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The TIMBERJAY

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SHOWY LADYSLIPPERS

Flower patch decimated by county brusher

Neighbors fear attraction could be gone for good

by DAVID COLBURN

Cook/Orr Editor

GREANEY- Beryl Novak and Jim Prepodnik, who live on Sethers Rd. north of Greaney, have big soft spots in their hearts for showy ladyslippers, the state flower—and in particular a large patch that, until recently, used to lie along the road between them.

"I've seen them for over 50 years over here," Novak said of the patch, which is at most a couple of hundred yards north of Prepodnik's house.

Yet both the flowers and the two

A St. Louis County brusher recently destroyed a large patch of ladyslippers, the Minnesota state flower, north of Greaney. photo by D. Colburn

gentlemen's hearts were ripped to shreds a little over a week ago when a county brusher came through and destroyed all but two of the blooming beauties.

"It just doesn't make any sense," Novak said. "It just chewed everything up. They were all along here. There's

See...FLOWERS pg. 8



SULFIDE MINING

Feds begin Twin Metals EIS process

DNR describes proposed mine plan as 'incomplete'

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER

Managing Editor

REGIONAL— The federal environmental review process for the proposed Twin Metals copper-nickel mine and a related mineral lease near Ely is now underway. The Bureau of Land Management announced Tuesday that it is ready to move forward with preparation of an environmental impact statement in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service.

Twin Metals submitted a formal plan for its proposed sulfide-based mine back in December. The company has also submitted a preference-right lease application for additional lands on which it has been prospecting. An analysis of the lease application will be part of the upcoming environmental review.

"Under President Trump's leadership and direction from the Secretary, this proposed mine may reduce the vulnerability

See...EIS pg. 8

PUBLIC HEALTH

Eateries adjust to COVID-19 era



State warns of more restrictions if guidelines not followed

by JODI SUMMIT

Tower-Soudan Editor

REGIONAL— By now, anyone who is on social media has seen the photos: crowds at area bars and restaurants not following the rules for social distanc-

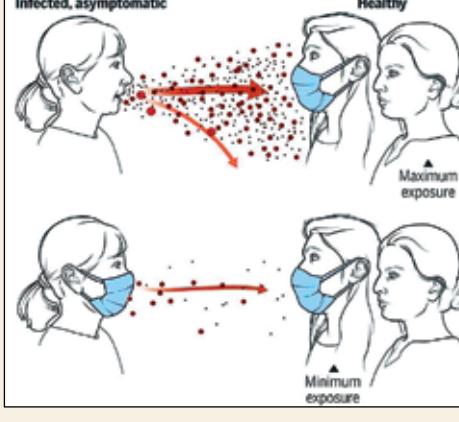
Bartender Joett Baldwin, left, and server Kaylee Iverson wear protective face masks and gloves while serving guests at the Wilderness Grill at Fortune Bay Resort Casino. photo by J. Summit

ing, and bar and restaurant staff not wearing face masks.

The state guidelines

for safely reopening bars and restaurants clearly spell out the new rules: ensuring a minimum of six feet between tables, limiting indoor capacity to no more than 50 percent, requiring reservations, and requiring workers to wear masks at all times and to strongly encourage customers to

See...ADJUST pg. 7



by KEITH VANDERVORT

Ely Editor

ELY— As many as two dozen states, mostly in the south and west, are reversing their re-opening plans because of spikes in cases of the novel coronavirus. Governors in Florida, Arizona and Texas quickly reopened their states while taking a low-key approach to social distancing and mask-wearing. Now each of them is seeing skyrocketing coronavirus caseloads and rising

hospitalizations.

In Minnesota, there have been 35,584 confirmed cases of the coronavirus as of early this week and as many as 1,460 deaths attributed to the pandemic.

As the Fourth of July holiday weekend brings families and crowds together in the Northland, many residents here continue to believe northern Minnesota is untouchable by COVID-19.

See...MASKS pg. 7

NETT LAKE

No new cases of COVID reported at Bois Forte

by DAVID COLBURN

Cook/Orr Editor

NETT LAKE— Those who tuned in to a Bois Forte Band coronavirus question and answer session on Facebook and YouTube on Tuesday heard some encouraging news from community health nurse Teri Morrison: no new positive COVID-19 cases have been discovered since one was announced by Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers on June 19.

Morrison opened the session with a review of testing protocols, but was quickly interrupted by an online viewer with the question on everyone's minds—have there been any more cases?

"We've had one case in Vermilion almost two weeks ago," Morrison said. "Otherwise, we haven't had anything since. There are no current active cases on Bois Forte."

The July 19 announcement included swift action by the Bois Forte Tribal Council to implement stiff penalties including loss of all tribal privileges for anyone violating an isolation/quarantine order. Chavers alluded to an incident in which the COVID-19-positive individual may have prompted the action by violating stay-at-home restrictions.

Morrison said she and community health nurse Terry Defoe are responsible for initiating actions including isolation and quarantine guidance, contact tracing, and individual and family support. If additional cases are iden-

See...COVID-19 pg. 7



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Community notices

Ruby's Pantry set for July 9 in Cook

COOK- The next Ruby's Pantry will be a drive through food distribution at the old Cook School parking lot on Thursday, July 9 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. A \$20 cash donation at the door buys an abundance of food. For safety reasons, no one over 60 years of age will be asked to volunteer. Sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Alango. For more information, contact Amy Viita at 218-666-2220.

Vermilion Country School seeks volunteers for monthly presentations

TOWER- For the 2020-2021 school year, Vermilion Country School is looking for volunteers to give interactive presentations on the following topics: October- bullying, November- staying motivated and self control, December- media influences, January- setting goals and accepting responsibility, February- smart technology use, March- respect and self esteem, April- healthy habits.

Presentations should last about an hour and should engage the students. For additional information or to express an interest, contact Frank Zobitz at fzobitz@vermillioncountry.org.

TumbleBookLibrary collection now available

REGIONAL- The Arrowhead Library System is pleased to announce the availability of the TumbleBookLibrary for all patrons living in the seven-county area of Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, and St. Louis counties.

TumbleBookLibrary, geared towards youth in grades K-6, is a collection of animated talking picture books, read-alongs, eBooks, quizzes, lesson plans and educational games that can be accessed from the comfort and safety of home at any time. "We are very excited to launch the TumbleBookLibrary collection," said ALS Regional Librarian Mollie Stanford. "These electronic books are fantastic resources that will keep kids engaged in reading and will help contribute to school success."

The TumbleBookLibrary includes a wide selection of stories that come to life for kids through engaging animation, and the website is easy for kids and families to navigate together. There are even options to hear stories in French or Spanish. Each story comes with puzzles and games geared to ensure reading comprehension. Patrons can use computers, tablets or mobile phones to access the collection. An Internet connection is needed, no library card number is required, and books are streamed right to your device at the click of a button.

To access the TumbleBookLibrary, please visit www.alslib.info and click on the TumbleBookLibrary icon.

NLMF's production of "The Medium" to go on stage in Ely

ELY- One of Northern Lights Music Festival's productions has changed venues. Menotti's opera, "The Medium," will now be held at Ely's Historic State Theater, rather than Aurora's Mesabi East Veda Zuponic Auditorium. The dates and times will remain the same, Sunday, July 26 at 4 p.m. and Monday, July 27 at 7 p.m. Gian Carlo Menotti's "The Medium" might be the most famous American opera, and stars Metropolitan Opera singer Barbara Dever in the role of the fortune-teller Baba. This thriller was one of the first televised operas. Opera-goers will be socially distanced, so seating will be limited. To purchase tickets, please go to www.northernlightsmusic.org.

Opening the music festival will be two exciting outdoor performances to celebrate the Fourth of July. Festive Fourth will be produced at Virginia's Olcott Park Bob Baldrica Bandstand on Saturday, July 4 at 4 p.m. with the NLMF Orchestra, conducted by Gavriel Heine, presenting Gershwin's "American in Paris." Bernstein's "Overture to Candide," a set of Sousa Marches as a tip of the hat to the day, and Opera Arias by the cast of NLMF Opera's production of "Tosca." The concert will be repeated on Sunday, July 5 at Chisholm's Discovery Park Ampitheater, also at 4 p.m. The concerts are free to the public and a limit of 250 patrons will be admitted to the venues, socially distanced and masked. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

NLMF's premier event of the summer is Puccini's "Tosca" on Friday, July 17 at 7 p.m. and on Sunday, July 19 at 7 p.m. at Chisholm's Discovery Park Ampitheater.

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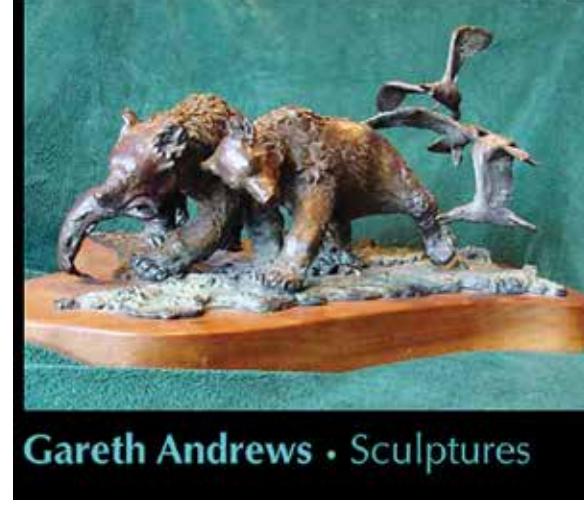
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THE ARTS First Stage Gallery to reopen July 3



Gareth Andrews • Sculptures

Bonnie DuFresne • Watercolors



submitted photos

VIRGINIA- The Lyric Center for the Arts is pleased to announce that the First Stage Gallery will be reopening on Friday, July 3 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The gallery will be open Fridays and Saturdays for the near future. The Lyric Center is requiring masks to be worn and will restrict the occupancy to 10 persons at a time. The featured exhibit for the month of July is "Animals and Birds" with watercolors by Bonnie DuFresne and sculptures by Gareth Andrews.

Bonnie DuFresne of Gilbert is a self-taught watercolor artist who has exhibited widely across northern Minnesota. Her work depicts creatures you would find nearby on the Iron Range, and also wild horses and buffalo from her travels to South Dakota. When Bonnie isn't busy driving school bus she spends

her time in her home studio painting and framing her work. She has been a regular at many area art fairs and is missing the interaction with people while those gatherings have been canceled due to the pandemic.

Gareth Andrews grew up on woodland farms in northern Minnesota. Inspired first by his father's and grandfather's artistry, he continued to explore the arts at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. He trekked North and South America and toured Europe before exploring Alaska for a decade, sculpting, painting, and doing historical restorations for the University of Alaska Museum in Fairbanks. Minnesota's Iron Range is now home for Andrews and his wife Carol. Public installations of his art on the Iron Range include the Iron Range Veterans Memorial "Shoulder to Shoulder Even the

Fallen Stand Tall," in Virginia, the bronze sculpture "Legacy of Learners," at Hibbing Community College, and "Passing Torch," a memorial in bronze relief for Virginia Regional Medical Center. He joined forces with friend and fellow sculptor, Byron Kesanen, to create "The Sawyer," for Rotary Park in Virginia. A seasoned lecturer and illustrator, Andrews has shown his award-winning work in museums, galleries, and exhibits from coast to coast for more than 30 years.

The exhibit "Animals and Birds" runs through Saturday, Aug. 1. A reception for the artists will be held on Friday, July 3 from 5 - 7 p.m.

The First Stage Gallery is located at 510 Chestnut St. in downtown Virginia. Learn more at www.lyriccenteronline.org.

Stephanie Elling, DPT, hired at Cook Hospital Rehabilitation

COOK- Stephanie Elling graduated from The College of St. Scholastica in 2013 with a Bachelor's degree in Exercise Physiology and again in 2016 with a Doctorate degree in Physical Therapy. After graduation she worked at a private practice in Cloquet in outpatient orthopedics for over two years. Here she gained experience in post-surgical care, manual therapy, return-to-sport training, and aquatic rehab. Then she transitioned into travel therapy and completed contracts across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Florida in skilled nursing, memory care, pedi-



atrics, acute care at critical access hospitals, and multiple outpatient clinics treating a wide range of orthopedic and neurological conditions. She has additional training in TMJ, headaches, sports rehab, dementia care, pediatrics, kinesiotape and manual therapy techniques. Elling has a passion for rural healthcare and enjoys working with patients of all ages and diagnoses. She is excited to join the rehabilitation team at Cook Hospital and looks forward to serving the Cook community and surrounding areas.

LAKE COUNTRY POWER

Operation Round Up® gives to community programs

REGIONAL- Through the contributions of Lake Country Power's participating members, the Operation Round Up® Trust Board recently approved \$50,675 in assistance to local community programs during its quarterly meeting.

The cooperative's trust board reviewed and considered 33 grant applications and distributed funds to 31 projects and programs this past quarter. Since the program's inception in October 2004, more than \$2.5 million has been distributed to community-based projects and programs.

Some recipients will use their funds toward a personal protection equipment air tank, a new self-contained breathing apparatus project, COVID-19 response emergency meals, and fabric masks for the community.

All funds generated through Operation Round Up® are set aside in a trust fund. A voluntary Trust Board of nine co-op members administers the trust. Of the funds collected through the program, 100 percent is distributed to charitable organizations through an application

and selection process. The trust board uses special guidelines and policies when choosing recipients.

Recent recipients in our area include:

- Pike Sandy Women's Club
- Township of Breitung
- Washington Elementary School P.I.E.

► Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota Senior Nutrition

- Quad City Food Shelf
- Greenwood Volunteer Fire Department

► ElderCircle

► Northwoods Friends of the Arts

► Voyageurs Area Council

► Old School Lives, Inc.

► Dorothy Molter Memorial Foundation

► St. Louis County Volunteer Rescue Squad

► Story Portage - community book club

Operation Round Up® is a charitable program unique to electric co-ops, which is designed to provide financial assistance to worthwhile activities and community projects by "rounding up" members' electric

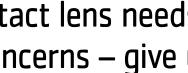
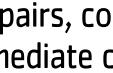
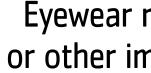
bills to the nearest dollar. The average donation of each participating Lake Country Power member is less than \$6 annually.

Among Lake Country Power's 43,000 members, nearly 64 percent of all active electric accounts participate in the program through voluntary contributions. Interested members can opt into the Operation Round Up® program by calling the cooperative at 800-421-9959 or using an online form at lakecountypower.coop. Applications are available online at www.lakecountypower.coop (My Cooperative > Community > Operation Round Up®). The next application deadline is Saturday, Aug. 15.

Lake Country Power, www.lakecountypower.coop, is a Touchstone Energy® cooperative serving parts of eight counties in northeastern Minnesota. The rural electric cooperative provides services to nearly 43,000 members and has offices located in Cohasset, Kettle River and Mt. Iron.

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BREITUNG TOWNSHIP

Plans underway for Breitung trails

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA
Staff Writer

BREITUNG TWP-
While repairs have been done to the Breitung paved trail between the wastewater ponds and McKinley Park Campground, a more comprehensive reconstruction might be in its future.

The Breitung Board has been working with JPJ Engineering on plans to remove and replace the entire section of trail. The plans include creating a safer exit down to McKinley Park Campground. The trail currently goes straight down the hill into Cty. Rd. 697. The new plans call for a switch-back, creating a landing/overlook area, and then following the road to the west entrance of the campground.

At the June 23 meeting, Chairman Tim Tomsich said they would apply for funding from the IRRR Regional Trail Fund.

If the project is funded by the end of the year, they would begin construction next spring. The cost is currently estimated at between \$250,000 and \$300,000. The township plans to use McKinley Park revenues for the local match on the project.

Looking ahead, plans are also being made to complete the loop "around the horn." Currently, the trail ends about a half-mile past McKinley Park and pedestrians and cyclists have to follow Cty. Rd. 697 for a mile before picking the trail back up at HooDoo Point Campground. Tomsich said that the process to complete this portion of the trail could be time-consuming and complicated because the trail would be on property owned by Breitung, Tower, and St. Louis County and they would be applying for several grants. The trail would also go through a swampy area, which would

require the project to go through an environmental review. Tomsich hopes that construction could start in 2023.

In other news, the board:

- Heard from the Minnesota State Demographer that the Breitung Township population is estimated to be 575 people as of April 1, 2019. This is down five people from the previous year's estimate.

