

North Country Christmas... Holiday stories and more inside this week's paper

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healthy holiday this year

The TIMBERJAY



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THE CORONAVIRUS

Ely schools move to distance learning

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY — With the coronavirus pandemic raging through the nation, state, county, and particularly Ely, ISD 696 students will be returning to distance-learning protocols after the Thanksgiving break and will remain at home at least through the end of December.

That recommendation by school district administrators

Plan likely to remain in place through December

was announced at the Nov. 19 meeting of the Ely Safe Learning Plan Advisory Council. The learning plan transition was met with abundant approval by the members of the advisory council as COVID-19 continues to spread unabated.

As many as 63 students in the Ely school district, and at least seven teachers, were report-



ed to be in quarantine as of Nov. 19, according to Superintendent Erik Erie. He also reported to advisory council members that the active positive case rate in

the school community increased to four on Nov. 19. The cumulative positive case rate is now at 11 since the beginning of the school year.

All school activities, including sports, are also paused for at least four weeks.

Erie reported the northern St. Louis County dashboard data showed a positive case rate of

58.2 per 10,000 people, a slight decrease from 60.1 reported the prior week. However, central St. Louis County positive case dashboard exploded from 41.6 to 72.92 in a week. All schools in St. Louis County showed a positive COVID-19 case rate increase from 50.69 to 91.1.

“Right now, we are not seeing transmission between faculty, staff, and students,

See...ELY pg. 8

WARRIOR SPIRIT

NATIVE SOUND

‘Ancestral Legacy’
to be released
by Nett Lake’s
War Bonnet

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

NETTLAKE- What does a Native American rock band do to follow-up a successful first CD that was nominated for two Native American Music awards and is getting airplay from coast to coast?

They create more music and release a second CD, set to release on Nov. 27.

Chaz Wagner and Tony Parson are the core creative talents of War Bonnet, and they’re following up the 2019 release of “The Ghost Dance” with “Ancestral Legacy,” an 11-song album honoring Native warriors’ spirit, both historic and contemporary.

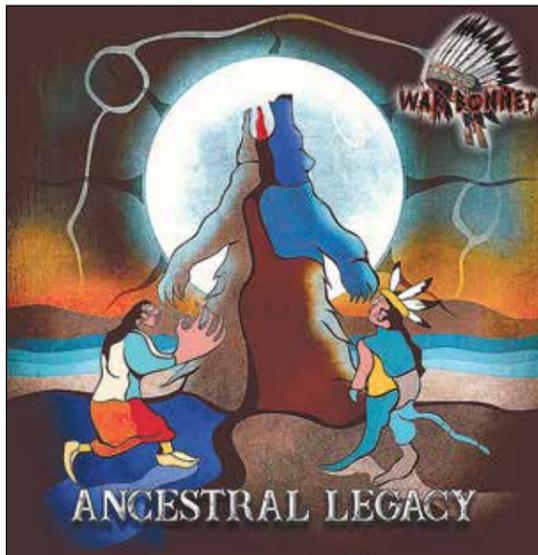
“The first album was building a foundation,” Wagner said. “The second one is bringing our sound up to a whole new level, a whole new platform. The basis of this album is who we are as



Chaz Wagner and Tony Parson, of War Bonnet, are following up their successful 2019 album, “The Ghost Dance,” with a second CD, “Ancestral Legacy,” on Nov. 27.
photo by D. Colburn

Native Americans. We come from a long lineage of veterans and warriors. We came up with the title ‘Ancestral Legacy’ because we are spawned from our ancestors, we are our ancestors, we are those warriors. It’s because of their actions that we are still here today, so we

See...SOUND pg. 7



SULFIDE MINING

Agreement complicates hopes for Twin Metals

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

ELY — The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Ely-based Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness have reached a stipulation agreement under which the state agency will consider possible changes to non-ferrous mining rules in Minnesota — changes that could include a prohibition on non-ferrous mining in the Rainy River watershed.

The agreement, filed recently in Ramsey County court, commits the DNR to undertake “a fair and impartial process to make findings on the adequacy of its non-ferrous mining rules to protect the Boundary Waters and Rainy River Headwaters.” The study, according to the court filing, “will be guided by the science and the evidence, with no pre-determined result.”

The development could seriously complicate Twin Metals’ plan for a copper-nickel mine near Ely. The company has now intervened in the case in an effort to block any changes to state rules. “We submitted our comments on the agreement filed by the DNR, and they assured us that they are under consideration,” according to a Twin Metals’ statement. “[Twin Metals] expects to

See...MINING pg. 7

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Area COVID cases jump over 60 percent in two weeks

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook/Orr Editor

REGIONAL- New COVID-19 cases in the North Country are growing at an even faster rate in the past two weeks than the dangerous rise across the state that prompted new business and

social restrictions from Gov. Tim Walz last week.

The zip codes of Orr, Cook, Tower, Soudan, Ely and Embarrass added 118 new cases between Nov. 5 and Nov. 19, a 60.8-percent increase, according to St. Louis County Public Health Department data. Cases

statewide increased by 51.6 percent over the same period, and with 7,219 cases added Sunday the total number of cases in the state since the pandemic began stood at 270,157.

“It has been a really hard week in Minnesota, from record numbers of COVID cases to the

deaths,” Walz said in a Friday press conference.

Ely saw the largest two-week growth in new cases in the area, at 42, a rate that factored into the decision to shift Ely schools from in-person and hybrid learning to distance learning after Thanksgiving.

A computation used by health officials to allow for comparisons across areas is the number of cases per 10,000 people, and by that measure the Embarrass area has the most densely concentrated number

See...COVID pg. 8



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Community notices

Vintage Country Christmas craft fair set for Dec. 5 canceled

TOWER- The Vintage Country Christmas Craft Fair that was set for Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Tower Civic Center has been canceled due to the new statewide coronavirus regulations put in place this past week.

Artists sought for February Ely ArtWalk

ELY- The 2021 Ely ArtWalk is just around the corner. Held from Feb. 4-28, 2021, this annual affair will once again be part of the Ely Winter Festival. This time the show is extended to the entire month of February.

ArtWalk 2021 registrations and payment are due by Friday, Dec. 4. To register online or for more information, go to www.elyartwalk.org. If it is difficult to register online, paper entry forms can be found at Art and Soul Gallery in Ely.

Individual entries require a \$10 fee for up to five pieces and group entries require a \$30 fee for a maximum of 15 pieces. Payment is accepted online or checks can be mailed to Ely ArtWalk, PO Box 132, Ely, MN 55731.

The Ely ArtWalk is dedicated to the creation, promotion, and appreciation of the arts. This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Donald G. Gardner Humanities Trust.

Shine Bright Ely events begin Thanksgiving night, Nov. 26

ELY- Let there be light! Shine Bright Ely, a new Chamber event, kicks off on Thanksgiving evening. Join area businesses as they deck their windows and storefronts with all things cheery. The switch is flipped at sunset, so enjoy festive displays and holiday lights after a hearty holiday meal. Businesses will be open to do some preholiday shopping, too. Watch for the event map featuring participating businesses @ ElyChamberOfCommerce or Ely.org/shopping.

Ely's Smalltown Christmas Shop Local is set for Saturday, Nov. 28. Ely is home to many great locally-made products ranging from outdoor clothing and gear, to knife sharpening systems, to granola.

Remember to shop local, not only on Small Town Christmas Saturday, but every day. Support the businesses that support the community through their generous financial, facility, and product support to the many events, nonprofit organizations and fundraisers throughout the year.

