green tract
62 Put lube in
63 Deny, as a statement
66 Blue-skinned race in
69 THREE OF A BIND
75 Wry comic Mort
76 Bitter complainers
77 Troll's cousin
78 Famed coach Parseghian
81 Edmonton's prov.
83 Like boys
84 Certain granola snack
85 THREE OF A WIND
91 Rink star Bobby
92 “Silas Marner” novelist
93 On the cutting edge of art, informally

94 Fluids in blood
95 Car part on a wheel, to Brits
96 Airport town on Long Island's South Shore
98 Bite gently
101 Giddy delight
103 THREE OF A MIND
110 In the past
111 Really strain
112 — -Ball (arcade favorite)
113 Slight ridge on a surface
114 Tiny particle
116 THREE OF A RIND
122 Calf's father
123 More dilettantish
124 Cuisine with many curries
125 Under sail
126 Apple discard
127 Jeb the reb
128 Desiccated
129 Gen — (millennials)

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Super Crossword

THREE OF A...

4 Letter-printing aid	38 Part of UAE	74 — Haute (Indiana city)
5 “Gloria in Excelsis —” (hymn)	42 Aperture setting for a shutterbug	78 Master pilot
6 Act human, so they say	43 Atheist Madalyn Murray —	79 Eliminating as a possibility
7 Crust, mantle or core	44 During which	80 Plato's pupil
8 Expository piece	46 Geyser stuff	82 Rodeo ride
9 Dry red wine	47 More alluring	84 Dental care brand
10 Fall mo.	49 Signs again, as a contract	86 Mouselike critter
11 In no way	51 Jamaican pop genre	87 Half-cocked
12 Super-cold	53 Orators' platforms	88 Broadcast
13 Dinner chicken	54 Lisa of “Melrose Place”	89 Hale- — (comet)
14 “The Human Condition” author Hannah	55 “The hour has arrived”	90 Strong desire
15 CIA figure	56 Asia's shrunk — Sea	95 Afternoon service salver
16 Concerned with voting	58 Kinds of bulbs, in brief	97 Public squares
17 Inclination to keep silent	63 Big name in polls	99 Contend
18 Islam, e.g.	64 “Sounds like —!” (“Let's do it!”)	100 Young 'un
24 Hired tough	65 Gives up	102 Irish Gaelic
25 Structured gps.	67 Human herbivore	103 Bard's feet
30 Orangy shade	68 “— it rich?”	104 Really strain
33 Knightly virtue	70 Converse	105 Boston hoopsters
34 Slaughter in an outfield	71 Minoan land	106 Actress Anne
35 Ian Fleming novel	72 N'awlins sub	107 Angelou's “And Still —”
36 Forecaster	73 Celebrity astrologer Sydney	108 S.F. NFLer
37 Water pitchers		109 Epic stories
		115 Hardwood tree
		117 VW lead-in
		118 Carrere of “Rising Sun”
		119 — capita
		120 Sculling item
		121 Contend

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Outdoors

Our lives in the Northwoods

RECREATION

DNR seeks comment on Arrowhead Trail master plan

Open house set for July 7 in Cook

REGIONAL — The Minnesota DNR is inviting the public to an open house to review and comment on an updated master plan for the David Dill-Arrowhead State Trail in St. Louis and Koochiching counties.

The open house will be from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, July 7 at the Cook Community

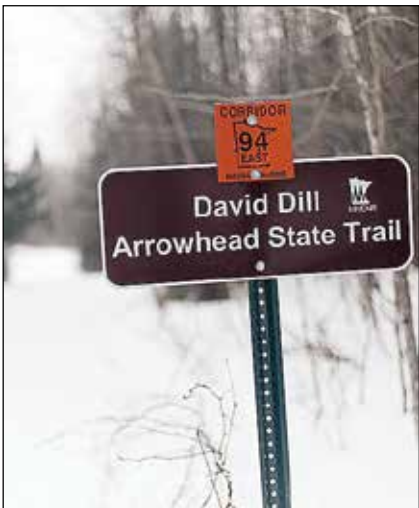
Center in Cook. The public is invited to attend the open house to review the plan, ask questions, and submit comments. No formal presentation will be made.