- Will wait to send payment to Tower Area Ambulance Service until a new contract is settled.

- Is asking residents to complete a survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3BLFJMN>, or go to the Breitung Township website and click the link provided. The survey is about customer satisfaction with their internet/TV/phone provider and information is being used by the local Blandin Broadband group

to work on the possibilities of bringing faster/more reliable internet service to the area.

- Accepted a \$2,500 grant from Lake Country Power's Operation RoundUp® and a \$4,000 grant from Minnesota Power for fire department equipment replacement.

- Received \$499 from Lake Country Power as a capital credit allocation.

- Approved the purchase of an iPad for the maintenance department for \$1,240.

- Signed a five-year agreement with Midco.

- Accepted a new fire department member, pending completion of physical and background check.

- Heard that Renee Pearson will serve as deputy clerk.

- Heard that baseball tournaments will be held at the Soudan baseball field on Saturday and Sunday, July 11 and 12, and possibly



A portion of the Breitung trail near McKinley Park Campground. photo by J. Summit

bly on Thursday, Aug. 6.

- Heard that Mesabi Bituminous will add an additional layer of blacktop to the town hall parking lot and possibly behind the police department, price dependent; will work on drainage around the town hall; will put a grate on the open culvert on the south side of the driveway; will reseal concrete; will reseed on the south side; and put up a flagpole.

- Heard from Supervisor Chuck Tekautz who noted that many recreational vehicles such

as ATVs, side-by-sides and dirt bikes have been driving very fast on township roads and recommended enacting a 15 mph speed limit ordinance for them.

The Breitung buildings will continue to be closed to the public until Aug. 1, except for township and fire department meetings, and the township will continue to follow the Governor's orders. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 21 at 12 noon.

CITY OF TOWER

Kringstad to oversee city's COVID-19 response

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

TOWER—In a ten-minute special meeting last Friday, the city council here adopted a COVID-19 preparedness plan and approved a resolution for a demolition grant from the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation.

Clerk-treasurer Victoria Ranua said she tried to build

some flexibility into the health preparedness plan so the city's response could be modified as conditions change, without coming back to the council each time. Under the plan, Mayor Orlyn Kringstad would have primary authority and responsibility for implementing its provisions.

Under a June 5 executive order by Gov. Tim Walz, all cities were required to adopt

COVID-19 preparedness plans by June 29.

The council also unanimously approved a resolution to authorize application to the IRRR's residential redevelopment program on behalf of the Tower Economic Development Authority. The TEDA acquired a blighted, tax-forfeit residence located at 510 S Second St. earlier this year with the intent of redeveloping the site for new

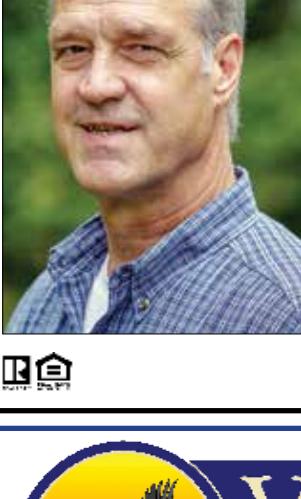
housing. The roof on the existing house had leaked badly for several years and the house is now heavily infested with mold and rot, which is why TEDA opted for demolition. Once the house is removed, TEDA officials have discussed either partnering with Habitat for Humanity or contracting for the construction of a new house on the site for eventual sale.

The IRRR grant will fund

approximately 75 percent of the \$10,778 expense to demolish and remove the structure, with TEDA covering the remainder.

Ranua noted that the city has used the IRRR residential redevelopment program a number of times for the demolition of abandoned residences in the city.

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Editorial

Repealing the ACA

Americans will suffer if Trump succeeds in his bid to eliminate health care

In a surprise move late this past week, the Trump administration filed a last-minute brief with the U.S. Supreme Court asking the nine justices to strip approximately 25 million Americans of their health care coverage in the midst of the worst pandemic in a century. In it, President Trump is seeking to have the Affordable Care Act thrown out in its entirety, a move that could potentially take away health care coverage for tens of millions of Americans.

The high court is expected to hear oral arguments in the case just as Americans are heading to the polls in this November's presidential election.

There is almost no conceivable rationale for the administration's actions, unless Donald Trump has decided he really doesn't want to be President, after all. Not surprisingly, Democratic leaders in Washington couldn't believe their good fortune. This is the same party that won the midterms largely on the issue of GOP efforts to undermine health care—and that was before the COVID-19 pandemic.

With presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden already leading the hapless Trump by double-digits in most recent polls, being able to paint the president as cruel on top of incompetent should be icing on the cake. Keep in mind what would be lost if President Trump has his way and the ACA is wiped away:

► Protections for pre-existing conditions. In the past, insurance companies routinely refused to cover people with existing medical problems or increased their rates to punishing levels. The ACA ended that practice.

► Expanded Medical Assistance eligibility. Most of the roughly 25 million who gained insurance coverage through the ACA did so through Medical Assistance, a comprehensive federal insurance program for low-income individuals and many children.

► Advanced tax credits that substantially reduce the out-of-pocket expenses for those who purchase insurance through the individual private insurance market. These tax credits save many families and individuals many thousands of dollars a year

on their health coverage.

- The ability to keep young people on their parents' health plans until age 26.
- Limits on insurance company profits.

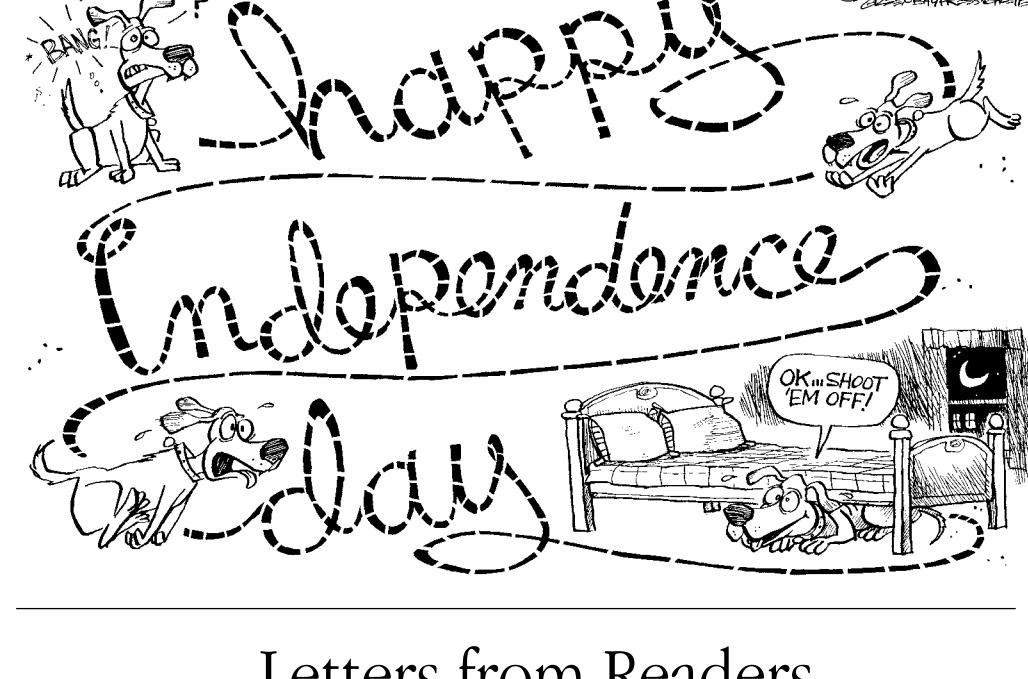
There, of course, are many more parts to the ACA, but these are some of the biggest changes in U.S. health care law that have helped to cut the rolls of the uninsured in half since the law's enactment.

President Trump claims he has plans to replace the ACA with "something fantastic and more affordable," yet most Americans should, by now, recognize that most of what President Trump says is mere puffery or preening, without meaning or substance. He already had the chance, along with congressional Republicans, to offer up an alternative to the ACA in 2017 and they all struck out.

The reality is, while the ACA is far from perfect, it's a fairly cohesive set of concepts that work in combination with one another, yet don't work in isolation. The only viable alternative is a single-payer option, which is a road the GOP would never travel. The truth is, Republicans have no alternative because the ACA was their alternative. They simply refused to vote for it when it was proposed by Democrats.

None of this matters to Trump, of course. As numerous former high-level staff have reported in recent months, Trump only cares about the politics of his actions, not the repercussions to America. President Trump is gambling on a "base strategy" in his re-election bid, rather than trying to appeal to the majority of Americans. And for his hardcore supporters, eliminating all vestiges of America's first black president ranks right up at the top of their list of priorities. If 25 million Americans have to lose their health insurance to help Trump turn out his base, that's all fine within this president's amoral universe. It's the same "who cares?" mentality that's left the United States as the world's coronavirus basket case.

It's time for Americans—all Americans—to tell this president that they care. Enough, that is, to get out and vote this November.



Letters from Readers

Pandemic can increase suicide risk

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some people with mental health problems may be at elevated risk for suicide. This is because the levels of stress that many are experiencing can lead to feelings of hopelessness and despair. People who are already in treatment for suicide risk may need additional support. Other people may experience an exacerbation of existing or emerging mental health problems. This includes those with psychiatric disorders—depressive and bipolar disorders, alcohol and substance use disorders, and psychotic disorders—as well as individuals who struggle with aggressive or disinhibited behavior and find it difficult to manage strong negative emotions.

If you are concerned about someone's possible suicide risk, we recommend that you share your concern and ask the person if they are having thoughts of suicide. We also recommend that you look out for worrisome behavior changes, particularly when they follow or are related to a loss, a painful or shaming experience, or a change in life circumstances.

Some warning signs for suicide include the following: Expressing hopelessness or having no reason to live. Suggesting they're a burden on others, or that they're experiencing unbearable pain. Increasing their use of alcohol or drugs. Withdrawing from usual activities or isolating from family or friends.

If you are concerned for a friend or family member, share your concern with this individual, noting that you care for them. We encourage you to: a) listen to and validate the person's emotional pain, b) ask if he or she is having thoughts of suicide, and c) stay with the person until they are linked with needed help or with another person who will assist them in getting such help.

If you or someone you

know is in need of help, reach out to either of the following at any time for help:

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255). They provide free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional stress 24/7, 365 days a year. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 150 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.

Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" or "START" to 741741 to reach a crisis counselor. This is a free, 24/7, 365 days a year confidential text message service for people in crisis.

Mark Jacobson
Winona

We need Quinn Nystrom

Quinn Nystrom is the person we need to represent us in Congress. She is the Democratic nominee who is running against the incumbent Peter Stauber for the Congressional District 8 seat.

We don't need another two years of a representative who backs every single policy of Donald Trump, from eliminating the Affordable Health Care

Act in the midst of a pandemic, to opposing meaningful police reform, to opposing a woman's right to reproductive health choices. We need a new start, someone to fill the shoes of effective DFL legislators who have represented us in the past, including Jim Oberstar, Rick Nolan, and Paul Wellstone.

Quinn Nystrom has prepared for this campaign and for the role of U.S. Representative. She cares deeply about people who are going broke or dying because of high drug prices; our Native brothers and sisters and other underserved communities who are consistently discriminated against; our clean water and air; our friends who are hungry and can't afford rent; and getting equitable wages for workers who are often ignored

but keep our society running.

Let's elect an energetic, passionate, and knowledgeable woman to Congress in November. To learn more, go to quinnforcongress.com.

Carol Orban
Ely

Referendum does not reflect reality

I am writing to express my concerns about the upcoming vote on the Ely Public School bond referendum on Aug. 11. I graduated from Ely High School in 1962 with a class of 100 students. This year the graduating class had 45 students and has not been much higher than that for quite some time, oftentimes lower. Since I graduated, a number of buildings, such as the Lincoln School, Old High, and the John F. Kennedy building have been torn down because they were "old" or from lack of use. There has been a lot of fluctuation in the use of the district's buildings over the years.

As far as I can tell, Ely Schools struggle with budgetary concerns each year. Looking at the plan for the upcoming referendum, it is far too grandiose for the number of students that we now have and will have in the foreseeable future.

In addition, we must realize our current economic situation with COVID-19. Our economy is struggling right now, to say the least, and no one knows how long we will be in this situation. Mines and other businesses all over the Range are reducing, making additional hardship for homeowners and families in our area. Is it prudent to increase up to several hundred dollars in additional property taxes for such a small number of students? If one doesn't have a job, it's very hard to pay property taxes.

Under our current circumstances and with the economic future so uncertain, why should we spend well beyond our means?

Judy (Mosnik) Swenson
Ely



Being colorblind is an excuse, not a virtue

When I had to go to the optometrist as a fourth-grader to get glasses, one of the things he tested me for was color blindness. He explained that it was a vision problem where people couldn't see certain colors. I didn't have it, but I still ended up with glasses.

Recently, I've heard or read a number of people who seem to wear color



DAVID COLBURN

blindness as a badge of honor, a sign that they have somehow risen above issues of race and color that have come to the fore these past couple of months:

"I don't see color."

"We're all just one race, the human race."

"It's not race, it's economics."

"I see you as a person, just like me."

The underlying sentiment of those and similar phrases indeed sounds virtuous, much like one of white people's most favorite Martin Luther King Jr.'s quotes: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." Look, Dr. King didn't want us to see color, and we don't! No, taken in full context, that's not what Dr. King wanted. He was a proud black man, proud of his heritage, and he didn't want people to ignore blackness. He

wanted content of character to be the defining characteristic of how black people are judged, but he didn't want people to ignore the culture and characteristics of black Americans. Not at all.

While one may think being color blind is a good thing, it really isn't. That's a lesson it literally took me decades to learn.

In my early years, color blindness came naturally to me. In my little Kansas hometown, our one black resident, a sweet old woman named Lizzie Holder, was to me just like dozens of other sweet old women in town. I

never thought about her as being black. When I was playing basketball in the back yard, I always pretended to be Kansas Jayhawk great Jo Jo White sinking the winning shot. I never thought twice about the fact that Jo Jo White was black. I just wanted to win.

I was still color blind when I went off to KU for college, mostly because everyone of color I met was just like me—they were college students with the same aspirations for degrees.

See COLOR...pg. 5

Letters from Readers

Transfer trust money to ambulance fund

Last week's article about the Gundersen Trust fund containing somewhat over \$1,000,000 sure revealed additional confusion about the City of Tower's dismal finances. On the one hand, the city hasn't had any problem draining hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Tower Area Ambulance Service fund, money that was earned by the seven-member community Ambulance Service through service runs and supposedly kept track of and administered by the city. The city had no problem transferring that money to shore up unrelated expenses. On the other hand, the Gundersen Trust Board majority (of questionable membership) apparently considers their million-dollar hoard to be sacred.

In the meantime, enough Gundersen money needs to be transferred to make the Tower Area Ambulance Service fund whole. And then end the confusion by starting to keep track of things.

Lee Peterson
Greenwood Twp.

Stay home and absentee vote!

I've gone to the polls to vote for the President of the United States since 1976 – voting in Chicago, Washington, D.C. and now I'm looking forward to casting my ballot in Ely. I've always had a special feeling about walking into the polling place, together with my neighbors, and casting my vote.

While I'm planning to vote in person this Nov. 3, with the possible unknowns of the COVID-19 pandemic, things may be different. So, to ensure that my vote is counted, I'm planning to also request an absentee ballot. If you're thinking about doing the same, you can go online to the Minnesota Secretary of State at www.sos.state.mn.us, scroll down and click on "Vote Early By Mail" and follow the instructions.

Then as we get closer to Election Day, having an absentee ballot in hand, we can better decide whether we want to vote in person or by mail, ensuring that our votes will be counted.

Pam Ransom
Ely

Trump is a profile in cowardice

In the 1950's, future president John F. Kennedy wrote (or at least co-wrote) a Pulitzer Prize-winning book entitled "Profiles in Courage", a study of singular acts of political courage shown by a handful of senators throughout our history. In the avalanche of books certain to be written about the Trump presidency, I suspect a common theme will be to detail an era which could aptly be described as "profiles in cowardice". However one chooses to define courage—physical, moral, intellectual—the cowardly opposites have been on full display repeatedly during the Trump era.

One example: His painfully weak performance at Helsinki in 2018, in which he sided with our worst enemy, Vladimir Putin, and against the F.B.I. and every single U.S. intelligence agency, a spectacle which virtually every State Department veteran, past and present, described as the most shameful, embarrassing, pathetic display by an American president in memory, probably in all of U.S. history. He basically

groveled in front of Putin.