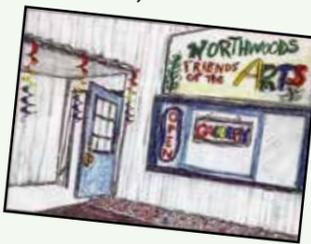
Several events will not be held this year including the Holiday Parade and City Tree Lighting Ceremony. COVID-19 restrictions prevent moving forward with these events.

The Mrs. Claus Party is modified this year as a no-contact event. Families will drive through the Ely Chamber of Commerce parking lot at 1600 E Sheridan St. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be outside the Chamber building greeting youth from 1-2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 12. Elves will deliver age-appropriate goodie bags filled with treats, small gifts, and holiday craft kits to each vehicle.



NWFA's "FRIENDS of HEARTS Holiday Market" KEEP THE ARTS IN YOUR HEARTS

Carvings, paintings, pottery, fiber arts/crafts, cards and calendars, masks and small gift items are available during Nov. and Dec.



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NORTHWOODS PARTNERS

Holiday Fundraiser at the Grand Ely Lodge

ELY- Please join Northwoods Partners this holiday season at the Grand Ely Lodge. In lieu of the annual Festival of Trees, you are invited to their Holiday Fundraiser which runs Nov. 23 – Dec. 28.

Inside the lobby of the Grand Ely Lodge you will find three trees. You are invited to place an ornament for \$5 on the Memorial Tree in Honor of or in Memory of a Loved One.

The other two trees are Mitten Match Trees. Take an envelope off the tree, place your donation in it, and hand the envelope to the front desk employees. Your donation has two times the giving power this holiday season. All donations will be matched by an anonymous donor up to \$5,000. Each donor, as a thank you, receives a hand-crafted birch bark ornament.

If you would like to purchase the birch ornaments, they are \$10 each.

This year Northwoods Partners is introducing Chairs for Care. Twenty-two chairs have been designed by local artists and crafters.



You may purchase a chair for \$50, while they last.

All money raised in this fundraiser stays right here in our community. Northwoods Partners is dedicated to providing resources that promote independence and healthy aging for our area seniors and their families.

Special thanks to the Grand Ely Lodge, Northwoods Partners Board and Committee Members, local artist

and crafters, and their supporters for helping make this fundraiser possible.

Please note that this event is being held in lieu of the annual Festival of Trees in order to abide by current COVID-19 restrictions. Festival of Trees will be back next year!

Christmas at The Nelimark's Heritage Holidays, Dec. 10 - 12

EMBARRASS- The Nelimark Homestead will be open for Heritage Holidays from Thursday, Dec. 10 through Saturday, Dec. 12. Hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Please come with a comfortable face mask, wear it, and wash your hands, too.

Available for sale at the homestead will be homemade aprons, rugs and blankets, sauna supplies including fragrant soaps, holiday pillows, handcrafted signs, jewelry, woolen mittens, wreaths and repurposed

items. A well-stocked collectibles room upstairs will be open as well.

A limited supply of homemade breads will be available along with numerous Christmas delights, baked and carefully packaged - cookies, kringler, candies, potica loaves, and plenty of pulla.

With increasing COVID-19 cases in the area, members of the group were concerned about the Dec. 10-12 opening going on as planned, but after checking and thinking about

it they have decided it is "full speed ahead".

Social distancing practices will be enforced and everyone must wear masks properly, additionally, the hostesses will be wiping down things in the museum throughout the day. Products will be wrapped carefully and guests may be asked to limit entrance to the homestead if it is too full at any given time.

TEEN HEALTH

Most St. Louis County teens are not using alcohol, drugs, or vaping

REGIONAL- It's common to think that a trending activity or behavior is so popular that everyone is doing it. For young people in particular, this preconceived notion can create a peer pressure effect, encouraging more kids to participate in the behavior out of fear of being left out. In reality, the perception that "everyone is doing it" is often overstated.

This is especially true for perceptions about substance use among youth in St. Louis County. Data from the 2019 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS), which surveyed 8th, 9th and 11th-grade students, shows that youth perception surrounding substance use tends to overestimate the number of students who have used or currently use substances.

For students, it can often feel like a significant number of their peers drink alcohol, use marijuana, or vape; however, the reality is that most 8th, 9th and 11th-grade students do not consistently use these substances. In fact, the MSS data shows that in the 30 days prior to the survey, 85 percent of southern St. Louis County students did not use alcohol, 88 percent did not use marijuana, and 79 percent did not vape. Duluth and Duluth Public School Academy, Floodwood and Hermantown students participated in the MSS. In northern St. Louis County, participating schools include Chisholm, Ely, Hibbing, Virginia,

Mt. Iron-Buhl, St. Louis County and Mesabi East, with data showing that in the 12 months prior to the survey, 70 percent of students did not drink alcohol and 84 percent did not use marijuana.

New billboards highlighting some of these data and actual student substance use norms are now on display throughout St. Louis County. The billboards communicate that the majority of St. Louis County students do not drink alcohol, use marijuana, or vape, even though they may perceive others are doing so. By giving accurate information about usage, the messaging makes it clear to students that they aren't alone in choosing not to participate in these activities, while maintaining a focus on positive behaviors to change the influences of peer pressure.

According to The Montana Institute, which developed this type of messaging strategy, "The Science of the Positive is based on the core assumption that the positive exists

in every community and culture; it recognizes that suffering, pain, and harm are very real."

"While most youth are choosing to avoid drinking alcohol, vaping, or using marijuana, we recognize that not all youth in our region have that same opportunity," said Stephany Medina, St. Louis County Public Health Educator. "It's important to talk with kids about substance use and to help them develop a strategy on how to say no to things like vaping if offered by a friend. While parents and trusted adults can't change what a student ultimately does, they can help influence their thoughts about substance use and empower them to make informed choices."

St. Louis County has developed resources and partnerships to assist youth and adults around substance use prevention and intervention. To learn more, visit stlouiscountymn.gov/drugprevention.

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CITY OF ELY

Urbas won't accept job as Ely mayor

New mayor will be selected in special election to be held sometime next year

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – City residents here will be getting a new mayor next year, but it won't be the candidate they voted for earlier this month. Eric Urbas officially confirmed late last Wednesday that he would not accept the position of mayor, despite receiving the most votes in the race.

Urbas pulled out of the contest in August, citing ongoing health concerns, however, his announcement was too late to be removed from the ballot. He had challenged incumbent Chuck Novak for the position. Urbas received 925 votes and Novak received 800 votes in the Nov. 3 election.

Urbas took a couple of weeks while deer hunting to mull his decision. He technically had until the end of the year. He

informed the Ely City Clerk that he will not accept the job.

"I did a lot of thinking, without all the distractions, and the conclusion I came to was that I made the decision (to withdraw from the race) in August for a reason. I decided to stick with my reasons. I talked to a lot of people over the last couple of weeks, but in the end I needed to make the decision on my own."

Urbas said he was amazed by all the support in the community. "So many people think so highly of me, and that is much appreciated and so humbling," he said

He encouraged others in the community to consider running for the office. "We could still have a change," he said, "it's just not going to be me. My life here in the Ely community will continue, but more in the background. That's what I like to do." He said he may consider

servicing on a city committee or commission in the future.

When City Council members meet for their first meeting of the new year on Jan. 5, they will declare a vacancy in the mayoral office and post a schedule for a special election. "The city will open a filing period for the position and set the date for a special election," said Mayor Novak. "With the early voting procedures in place now, we may not have an election until April."