The David Dill-Arrowhead State Trail is approximately 125 miles long, stretching from an intersection with the David Dill-Taconite State Trail just east of Tower, northwest to an intersec-

tion with the Blue Ox Trail south of International Falls.

The original master plan for the trail was written in 1980 and revised in 1983. The trail is primarily managed for snowmobile use, but other uses such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, hunting and skiing are permitted in certain areas. The proposed plan update retains the current trail uses, but will also allow the trail to be open to off-highway vehicle use in some areas where conditions allow.

Those who are unable to make the open house but wish to review the plan can learn more on the David Dill-Arrowhead State Trail webpage on the DNR website. Written comments may be submitted by email (joe.unger@state.mn.us), an online comment form, or emailed to Joe Unger, DNR Parks and Trails, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155. The DNR will accept written comments through July 27.



PERSPECTIVES

Scenery vs. safety

Roadside clearing on the Echo Trail has some area residents seeing red among the green

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ECHOTRAIL—Clearing of trees and brush along this iconic roadway within the Superior National Forest is on a temporary hold while St. Louis County officials take stock of work done to date. Some border country residents have raised alarm over the impact to the scenic qualities of the road, which is a primary access route to a large swath of the western end of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

“We have no issue with brush clearing,” said Paul Schurke, of Ely, who along with a handful of others, met with Forest Service officials and St. Louis County Commissioner Paul McDonald last week to discuss their concerns. But, he said, the removal of hundreds of large pine and the prospect of additional pine removal, is concerning.

County public works officials say the clearing of the easement is intended to enhance public safety by improving sight lines along the winding road as well as reducing the cost of damage to county equipment, such as snowplows, that occasionally strike trees that crowd the roadway.

Yet the work, in some areas, particularly just west of Big Lake, appeared to go well beyond what could be justified for road safety.

The U.S. Forest Service, which owns most of the property along the road, greenlighted the

clearing earlier this year through what’s known as a categorical exclusion, which meant little or no public notification was required. Yet area residents noticed once the work began earlier this spring and some were surprised by what they saw happening on a road that has been considered one of the state’s most scenic.

“I was stunned,” said Leah Rogne, a resident of Greaney, who traveled the Echo Trail recently after hearing about the cutting along the right-of-way. While she said she’s seen county roads that looked worse after similar right-of-way clearing, she noted that the clearing in some places included everything, even large and scenic pine. In some areas, the easement is clearcut back as much as 20-25 feet from the sides of the road.

Residents concerned about the cutting were most worried that it would devastate the scenic value of a about a ten mile stretch of the county road the runs from Hegman Lake up to the north side of Big Lake.

Yet, according to Kawishiwi District Ranger Aaron Kania, the tree cutting along the highway has largely been completed, which means some of the most scenic portions of the road may be preserved for now. Kania, who had been on vacation, was surprised to hear that residents had concerns about the road work along the Echo Trail.

Because the county does



Top: A scenic stretch of the Echo Trail near Big Lake, about 20 miles north of Ely.

Above: Just past the scenic stretch above, substantial shoulder clearing has dramatically changed the look of the road

Left: Large pine stumps, located about 10-12 feet from the road edge wait to be ground down.

Wildflower Watch

This week’s featured flower
TALL MEADOW RUE



This sometimes ungainly wildflower is blooming right now in wet areas across the North Country. **Tall Meadow Rue** *Thalictrum dasycarpum*, is an easy wildflower to spot thanks to its height, which can go as high as seven feet.

Unlike most wildflowers, which have both male and female parts in the same flower, Tall Meadow Rue has separate male and female flowers—and some plants only have the flowers from one sex. The flowers pictured above are the male variety, which are recognized by the many long stamens that hang down below from a central connection.

It’s a member of the Buttercup family.