Another example: With his penchant for firing those who've displeased him, I've noticed a pattern, so I did some research and discovered that in the real world (as opposed to his reality t.v. show), he's never apparently fired anyone face-to-face. Oh, he's had lots of people fired, but it seems he always has someone else do it for him.

Yet another example: Taking responsibility - Harry Truman's "The buck stops here." said it best. True leaders, in any field, will always say, "If it happened on my watch, I'm responsible," just the opposite of Trump's response to every crisis, especially a once-in-a-century health crisis.

As for Trump's draft status during Vietnam, consider that his "bone spur" diagnosis should not have prevented him from serving, if he'd wanted to. If he'd been diagnosed with asthma or a heart condition, for instance, he would've had no choice. But there were guys who served with bone spurs, just not in the infantry (unless they hid the condition - I personally knew two such guys, one of whom was, in fact, an infantryman). There were lots

of other military jobs where this was not an issue. So bone spurs should only have determined WHAT he could, or couldn't, do, not IF he could serve at all. It was still his choice, and he chose not to serve, despite what he would have everyone believe now.

I'll end this by mentioning the latest scandal, involving the credible story of a Russian bounty program targeting our troops in Afghanistan. Every veteran, every family who has had a son or daughter in uniform, should be beyond outraged by Trump's lack of response to this, as if we needed any more evidence of his subservience to Putin.

In the histories to be written of the Trump era, the abject cowardice on display from this commander-in-chief will be hard to ignore. The "coward-in-chief" would be far more appropriate.

Lynn Scott
Soudan

COLOR...Continued from page 4

and careers. However, differences started to sink in when the Black Student Union group started protesting something one year. I can't remember what it was, but when I saw black students with signs marching in front of the student union, I realized they weren't just like me. I started paying attention.

It finally hit me that I was white when I was on a date in Kansas City. We decided to try a Gates and Son Barbecue place downtown. It was the first time in my life I'd ever been in a place where my date and I were the only white people in the restaurant, and I immediately felt conspicuous and uncomfortable. We ate, we got out, and I started wondering if that's how black people felt going into otherwise all-white settings. I would discover over the years that yes, they often did feel that way.

College was eye-opening in relation to race, but I still had blind spots as I moved on into my professional work in early childhood education. This

was my period of "I can RELATE!" I could relate to the experiences of people of color because now I was a minority, too! I was a man in a field that was 95 percent women. In the workplace, conversations would change when "the man" walked into the room. I got invitations to join early childhood professional groups, and even got a couple of jobs, because I was a "minority." There were times I wondered whether my contributions were valued because of my intellect or because of my anatomy.

But it was a delusion. I always had a way out. I didn't have to be in early childhood education. I didn't have to be a minority, and really, I wasn't. I was still a white male, with all the associated privileges. People of color were always black, or Asian, or Native American, or whatever, no matter where they lived or what they did. Huge difference.

I finally came to grips with my lingering color-blindness about 20 years ago through one of the

most incredibly insightful and humbling weeks of my life. I was one of twenty white people who lived with twenty people of color, mostly all black, at a residential camp for a weeklong experience called "Dismantling Racism," where we learned from each other through structured activities and free time what racism was all about. I can't condense a week's worth of astounding into one column, but a moment of controversy speaks to the problem of color-blindness.

On the third evening, in a particularly emotional exercise, our new black friends shared some very personal and hurtful stories about discrimination they had experienced because of the color of their skin. We white people were to sit and listen, and by the end a number of us were on the verge of tears.

A well-meaning white woman, wanting to make them feel better, spoke up. "I just want you to know that I don't see color when I look at you," she said.

"We're all the same."

After three days, both black and white people were shocked. We were there to have our eyes opened to the impact color has on people in society, and here was a white person who didn't get it, who was denying that there were any differences between her and these black people who just bared their souls about why their experiences weren't the same as white people.

An increasingly intense discussion ensued. The white woman maintained her position, adding insult to injury by proclaiming, "I only want to help you people."

After 20 minutes, two of our counselors took the woman out of the room to talk with her individually, while the others stayed with us to process what had happened. It felt like a car wreck. I don't think anyone slept well that night.

The next morning, we discovered the white woman who made the comments had left and wasn't coming back. Instead of relief, there was

a collective sense of loss. She'd been friendly and nice, and folks generally liked her. But she didn't "get it." She didn't see color. She couldn't grasp that she was denying the experiences of the people right in front of her, that she was in essence saying to them that she didn't need or want to have the difficult discussions about race and color that needed to happen. She was color-blind, and she couldn't or wouldn't see what was right in front of her.

That's when I learned to see color-blindness as just an excuse, an avoidance technique, a denial. In today's polarized environment, it's an all-too-easy way to quickly distance ourselves from discussions that need to be had, even here in mostly white rural northern Minnesota.

It's important for us to take off the color blinders and see the effects of race around us. It's not just a problem for blacks in the cities. It's an issue for Native Americans, blacks, Asian-Americans, and others who

live and work right here. And if for no other reason, it's in the self-interest of whites to see color and its effects and to have those discussions, because Minnesota seriously needs to rise from its position as, statistically, one of the worst states in the country for racial disparity. When white people recognize the barriers of color and work to remove them, then those disparities begin to disappear as people of color rise to new levels of success.

And the systems we have to devote enormous resources to, including your tax dollars, to combat those disparities disappear, too.

Leveling the playing field begins with seeing color for what it is, with all its richness and its challenges. Hopefully it won't take decades, like it did for me, for enough people to see the colorful light and take meaningful steps for change. We've all seen rainbows – color can be a beautiful thing to embrace.

Ely looks to IRRR for economic, business stimulus

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

New grant program could help increase employment opportunities

ELY – Ely economic development officials are hopeful that a new community relief program will help businesses here get back on their feet following a shutdown of commerce this spring and early summer due to public health concerns over the coronavirus pandemic.

Council members, Tuesday, acting as the Ely Economic Development Authority, authorized city staff to submit the grant proposal next week to the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation's Taconite Area Community Relief Grant Program.

EEDA President Heidi Omerza praised the program and asserted that the \$400,000 grant application, along with a \$100,000 investment from the city's economic devel-

opment arm, "is the best thing for our businesses' owners at this time." She added, "This will help make sure we can get out of this and get our employment back up over the next year or two."

Ely Clerk-Treasurer Harold Langowski indicated that local business leaders help draft the narrative for the grant application, due July 6. "Some businesses are having issues with job recruitment and job retention, and others are considering expanding (their business) and having trouble raising capital. We are looking at any and all potential uses for the funds," he said.

Langowski said the program is considering two options for forgivable loans. "What we heard, from at least two local bankers, is that people

aren't looking to borrow more money. This is not a time when they want to go out and borrow more money. Maybe we can assist those who may want to expand a little bit. It may be just a micro-grant, but it would be outreach to as many as 20 businesses, which would certainly have an impact," he said.

Mayor Chuck Novak praised the grant program as one way for the city to help local businesses. "This is one initiative that may not get a lot of headlines," he said. "We are offering a \$25,000 loan at one-percent interest, and if they can add two employees for two years this could be forgivable and they won't have to pay it back. That's an incentive that many business owners are really interested in. We need 25 applicants, and our

banks say they easily have 25 applicants."

Novak added that the city's \$100,000 investment in the program is money well spent.

"This is one of those programs that will help us move forward and is one of those programs that other cities will take over and copy Ely and what we're doing," Omerza said. "Like so many other things that Ely does, this is out front and innovative."

"We can't get the cart ahead of the horse," warned Langowski. "We still have to apply for the grant, but I think we are hitting all the marks on what the (IRR) agency is trying to do to help businesses," he said.

Ely's economic advisor John Fedo added that the EEDA's initiative has strong support

from the Ely Chamber of Commerce, and area developers. "Hopefully that will add to the texture of what we are doing here," he said.

Fedo estimated that the grants could be awarded in two or three weeks.

Other business

► In his monthly economic development activity report, Fedo informed the authority that the Laurentian Vision Partnership (LVP) recently reconstituted with a new focus and regional marketing mission on mining economic development. The organization is now called Mining Vision Partnership (MVP).

► Ely's Historic State Theater recently took delivery of Historic Tax Credits that will be used to help reimburse IRRR's

financing for that project. The non-profit organization opened their movie theater last week.

► Fedo noted that the State Legislature's failure to pass a bonding bill in the regular session or the recent special session put the city's trailhead project in a holding pattern. Council member Paul Kess expressed his disappointment that the city's economic development project did not get more support from the State House members, especially Rep. Rob Ecklund. "That is troubling to me," he said.

Fedo also voiced his disappointment in Ecklund. "He is elected to serve us. We have the right to demand he serve us on this issue," he said. "Call him and put the pressure on him."

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Week of July 6

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.

Tuesday

Tower Area Food Shelf- Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:30 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is July 21.

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

Wednesday

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

Thursday

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

Vermilion Country School Board- Meetings posted online at vermillioncountry.org.

Tower Food Shelf

TOWER- The Tower Food Shelf is not able to increase its hours on a regular basis, but anyone needing an emergency visit can contact Food Shelf Coordinator Marge McPeak at 218-753-3503.



Tower-Soudan Lake Vermilion Events Board members Cathy Wright and Lori Tomsich handed out free flags in front of Zup's Grocery on June 26. The events board had voted to purchase the flags to help the community celebrate the Fourth of July in a year when safety concerns caused the parade to be canceled.
photo by J. Summit

Herbicide applications to help reforestation efforts in the Tower area

TOWER- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will begin herbicide applications on select state lands to improve reforestation efforts.

Applications will begin around July 1 and continue through approximately Aug. 15. Sites are located in the Kabe-

togama and Sturgeon River State Forests.

Signs will be posted on all herbicide treatment sites. Adjacent landowners within a quarter mile of the treatment sites received notification. Herbicides will not be applied within 100 feet of any waterbody, fol-

lowing DNR herbicide application guidelines.

The DNR plants trees on state lands to reforest harvested areas, provide wildlife habitat, protect watersheds, and maintain healthy forests. Part of the reforestation process involves applying herbicides to the har-

vested areas prior to or following tree planting.

The DNR uses minimal amounts of herbicide only when absolutely necessary. The DNR uses a non-neonicotinoid herbicide that has been proven safe for bees and other pollinators.

This past spring in

the Tower area, the Forestry Division planted more than 78,000 seedlings on 120 acres. Statewide, more than 675,000 seedlings were planted on state forest lands.

For additional information, contact area forester, Dave Sopoci at 218-757-3274, ext. 223.

College News**Students named to the College of St. Scholastica Spring Dean's List**

DULUTH- The College of St. Scholastica is proud to announce its Spring 2020 Dean's List recipients. Dean's List members have achieved a 3.75 grade point av-

erage or above on a 4.0 scale. The College of St. Scholastica would like to commend these students for their honorable academic achievements.

Spring 2020 Dean's List includes the following local students:

Bria Chiabotti of Soudan. Chiabotti is majoring in Nursing.

Lori Huseby of Babbitt. Huseby is majoring in Mathematics.

Brandon Mackai of Embarrass. Mackai is majoring in Health Infor-

mation Management.

Alyssa Scherer of Embarrass. Scherer is majoring in Accounting.

Madeline Zupancich of Tower. Zupancich is majoring in Education.

UMD announces Dean's List for Spring Semester

DULUTH- Sophie R. Lenz, of Embarrass, has been named to the University of Minnesota Duluth Dean's List for Spring Semester 2020.

Students on the Dean's List have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher. Lenz is a junior, in the Pre Civil Engineering program in the Swenson College of Science and Engineering.

Heather Anderson named to Dean's List at UW-Superior

SUPERIOR, WIS- Heather Anderson, of Soudan, has been

named to the University of Wisconsin-Superior Dean's List for academic achievement during the Spring 2020 semester.

To be named to the Dean's List, students must have completed 12 degree-seeking semester credits and achieved at least a 3.50 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale).

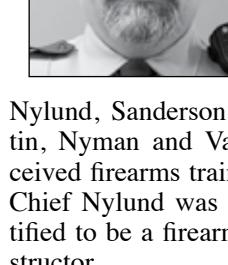
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ceived a LovEly Cake from Jessica Joan and cake-maker Susan Laine. Joan was stopped by Officer Cody Vail and was impressed with his professional conduct. "Thank you for keeping us safe and providing peace of mind when there are so many questions, thank you for putting the needs of the public above your own," she said in a note to the department.

BREITUNG POLICE DEPARTMENT**May Police Report**

Breitung Police Chief Dan Nylund



3 harassment - referred to county attorney
1 expired registration - citation
1 no driver's license in possession - citation
3 speeding - citations
The department re-

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The department re-

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	Cook Transfer Station 2134 S. Beatty Rd., Cook Hours Mon: 10am-6pm Tues thru Sat: 9am-3:30pm
County 77 Canister Site 2038 County Rd. 77, Greenwood Twp Summer Hours Tues: 8am-5pm Thurs: 8am-1pm Sat: 8am-5pm Sun: noon-6pm	Soudan Canister Site 5160 Hwy 109, Soudan Hours Mon, Wed, Sat, Sun: 8am-5pm
Embarrass Canister Site 7530 Koski Rd., Embarrass Hours Sat: 12:30-4:30pm Thu: 10am-5pm	Aurora Transfer Station 5910 Hwy 135 N., Aurora Hours Mon, Thurs, Fri: 8am-4pm Tue, Wed: 10am-4pm Sat: 8am-noon
Household Hazardous Waste Facility 5345 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Hours Tues and Sat: 8am-1pm	Regional Landfill 5341 Regional Landfill Rd., Virginia Hours Mon-Fri: 8am-4:30pm Sat: 8am-3:30pm

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

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

ZUP'S 315 Main St, Tower
753-2725

Happy 4th of July Stay Safe!

Shop Zup's for All Your Summer Favorites!

**Mon.-Fri. 8-6 & Sun. 8-3
Sat., July 4 • Open 8-3**

TOWER FARMERS MARKET

Buy Fresh for the Fourth!

Fridays 4-6 PM

Libraries

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

Babbitt library

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

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous
AA - 7 p.m. Mondays, and 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Ely
WOMEN'S AA - Noon Mondays, St. Anthony Church basement, Ely
BABBITT AA - 7 p.m. Tuesdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church
AL-ANON - Sundays 8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely.

For persons who encounter alcoholism in a relative or friend.

BABBITT AL-ANON
 Thursdays, 7 p.m. at Woodland Presbyterian Church.

CO-DEPENDENTS'
 12-step support group, noon Fridays, St. Anthony's Catholic Church, Ely.

ELY FOOD SHELF - Third Wednesday each month, 15 W. Conan St.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION GED - Study materials and pre-test available. Tower by appointment. Call 365-3359, 827-3232, or 1-800-662-5711.

Tuesday Group goes virtual

ELY - The upcoming Tuesday Group schedule is listed below. All talks are at 12 noon on Tuesdays.

All presentations are administered in a virtual presence until further notice due to the coronavirus pandemic. Send email to stevieschon@gmail.com for more information.

July 7 - Sarah Hobbie - U of M professor - Cedar Creek Natural Area Research

EBCH hosts blood drive

ELY - The Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital is hosting a blood drive on Wednesday, July 8 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All COVID-19 standards for public health safety will be in place.

For more information and to register, call Shari Saw at 218-365-8751.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2020



watching big clouds float from the deep lake below them
 summer swimming fun

ISD 696 Update from Superintendent Erik Erie

Early voting by absentee ballot for the \$10 million bond referendum being proposed by the Ely School District started June 26, with Aug. 11 as Election Day, for the ISD 696 bond referendum.

In order for our citizens to have the opportunity to be informed the district has compiled information about the bond referendum, on our district website: <https://www.ely.k12.mn.us/> or visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ely.k12.mn.us/>

We are also holding public forums that are scheduled to be in a virtual format, using Facebook Live, where the public can ask questions through a

chat feature. You can go directly to our Ely Facebook Page (see link above) our district website (see link above) to connect. The public forums are scheduled for the following dates and times:

►Tuesday, July 13 at 6 p.m.

►Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 6 p.m.