An interim mayor will be appointed (likely from the city council) to fill the vacancy to serve when Novak vacates the seat on Jan. 5 until the results of the special election are certified.

"Everything is kind of fluid right now as we figure things out and wait for clarity from the Secretary of State's office," Novak said. When asked if he was interested in continuing as mayor of Ely, he responded, "It is too

early to tell. There are lots of issues to consider."

Voter turnout in Ely approached 90 percent this year. According to Deputy Clerk Casey Velcheff, there were 2,783 registered voters on Nov. 3. Another 174 voters registered on Election Day. A total of 1,165 voters opted to vote in-person at the Ely Senior Center, and 855 absentee voters were received.

Council meeting

At the Nov. 17 meeting, the city council took the following action:

► Accepted the completion of Police Chief Chad Houde's six-month probation for the new position.

► Heard from Sibley Drive residents Bernie and Jeanette Palcher involving the city noise ordinance concerning a neighbor who is running a generator for residential electrical power.

Council members approved a motion to direct the Ely Police Department to enforce the noise ordinance concerning the complaint, and forwarded the matter to the Planning and Zoning Committee and the Ely Utilities Commission for investigation and recommendations.

► Approved a recommendation from the Budget Committee to allow \$2,000 in the 2021 Capital Project Fund Budget for Ely Tree Board projects.

► Approved a conditional offer to David Wimmer for the open Ely Police Department patrolman position, pending psychological and medical exams, with an estimated start date of Jan. 1.

► Approved a conditional offer to Joseph Olufson for the open Ely Police Department patrolman position, created by

See COUNCIL...pg. 5

THE LEGISLATURE

Other Range legislators unlikely to leave DFL caucus

With DFL in control of Minnesota's House, there's little incentive for area lawmakers to leave their party

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

REGIONAL—Last week's surprise announcement that Sens. Tom Bakk and David Tomassoni were leaving the DFL to form their own Independent caucus in the state Senate is unlikely to lead to similar moves among Iron Range representatives in the Minnesota House.

"I don't see where it changes my position at all," said Rob Ecklund, DFL-International Falls, who represents all but the

Duluth area in Bakk's sprawling Third Senate District.



Rob Ecklund

Ecklund, who won re-election in a surprisingly tight contest this year, said he'll continue to work closely with Bakk on issues that affect northeastern Minnesota. "Tom Bakk is my friend as well as my senator," said Ecklund. "That doesn't

change."

While Bakk and Tomassoni's decision undoubtedly enhances their influence in the closely-divided Senate, that same dynamic would not be at play in the House, where the DFL retains its majority. "I'm in the House majority and that's a good place to be," said Ecklund, who said he's in line for a committee chairmanship in the House this session.

Ecklund said the unique circumstances in the Senate made it increasingly difficult for Bakk

and Tomassoni to operate effectively within the DFL caucus. "If you look at the makeup of the Senate DFL, except for a couple, there aren't any other DFL senators from outside the metro. It would be tough to work an agenda for northeast Minnesota with that makeup," said Ecklund. If, as expected, both Bakk and Tomassoni are given committee chairmanships, that's likely to significantly enhance their abilities to serve their districts, notes Ecklund.

While still dominated by

the metro, the House DFL caucus continues to have more members from other parts of the state, giving those outstate members greater influence within the caucus. The DFL caucus includes three Iron Range legislators, Julie Sandstede and Dave Lislegard, who represent the two halves of Tomassoni's district, as well as Ecklund.

The *Timberjay* reached out to Rep. Lislegard seeking comment for this story. He did not respond prior to deadline.

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Editorial

Will the GOP stand up?

Only the Republicans can put an end to the ongoing danger posed by Donald Trump

“It increasingly appears that it will be up to the Republican Party to save America from a would-be dictator. President Donald Trump has made it abundantly clear in recent weeks that he has no intention of honoring the will of the voters this election, and he could well get away with dismantling the American system of governance unless Republicans take a stand.”

Timberjay editorial, Oct. 2, 2020

Perhaps the saddest thing we can say about the current state of affairs with our presidential election is that there is nothing here that is a surprise. Donald Trump made it perfectly clear in the weeks leading up to the Nov. 3 election that he would only accept the will of the people if he won.

Most of us learn by the time we reach Kindergarten that you don't win every game, and that just because you lose at Chutes and Ladders, doesn't mean the other kid cheated, or that you have the right to throw the board and pieces across the room in a snit. Donald Trump clearly never learned the basic lessons that help the rest of us get along.

Unfortunately, just as the parent who fails to correct the unruly child enables their bad behavior, the failure of Republican Party leaders to put the nation before their own narrow political interests, has allowed an unhinged President to put our representative form of government in the greatest peril in modern history.

The reality is that GOP leaders in Congress and elsewhere are well aware that there is absolutely no evidence of any kind of systematic voter fraud that could sway the election. The Trump administration has had case after case virtually laughed out of court for lack of any basis in reality.

President-elect Joe Biden won a commanding victory, with a popular vote margin that now exceeds six million and an electoral vote margin identical to the one Trump called “a landslide” four years ago.

The people have spoken, yet top GOP leaders sit mute as the leader of their party takes their party's members down a rabbit hole of mass delusion. Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, argued with a straight face last Thursday that election officials, of both parties, across the country, conspired to commit fraud to defeat President Trump. They did so, according to Giuliani, using voting machines linked to the late Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez and George Soros, a funder of liberal causes often

demonized by the right, and that votes in the U.S. election were actually being counted overseas.

This would be a surprise to the thousands of election officials around the United States who worked tirelessly for days to complete the vote counting this year. It would be an even bigger surprise to election officials in Georgia, who used the very machines at issue. They recently completed a full hand recount of all their ballots, only to find no evidence of manipulation of the vote in that state, which went for Biden. Trump's own top cyber-security official certified this year's election as the most secure in American history. Of course, he was fired for speaking the truth.

The logical disconnects in all of this are stunning. The Trump administration and its followers would have us believe that the very same ballots, which they are happy to count to maintain their Senate majority, are somehow tainted on the presidential portion. Would liberals really conspire to keep Mitch McConnell as Senate Majority leader? Really?

As the news and opinion site *Huffington Post* recently headlined the situation: “Comically Stupid, Profoundly Dangerous.” It's true. The Trump campaign's antics would be a source of amusement if they weren't destroying America. Several recent polls have shown that large majorities of the Republican base actually believe the vile nonsense being peddled by Trump and his craven allies. How do we ever put the pieces back together as a nation when tens of millions of Americans fall victim to malicious fantasy? This is precisely how nations become failed states.

There was a time when GOP leaders actually demonstrated leadership. In 1974, top Republicans went to the White House and told then-President Richard Nixon it was time to go, for the good of the country. Today, they sit in their offices, many unwilling to even acknowledge the reality of Biden's election for fear of unleashing the anger of millions of their constituents who labor under the delusion, fed by their own president, that the election was, somehow, a massive fraud.

There certainly is fraud at play here, and President Trump and his GOP allies are the perpetrators.

There is only one way to reverse course, and it requires that top GOP leaders exercise the political courage needed now to save this country from the chaos that Trump seeks to inflict on us all. Otherwise— let's face it— he'll burn the house down.



Letters from Readers

Vets offer thanks for their special day

We wish to offer a huge Thank You! to Randy and Carol Semo for the recent free Veterans Day Breakfast served at Good Ol' Days. You are really great and special people and your generosity to Veterans and the community is so much appreciated.