Nature Notes

This week’s feature
JUNE BERRIES



While conventional wisdom suggests that our hard freezes the last few days in May should have severely damaged our wild berry crops, the reality appears to be a bit more mixed. And this year’s jun berry crop is showing signs it’s a good one.

While most jun berries actually ripen in July here in the North Country, there are a few ripe ones out there right now, with plenty of others that look ready to ripen up soon. If your favorite blueberry patch didn’t fare well from the late May chill, you might want to keep an eye out for jun berries. They’re similar to blueberries in some ways, although they’re slightly less juicy, which makes for a firmer pie. They also have a slight almond-like flavor, which many folks really like. And, because jun berries grow on shrubs, you can stand up to pick, something you definitely appreciate as you get older!

Fishing report

Ely area

There seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel for struggling walleye anglers. As mayflies begin wrapping up on many area lakes, the bite has begun to improve on those lakes.

The best depths vary lake to lake, but technique and locations have been very similar. Many anglers have reported catching good numbers of walleye. in 8-12 feet of water, while others have reported catching walleye in 18-23 feet of water. Locations where anglers have been finding walleye include main lake points and sunken islands. Spinner rigs tipped with a leech has been accounting for the majority of fish caught, but crawlers and even minnows have been effective. Orange, gold and green have been hot colors. (Anglers coming up fishing should contact a resort, on the lake they plan on fishing, for current status of the mayfly hatch on that lake.)

Smallmouth bass fishing continues to be outstanding on many area lakes. Anglers have been catching lots of bass early in the morning with topwater baits like hulla poppers, jitter bugs and whopper poppers. As the sun gets up the topwater bite cools off. Anglers switching over to wacky worms, senkos and ned rigs continue catching bass for the majority of the day. Areas to fish have been large, shallow boulder flats. Great colors for soft plastics have been watermelon pumpkin and orange.

Panfish - Anglers have been having success targeting crappies in classic summertime haunts. Crappies have been hanging out over deep water during the day, near weed beds, then sliding into the weed beds as the sun sets. Anglers have been catching them with small jig and twisters or minnow under a bobber. Anglers fishing for sunnies have been finding them in weedbeds, downed trees and rock piles. Anglers have been catching them

with angleworms and wax worms fished under a bobber.

Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors, Ely

Kab-Nam area

Walleye have changed their feeding habits and are now focusing on the recent mayfly hatch. As suspected, even though a mayfly hatch can frustrate anglers, it has walleye more concentrated and easier to find. Depths of 18'-24' have been the best bet for finding active fish, which are now starting to school up off mid-lake reefs and shoreline points. Lindys tipped with leeches and crawlers have been best. Without much wind lately, early and late in the day, even well past dark, are your best bet. If the wind is blowing, move into and along the deep weed lines. Pitching a jig and half crawler into these areas can be deadly. If you visit the Kabetogama Lake Association website, many of the guides and resorts listed are also doing reports so there is plenty of information out there to help you focus in on areas to target.






During the day, spend your time targeting pike over weed beds and shallow reefs as they have been extremely active. Any large baits are working and numerous large pike are being caught. Smallmouth bass can be found in these areas as well.

It has been crazy busy around Kab! The blueberry pancake breakfast on Sunday at the Kab town hall was a huge success. Speaking of blueberries, this year is going to be interesting. With the late freeze and then lack of moisture and hot weather, you will have to do some searching to find them. Your best bet is to look near swampy low-lying areas and any of the numerous islands on the lake.