Ely Public Schools are planning for the next school year now that we have additional guidance from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

The three scenarios we are being asked to plan around are:

►All students returning to school buildings following the most current MDH and

CDC guidelines

►Hybrid model following MDH and CDC guidelines that provides for social distancing and limitations on numbers of students per classroom

►Distance learning model similar to how we finished the school year. As part of this planning process we expect to survey students and parents to gather their input. A letter was sent out to families this week through our JMC student management system to update them on the three scenarios

. We expect a final decision from the Governor's office and MDE the week of July 27, letting us know what

form schools will be asked to start the school year in.

As our summer moves along we are providing meals to families in need and will continue to do so through July and August with the help of Ely Community Resource and the United Way. So that there is no disruption in service, meals can continue to be picked up at school on weekdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. throughout July and August.

You can contact me for more information by calling 218-365-1725 (school) or 218-750-4564 (cellular). My email address is eerie@ely.k12.mn.us.

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION**March begins at 1 p.m. Saturday**

Police implement zero-tolerance policy for illegal fireworks

by KEITH VANDERVORT
 Ely Editor

ELY - The Fourth of July patriotic march, organized by a community group in place of the city-sanctioned celebration this year due to public health concerns over the coronavirus pandemic, is slated to begin at 1 p.m. on Saturday near the high school parking lot.

Using the traditional Independence Day parade route, those marching will assemble near the school football and baseball fields on Stuckel Avenue and begin the march at Harvey Street, head west to 2nd Avenue, turn right at the Ely Post Office and proceed to Sheridan Street. Marchers will turn east onto Sheridan Street and proceed past Whiteside Park to 8th Ave, and turn right, ending at Harvey Street.

According to event organizers on the 4th in Ely Facebook page, the patriotic march will be led by the Ely Honor Guard, and will feature the Ely Klown Band, rescue vehicles, and private and community floats. Ely city council members agreed that the city will provide traffic control.

Because of public health guidelines due to COVID-19, adjustments to Ely's usual parade festivities are in place.

►People will not be allowed to set out



Any chairs set up early for the patriotic march on Saturday afternoon may be subject to removal by the Ely Patriotic Club. file photo

F-16s will fly over Ely on Saturday

According to Ely Air Force veteran Steve Saari, the 148th Fighter Wing from Duluth will salute the celebration of Independence Day on Saturday, July 4 with a two-plane F-16 flyover from east to west down Sheridan Street.

"The TOT (time over target) is between 11:15-11:25 a.m." he said. "Ely is one of two Minnesota cities selected for a flyover. The other is St Cloud. Get out on the street and cheer on the sound of freedom. God bless America."

chairs overnight to reserve viewing spots. Any chairs set out in advance may be confiscated, according to organizers.

►Family groups are encouraged to practice social distancing and to separate from other spectators.

►Use of protective face masks is encouraged, but not required.

Other Fourth of July events, including the traditional festivities at Whiteside Park prior to and after the previous parades, and the Four on the Fourth running race, are canceled this year due to COVID-19. Whiteside Park is open to the public.

The city of Ely is still sponsoring the annual fireworks show at dusk,

with fireworks being set off over Miners Lake.

Anybody thinking of shooting off illegal fireworks in the city of Ely this year will not get a break from the Ely Police Department.

A zero-tolerance policy is implemented this year, according to Chief Chad Houde, because of the lack of rain and extreme dryness.

"In the past, we kind of looked the other way, but because of the fire danger this year, we will have no tolerance for those who break the law," Houde said. "We had two house fires within a month here. And remember to socially distance when watching the city's fireworks over Miners Lake."

Election judges needed for Ely

ELY - The city of Ely is looking for Election Judges for the 2020 Election Season. Primary election day is Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020. General election day is Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020.

Application forms can be found on the city's website at www.ely.mn.us.

Applications must be submitted by Monday, July 6.

For more information, please call the clerk's office at 218-365-3221 ext. 1.

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City trees at 'critical' stage

ELY - A moderate drought in northern St. Louis County this summer is growing severe and has the Ely Tree Board concerned. Newly-planted terrace trees along the boulevards are having a hard time surviving.

"Our volunteers are doing their best to keep them watered but with this drought we are at a critical juncture," said board member Val Nesteruk.

She added, "So many of you have donated thousands of dollars and thousands of hours over the past several years replanting our boulevards, for which we are so grateful. Now as a community, we need to get out there and water so those trees won't die."

ELY - Ely's assisted living facilities will not be forgotten during the Independence Day weekend.

A motorcade is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Friday, July 3 at the facility located on Second Avenue West between Harvey Street and White Street.

►Fill gator bags within the vicinity of your hose, or just water the base of the tree (trees with the black "diaper bags" need water at this point too).

►Carry a bucket of water to trees in your neighborhood two or three times a week.

►Message us if you live out of town and would like to help--we can give you watering containers and specific spots to help with.

"And please be careful when weed-whipping," Nesteruk added. "Overzealous weed whippers have damaged many trees."

For more information, go to Friends of the Trees of Ely on Facebook or email treesofely@gmail.com.

CareFree Living consists of three buildings with parking lots in front. The motorcade will line up on Harvey Street and proceed south through the parking lots.

Organizers are asking people to line up starting at 1:30 p.m. with the motorcade starting at 2 p.m.

Motorcade at CareFree Living

ELY - Ely's assisted living facilities will not be forgotten during the Independence Day weekend.

A motorcade is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Friday, July 3 at the facility located on Second Avenue West between Harvey Street and White Street.

Canvas art fundraiser headlines NWFA show

Tenth anniversary items, lion sculpture also on display

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK – In another small step toward a return to regular operations, the Northwoods Friends of the Arts debuts a new gallery show this week that looks to the future while paying homage to the past.

The centerpiece of the show is a collection of canvas-based artwork produced for the organization's first-ever "A Canvas and You" fundraiser.

Working with a variety of media including paint, fabrics, textiles, photography, and more, local artists spent the past two months creating 56 works of art on 8x10 canvases that will be on display and for sale throughout July and August.

"It's better than I expected with all of the things that have been going on," board member Judith Ulseth said. "I'm really amazed with the quality of the art. People really spent a lot of time

on them."

The NWFA Gallery closed in March in response to the novel coronavirus pandemic, and all classes and the photography contest were canceled. However, the board didn't pull the plug on "A Canvas and You," hoping that conditions would improve and that the gallery could reopen to host the new show.

"This is our first time for this fundraiser," Ulseth said. "Jim DeVries came up with the idea."

Ulseth said she was somewhat skeptical that they would get much response, but when NWFA started selling canvases to prospective participants in April, the board was gratified with the response.

"People were making appointments to buy the canvases," Ulseth said.

Creations range from whimsical and concrete to serious and abstract. At least two pay tribute to one of the organization's original members, Sue Wolfe, who died in May.

Each piece of canvas art is priced at \$50, with \$25 going to the artist and \$25 going to NWFA to help fund future classes and events.

Anniversary nod

This is NWFA's 10-year anniversary, but all thoughts of a big celebration of the milestone disappeared when COVID-19 pandemic restrictions kicked in, Ulseth said.

However, to complement the canvas art display in the back classroom, NWFA has assembled a varied collection of art and memorabilia celebrating a decade of service to Cook and the north woods area.

Most of the artwork was produced in NWFA classes, such as Mary Beth Downs's watercolor class and Theresa Drift's acrylics class, Ulseth said. Picture books commemorating past anniversaries also are on display.

Rounding out the exhibits in the back classroom will be a life-size wire lion sculpture creat-



NWFA board member Judith Ulseth straightens a picture in the "A Canvas for You" gallery show and fundraiser beginning a two-month run this week.

photo by D. Colburn

As always, the front room of the gallery features works for sale from about 30 area artists.

The NWFA Gallery, located at 210 S River St. in Cook, next to Dream Weaver Salon, is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and 9 a.m. to

1 p.m. on Saturdays.

Additional information may be obtained online at nwfamn.org, or on the NWFA Facebook page, by emailing nwfamn.org@gmail.com or by calling 218-780-7130 during gallery hours.

Cook fundraiser on July 3 to assist man with ALS

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- If the name Marc Westerbur, of Virginia, rings a bell for Cook-area residents, it may be that they know him through their children.

"This is a gentleman who has volunteered for many youth activities in the city of Virginia, and also for many kids' activities in the Cook area," said his friend of ten years, Jeff Hunt. "This man has donated a ton of his personal time to kids on the Iron Range."

Westerbur also has been the set designer for the Virginia Skate Show for about 25 years, Hunt said, but he wasn't able to do the props this year. His muscles were too weak.

In mid-April, the 50-year-old Westerbur was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as ALS. It's a progressive

disease that affects nerve cells that control muscle movement, eventually taking away abilities to do basic skills like walking, dressing, speaking, and swallowing. It can adversely affect breathing, but while the average survival time after diagnosis is three years, the disease affects people differently, with some living 20 years and longer.

While Westerbur is being treated and checked at Mayo Clinic to see if he has a disease that mimics ALS but isn't as severe, Hunt said it's 98-percent likely Westerbur has ALS.

"It's already hard for him to walk now," Hunt said. "He's on crutches. It's hard for him to feed himself. In a manner of four months he's gone from being able to do most things to being hard to do daily activities."

Marc and his wife, Kristi, have three children. Daughter Jill just

graduated college, Hunt said, and twins Jace and Jayda are seniors at Virginia High School. "And the family dog that doesn't leave their side, Reuben," Hunt said.

Westerbur has worked for about three decades for Hanger Clinic, which makes prosthetics and orthotics. Before his ALS diagnosis, he volunteered to take a pay cut to help with COVID-19-related cutbacks. Now he's on disability, making about a third of what he made just a few months ago, Hunt said.

"It's so ironic that this gentleman has saved and helped out thousands of people with their limbs over the last 30 years, and now his limbs aren't working," Hunt said. "How ironic is that."

Hunt, Heather Chavers, and Nita Lind, all friends with Marc, knew they wanted to do something to help, but there

was a hurdle in the way.

"Through this whole

thing Marc has not wanted a benefit. He's a very humble person," Hunt said.

Semantics, however, provided an out, and Hunt and Lind have been the main drivers in creating a "bash," not a benefit, to raise aid for Westerbur and his family. Central to their scheme was getting a particular band to commit to the event.

"Nita knew that Marc's favorite band is GB Leighton," Hunt said. The Minnesota rock band has sold over 70,000 albums and normally plays more than 200 gigs a year.

"We got ahold of GB Leighton and told them about Marc's condition, and they asked when and where can they help out. Heather and I provided the venue to make it happen."

So the outdoors bash featuring GB Leighton is on for Friday, July 3,

will be accepted in any amount.

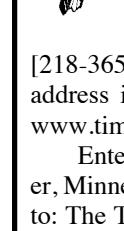
"We just want more people to come and donate if they can," Hunt said. "And we won't say you can't come if you're not able to donate."

Those who can't attend but would like to make a donation can contact Hunt at 320-443-5229, or mail a donation to Jeff Hunt, in care of Marc Westerbur, 9013 E Wakemup Village Rd., Cook, MN 55723.

"It was approved by the city to have it," Hunt said. "Parking has been OK'd by the county on the county road. You can park on the road as long as you're not in the right of way."

The event is free, and donations for Westerbur

the TIMBERJAY



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COOK CITY COUNCIL

High-speed internet survey approved

COOK- Aided by a prompt in the form of a letter from Field Township, the Cook City Council gave the green light to an area survey to determine the interest in getting high-speed internet.

The survey will be conducted by Paul Bunyan Communications, a Bemidji-based provider that touts its GigaZone fiber optics network as "the future of broadband internet," capable of download and upload speeds of up to 1000 Mbps.

A service availability map on the company's website also shows planned future network developments in the Voyageurs National Park area, stopping northeast of Orr. A small, irregularly-shaped area southwest of Cook also is marked for development in 2021.

Councilors discussed possible items for the survey, but were informed Paul Bunyan already has

a five-item survey it will use. The city will cooperate in mailing the survey to residents and businesses.

In open remarks, council member Elizabeth Storm complimented residents on the general appearance of the community, and then moved to reinforce the need for people to continue to practice wearing masks, social distancing, and adhering to other guidelines for preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus.

"I also would like to remind people that when we're gathered together to wear masks and stay six feet apart. COVID has not gone away. COVID is probably rising in August and September, and then we'll not only have COVID, we'll have the flu."

Storm noted that many individuals in the community fall into high risk categories for age and underlying health conditions.

"I don't want to spread it to you, and I don't want you to spread it to me. I'd like to live a few more years," she said.

Storm also announced that Feed My Sheep is moving back to the park, and that the grant-funded community art project "It STARTS on Main Street" has been delayed until next year.

In other business, the council:

► Heard a request from Heather Chavers for a special use permit for a July 3 fundraiser at the intersection of Hwy. 115 and 24. The council determined no special permit was needed and gave their approval.

► Discussed with housing authority executive director Reed Erickson an issue in the timing of appointments to the authority board. Erickson said that board members who are appointed outside of the mayor's normal January annual

appointments run afoul of federal Housing and Urban Development regulations and could effectively be rendered unable to participate in board business. The council agreed to establish Jan. 1 as the recommended date for Mayor Harold Johnston to make board appointments in the future.

► Approved payment of project invoices to JPJ in the amount of \$7,447 and DBS, general contractor for the new Zup's, in the amount of \$17,201.

► Approved a job search for a person to fill the vacant lead clerk position at the liquor store.

► Approved a bid from ADM Construction of \$167,281 for ADA improvements at the community center.

► Approved a joint powers agreement with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for access to the state's criminal justice data communications network.

ADJUST...Continued from page 1

wear masks when not eating or drinking.

On Monday, Gov. Tim Walz stepped into the fray, warning bar and restaurant owners and customers that the state is considering additional restrictions, including closing them back down, if guidelines are not being followed.

At this point, the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Department of Labor and Industry, have been working on educating bar and restaurant owners.

"Our inspectors are getting a lot of questions on how they comply with their specific situation," said Blake Nordin, North Field Operations Supervisor from MDH.

"We do get complaints from the public about certain places that aren't social distancing and mask wearing," he said. "If that happens,

we remind the owners what the executive order says. We want them to be able to operate within the guidelines." Nordin said they understand how difficult it is for some businesses to comply with these rules.

"But hopefully this will shorten the time we have to operate like this," he said. Nordin says their inspectors are seeing many restaurants and bars that are complying, but also seeing many that are struggling.

"We just want to remind everyone of the importance of this," he said.

Just this last week, four large outbreaks of COVID-19 have been traced back to bars in Minneapolis and Mankato.

In addition, contact tracing in the state has shown that close to 10 percent of the 6,500 people who had just tested positive had

been at restaurants or bars immediately before being diagnosed.

Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm has said that traditional bar settings are not yet allowed under current reopening rules. Instead, bar spaces are treated like restaurants, which means tables must be spaced six feet apart. And while bars have closed off half their seating to encourage social distancing, standing or crowding at the bar spaces is also not permitted.

Tony Chesak, from the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association, sent a memo to its members this past week warning that lax enforcement may lead to future closures.

"Servers, bartenders and other staff members, YOU MUST WEAR MASKS," he wrote. "It is the law and having

your customers wear them is mandatory in some cities in Minnesota but strongly suggested statewide. Make sure 'social distancing' is adhered to with both your staff and your customers (ie. table spacing; booth partitions; not gathering at the bar, etc.) Also, reservations is not just a suggestion, it, too, is a requirement."

Local impacts

Fortune Bay Director of Sales and Public Relations Brian Anderson said they have implemented the state guidelines, and so far, their guests have responded mostly positively to the new rules.

"They know we are taking this seriously," he said. "This is a new normal to get used to. It is not going to just go away."

Anderson said they require all their employees, as well as guests, to be wearing masks (except if

eating/drinking). Fortune Bay is also doing temperature checks on everyone entering the premises.

Fortune Bay staff meets daily to talk about safety and cleaning issues, as well as feedback from guests. Anderson said they have heard from some former customers who said they won't return if mask-wearing is required.

"We know that wearing masks is uncomfortable," he said. "We are protecting those at risk."

Autumn Jacobson, one of the co-owners at BayView Bar and Grill said they have reduced the capacity in their outdoor eating area and are following all the sanitizing/cleaning guidelines. But having their servers wear masks has been more of a challenge. All their servers do have masks with them and will put them on if requested by a

customer. But requiring their use while working outdoors in a hot and often humid environment is difficult, she said.

"We are trying our best," Jacobson said.