We also wish to thank the students and staff at the Tower-Soudan Elementary School for the recognition you offered to us on Veterans Day. The words and pictures you gave to us and to area businesses to post to express your gratitude were so patriotic. Thank you all and God bless!

**Ray Berg
Soudan
Kal and Don Reinhardt
Tower**

Selling out to union busters evidence of the Resource Curse

Watching Sens. Bakk and Tomassoni leave the Democratic Party to make common cause with mostly rural Republicans should

remind us of the Resource Curse. That's the observation that areas that try to base their economies on natural resource exploitation usually end up with lousy economies.

It's especially distressing that a former union official like Sen. Bakk would align himself with the political party that has dedicated itself to destroying our collective bargaining rights. We've lost a lot of union jobs to the Republican Party. Bakk and Tomassoni have defected to the enemy.

I suspect that the mining industry is pulling strings behind the scenes. They'd like Minnesotans to believe that radical environmentalists and regulatory agencies are stifling economic activity when the problem is that Minnesota now has to cope with lousy ore bodies. We mined out the rich iron ore and are left with taconite which averages only twenty-five percent iron and to date our copper ore bodies average less than one percent copper while globally we have a lot of copper mines between two and eight percent.

We should be listening to economists who try to educate us about Opportunity Cost. That's the theory that

if you invest your capital in one activity,

you lose the opportunity to invest in a more rewarding action. Bakk and Tomassoni are wasting their political capital by opposing environmental protection and bashing our indigenous neighbors when they should be diversifying the Iron Range.

Our Iron Range legislative delegation and the Iron Range mayors who supported Trump remind me of the Cargo Cults of New Guinea. After World War II, the unsophisticated natives thought that if they built runways the planes would come with more cargo. Our politicians believe if they permit more mines our economic system will reward us with more prosperity. The evidence of Essar, Mesabi Nugget, Magnetation, and other mining bankruptcies won't discourage them.

Mining developers have a saying that “Grade is king.” Minnesota no longer has enough high grade ore to support a huge mining industry. The best we can do is to subsidize our existing jobs while we transition to a sustainable economy.

**Bob Tammen
Soudan**

COMMENTARY

Accepting election results is critical to sustaining democracy

Every year right after an election, I'd find a small pile of requests waiting for me from journalists. They wanted some sort of comment on what it all meant. “What are the voters telling us?” they'd ask.

It's human nature to want to make sense of such a complex picture—to draw conclusions from many millions of individual decisions. But it

is also politically important, because how elected officials interpret the results—or seek to convince others to interpret the results—goes a long way toward shaping the impact of the election.

The key thing to recognize in the wake of November's voting, and this will not come as news, is that we live in a sharply divided

country. When the votes are all counted, projections suggest Joe Biden will wind up with about an 8 million-vote, 4 percentage-point lead, hardly a landslide but still a decisive margin. At the same time, Republicans retain a narrow margin in the Senate and made gains in the House.

What all this adds up to is a governance challenge. Without Republicans and Democrats agreeing to find common ground, it will be hard for the U.S. to exert strong influence around the world

See **ELECTION...pg. 5**



**LEE
HAMILTON**

Can we make Thanksgiving a way of life?

When I was a child, the holidays I cherished the most were the ones I considered the “fun” ones – the Fourth of July, Halloween, and Christmas. Each generated a sense of anticipation well before the day itself.

I couldn't wait for the day family friend and fireworks salesman Larry



**DAVID
COLBURN**

Kohlman would pull his car into the Colburn driveway on Elm Street and pop open his trunk. For friends, Larry sold Independence Day magic at cost, so there was never a shortage of firecrackers and fountains and Roman candles. Between about third and seventh grades I relished all the

hours spent in advance figuring out what plastic model cars and airplanes I'd built that past year would be gloriously blown to smithereens. The Fourth of July was the centerpiece of a highly anticipated week-long frenzy of explosions and flashes of fun.

The thrill of Halloween changed across the years of my youth from what costume I would choose and how much candy I would get to what kind of pranks my friends and I could get away with, but it was always

the eagerly anticipated highlight of fall.

And I need not waste much printer's ink on why this kid reveled in Christmas, only to add that with my birthday coming just three days after it was my most favorite of all.

But increasingly, as I've aged, my favorite holidays have shifted from the ones I once found most fun to the ones that carry the most personal of connections.

Halloween remains a favor-

ite not because of costumes or candy, but because it's a day to remember what a special day it was for my Mom, the consummate cook, entertainer, and hostess. Halloween brought with it Mom's biggest social shindig of the year, a massive and glorious buffet she spent days and weeks preparing for, that would draw dozens and dozens of families back to the house after trick-or-treating was done. It

See **THANKS...pg. 5**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Broadband study identifies high priorities for upgrade

by STEPHANIE UKKOLA
Timberjay staff writer

REGIONAL- Diane Kruse of Colorado-based NeoConnect updated the Vermilion Lake Town Board recently on the progress toward bringing broadband internet to residents in the township and surrounding communities. NeoConnect was chosen by the local broadband group to do a feasibility study on the effort.

Kruse said that the project would cost between \$12.7 million and \$20.5 million depending on the rock density where the fiber would be laid underground. "Underground is

more costly," said Kruse, "but the operating expenses are low."

She identified Daisy and Pike Bay, along with the city of Tower, and Breitung, Greenwood, Kugler, Eagles Nest and Vermilion Lake townships as high-priority areas.

NeoConnect used the results of internet speed tests completed in the area over the past year to find which locations were most in need of upgrade. The speed test is still open and residents of these townships are asked to complete the speed test if they haven't yet.

The speedtest can be found at: mnruralbroadbandcoalition.com/speedtest.

From the existing results, Kruse determined "the majority of your area is unserved," meaning that there is either no or only very slow internet available.

The project is expected to be 50 percent funded by grants and federal funding. The remaining funding is negotiable between the selected internet provider (such as Paul Bunyan Communications, CTC, NES, Midco, or Frontier) and local governments. In past nearby projects, local governments have only had to pay about one percent. "We're coming in armed with information about the project and will woo providers into competing for the project,"

said Kruse.

She said the project would likely take about three years and is expected to lose money in the first year and start making money in the second year, making it an attractive prospect for internet providers. Cost for individuals would likely be between \$60 and \$150 per month.

Broadband has become increasingly necessary for day-to-day life. Internet is now being integrated into kitchen appliances, thermostats, security systems and medical devices. It's also used for schooling, doctor appointments, for work and for social connections. The pandemic has made this need even more

apparent. In the first month after the pandemic began impacting life in the region, internet use went up 92 percent, Kruse said, adding that two-thirds of the people who began working from home decided to continue working from home.

The most important thing residents of Tower and the surrounding townships can do, said Kruse, is to show their support for the project by contacting their town supervisors, county commissioners and state legislators, by publicly expressing support for increasing internet access throughout our area, and by taking the speed test.

COVID-19

Ely Community Health partners up for seniors

by KEITH VANDERVORT
Ely Editor

ELY – With coronavirus spiking to unprecedented levels of positive cases and deaths in the United States soaring north of a quarter million people, the Ely Community Health Center (EHC) firmly believes the pandemic will continue to rage during most of 2021, and they are very concerned about the impact isolation will be having on seniors in this community.

EHC Executive Director Jon Erickson recently presented a plan to Tuesday Group participants to address the continuing and growing concerns for this vulnerable segment of the population.

"Many people are getting tired of the coronavirus and getting downright complacent," he said. "My biggest concern is the impact on our seniors. Limiting contacts by telephone or through a window is very hard on them. They don't understand why this is happening, especially if they have even slight memory issues."