Courtesy Cooper's Gateway Store, Lake Kabetogama

LAKE COUNTRY FORECAST

from NOAA weather

Friday					Saturday					Sunday					Monday					Tuesday				
																								
83 59					90 64					91 63					81 56					76 52				
Ely	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Emb.	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Cook	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Orr	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.	Tower	Hi	Lo	Prec.	Sn.
06/21	61	42	0.32		06/21	60	41	0.62		06/21	60	44	0.40		06/21	55	43	0.30		06/21	60	43	0.54	
06/22	59	36	0.04		06/22	58	36	0.02		06/22	60	42	0.03		06/22	68	41	0.02		06/22	60	34	0.08	
06/23	67	42	0.02		06/23	70	36	0.00		06/23	69	42	0.01		06/23	82	52	0.00		06/23	66	47	0.00	
06/24	82	57	0.00		06/24	83	54	0.00		06/24	82	42	0.00		06/24	77	55	0.01		06/24	82	58	0.00	
06/25	79	51	0.00		06/25	78	47	0.00		06/25	80	52	0.00		06/25	79	55	0.00		06/25	78	48	0.00	
06/26	81	55	0.00		06/26	79	48	0.00		06/26	81	61	0.05		06/26	72	61	0.00		06/26	80	56	0.14	
06/27	70	58	0.07		06/27	70	57	0.02		06/27	67	58	0.12		06/27	77	54	0.00		06/27	69	56	0.02	
Total			6.81		YTD Total			7.68		YTD Total			8.54		YTD Total			10.80		YTD Total				10.26

ECHO TRAIL...Continued from page 8B



Left: One of many large pine stumps, this one about 24 inches in diameter, were apparent as part of the easement clearing on the Echo Trail. Above: A county brusher sits idle along the road, north of Ely. photos by M. Helmberger

not have a formal right-of-way for the road, the Forest Service retained considerable input into the clearing work. And Kania was complimentary of the county's openness in addressing Forest Service concerns, which may have headed off some of the biggest potential points of conflict. Those included some roadless rule protections around Hegman Lake as well as goshawk habitat around Big Lake and near the Stuart River, which appeared to have reduced the amount of tree cutting in those areas. "We went through the plan pretty much tree-by-tree," said Kania, who said the Forest Service tried to be conservative with cutting in order to protect the road's esthetics. "The county came to us and was very willing to discuss our concerns," said Kania. "We felt we were heard."

Kania noted that logging as part of the Hi-Lo timber sale is also taking place along that portion of the Echo Trail and that some residents may be confusing the visual impact of the timber sale with the easement clearing.

McDonald said the county still has a brusher up on the Echo Trail, which was sitting between Big Lake and the Portage River as of Monday,

and will continue to work along the corridor in the coming days. But the device is not designed to cut larger trees. Kania said that work was completed earlier this year, when the frost was still in the ground and that as far as he is aware, no more large trees are slated for removal. McDonald said some dead or diseased trees are still likely to be cut, but that work will be done in coordination with the Forest Service. "As for the big historic pine, it's my understanding that those aren't going," McDonald added.

Other interests

While the scenic quality of the Echo Trail is exceptional, Kania noted that there are other factors that do weigh in on Forest Service decision-making when it comes to maintenance of a historic and sensitive resource like the trail. Kania noted that some of the handful of residents in the Meander Lake area do travel the road to Ely for work, year-round, and that some of those commuters were relieved to see the work underway. "We've also heard from some outfitters who have staff driving that road every day with vans. They're pretty happy that the road is safer."

Kania also cited the recent

Bezghik Lake Fire as another factor. He said Forest Service modeling had shown that the fire could have potentially reached the Echo Trail and that maintaining a more open corridor could help to make the trail a more effective fire break for firefighters and a safer corridor in the case of evacuations.

"That fire danger is real," agreed McDonald. "We lost some structures up there this year and I think that's going to continue to be a real issue," he said.

Yet others see the historic and scenic qualities of the Echo Trail being left behind. "The decision was made without public input," said Carla Arneson, of Ely, in a letter she drafted on the subject. "Logging trucks had value, plow trucks had value, protecting those who choose to drive too fast had value, but not the unique beauty of the Echo Trail, unparalleled anywhere in the state of Minnesota," she added. "Give its beauty the equal value it deserves. We could then work together to give the Echo Trail official historical status and recognition, while at least maintaining a glimpse of its past for future generations."

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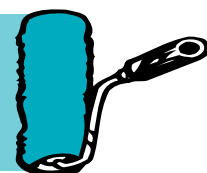
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