COVID-19 transmission in outdoor areas has not been as great a concern as in indoor seating environments. BayView is only serving food and drink outdoors this summer.

Having employees wear masks seems to be a tough sell in other restaurants also. The *Timberjay* has received comments from multiple area residents concerned about the lack of face masks by staff at area restaurants.

The lack of mask-wearing is keeping some regular customers, who fall into high-risk categories or have family members that do, from dining out.

MASKS...Continued from page 1

An Ely health professional asked one question this week, "Why aren't more people wearing face coverings?"

Jon Erickson, the executive director of the Ely Community Health Center, continues to voice caution about steps to help reduce the spread of the coronavirus.

"Although it is only a recommendation and not yet a mandatory requirement, wearing a face covering when you cannot ensure proper physical distancing should be compulsory," he said. "It is the only method, beyond re-implementing the mandatory stay-at-home orders, to restricting the transmission of the COVID-19 virus."

Last month, Erickson was asked to comment on the impact on public health in conducting a parade-type "patriotic march." Such an activity is slated to begin at 1 p.m. Saturday in downtown Ely.

Reduce the spread of COVID-19

► Wear masks when in public. 10-50 percent of virus carriers are asymptomatic, therefore wearing masks helps control the virus and has been shown to lower COVID-19 spread.

► Avoid enclosed spaces with groups of people where the virus can linger in the air for long periods of time.

► Get tested if you have cold or flu-like symptoms.

► Stay six feet away from others.

► Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or sleeve, or a tissue, and then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands afterwards.

► Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom or before eating. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-percent alcohol.

► Avoid touching your face "especially your eyes, nose and mouth" with unwashed hands.

Source: Ely Community Health Center

"We are now seeing a lot of tourists and visitors coming to experience what Ely has to offer, but since we have no way to check where these people are coming from, we have a hard time assessing what the future risk level really

is," Erickson said. "There is an established risk metric which would classify the Ely Fourth of July parade as a moderate risk as long as the parade organizers enforce physical distancing rules (where individuals from different

households remain spaced at least six feet apart and wear face coverings.)"

He added, "If the parade organizers do not enforce the separation of households by six feet and enforce the use of face coverings, the risk level would be elevated to the second highest level, which is the higher risk classification and should not be permitted this year."

Erickson said his position is influenced by "the general laissez-faire of the (Ely) community" in wearing face coverings in community gatherings and supermarkets. "In my observation, too many people are not following the general CDC guidelines, so that asking the parade organizers to enforce these rules when the community is not supporting them would not be a good decision," he said.

Medical professionals are starting to see that significant virus transmissions are happening from

people who are infected by the virus but are not demonstrating symptoms of the disease, according to Erickson.

"If you think that the risk of catching the virus is small because we live in a small rural community, the more important issue is that you could be a carrier of the virus but not demonstrating the symptoms," he said. "So please understand that wearing a face covering is not necessarily about protecting yourself, but about protecting your fellow community residents."

For now, face coverings may be the least liberty-restricting option available to public health officials.

"But if not enough people wear face coverings, further freedoms could be taken away, that's when social distancing is enforced, and certain lockdowns are resumed," Erickson warned.

Gov. Tim Walz said a statewide mandate requir-

ing all people to wear masks while in public is "on the table."

While he didn't give an indication this week on when he'd decide, the governor said such a move would offer public health benefits while helping businesses that are struggling to enforce their own mask rules.

In several other states this week, governors have delayed or even pulled back their next reopening phase amid rising case counts.

"It is unknown what the scope of the COVID-19 outbreak is, and it is unknown when there will be a vaccine," Erickson said. "What is known is that face coverings can help curb deaths, if people decide to put one on."

For more information, contact Erickson at director@elycommunityhealth.org or call 218-365-5678.

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COVID-19...Continued from page 1

tified in the days ahead, Morrison said she would be the primary contact for the Nett Lake side of the reservation and Defoe would be responsible for cases on the Vermilion side. However, Morrison said they would remain flexible, depending on scheduling and caseloads.

The tribe has the necessary equipment to conduct and process COVID-19 tests, with results typically ready in about 15 minutes, Morrison said. They also have additional nurses lined up to get the necessary training if more assistance is needed, she said.

The priority for any band member who tests positive for COVID-19 who lives on the reservation or within 30 to 45 minutes away is to have

their case handled by the tribal health care office, Morrison said. Limited resources make it impossible to assist band members who live farther away. Morrison offered one other disclaimer.

"If you're not native, I can't take your case," she said, "so that goes to the Minnesota Department of Health."

When asked why it was decided that tribal employees were brought back to work even though COVID-19 hasn't yet hit its possible peak, Morrison said the decision came down to numbers.

"We opened it up because we didn't have any cases," she said. "The red zone has been gone for a long time, like two months. We brought people back to work because the cases

weren't there. If we have more cases we can close it back down. We can bring the restrictions in more. That's why we opened it up. We can't stay home forever."

Morrison declined to answer numerous questions that would have violated patient confidentiality or asked for medical advice that should be addressed by a primary care physician.

She acknowledged the frustrations of those who wanted more information about the case and others who may be isolated or quarantined, but reemphasized the ethical and legal need to preserve confidentiality.

"I can say what district [a case is in] and I can say an age range," Morrison said. She also mentioned

an exception for emergency responders.

"If you live on the reservation we can only release your information to EMS," she said. "When I'm doing a case investigation I will ask if I can release your information to 911 dispatch. If there's a 911 call to your house, EMS and the police department will get that information."

Morrison also referred questions about the possible penalties for violating quarantine orders to the tribal council.

"I can't comment on the resolution," she said. "It's not mine."

Morrison spent the bulk of the hour presentation reviewing issues related to isolation, which is when someone who is sick is restricted to home quarantine. She described various ways in which people could utilize her office or friends and family to keep those on lockdown supplied with necessary food, medications, and other items.

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GOOD TO GO!

FLOWERS...Continued from page 1

nothing here now."

"I heard them doing it," Prepodnik said. "It didn't dawn on me that anybody could be that stupid. I've lived here all my life. There was never any need to alter this hillside before now."

The patch stretched about 20 yards, filling the ditch and going up a slope about five to ten feet to a tree line. On the end closest to a nearby stream a solitary tattered plant and bloom remained. Novak walked alongside the jumbled remains of shattered limbs.

"Look at how he dug in here, just cut way down in the ground," he said.

He reached the far end of the patch and stepped up the hill, pointing out a second remaining bloom behind a tree trunk.

"There's a survivor," Novak said. "He couldn't quite reach it to kill it."

Trailing behind, Prepodnik surveyed the



Beryl Novak, left, and Jim Prepodnik, live on either side of a large patch of ladyslippers that were destroyed by a St. Louis County brush clearing operation near Greaney. photo by D. Colburn

damage.

"This whole hillside was covered with them at times," he said. "At other times there weren't as many. This area here was covered with them."

Novak said he had talked with a county road foreman who told him that the branches needed to be trimmed because strobe

lights on service trucks were hitting them.

"Well, that's up there," Novak said, pointing up at chopped off limbs. Then he pointed to gouge marks at the base of several trees and in the dirt. "What do you call this?"

Novak said the foreman also told him that the county planned

to remove some trees and reshape the ditch because the road was starting to wash out.

To a casual observer, a segment of road appeared to show signs of recent water pooling and runoff, and portions of the ditch had either filled in or were higher than the adjacent road. "That's what he told me,

ditch work," Novak said.

Both men said the patch was well-known in the area, and that it was common to see cars parked on the road during blooms as drivers and riders got out to admire the flowers.

And when the showy ladyslippers aren't in bloom, both men have pictures in their houses that let them enjoy the flowers year-round.

"My daughter had her graduation pictures taken in here," Prepodnik said. "We had a professional photographer do it." Prepodnik had the photographer take pictures of his daughter, and also of the flowers by themselves.

"Those pictures are hanging all over the place. He really did a nice job on them."

"I've got a picture of one at home, there's 12 flowers on that one plant," Novak said.

Novak noted the irony of the destruction, given

the legal protections given the state flower.

"If somebody came in here and picked them or dug one up and tried to steal it and somebody caught them, you know what would happen," he said.

Neither man held out much hope that the patch would reappear next year.

"They're orchids, they're not dandelions," Novak said. "They're not going to pop out of the ground again. They just plain killed the things."

Novak seemed resigned to the end of a 50-year tradition of anticipating the blooming of the orchids.

"That's the thrill of living up here," he said. "You enjoy stuff as it comes. That's the way we live up here."

Prepodnik was equally dejected.

"I don't expect to see any next year," he said.

EIS...Continued from page 1

to disruption of critical mineral supplies," said William Perry Pendley, Deputy Director for Policy and Programs for the BLM.

The announcement begins a public process for scoping of issues that will be examined in the EIS. The BLM is currently deciding when and where it will hold public scoping meetings. Once that decision is made, notifications will be published in the Duluth News-Tribune and the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

The BLM's decision to move ahead with an EIS comes less than a week after the Minnesota

Department of Natural Resources announced that the company's mine plan was "incomplete." The DNR, at the same time, submitted more than 800 questions and comments to Twin Metals related to the proposal. A company spokesperson said Twin Metals would be responding quickly to the DNR's questions and concerns.

Unlike the review of PolyMet's proposed copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes, where the DNR and the federal Forest Service produced a joint EIS, the DNR has announced that it will conduct a separate state review for the project. The project is highly controversial in Minnesota

due to its proximity to the 1.1 million-acre Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and it appears that state regulators have questions about the Trump administration's commitment to environmental regulation. State regulators would ultimately be responsible for the bulk of the permitting required for the Twin Metals project.

This week's announcement was lauded by pro-mining organizations. "Twin Metals' proposed mine has the potential to help revitalize the economy of northeastern Minnesota by creating more than 750 high-wage, family-sustaining mining jobs plus 1,500 spinoff jobs in the region," said Nancy Norr, Chair of the

industry-backed group Jobs for Minnesotans. "And, it will provide strategic minerals critical to the medical industry, broadband communications technology and the transition to a green economy," added Norr.

A Twin Metals spokesperson also lauded the decision. "This is a standard but significant step in the process," said Julie Padilla, Twin Metals Chief Regulatory Officer. "It signals that the federal government is moving ahead with its regulatory review, which we expect will take a number of years to complete and should include any relevant data from previous studies."

Meanwhile, critics of the project blasted the

administration's decision. Former Minnesota DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr, who now serves as executive director of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, challenged the argument of supporters who claim that the U.S. needs the metals that the Twin Metals mine would produce. "America has 24 mines producing copper," said Landwehr. "There is no shortage of copper, but there is only one Boundary Waters."

Critics note that the federal review comes just as President Trump has signed an executive order that sharply limits the scope and time frame of environmental reviews as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The administration has also refused to release scientific studies and other data gathered by the Forest Service as part of a two-year study of a proposed mineral withdrawal in the area covered by the Twin Metal leases. The administration abruptly canceled that study last year, just weeks before it was scheduled for completion.

"They have shredded the federal Clean Water Act, gutted the National Environmental Policy Act, arbitrarily reinstated expired leases, made a joke of the environmental review process, canceled critical studies, and suppressed important science, all with the goal of handing over America's most popular wilderness to

be exploited for the benefit of a Chilean multinational mining company," said Landwehr.

Chris Knopf, executive director of Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, agreed. "In its unflagging enthusiasm for these mines, the Trump administration has suppressed science, hidden information, ignored pending litigation, and twisted the law to allow a Chilean-owned company to override the will of the American people," he said in a statement.

BLM's Perry dismisses such concerns. "If the plan of operation is approved, you can rest assured knowing that development and production of critical minerals is done in an environmentally-responsible, regulatory-consistent, and economically-feasible manner," he said.

The proposed mine plan operations and maps showing the locations of the proposed mine, existing leases, and requested preference-right lease, and shapefiles showing the locations of areas proposed for development can be found at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/1503233/510>.

Financial questions persist

Even as the federal environmental review gets underway, questions still remain about the financial viability of the Twin Metals project. The mine plan presented by Twin Metals in December did not include any financial projections and the company has not responded to questions on the subject from the Timberjay.

A financial projection issued by Duluth Metals, the former parent to the Twin Metals project, in 2014, prompted a collapse in Duluth Metals' stock price, at which point Antofagasta acquired the company at a fire sale price. That disappointing projection was based on an assumed copper price of \$3.50 per pound and an assumed nickel price of \$9.50 per pound. Copper has not reached \$3.50 per pound at any time in the past five years and was trading at \$2.73 per pound this week. Nickel has averaged less than \$6 per pound over the past five years and is currently trading at \$5.78 per pound.



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AGRICULTURE

Sowing hope among seeds of despair

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

R E G I O N A L - Everyone knows farming can be a tough occupation, but many aren't aware of just how tough it's become, or the toll it's taking on the people dedicated to producing the food we eat.

U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts for net cash farm income were bleak for 2020 before the havoc of COVID-19 reared its devastating head.

In February, the USDA predicted double-digit losses in all crop categories except specialty crops. Corn farmers were expected to bring in 12.4 percent less than in 2019—wheat farmers, a whopping 25.5 percent less.

Corn could well be worse, as at \$3.15 a bushel the price is down a dollar from last year, and down 60 percent from 2012's high of more than \$8 a bushel. There's plenty of excess corn to be had after recent bumper crops, compounded by the closure of a key buyer, ethanol plants, who shut their doors when oil companies received a COVID-19-inspired exemption from having to use ethanol in their fuel.

The current crisis is likely to exacerbate long term trends of increased bankruptcies and, more tragically, suicides. The incidence of suicides among farmers has increased by 40 percent in the past two decades, catapulting the profession to the fourth-highest rate among all occupations, according to a CDC analysis released in January.

Higher prices at the grocery store haven't translated into more income for those who produce the food we eat, and although the CARES Act included almost \$25 billion to help farmers offset COVID-19-related losses, it didn't address the non-COVID losses already projected by USDA.

In southern Minnesota, where farming is big business, there's been a program for more than

New service supports farmers experiencing tough times



Rich Tunell

20 years designed to help farmers cope with stress and prevent suicide. In the northland, driven by the three T's of timber, taconite, and tourism, farmers have been left to find such resources themselves.

But that's changing with the advent of a new program through Lake Superior Community Health Center, a program with offices in Duluth and Superior. Thanks to a grant from the Miller-Dwan Foundation, farmers in this region now have access to someone who will come to them, for free, to help navigate their way through stressful times.

Rural health outreach

Program coordinator Rich Tunell wasn't a farm kid or an agriculture professional. He was in communication and technology and discovered over time that what he liked best was helping people solve their problems. That interest was

heightened even more through his work with a Stephen Ministry at his church. Helping became a passion, enough so that Tunell abandoned his career and earned a master's degree in counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

Now, as the program's first coordinator, hired in March, Tunell has an even deeper appreciation for farmers and is busy getting the word out that he's ready to do whatever it takes to help them through difficult times.

"I admire their resilience," Tunell said. "They're basing their livelihood on something they might not even see today. They don't know what their crop is going to be like, they don't know what the price is going to be when they sell it. It's all based on future prospects, on faith. That's a big thing I like. They tend to care for their neighbors. I like the idea that many farms have been passed down through generations. It's heritage, it's ingrained into who they are in their lives."

Tunell said he grew up in a family that ran a seasonal restaurant in Superior, so understands family-oriented businesses and the financial challenges they face.

He also draws on his military experience, four years with the Air Force in Spain doing communications and computer work. He was within a month of returning stateside when President George

H.W. Bush announced Operation Desert Shield. "That threw me for a loop," he said. "Most of my stuff was already shipped back; my wife was already here. Should I volunteer to stay, or do I just get out?" Faced with a stressful dilemma, Tunell did what he hopes farmers will do—he turned to someone else for counsel.

"I talked to my commander about it," Tunell said. "He didn't see any problem with me getting out. Things were still up in the air as to what was going on, and that's what he recommended to me."

"You never know what to expect," he added. "It looks like you have everything laid out and all of a sudden a curve ball comes. You have to be prepared to handle what comes." Tunell knows that the quality of resilience he admires in farmers can sometimes end up being a barrier to asking for help.

"A lot of times it's hard for people in these positions to open up to each other and family," he said. "They have to be the stoic one, they have to be the one in charge who holds things together. To get someone to break through that barrier is hard."

That's why Tunell has started his work by looking to connect with people who interact with farmers on a regular basis.