In developing the community initiatives, EBCH developed a relationship with the Ely Senior Center and Northwood Partners

to participate. "The only way we as a community can work together is to come together," he said. "Both of these organizations are very much committed to our senior community, so we are trying to provide the medical care side in concert with both of these organizations."

Some of the initiatives under consideration include:

► Vitals Checks - Starting next month or early next year, monthly or semi-monthly medical vitals checks will be provided at the Ely Senior Center, Erickson said. In light of the new social interaction restrictions put in place just prior to Thanksgiving, keep in mind that the new service may be delayed.

"People, and not just seniors, will be able to come in for blood pressure, temperature, and oxygen percentage monitoring," he said. "And we will be able to talk with you to see what's going on and how you are doing. That is vitally important. A schedule will be published as soon as possible."

► Hearing Loss Clinic - Modeled after a successful state program called the Hearing Assistance Program, Erickson said he hopes to address hearing loss issues in a number of ways.

"We will provide equipment to help detect hearing loss," he said. "Ear wax build up is a common cause of hearing loss. We can help with that. Hearing loss that can be dealt with by hearing aids. Others that may need a referral to a specialist. Many seniors are incorrectly diagnosed as early onset dementia who really have hearing loss issues. This initiative will require equipment and training for our nurses and EMTs."

► Living at Home - This program is also modeled after an existing program called Living At Home Network. "The goal of this program is to try to create the resources so our seniors can live longer in their homes but with proper follow up and observation," Erickson said. Northwood Partners could provide the Telephone Banking for the Call-A-Senior program.

"Our nurses and EMTs would provide in home vitals checks and basic services like medicine preparation, prescription renewals, evaluation of home safety, and concerns about depression or other aspects of mental health," he added.

Erickson also talked about using the Ely Senior Center to provide a series of educational

programs such as minimizing the risk of falling, dealing with hypertension and diabetes, healthy eating, medical insurance assistance and dental service coordination.

"These in-person programs would, of course, adhere to all of the social-distancing and mask-wearing protocols to continue to keep everyone safe," he added. "These are all issues that are hitting the senior community, and with the pandemic are going to be greatly exaggerated."

Erickson highlighted aspects of helping seniors to eat healthy. "Using our SNAP-Ed program, we have a vast curriculum of material to address eating healthy, eating on a budget and preparing good meals with little effort."

Programs would be offered in-person with proper distancing and masks. "At the end of each class, participants would be given a bag of the ingredients and the recipes for the meal so they can make the meal at home," he said. "We are looking to participate with both the local grocery stores on this program."

A joint initiative with Northwood Partners to expand on the services EBCH currently provides for MNsure, Social

Security and Medicare issues is also under development. "We would have an employee who could interface between the senior, their family members and the various organizations who can help deal with this minefield of issues," Erickson said.

EBCH is also in negotiations with a funding organization to provide funds to hire a Dental Coordinator who would focus on providing programs that would address senior dental services, especially for people in assisted living facilities and those who do not have access to transportation, "pop up" dental clinics for families who are on medical assistance or who do not have access to oral health care because of lack of employment, and youth oral health care education including providing dental brushes to the schools.

Erickson cautioned that the EBCH plans and initiatives will fluctuate with the pandemic raging and the cost of program resources. "Keep in touch with us and sign up for our newsletter," he said.

For more information, go to their website at www.elycommunityhealth.org, or call them at 218-365-5678. Email Erickson at director@elycommunityhealth.org.

THANKS...Continued from page 3

took on added importance after my Dad died in 1987 and my sisters and I were living afar, as we all loved seeing Mom carry on that tradition, until in her mid-80s it became too much for her to do. When she died two years ago it was surprising and heartwarming to discover just how many families considered that a treasured part of their own Halloween experiences.

Memorial Day and Veterans Day have become treasured holidays for their personal connections. I'm named after a great uncle I never knew, David Potter, who was killed in World War I. My father, grandfather, and a great uncle served in World War II. That particular aspect of their lives makes those holidays reasons to remember not only

their service but their lives and their roles in mine.

And that brings us to Thanksgiving, a holiday with a personal connection shared by many, but surely not by all, one discovered by a curious eighth grader as he rummaged through boxes of memorabilia in the family basement one afternoon.

In a box containing papers from my father's college days I unearthed something I'd never seen—a family tree, handwritten in Dad's familiar style, detailing the lineage of his family in America.

It became even more fascinating when I saw the name at the top of the tree, Edward Winslow, a passenger on the Mayflower and three-time governor of Plymouth Colony. My Dad was

Edward Winslow Colburn, and my middle name is Winslow, too.

A holiday connection really can't get much more personal than that. It was a discovery made awkward when moments after thinking, "Wow, I'm descended from someone on the Mayflower," I thought "No, I'm not – I'm adopted." The find created a question about personal identity that took a long time to resolve, but that's a story reserved for a different time and context.

But I am fully Edward Winslow Colburn's son, and gladly claim the lineage of being one of about 35 million Americans alive today who trace their family lines back to that first Thanksgiving in Massachusetts. By lineage and in practice,

the spirit of Thanksgiving is woven into who I am. Barely a day passes when I don't find myself with thoughts of gratitude for something in my life. It's usually simple things – the marvel of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, the luxury of having time to contemplate the wonders of nature, or the privilege of someone sharing their personal story with me. Sometimes it's something as grand as the gratefulness I feel for a young Kansas couple who reached out across the miles to make a newborn in California the beginning of their lives as marvelous parents.

Over the past ten months there's been the immense sense of gratitude for my new life in the North Country, for all of those

people and experiences that have made this feel more like home than anywhere I've lived in the past two decades, and for all that remains to be discovered.

Thanksgiving is a welcome day for expressing gratitude, no matter what the circumstances, and a special personal connection makes this a most cherished holiday. But I've come to believe Thanksgiving is much better celebrated as a lifestyle, something to live year-round. It makes the good days better, it makes the tough days easier to bear, and it means you're less likely to take for granted all of what we have to be thankful for.

HAMILTON...Continued from page 4

and to get ambitious things done. When voters are as on edge as they still appear to be, building a broad and sustainable consensus in favor of difficult policy decisions is arduous.

It's also worth remembering that our election is watched all over the world, and not casually: ordinary citizens and political leaders in country after country pay close attention. Because the U.S. plays such a critical global role, they worry when they see us conducting an election that the losing side characterizes as corrupt or in some way faulty. That's why the statements of the

outgoing president and his Republican allies have been damaging. They feed into the false narrative Vladimir Putin has been trying to peddle about our system, that it is falling apart.

In the runup to the election, my chief concern was about efforts to suppress votes. Yet despite the obstacles thrown in their way, millions more Americans voted this time around than ever before. Their determination to make their voices count despite long lines and other inconveniences was inspiring.

Similarly, the remarkable efforts by state and

local elections administrators of both parties to hold a free and fair election in the middle of a pandemic with more turnout than they'd ever experienced ought to be recognized and celebrated. It was a heartening display of dedication to American values. It is not a perfect system; we always have islands of misconduct. But I used to spend election day going around to visit precincts, and always was deeply appreciative of the seriousness of election day workers from all walks of life and backgrounds. They understood what was at stake and wanted to make sure our system

worked and was fair and honest.