"It's not necessarily directly contacting the farmers," he said. "It's dealing with their pastors, their bankers, their insurance companies, where they buy their food, so that when I gain their trust maybe the farmers will see that I'm trustworthy. I don't want to be a sales person and push my way into someone's life because you just get pushed away and you can't even open the door then."

While Tunell is available by phone or in his office, his goal is to take his services out on the farm, where he believes farmers feel most comfortable. He starts learning the moment he pulls into a farmer's driveway, paying close attention to the history and stories to be gleaned from observing the land, the equipment, and the buildings. And he's in no rush to come and go, knowing that establishing a relationship with someone is important in being able to help.

"I'm interested in their stories, how they developed, how it formed who they are today," he said. "If they want me to come alongside them on the farm and spend the day with them to get to know them, I will."

Tunell emphasized that his job isn't about mental illness, it's about mental health, and helping farmers and families

handle the extraordinary stress they may be under.

"What I really want to focus on is dealing with their stress, their relationships, and where they're at. I think everyone can use help in some form or another. We can always improve how we talk to each other, how we listen to each other, how we have a different mindset for the stresses we have to deal with. They just need some outlet, some unbiased person who can come in and tell them they're doing OK and how to handle stress a little bit better, how to help with communication. That's more my approach."

Tunell said he's grateful that the nature of the program allows him to concentrate on service, rather than generating numbers.

"I can't be keeping stats on how many farmers I've seen every week," he said. "If you worry about that you're going to blow it. I look at this as a long-term process where I take my time and let them get to know me and get comfortable with where I'm at. Before they need help, or when they need help, I'm available."

Those interested in learning more about Tunell and the rural health initiative can call Tunell at 218-730-6833, or send an email to rtunell@lscchc.org.

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COVID-19

Personal protective equipment for all

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

ELY - A cabin owner in rural Ely is doing his part to keep his new "home-town" safe during the coronavirus pandemic.

Carl "Levi" Levinson is a software engineer by training who had been visiting the Ely area for more than a decade before deciding to buy a rustic lakeshore cabin to call his own.

He now is becoming known for his grassroots effort, elymask.org, to make sure there are enough masks available in Ely and neighboring towns to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Early warnings

Levinson speaks Chinese and Japanese, and taught at a university in Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the worldwide coronavirus outbreak, earlier in his career.

He's been reading and watching news from China, in Chinese, for years, and in January started noticing videos of Chinese nationals purchasing large quantities of masks from stores in the U.S., often clearing the shelves of warehouse-style retailers.

"The United States government has documented this," he said. "Over a billion masks were exported from the U.S. to China between January and March."

Levinson was also reading about the novel coronavirus.

"I was seeing all this stuff," he said, "and I wanted to be prepared."

So Levinson started purchasing items like N95 masks, surgical masks, rubber gloves, blue shop towels, disinfectants, alcohol, and wipes.

A strategy of caring

Levinson emphasized that he wasn't hoarding; he had no intention of trying to sell these items at above-market prices. In fact, he was planning to simply give them all away.

But soon he realized that the items he was looking for were all out of stock.

"I started buying parts, things that could be assembled," he said. "My intention has been to help the hospitals, emergency responders, and the city of Ely."



How to help

Any citizens who want to donate fabric or time (cutting) to help supply the kits of pre-cut fabric and tie-strings can text/call 218-235-0525. elymask.org is committed to supporting local sewing experts. Any sewing expert who needs fabric or kits supplied, please call/text the number above.

His strategy had two parts. The first was to create low-cost, disposable masks that could be used until reusable cloth masks were available.

Levinson started tinkering with a low-cost alternative, the blue shop towel, which laboratory testing has found to be better than cloth at filtration.

First, he designed a single-use shop towel mask that only cost pennies to make and could easily be assembled into bulk kits.

Then he designed a fitted mask using multiple layers of blue shop towels, masking tape, and elastic

bands. Levinson's idea was to create kits so that individuals or businesses could make the masks they needed for their employees and to sell to customers. The kits that were assembled in plastic bins included directions, rubber gloves and alcohol spray so that the person assembling the masks could keep the entire process as sterile as possible.

The second part of his strategy was to create a team of local sewers, which he assisted by providing materials and even sewing equipment to make the mask-making process go more quickly.

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Carl "Levi" Levinson is gaining a following around Ely for his grassroots effort, elymask.org.
photos by J. Summit

the fabric and sewing ties.

While he has been able to donate the supplies for the blue shop towel masks, as well as materials to create cloth masks, Levinson said people need to understand that cloth masks cannot all be free.

Low-cost fabric masks are also now available, he said, and are being stocked in many area retail stores.

And the idea of hiring local sewers to make masks that will be sold in local stores is a win-win, he said.

"I want to help get that ecosystem going," he said.

Levinson just purchased another 40 yards of fabric and said that he is still looking for a few more local sewers to work with him, as the need for low-cost disposable masks is still ongoing.

"Churches are needing a lot of these masks," he said.

The efforts at Wintergreen Design have provided thousands of high-quality washable masks, he said, most of which have been given away for free.

"This is a symbol of

Ely kindness, and a truly consecrated civic effort," he said.

Levinson is assisting that effort by donating pre-cut fabric and ties and is looking for volunteers to help with pre-cutting

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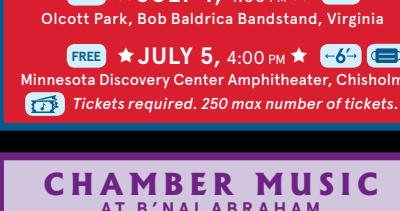
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FOURTH OF JULY

Modified celebrations planned

Ely, Tower, and Orr all plan fireworks and a variety of activities as communities adjust to COVID-19

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

REGIONAL- The novel coronavirus has wreaked havoc on traditional community celebrations for the Fourth of July. But some events, including fireworks in Orr, Tower-Soudan, and Ely are still on the calendar despite the ongoing pandemic.

Orr has always provided a jumpstart to area celebrations,

with its Third of July celebration. This year, there will be fireworks launched from Orr Bay on Friday night, sponsored by the Pelican Lake Resort Association. The show will start shortly after dusk, and the best place for landlubbers to view would be between the public access boat ramp behind Pelican Bay Foods and the highway pullout south of Oveson's Pelican Lake Resort and Inn.

Those who would like a little music with their fireworks may want to be at the Orr Muni, where the band Nightshift will be playing outside from 8 p.m. to midnight. The Orr Muni is also advertising a bean bag tournament on July 3, with registration beginning at 5:30 p.m. The event begins at 6 p.m., with competition limited to the first 32 teams. The registration fee is \$20 per team, with 100-percent paybacks.

Tower-Soudan will not have a parade this year, but they will have a professionally-run fireworks show by Pyrotechnics Display of Minneapolis. The Fourth of July show will start at 10 p.m. sharp, with fireworks shot off the hill north of Tower.

The show will start with a big bang and continue for approximately 20 minutes, ending with a

See FOURTH...pg. 2B



LAKE LIFE

Aboard a Vermilion tradition

Mail boat provides service and an entertaining tour of Lake Vermilion

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

TOWER- Skies were cloudy and Lake Vermilion's surface was troubled by a brisk, cool wind early Friday morning, but nothing that day would prevent a certain courier from the swift completion of his appointed rounds. And as the mail boat pulled out of Pike Bay headed toward open waters, a brilliant white glimmer of sunshine that suddenly appeared on the not-too-distant surface promised it would be a good day to be out on the lake after all.

"Tradition" barely does justice as a description for the mail boat service operated out of Aronson Boat Works. For nigh onto 100 years, the mail boat has been delivering letters and packages to island and other water-access summer homes on the Tower end of Lake Vermilion.

There is, however, no nostalgia to be found in the brand-new Lund demonstration boat used to run the circuit six days a week. But the boat's skipper and mail carrier, Larry Milbridge, makes sure his tourist passengers get a good lesson about life on the lake, with stories of the present spiced with items of history both general and personal.

"This is my home area," Larry said. "I retired from my real job. I was a game warden up on Lake of the Woods for 25 years. I bought an old tear-down (house) years ago and, when I retired, I tore it down and put in a new place."

I heard that the mail boat job had come up. Three months in the summer – that's kind of a no-brainer."

That was six years ago, and for Larry, slipping into the role wasn't difficult at all.

"I've been on the lake since I was nine years old," he said. "Even when I moved away to work, I'd come back to my parents' lake place. I knew the lake, that was the easy part. Learning the route took about two or three days."

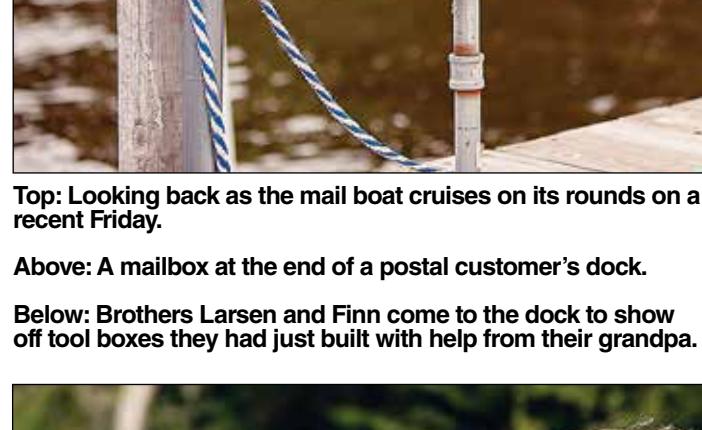
A sample of personal history popped up as the boat passed an old weathered boathouse.

"We used to jump off that boathouse when we were kids," he laughed. "I shimmied up there and jumped right in."

While it's estimated that there are about 3,300 homes around the entire lake, only places on the Tower end of the lake that are isolated and accessed only by water are part of the mail route. That makes Larry's delivery load around 50 stops or fewer. Last Friday's deliveries took him from near Rice Bay in the east to Oak Narrows in the west.

Bald eagles, singles and pairs, watched from the trees as the mail boat whizzed by, sometimes slowing to allow a better look. Headed west, a young bald eagle in flight slipped into formation in the air off the port side and briefly kept pace before turning away.

A loon mama toting a fuzzy brown baby on her back was unruffled as the boat encroached on her small cove to reach the only visible dock



Top: Looking back as the mail boat cruises on its rounds on a recent Friday.

Above: A mailbox at the end of a postal customer's dock.

Below: Brothers Larsen and Finn come to the dock to show off tool boxes they had just built with help from their grandpa.



Right: A drake mallard shows little interest in the mail boat's arrival.

all photos by D. Colburn

around.

As a game warden, Larry was attuned to the possibilities of nature sightings, but there was another aspect to the job he appeared to enjoy even more.

"It's a personal business – you meet a lot of nice people

See MAILBOAT...pg. 2B

VFW BASEBALL



Ely's Jackson Levens waits for a throw while an Esko player kicks up dust with a slide to second.

photo by K. Vandervort

Ely splits with Esko

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – The Ely U-16 VFW baseball team split a doubleheader with Esko last Saturday at their first home appearance of the season at Veterans Memorial Field.

The Timberwolves lost the first game of the day, 6-4, despite a worthy performance by pitcher Harry Simons, who threw a complete game while giving up just three earned runs. He gave up seven hits, allowed five walks and had five strikeouts.

Simons also added two hits at the plate. Eddie Prijatel had three hits and scored two runs and Jackson Levens batted in two runs.

Ely bounced back for a 7-6 win in the second game. Prijatel was winning pitcher, throwing in the last two innings, allowing one earned run, no hits, one walk, and two strikeouts. Starting pitcher Jacob Towley pitched the first three innings and gave up five runs, three earned, three hits, six walks, and had three strikeouts.

Towley also contributed an RBI double. Joey Bianco had two hits, including a two-run single. Iver Lepisto added a walk-off sacrifice fly, driving in Bryce Fairchild.

Ely opened the season last Friday at Cook County, losing 14-11. Relief pitcher Elliot Levens took the loss. He pitched three innings, allowing eight runs, one earned. He gave up just one hit, allowed five walks and had one strikeout. Starting pitcher Bryce Fairchild was on the mound for three innings, allowing six runs, three hits, three walks, and had two strikeouts.

Simons had two hits, two runs, and a two-run single. Prijatel also had a two-run single. Logan Loe had two 2 RBI.

"We were down 6-1, then went ahead 11-6," said Coach Jim Wittrup. "We couldn't hold the lead, and lost 14-11. We had a couple bad defensive stretches, and made 11 errors. Typical first-game stuff."

The Timberwolves were set to travel to Taconite on Thursday, July 2 and International Falls on Tuesday, July 7. Ely is scheduled to host Proctor on Thursday, July 9.

All youth sports were delayed this spring due to public health concerns and stay-at-home orders because of the coronavirus. Game schedules could change without notice.



FALL FESTIVALS

Ely Chamber to decide on Harvest Moon later this month

ELY - A final decision on a recommendation from the Ely Chamber of Commerce events and promotions committee that the organization's 2020 Harvest Moon Festival be canceled will come from the chamber's board of directors later this month.

According to Chamber Executive Director Eva Sebesta, the chamber's board will wait until the end of July to make a final decision on Ely's second large festival of the summer.

Back in April, the chamber canceled this year's Blueberry/Art Festival and several other summer events due to public health concerns over the coronavirus and the state's stay-at-home orders.

The chamber's events committee recommended on May 26 that the smaller fall festival also be called off this year because of the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

The minutes of the May events and promotions commit-



tee, released on Thursday, June 25 stated:

"Harvest Moon Festival – After committee review of a letter received from the Events

Coordinator, Ellen Cashman, and in light of the recent cancellations of large public gatherings including the Minnesota State Fair due to COVID-19, a motion

was made by Jodi Martin with support by Bonnie Starkman to recommend cancellation of the Harvest Moon Festival for 2020. Motion carried. The Chamber Board will make the final determination on the recommendation."

"Ellen has been following the Minnesota events and festivals association and the recommendations they have been giving," Sebesta said, "and right now we are waiting to hear what the recommendations are from the Minnesota Department of Health and what the Governor is going to allow."

She said that current guidelines allow for a "few hundred" people to get together. The Harvest Moon Festival typically draws thousands of visitors into Ely.

"Our decision is going to be dictated by what the Governor is going to allow for in terms of events," Sebesta said.

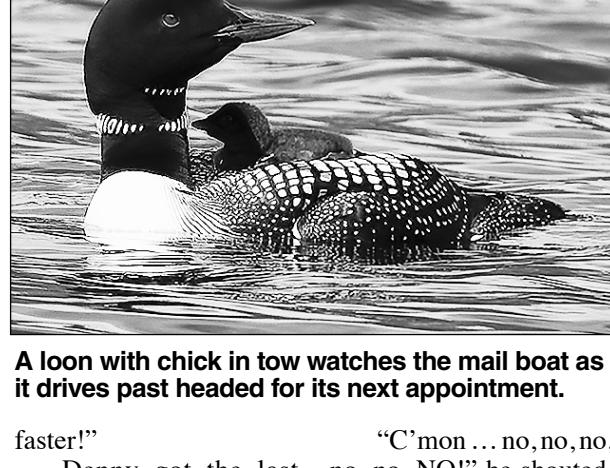
"The board is holding off (on

their decision) because things are changing literally every day. We want to wait as long as possible, which is July 28, and we still want to give folks enough notice so that if we do cancel, vendors can get their refunds. We want to have the best possible information when we make our decision," she said.

Any decision by the chamber's board of directors will be made with no current members as this week the terms of board president Brian Forsberg and board treasurer Chuck Zeugner are set to expire, according to Sebesta. Board elections will determine the board's new leadership structure.

The Ely Watercross Association is hosting a racing event Aug. 8-9 at the Longbranch in Winton. A gathering of ATV riders from around the state will hold a convention in the Ely area Sept. 18-20. The Ely Marathon, on Sept. 26, is also still scheduled.

MAIL BOAT...Continued from page 1B



A loon with chick in tow watches the mail boat as it drives past headed for its next appointment.

faster!"

Denny got the last word.

"It's Friday!"

At another stop, Larry sometimes finds a treat waiting.

"Hi, Sharon," he called out.

"She leaves blueberry scones in here for me sometimes," he said as he opened the mailbox.

"My wife has come with me before and she said, 'Please stop feeding the mailman.'"

A stiff breeze caused an anxious moment as Larry backed away from the dock and the boat drifted precariously close to the rocky shallows.

"C'mon ... no, no, no, no, no, NO!" he shouted, coming within inches of striking the propeller before moving away. "Boy, did I luck out there. This thing acts like a sail. I used to have an old clunker, and if you hit something it didn't matter. This is the boss's boat. It's for sale. Situations like that – not good."

Five new stops were added to the route this summer, and a few of them reflect a change in type of customers.

"These are some of my new types of customers – people who are working from home," he said as he pulled up to another

dock. "You can probably see most of my people are retired – who else can spend summer at a lake place? But now I've got people working from home this year. They said they have great service out here, and most of these people, their work is on computers. Things are changing out here."

Larry appeared to be on top of changes large and small, pointing out new construction in one spot where the day before barges brought three cement trucks, and noting another where someone was re-planking a dock. He notes points of interest along the way, including lodges, campgrounds, sites of past fires, and has stories to go with most of them.

"These people are fun here," he said as the boat zoomed past a waterfront cabin. "They've got a tiki bar. See that boat that's upside down? It's called the S.S. Painkiller."

While Larry is a good conversationalist, he never takes his eyes off of the route, looking for other boats, loons, and on Friday, the unexpected – three swimmers out in open water that caused him to throttle back suddenly.

No waving, no bright life jackets, just three heads bobbing up and down in the rough waves as they were treading water. A high-speed course correction to avoid one would've sent the boat straight at another. As Larry maneuvered the boat between swimmers at low speed, he turned to one and muttered "Not smart" before jumping back up to speed.

While the mail is a priority, safety always comes first, even if that means setting aside the postal service's reputation for delivering in any and all conditions.

"My last day last summer I had an old couple with me and as we came out of Pike Bay, I said, 'Folks, I don't normally do this but I'm asking we all put a life jacket on,'" he said. "I could just see it was all whitecaps. We started heading toward Birch Island and the water starts coming over the bow, and I said, 'That's it, we're going back.' No piece of mail is worth my life or my customer's life."

Larry said he hasn't noticed a decrease in boat traffic this season, but there's been a change in the types of boats he's seen

Want to go?

The mail boat runs Mondays through Saturdays, leaving the dock at Aronson Boat Works at 9 a.m. More information about ticket prices and reservations is available by calling 218-753-4190, or on the Aronson website at <https://www.aronsonboatworks.com/mailboat-excursions>.

seeing.

"There are more pontoons, for sure," he said. "That's the fastest growing segment of the boating industry. They're nice, they're comfortable, but they take up too much dock space at the restaurants."

Pontoons have become more popular because of structural and horsepower enhancements that make them capable replacements for ski boats while providing plenty of room for passengers.

"It's not grandma and grandpa's putt-putt-around-the-lake pontoon anymore," he said.

FOURTH...Continued from page 1B

grand finale. The fireworks are visible from many spots in Tower and Soudan, and even out on the lake.

Good Ol' Days on Tower's Main Street will have fire dancers, a Fourth of July tradition, performing as soon as it starts to get dark. They are also having music outdoors with Ron E Cash at 12 noon, and Ely Ed at 6 p.m. Food and drinks will be available at Good Ol' Days on July 4.

There will be no formal Vermilion 10K/5K run this year but the 10K loop route will be marked July 3 through July 5. The starting line will be marked in front of the Tower Fire Department with a map of the route. Directional markers and mile markers will be on the route. Runners should be aware that there will be no one at road crossings and there will be no water stations. Anyone wishing to run a 5K can start at the finish line (on the bike trail at end of Main St., behind Vermilion Land Office), run 2.5K on the route, then turn around to finish. The finish line will be marked with a spot to take a photo, which can be emailed to vcs charter@gmail.com

along with your race time.

While Ely's parade has been canceled, a Fourth of July march is set for 1 p.m., using the traditional parade route.

Marchers will assemble on Stuckel Avenue (by the football field) and begin the march at Harvey Street, head west to 2nd Avenue, turn right at the Ely Post Office and proceed to Sheridan Street. Marchers will turn east onto Sheridan Street and proceed past Whiteside

Park to 8th Avenue and turn right, ending at Harvey Street.

According to event organizers on the 4th in Ely Facebook page, the patriotic march will be led by the Ely Honor Guard and will feature the Ely Klown Band, rescue vehicles, private and community floats, kids on bikes and the traditional distribution of goodies and groceries by Zup's Food Market.

The city of Ely is still sponsoring the annual

fireworks show at dusk, with fireworks being set off over Miners Lake.

The Four on the Fourth run will be done as a virtual event.

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TOWER-BREITUNG WASTEWATER BOARD

Disinfectant by-product levels still a concern

Joint wastewater board still hoping for state or federal grant funding to upgrade water filtration plant

by JODI SUMMIT
Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER-SOU DAN-While the 2019 drinking water reports for Tower and Soudan both show no violations of EPA limits, the levels of disinfectant by-products trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids are still high enough to be of concern for the long-term safety of the water supply.

"The numbers are pretty similar for both Tower and Soudan," said Water Plant Manager Matt Tuchel. "And they've been at those levels for several years now."

Trihalomethanes ranged from 26.1-58.2 parts per billion (ppb) in Tower and 29-67.9 ppb in Soudan last year. Total haloacetic acids ranged from

36-54 ppb in Tower and 37-62 in Soudan. EPA limits are 80 ppb for trihalomethanes and 60 ppb for total haloacetic acids.

While neither of these chemicals is a danger to the general public in the short-term, they can be of concern for residents with certain health issues over the long term. Both chemicals are by-products of the water chlorination process. The plant has needed to use more chlorination chemicals in recent years to deal with surface water contamination in the well that is increasing the amount of organic matter in the well water itself. Beaver activity around the well area has been a concern, and the wastewater board has been hiring a trapper to remove beavers twice a year. Tuchel said they are removing between 50-60

beavers from the area every year. Beavers have also been causing problems at the sewage ponds, Tuchel said, doing damage to the dikes that contain the water.

The wastewater board has plans to upgrade the water filtration plant, and has worked with engineers from SEH Engineering, who ran a series of high-tech tests on the well water last year to determine the most effective and cost-efficient upgrades. The \$3 million project is included in this year's bonding bill that was approved in the State House, but Tuchel was not certain if the project made the cut in the Senate's version. Unfortunately, the legislature has yet to come to an agreement on a bonding bill in this year's session, though there is a chance the legislature will

meet sometime this summer and complete work on the bonding bill.

The board has also put in an application to a federal grant project run by the Army Corps of Engineers. Tuchel said the project meets the qualifications for funding, but said the program only make grants to a few projects in the state each year.

Tuchel said the project is likely unaffordable without assistance.

The 2019 Drinking Water Report showed no concerns with the amount of lead, copper, nitrates, and chlorine in either town's supply. Both lead and copper are found in household drinking water supplies mostly through corrosion of household plumbing fixtures



and pipes.

Copies of the complete drinking water reports are available for review at Tower City Hall and Breitung Town Hall.

Obituaries and Death Notices



Family Funeral Home in Virginia.

Beverly was born on May 30, 1940, the daughter of Frank and Julia (McKay) Desanno, in Soudan. She was a 1958 graduate of Tower High School, and married Bernard Lawrence in 1958. They lived in Embarrass, Tower and Virginia, where they raised their family. Beverly managed three separate Stevenson's stores at one time - two in Virginia and one in Chisholm - and was proud to have the top two stores in the chain of 80. She also worked at Ketola's Department Store and White Drug, delivered meds to nursing homes, and in her retirement, she cleaned homes. Beverly lived on Bass Lake for a period of time, moved to Midway, and relocated to Rochester to be close to her children, due to her failing health.

Beverly was a member of Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church in Virginia where she was involved in the choir, quilting group, Stephen's Ministry Team, and her Circle. She was a Sunday coffee organizer and helped serve special meals and funerals. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star

in Virginia, and was a Past Worthy Matron in Tower. She was a past treasurer of the Thunderbird Mall Association, a past president of the East Range Chapter of Business and Professional Women, and held state offices for multiple years. She was an avid gardener, and enjoyed outdoor activities, quilting, embroidery, and ceramics. For the past 20-plus years, Beverly enjoyed life with Arthur Lehtonen, her special friend and loving companion. They shared a rich life full of experiences and adventures together.

Beverly is survived by her special friend, Art Lehtonen of Virginia; children, Kim (Randy) Waldron of Rochester and Robert (Linda) Lawrence of Stewartville; brother, Robert Desanno of Crystal; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and extended family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Julia Desanno; sister, Marilyn Stephenson; and many extended family members.

Natalie Chinn

Natalie "Sis" Baird Chinn, 70, of Babbitt, passed away on Friday, June 26, 2020, at her home in Babbitt. A celebration

of life will be held on Saturday, July 18 from 2-4 p.m. at Tank's Restaurant & Bar in Babbitt. Family arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.

She is survived by her husband, Bill Chinn of Babbitt; sons, Kevin (Cheryl) Lantz of Coleraine and Kyle (Anita) Lantz of Embarrass; grandsons, Taylor and Cameron Lantz of Coleraine; brothers, Gary Baird of Minneapolis and Mitch (Dawn) Baird of Golden Valley; sister, Jackie (Greg) Aho of Burnsville; nieces, Kaci Baird, Jessy Aho and Caitlin (Billy) Fox; nephew, Mark (Elizabeth) Mercurio; great-nieces, Gina, Gabi, Shyla and Marla; and great-nephew, Easton.

Ray Roy Koski

Ray Roy Koski, 74, of Embarrass, passed away on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at his home. The family would like to thank the Essentia Health East Range Hospice and the Essentia Health Oncology and Infusion Center for their caring hearts and kindness during Ray's care. A graveside service was held at Greenwood Cemetery in Virginia on Thursday, July 2 with Pastor Gus Layman officiating.

Arrangements were with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Irene Wudinich Koski; son, Walter Koski; daughter, Pam (Jeff) Cerar; granddaughter, Brooklyn; an aunt and uncle; and several cousins.

Walter E. Walker Jr.

Walter Ernest Walker Jr., 99, formerly of Cook, died on Saturday, June 20, 2020, at Trinity Care Center in Farmington. A memorial service was held on Thursday, July 2 at First Baptist Church in Cook. Military Honors were accorded by the U.S. Navy Honor Guard. Arrangements were with Mlaker Funeral Home of Cook.

Lois J. Walden

Lois J. Bozicevich Walden, 84, of Tower, passed away on Monday, May 25, 2020, in Sun City, Ariz. The family is planning a celebration of life at a later time.

She is survived by her son, Robert (Nancy) Walden; daughters, Karen (Bradley) Forseen and Susan (Roger) Nelson;

grandchildren, Hans Walden, Alissa Walden, Katy (Reid) Romer, Jane (James) Bernard, Abby Polski, Cole Nelson and Hannah Nelson; brother, John Bozicevich; numerous nieces and nephews; and her significant other, Rich Collins of Sun City, Ariz.

Marlene J. Kari

Marlene June Kinney Kari, 84, of Blaine, formerly of Embarrass, passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2020, at Park River Estates in Coon Rapids. A private family burial will take place at Waasa Cemetery. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her daughters, Wendy Kari and Lynn Catherson, both of East Bethel; sons, Robert (Susie) Kari of Ocoee, Fla., and Patrick Kari of Fridley; grandchildren, Josh, Justin, Brandon, Brianna, Jacob, Erik and Callen; eight great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

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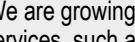
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Outdoors

Our lives in the
Northwoods

WILD FOODS

A potentially strong berry crop in need of rain

An exceptionally dry late winter-summer stretch has sent water levels plummeting

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL — It will all come down to the rain. After last year's disappointing wild berry crop, the signs were pointing to better news this year for fans of blueberries, juneberries, and other wild foods here in the North Country. Berry bushes were full of flowers in late May and the area mostly avoided any serious freeze in June, which

allowed the berries to set.

But a drier than usual spring has since turned into a moderate drought across much of the area, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. That, combined with unusually hot temperatures for the region, could well leave a promising berry crop withered, at least in some areas.

Rocky outcrops, where shallow, acidic soils and more sun tend to favor blueberries, are already parched in many cases,

although sporadic rains earlier in the week provided a little short-term relief. Areas with sandy soils aren't faring much better, since they drain quickly in the absence of regular rain. While swamp berries typically have better moisture reserves available, the intensifying drought could limit the abundance of those as well.

The drought is a remarkable

See **DROUGHT**...pg. 5B



Left:
Blueberries
are plentiful
in many
locations but
getting them
to maturity
will take
significantly
more rain.
The crop is
stressed due
to the
ongoing
drought.



Wildflower Watch

This week's featured flower
BUSH HONEYSUCKLE



The **Bush Honeysuckle**, *Diervilla lonicera*, is one of our most common wildflowers, although it's sometimes easy to overlook. The bush honeysuckle is a low-growing shrub that is found in abundance in forests across the North Country. Look for the leaning stems, which typically grow 1-2 feet in length and the lance-shaped leaves, which are attached to the stem opposite of each other.

The yellow, trumpet-shaped flowers, which grow at the tip of the shrub's stem, are often visited by hummingbirds.

New state forest maps to help you find summer fun

REGIONAL — Eight new state forest maps from the Minnesota DNR feature recreation highlights to help Minnesotans find their perfect adventure.

The maps, in print and mobile formats, are available for Bear Island, Big Fork, Burntside, Golden Anniversary, Remer, Koochiching, Smokey Bear, and White Earth state forests.

State forest maps can lead the way to summer hiking, mountain biking, birding, berry picking, horseback and ATV riding, fishing, camping and more.

"Whether you prefer a wilderness canoe paddle or an ATV ride, there's a summer state forest experience for everyone—and our new state forest maps will make the experience even better," said Laura Duffey, state forest map coordinator.

Here are just a few examples of the outdoor summer fun available at state forests:

Look up at the towering pines of the Lost 40 Scientific and Natural Area inside Big Fork State Forest.

Canoe among the pines at the Bear Island and Burntside state forests. Nestled on the edge of the Boundary Waters, these offer a northwoods paddling experience.

Cruise through trees on the

Above: A song sparrow is on full alert when the photographer happened past an area with fledged young nearby. Moments later, this bird feigned a wing injury in hopes of leading the photographer away.

Below: A song sparrow, revealing its central chest patch.

M. Helmberger



collection of chips, trills, and buzzy phrases that comprise the song sparrow's song. To most human ears, it has a reputation as a pleasing singer, hence its name.

Song sparrows also look different depending on where they're from. Here, in the north, our song sparrows tend to be dark brown, while in desert regions they can be much paler,

often with reddish overtones. In other regions, they are much grayer in appearance. In all cases, however, the song sparrow can be distinguished from most other sparrows by the heavy streaking on the head and breast, which culminates in a central dark patch in the middle of the chest.

See **SONG**...pg. 5B

THE NEIGHBORS

A sparrow with a song

The song sparrow is a common resident along area shorelines

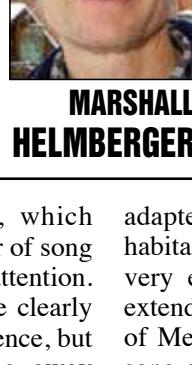
It's a stressful time of year for bird parents around the North Country. In most cases, their young of the year have spilled out of the nest by now, and that means an almost never-ending task of tracking youngsters just learning to fly and trying to keep them safe from the many predators—from domestic cats to birds of prey—that would love to make an easy meal out of their offspring.

And then there are those big, clumsy humans, like me, who happen to show up in the vicinity, unannounced.

Such was the case this past weekend as I worked my way along a swamp edge near the house. A sudden commotion, which turned out to be a pair of song sparrows, caught my attention.

The two parents were clearly disturbed by my presence, but rather than shrinking away quietly as you might expect, they were doing everything they could to attract my attention.

I knew young ones were



**MARSHALL
HELMBERGER**

of birds to try to draw danger away from their nest, or an unruly bunch of fledged young.

I used their considerable interest in my presence to snap a few of these photos before vacating the area to leave the couple and their young ones in peace. They had found a good place to raise song sparrow young. In my experience, song

sparrows, at least in our region, are almost always found near water, and here they were surrounded by it on three sides on a rocky knob that juts, peninsula-like, into a beaver pond located just upstream of the Lost Lake Swamp.