So, to see one party mounting an all-out attack on the integrity of the countless Americans who view running elections as a sacred trust is, to put it mildly, disturbing. We're all pleased or disappointed with the results of elections, depending on our preferences, but win or lose, our civic duty as citizens is the same. We should take pride in our country and its ability to conduct these elections fairly. The dangerous game of questioning the validity of the vote could have reverberations for years to come, and sow even more division

than we already face.

The point is, a lot of candidates lose in an election. Half of them, roughly. A vital part of our democracy is how we and they come out of it—that we accept the result and continue to support and improve the system, always working toward a more perfect union.

This is what makes it possible for us to govern in this great and diverse country. Americans can accept differences of opinion and not condemn the people who voted for a different candidate. We accept the results of the election and move on. To behave otherwise is

to weaken our democracy, perhaps beyond bearing.

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Libraries

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

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

Support groups

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous
OPEN AA - 7:30
p.m. Wednesdays and
Saturdays, in-person,
First Lutheran Church,
915 E. Camp St., Ely.

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

BABBITT AA - 7 p.m.
Tuesdays, Woodland
Presbyterian Church

AL-ANON - Sundays
8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's
Catholic Church in Ely.

For persons who
encounter alcoholism
in a relative or friend.

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

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

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

ADULT BASIC
EDUCATION GED

- Study materials and
pre-test available. Call
218-365-3359,
218-827-3232, or
1-800-662-5711.

In Brief

Ely Library due dates resume

ELY – The Ely Public Library will begin applying due dates to rented materials next month.

For those who have items out on loan, the due date is Tuesday, Dec. 1.

Any items checked out from this point forward will have the normal pre-COVID-19 loan period.

Library staff continues to promote safe public health measures and will not pressure any patrons into a separate trip to return items.

Overdue fines will not be assessed until early in 2021.

The library remains closed. Call 218-365-5140 for curbside pick-up services.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2020



november darkness
deep watercolor sunsets

a month flying by

SCHOOL SCIENCE PROJECT

Safe landing for Timberwolves3



A GoPro device aboard a weather balloon, part of an Ely eighth-grade science project, recorded this image over the Apostle Islands in Wisconsin last Tuesday. photos courtesy of Timberwolves3

Ely Middle School weather balloon retrieved in Wisconsin

ELY – Ely science teacher Nate LaFond reported the successful retrieval of the Timberwolves3 weather balloon data payload in Wisconsin that was launched Tuesday from the Veterans Memorial Baseball Field.

The eighth-grade science experiment landed just outside of Boulder Junction, Wis., after reaching a maximum altitude of around 59,000 feet and a top speed of 184 mph.

Another weather balloon launch was to be attempted Friday afternoon for the other half of the middle school science class.

Pictures were taken by the GoPro camera that was part of the mission payload. LaFond traveled to Wisconsin on Wednesday to retrieve the experiment.



Ely science teacher Nate LaFond retrieved the weather balloon payload near Boulder Junction, Wis.



The Timberwolves3 weather balloon was launched from Veterans Memorial Field on the campus of Ely school. It reached a maximum altitude of 59,000 feet and traveled about 162 miles.



the TIMBERJAY

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OUR COMMUNITY

Northwoods Partners to lead aging coalition

Organization awarded \$140,000 grant from Northland Foundation

Ely- An Ely-based nonprofit, Northwoods Partners, has received a \$140,000 grant to implement action plans to help local older adults and their family caregivers to successfully age in place.

Northwoods Partners is serving as the lead organization of a local coalition that involves a wide array of organizations working together as a team.

The grant was awarded by the Northland Foundation as part of its three-year special initiative, the Integrated Rural Community Aging Program.

Now, following an intensive coalition-building and planning process with an array of community and aging services participants, facilitated by the Northland Foundation, the funding will support the coalition's action plan over the next two and a

half years.

Among the broad goals outlined in the Ely area project are:

- Reduce food insecurity through direct delivery of food, including fresh produce, through the Ely Food Shelf and in collaboration with AEOA and the Ely Senior Center. Another activity will be ramping up the SNAP-Ed Program for Healthy Eating for Seniors working with the Food Shelf, senior center, and Meals on Wheels.

- Promote independent living with improved access to in-home services by addressing the area's current lack of in-home health care through programming to provide personal care assistance and home medical (nursing) support to older adults, to help them remain in their homes for as long as possible.

- Increase knowledge

and awareness of available senior services through the creation of an easy-to-use and up-to-date directory of senior services in the area, and marketing efforts to help area seniors understand what services are available to them.

- Reduce isolation by increasing social interaction, stimulate mental and physical activity through expanded intergenerational programs, and provide local seniors with training/assistance in using technology and social media.

“Our Ely Area Coalition vision is to support a well-connected community where all seniors, regardless of social, economic or cultural status have knowledge of and access to a full range of health, social, and independent living services,” said Lisa Porthan, executive director at Northwoods Partners.

“All of the partners in the Ely area who have been part of the planning process will work together over the next two and half years to achieve our goals,” added Porthan.

“These partners include Ely Community Health Center, ARDC, Ely Food Shelf, Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital, Ely Area Ambulance Service, Ely Community Resource, AEOA, Light House Center for Vision Loss, Ely Senior Center, Northwoods Partners Board, as well as staff and care facilitators from Essentia Health and St. Anthony's Catholic Church. Our community is blessed to have so many wonderful people who care so passionately about the health of our community. We are excited about what we can accomplish working together.”

SOUND...Continued from page 1

wanted to really honor and incorporate them into this album.”

Geronimo, Chief Joseph, Red Cloud, and Sitting Bull are names that leap from the list of track titles, and that’s by design.

“These are figures in history that people have heard about, so we wanted to make that connection,” Wagner said.

But the all-encompassing album ventures beyond those figures to acknowledge the breadth of Native cultures and experiences in the band’s signature style they call Native rock, reverently exploring and reinterpreting the darker, more recessed ancestral music created by North America’s indigenous people.

The album opens with an instrumental piece, “Warrior Nation,” that takes listeners on a journey to set the stage for what’s to come. Opening with a pulsating, rhythmic rock foundation using familiar Native American modalities, the piece creates tension with the addition of an edgy guitar lead before reaching resolution in a melodic, unifying orchestral anthem highlighted by a haunting keyboard melody reminiscent of a Native flute.

“You are kind of on edge listening to it,” Wagner said. “It just kind of builds and builds and builds up until the end, and



War Bonnet’s signature style is referred to as Native rock and acknowledges the breadth of Native cultures. photo by D. Colburn

then it’s just like a release, you feel spiritual. That’s what music should do – it should take you to places where you don’t go in a normal day.”

Wagner described one of the historical tracks, “The Legend of Geronimo.”

“That song is just so complex,” he said. “It’s a wonderful story of a legend called Geronimo, and something that has never been done through music. I just love the lyrics and how the guitars sound, and the groove of it is kind of like a stomp kind of beat. It gives you a sense of what he must have felt back then when he lost all of his family, and when he went up into the mountains and he prayed and the spirit talked to him. It brings it all together towards the end of it and you get a sense of pride. If Geronimo listened I think he would be proud of this song.”

For Parson, the song ‘Ikwe,’ a piece that addressed the difficult contemporary topic of missing and murdered indigenous women, set the standard for all of the duo’s other creative efforts for the album.

“It’s set the bar for the rest of everything we’ve done,” Parson said. “It’s not that I’m not proud of our first album, but I feel like that just raised the bar for where the band can go and opened up another door.”

The pair posted a music video of ‘Ikwe’ to YouTube last January, and the response to it has been gratifying.

“It’s just very serious, on the solemn side, but it’s also like a big prayer,” Parson said. “It’s got a lot of energy behind it, positive energy, strength and healing energy. I think that of all the songs, people always connect with that one.”

The song might seem to some an odd fit with the ancestral figures of the past, but Wagner said the song is literally at the heart of what the album is about.

“It’s track number six, the closest to the middle of the album we can get,” Wagner said. “Women have always been the center of our people, our culture, they’ve always been everything to us. We needed to honor them. The women are stronger than the men, they always have been. They took care of the family, they birth our children, so we have to respect them. It’s the heart of ancestral legacy, the heart of our album, they’re the heart of our people.”

“This is a huge topic in Indian country in the past and today,” Wagner continued, talking about the theme. “I’ve lost friends, I’ve lost family members through domestic violence.”

Making the album

Wagner and Parson did the entire first album themselves, something modern technology made possible. Wagner lives in Nett Lake, Parson lives in Chisholm, and most of the music was created sending music and lyrics back and forth over the internet, giving each other feedback and suggestions as they went. Wagner has been the lead composer and lyricist, often taking the lead from a melody or

chord progression Parson would send to him. And their creativity has a deeper source, too.

“When I write, I ask my ancestors, the spirits, what do you want me to say? I tell them what I’m going to do – let me be your voice. Sometimes these ideas just come out of nowhere, and I know that they’re with me.”

“I feel like that’s happened with me, too,” Parson said. “It’s like ‘I don’t know how I came up with that just now. It feels like there’s something very spiritual about what we’re doing.’”

When it comes time to create a song, each instrument and vocal is performed live and recorded by Wagner and Parson and then layered together, one track on another, for the finished product. One song, for example, may feature only Wagner, performing vocals, guitar, drums, and keyboards.

“Tony has way more involvement on ‘Ancestral Legacy,’” Wagner said. “I have him playing guitar, he’s doing vocals, he’s doing all the keyboards, and we’re both the authors and writers of all these songs.”

But War Bonnet also performs live, and for that they need other musicians to achieve their sound. In what the pair believes is an exciting evolution for “Ancestral Legacy,” those live performers have contributed tracks

to various songs. They include Eric Krenz, guitar, Becky Fricheck, vocals, Tom Fricheck, percussion, Alex Mehne, euphonium, Sean Zarn, bass, and Leah Lemm, vocalist.

“I wanted them to feel that they’re part of something,” Wagner said. While creativity and messaging is what drive Wagner and Parson, getting out the message to a broader audience is also important, and that’s been happening with their first album and pre-release of ‘Ikwe.’

“We are growing not only as a band, but we’re starting to expand nationally,” Wagner said. “We’re being played in Florida, in New York, Canada, California, and now we’re getting played in the Midwest. And Nebraska. So that we’re growing our audience, which is excellent.”

The official release of “Ancestral Legacy” will be Nov. 27, Native American Heritage Day. While they plan to have the album available on numerous popular online music outlets like iTunes and Spotify, Wagner encourages people to go to the band’s website, www.war-bonnetofficial.com, to buy the CD featuring cover art by Ojibwe artist Jonathan Thunder.

“We’ve got to release it then so we can move on to our next recordings,” Wagner said, smiling. “Buy the CD, support the artists.”

MINING...Continued from page 1

participate in substantive discussions involving all parties, and we expect that the DNR will defend its own rules and follow the law and the science as this case moves forward.”

The agreement has the potential to eventually settle a lawsuit that NMW filed last June under an obscure law known as the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act, which gives the public the right to challenge actions that have the potential to cause environmental degradation. NMW argued in court that the DNR’s current rules on non-ferrous mining cannot adequately protect pristine downstream waters in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and that only a prohibition on non-ferrous mining in the watershed could achieve the protection afforded the 1.1 million-acre wilderness area under both state and federal law.

“The Boundary Waters is a national treasure and the cornerstone for tens of thousands of Minnesotans whose livelihoods depend upon a healthy and protected wilderness,” said Tom Landwehr, Executive Director of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters. “State rules and standards are inadequate to protect the Boundary Waters, and this agreement gives us the opportunity to prove it.”

The agreement gets NMW past its initial evidentiary hurdle, since the MERA requires that plaintiffs under the act provide evidence of environmental harm. But Becky Rom, National Chair of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, said the plaintiffs had a powerful case to present, including detailed statements from former Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, who rejected the renewal of mineral leases for Twin Metals in 2016, citing “the inherent potential risk” that the proposed mine

poses to the Boundary Waters. “Based on information provided by [Twin Metals] to date, existing science, and examination of similar proposals, there is no reason to doubt that the mining operations [Twin Metals] hopes to eventually conduct could result in [acid mine drainage] and concomitant metal leaching both during and after mineral development given the sought after copper-nickel ore is sulfidic,” Tidwell wrote in his 29-page determination on the leases issued four years ago.

Landwehr, who served as DNR Commissioner under the Dayton administration, would also likely have been a strong witness for the plaintiffs. The Campaign also cites peer reviewed scientific papers that document the extreme sensitivity of the Rainy River watershed to downstream pollution due to the region’s complicated hydrogeology.

By stipulating that the plaintiffs have met their initial burden of proof, the DNR potentially avoids further district court proceedings on that question.

A Ramsey County judge must still sign off on the agreement, which would remand the claim to the DNR for what could essentially be a new rule-making process. The agreement avoids further litigation, at least for now, between NMW and the DNR, although a protracted administrative battle could still play out over many months, possibly years.

While the two sides have agreed that the plaintiffs have met their initial burden of evidence, the agreement does not mean that the DNR agrees with NMW or its desire for a prohibition on copper-nickel mining in the Rainy River watershed. “Through this stipulation, the DNR does not take a position on whether the evidence provided

by plaintiffs warrants a change to [mining rules] and does not admit that DNR believes [the existing rules] are insufficiently protective,” states the agreement.

If approved by the judge, the DNR would first undertake a public comment period to determine if revisions in the state’s mining rules are warranted. That process would likely begin early next year. Only after reviewing comments and expert submissions would the agency decide on the adequacy of its existing rules. The agreement calls for that decision to be made by Sept. 30, 2021. Any changes to those rules would come with their own public review process.

While the stipulation agreement would remand the issue back to the DNR, the Ramsey County court would retain jurisdiction over the matter and would need to approve any eventual resolution of the case.

The agreement would also likely set the stage for a contested case hearing before an administrative law judge, since either NMW or Twin Metals could ask for such a proceeding if they disagree with whatever the DNR ultimately decides. Such a process, known as a contested case hearing, could

involve weeks of testimony from a wide range of experts on the matter.

Rules exclude other sensitive areas

The DNR first promulgated the rules at issue, known as Minn. R. 6132.2000, back in the early 1990s to address the siting of non-ferrous metal mines. Those rules already prohibit the siting of such mines in the Boundary Waters, the BWCAW’s mining protection buffer zone, Voyageurs National Park, state Scientific and Natural Areas, state parks, and certain national monuments and wildlife areas. NMW is pushing to add that portion of the Rainy River headwaters located just south of the Boundary Waters to that exclusion list, noting that waters from that region flow north into the heart of the wilderness.

The waters in the Boundary Waters are afforded the most stringent water quality protections in the country. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has designated its lakes and rivers as Prohibited Outstanding Resource Value Waters, a designation that allows zero degradation.

NMW argues that by allowing mining within the watershed of the wilderness, current non-fer-

rous mining rules cannot guarantee the water quality standards that the state has established for protection of the Boundary Waters.