While song sparrows gravitate toward water here in the North Country, they've adapted to a wide range of habitats elsewhere across their very extensive range, which extends from Florida and parts of Mexico to Alaska. In fact, song sparrows are among the most diversified of any bird species in North America. Ornithologists have identified 24 subspecies of song sparrow and at least 52 regional differences found within this single species. They have adapted to almost every conceivable habitat, from Arctic grasslands to tropical rain forests. Just as humans have regional dialects, so do song sparrows, which can make it almost pointless to try to describe the jumbling

song of chips, trills, and buzzy phrases that comprise the song sparrow's song. To most human ears, it has a reputation as a pleasing singer, hence its name.

Song sparrows also look different depending on where they're from. Here, in the north, our song sparrows tend to be dark brown, while in desert regions they can be much paler,

often with reddish overtones. In other regions, they are much grayer in appearance. In all cases, however, the song sparrow can be distinguished from most other sparrows by the heavy streaking on the head and breast, which culminates in a central dark patch in the middle of the chest.

See **SONG**...pg. 5B

See **MAPS**...pg. 5B

Outdoors briefly**More federal recreation facilities are now open**

REGIONAL — Additional recreation-related facilities on the Superior National Forest are now open as the Forest Service works to reopen operations that had been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"With the summer season in full swing, our staff is working hard to reopen as many recreation sites as possible while providing for public health and safety with specific maintenance and cleaning standards," said Connie Cummins, Forest Supervisor, Superior National Forest. "We are pleased to be opening up some of the rustic campgrounds before the 4th of July weekend and appreciate the patience of forest visitors as we implement a phased approach to reopening sites."

The following rustic campgrounds are now open:

Baker Lake
Kawishiwi Lake
Silver Island Lake
Harriet Lake
Fourmile Lake

Tohey Lake
Toilets are now open at water access points, including at:

Moose Lake
Snowbank Lake
Lake One
Mudro Lake
Sioux River North
Moose River North

Farm Lake
Tofte Lake
Ojibway Lake
Johnson Lake
Echo Lake
Lake Jeanette
Sawbill
Trails End

Toilets are now open at the following trailheads and other recreational sites:

Bass Lake hiking trail
Vermilion Falls
Britton Peak
Oberg
Eagle Mt.
Trails End
Pincushion
Skibo Vista
Lake Leander
Laurentian Divide

All additional camp-

grounds not currently open will remain closed until further notice. Reservable sites have been canceled and refunded for the

MAPS...Continued from page 4B

Blue Ox State Trail in the Koochiching State Forest. As you travel past the black spruce swamps and upland aspen stands, be on the lookout for wildlife, including beavers, bobcats, eagles, moose and wolves.

Users have two ways to get the new maps:

The free Avenza App provides access to Minnesota state forest maps. Before you go, download the app and navigate to the desired map by searching MNDNR + state forest name in their store. Never get lost in the woods. Your phone's GPS

will allow you to see your location, track distance and more.

Fresh, redesigned paper maps with site-specific details are available from the DNR InfoCenter, at 888-646-6367. A PDF version of the paper map can also be downloaded and printed from the state forest webpage.

In addition to the maps for these eight forests, the DNR has recently updated maps for an additional 23 state forests. See the growing list of state forests with updated maps.

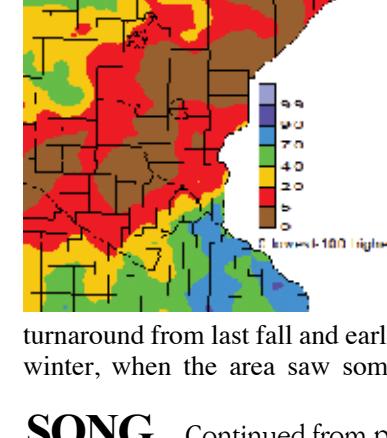
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Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
91 62	89 62	86 62	85 61	82 61
Ely Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Emb. Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Cook Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Orr Hi Lo Prec. Sn. Tower Hi Lo Prec. Sn.	06/22 76 41 0.00 06/22 76 38 0.06 06/22 75 50 0.00 06/22 66 46 0.00 06/22 76 39 0.04 06/23 70 48 0.00 06/23 68 40 0.00 06/23 69 50 0.00 06/23 73 52 0.02 06/23 69 43 0.00 06/24 74 50 0.02 06/24 74 44 0.04 06/24 72 54 0.30 06/24 75 50 0.03 06/24 74 48 0.21 06/25 77 40 0.00 06/25 74 38 0.00 06/25 75 50 0.00 06/25 81 45 0.00 06/25 76 39 0.00 06/26 81 46 0.04 06/26 81 39 0.05 06/26 82 52 0.02 06/26 79 63 0.00 06/26 81 47 0.03 06/27 80 49 0.00 06/27 78 47 0.00 06/27 79 58 0.00 06/27 84 52 0.00 06/27 81 52 0.00 06/28 86 54 0.00 06/28 84 51 0.00 06/28 82 58 0.00 06/28 88 61 0.00 06/28 85 51 0.00 Total 6.33 YTD Total 6.48 YTD Total 6.81 YTD Total NA YTD Total 5.38	06/22 76 39 0.04 06/23 69 43 0.00 06/24 74 48 0.21 06/25 76 39 0.00 06/26 81 47 0.03 06/27 81 52 0.00 06/28 85 51 0.00		



Savage resident Barb Aronen sent us this photo of a mother moose and her two calves, which she captured with her cellphone just south of the Y Store as they crossed Hwy. 169. We received a second photo this week of a mother moose and twin calves taken on a trail camera near Cook. Perhaps it's a good year for moose twins? submitted by B. Aronen

DROUGHT...Continued from page 4B

turnaround from last fall and early winter, when the area saw some

of the wettest conditions in years, leaving rivers and lakes at exceptionally high levels. Now, river and stream flows are at near-record low levels for early summer and lake levels have dropped precipitously.

How dry has it been? According to the Department of Natural Resources, much of northern St. Louis County is running anywhere from the 0-5 percentile for rainfall since April 1 (see map at left). That means it's anywhere from a once-in-a-century dry spell to a once-every-twenty-year event, depending on the location.

Temperatures forecast to hit

the low 90s on Friday and Saturday won't help the situation, as the hot temperatures prompt plants to draw more heavily on what limited moisture is in the soil than under average conditions.

The parched conditions have created a risk of wildfire, which is normally very low in early summer. More than a dozen firefighters from Tower, Greenwood and Breitung battled an escaped brush fire on Lake Vermilion's Pine Island late this past Saturday. About an acre of rocky terrain was scorched in the blaze.

SONG...Continued from page 4B

The other common sparrows in our area this time of year, the white-throated and chipping, both have clear breasts, without any noticeable streaking, at least in adult birds.

Song sparrows are mostly monogamous, although about 20 percent of them will pair up with more than one mate during the course of a breeding season. It just goes to show, once again, that

there's plenty of variety — call in natural variation — among song sparrows. Which is what always makes the natural world an interesting place!



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SUPPORT GROUPS

Ely AA GROUPS TO MEET BY PHONE- Starting immediately, the Ely Wednesday and Saturday AA Groups will not meet in person. A conference call meeting has been set up. At 7:30 on either night, call 978-990-5000, and enter the access code, 965850# Once the meeting has started, use *6 to mute and unmute your phone. If any other group would like to set up phone meetings, please call Anna Nimity at 218-290-2681 for assistance.

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.

OVERTREATERS 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. at the Babbitt Assembly of God 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.

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

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

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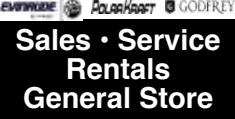
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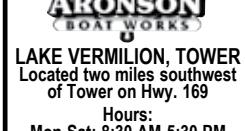
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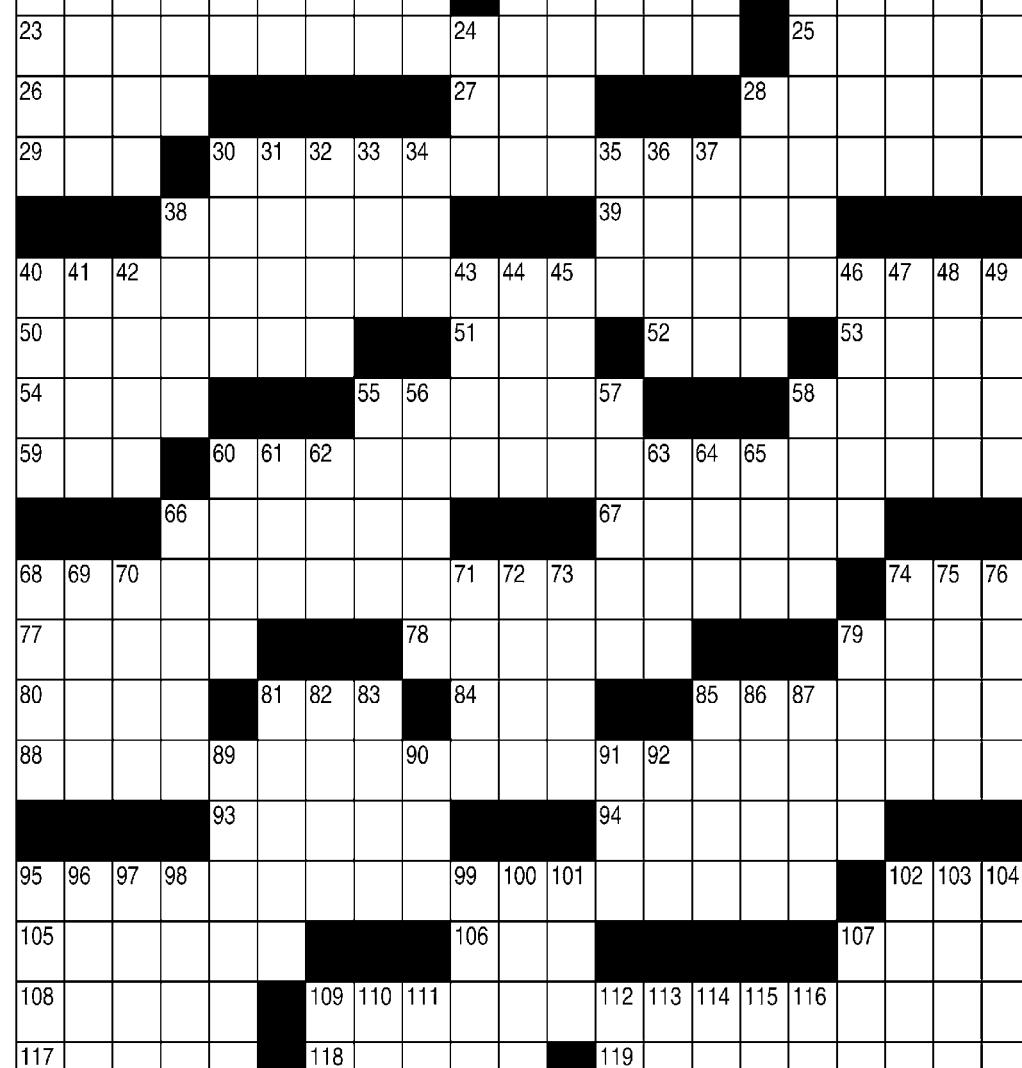
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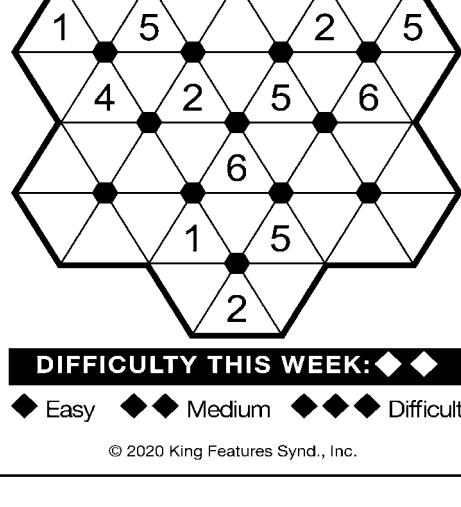
- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 Bus or train schedule | 58 Big like Santa | 108 Figure skater Slutskaya | 18 Core belief | 56 Caught fish with pots | 87 Sword part |
| 10 Marvelled vocally | 59 Sitting spot on Santa | 109 Riddle's answer | 19 Houston baseballer | 89 Spanish for "I love you" | |
| 15 Cowboy rope | 60 Riddle, part 4 | 117 Material for jeans | 24 Letters before xis | 57 Comparable (with) | |
| 20 Like political cartoons | 66 How-to book | 118 Pig | 28 Sprayed, with "down" | 90 Untruth | |
| 21 Litling song syllables | 67 Unspecified travel destination | 119 Talked into 120 "Alive" actor | 30 Spring flower | 91 Siouxian tribe | |
| 22 Sigmoid curves | 74 Install, as tile | 121 Certain eel | 31 Coin maker | 92 Aetna rival, for short | |
| 23 Start of a riddle | 77 "—Doone" (1869 novel) | 122 Big names | 32 Jumping stick | 95 Lumps of chewing tobacco | |
| 25 Michigan city | 78 Defiant types | 123 Sch. in Columbus | 33 Sch. in Columbus | 96 Certain int'l. delegate | |
| 26 Scotland's — Ness | 79 Pill bottle info | DOWN | 34 "... or — thought!" | 62 Beaten track | |
| 27 Address on the net | 80 Campus VIP | 1 Elon Musk's car company | 35 Ang of film | 63 Foldout beds | |
| 28 Opening part of an email | 81 Feel unwell | 2 — box (TV) | 36 Art Deco illustrator | 64 Suffix with meteor | |
| 29 Munched on 30 Riddle, part 2 | 84 Egypt, before 1971: | 3 Chop finely | 37 Young deer | 97 Minneapolis neighbor | |
| 38 Melodious passage | 29 Munched on 30 Riddle, part 2 | 4 Write deeply | 38 To — (perfectly) | 65 L-P link | |
| 39 Wipe out | 38 Melodious passage | 5 Bodily digit | 40 Good buy | 66 Miracle food | |
| 40 Riddle, part 3 | 40 Riddle, part 3 | 6 Onassis' nickname | 41 "—la Douce" | 68 Alan of "The Aviator" | |
| 50 Guevara called "Che" | 45 Guevara called "Che" | 7 Drill addition | 42 Cut short | 69 Caroling tune | |
| 51 Tillage tool | 51 End of the riddle | 8 Chou En- — | 43 Rug type | 70 Be a lure to 102 1970s | |
| 52 Cut short | 52 Letter before sigma | 9 Ernie of golf | 44 Daughter in "Hägar the Horrible" | 71 Castro of Cuba | |
| 53 In — (lined up) | 53 In — (lined up) | 10 Cheri of comedy | 45 Software testing phase | 103 "Iliad" writer | |
| 54 French lady friend | 54 French lady friend | 11 Brand of toothbrushes | 56 Meanings in dicts. | 72 Bundle up | |
| 55 Treating unkindly | 55 Treating unkindly | 12 Bit of a laugh | 81 Moving around | 73 In this spot think pieces | |
| | 38 | 13 Pipe bend | 82 "Suffice — say ..." | 74 Petty of films 107 ESPN no. | |
| | 39 | 14 Night's counterpart | 83 Boxer Spinks | 75 On the ocean hero | |
| | 40 | 15 Match official | 49 Jug type | 76 Rural assent to a lady | |
| | 41 | 16 Porto Rico, par exemple | 55 Sound of an air kiss | 110 Four halves | |
| | 42 | 17 Off the direct course | 85 Oodles | 111 Title for Elton John | |
| | | 107 Buy stuff | 86 Salami shop | 112 Auto navig. aid | |
| | | | | 113 Rock's — Speedwagon | |
| | | | | 114 Lyricist Gershwin | |
| | | | | 115 Supposed psychic gift | |



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.

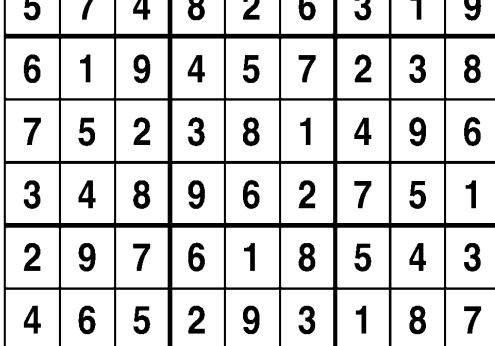


DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆◆◆

◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆◆ Difficult

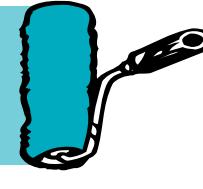
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Answer





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