“We have these very strong laws, which are designed to keep the upper headwaters of the Rainy River pristine,” said Rom. “It will be interesting to see how you can comply with those laws and policies while allowing copper mining upstream.”

Twin Metals argues that the rules in question are part of a robust environmental review and per-

mitting system in the state and they expressed confidence that the DNR would ultimately opt to uphold them. “Just last year, the Court of Appeals upheld those very rules. Twin Metals Minnesota has filed a motion to dismiss this lawsuit, because we do not believe it is appropriate before the court.” The company said it will continue to pursue environmental review and permitting for its proposed mine as the case moves ahead.

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ELY...Continued from page 1

however, we do have a number (of students) in quarantine," Erie said.

He referenced the recent announcement by Gov. Walz in implementing a four-week pause in many activities around the state. "We had some plans related to (school) activities tentatively in place before the Governor made his announcement, which are a little more restrictive than what we were envisioning, but there it is," he said.

Erie also indicated that Ely's junior high volleyball season ended immediately due to a COVID concern.

The Ely superintendent reported that many other area and regional schools are also transitioning to distance learning at various times, some

like Rock Ridge schools have no plan in place for returning to in-person learning. "Grand Rapids and Hibbing (schools) are on a two-week distance learning, and are due to come back Dec. 4, but according to our sources, they are re-evaluating that, and that could change," Erie said.

Ely K-5 Principal Anne Oelke added that Chisholm schools are remaining in distance-learning until the end of their second quarter, Feb. 1, 2021.

"Our neighboring school at Northeast Range, and ISD 2142, is planning to stay with in-person (learning)," Erie said. "Cherry school was shut down for two weeks and I think they are back now."

ISD 696 administrators also consulted with

Aubrey Hoover of the St. Louis County Public Health Department on Nov. 19. "Next week, for us in northern St. Louis County, they expect the (positive case rate data) to go down or hover at about the high 50s or 60," Erie said. "They don't expect a lot of change for us. They cannot say that for the whole county as they expect an upward trend in the county and state as a whole."

Oelke added, "Their projection for the mid-central area (of St. Louis County) was going to be in the high 80s, but even today (Nov. 19), they are already changing their projection to be in the 100s. Another thing I took away was that (COVID) was not going to slow down right now."

Megan Anderson, 6-12 Principal, re-iterated the prediction. "This is not slowing down. It will continue to increase through the holidays."

ISD administrators were set to meet virtually with Minnesota Department of Health officials on Monday, Nov. 23, and to take their guidance as they finalize plans for ISD 696 to transition to distance learning right after the Thanksgiving break on Monday, Nov. 30.

Erie also reported that officials from both Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital and Essentia Ely Clinic said "they are much busier than they have been and they confirmed that there is an increase in people there with COVID-related health issues."

Erie added, "They

don't see that this trend is going to subside. They feel that this (trend) is probably going to increase, hopefully not, but they are seeing an upward trend."

ISD administrators discussed their distance-learning plan recommendations with the advisory council members and highlighted the need for planning time for staff and teachers to prepare for the transition. The learning plan was set to be finalized on Monday, Nov. 23, following the MDH consultation. School board members were to be updated on the transition at their study session on Nov. 23.

The transition was planned to be implemented beginning on Monday, Nov. 30, and would run through the end of

December. A return date for in-person learning for students is not finalized. "We would have no contact days, beginning Nov. 30," Oelke said, "including no child care, no students, and only pure planning so we get this 100-percent right."

Erie added that the transition to distance learning will also provide an opportunity for custodial staff to complete "significant deep cleaning" in the school buildings.

"The hope is to always make sure that we get students back here in school, because we know that parents want their children here in school. We get that. We understand that. We know that this is hard. We are going to do everything we can to make sure we are able to do that," he said.

COVID...Continued from page 1

of COVID infections, at 345 per 10,000, in the area. That's followed closely by Orr at 312.

Orr's 23 new cases over the past two weeks was the region's largest increase by percentage, at 76.7 percent.

In response to Walz's executive order, many restaurants have shifted to take-out and delivery service, while others have decided to close entirely through Dec. 18.

County data

Total deaths from COVID-19 in St. Louis County reached 90 last week, with 78 occurring among residents of congregate care facilities and 12 in private residences. The youngest death was a person between 30 and 34 years old. Three more deaths were reported on Sunday, along with 209 new cases in the county.

While older adults are at greater risk of severe health issues from the virus, young adults continue to represent the

largest share of total cases and those fueling the recent rapid increase. One out of four cases in the county IS among those between 15 and 24 years old.

The rate of community spread in the northern part of the county, from both known and unknown sources, is also a concern for health officials. While other areas of the county, including Duluth, have seen a significant drop in the most recent data, the trend here has been steadily upward since Nov. 7.

Unchecked community spread across the state, particularly through small informal gatherings, is what prompted Walz's new restriction to limit gatherings to only people in a single household, throwing Thanksgiving plans out the window for thousands of Minnesotans.

Walz and state health officials also sounded the alarm last

Zip Code Areas	Nov. 5	Nov. 12	Nov. 19	Two-week increase	Cases per 10K
Cook	35	48	58	65.7%	266
Ely	57	66	99	73.7%	181
Embarrass	34	39	48	41.2%	345
Orr	30	41	53	76.7%	312
Soudan	4	5	6	50.0%	133
Tower	34	41	48	41.2%	249
TOTALS	194	240	312	60.8%	248

week about the state's hospital capacity, which is on the verge of being overwhelmed by the skyrocketing caseloads, as well as an increasing shortage of health care staff who are being exposed to COVID-19 in community settings.

Online data from the St. Louis County COVID-10

Dashboard for the period of Nov. 5-19 shows hospitalizations increasing by 111 patients, a 47-percent increase.

Testing demand ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday has increased to the point that state officials stepped back Friday from their recommendation that everyone be tested. The

new guidelines recommended testing for people with active symptoms, those who have been exposed within the past five days, and anyone working in critical industries like health care, retail, law enforcement and childcare.

Mesabi Range introduces zero textbook cost degree program

REGIONAL- True to its mission of preparing diverse learners for fulfilling careers, college transfer, and lives of intellectual curiosity and discovery, Mesabi Range College announces the launch of its Z-Degree (zero textbook cost) program.

Beginning fall semester 2020, students at Mesabi Range College will be able to earn their Associate of Arts (AA) degree without the additional cost of textbooks for Z-Degree designated courses.

Z-Degree programs have been gaining attention in the world of higher education since they were first introduced in 2014. Faculty members lever-

age the availability and flexibility of open-education resources (OERs), copyright-free materials, and faculty-developed resources to reduce or eliminate completely textbook costs for students.

The movement to bring the Z-Degree program to Mesabi Range College started over three years ago when a student confided to communication studies instructor Emily Werschay that he could not afford both the required textbook for the class and the gas money to travel home. "I realized that I didn't want a textbook to be the reason a student couldn't afford to go home or buy groceries," Werschay said.

What followed was a lot of energy expended in writing grants, developing an online faculty resource repository, and working with faculty who were redesigning their courses with OERs or other copyright-free materials. Werschay submitted a proposal for a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Innovation Fund Grant that addressed "obstacles to student success by using existing technologies, resources, or practices in innovative ways." As a result, the college was awarded a \$25,000 grant in 2017, followed by a \$10,000 grant in 2018. In 2019, Mesabi Range College was one of only

six colleges in the state awarded \$100,000 to finalize the Z-Degree initiative.

"Redesigning courses with OERs takes a significant amount of time and work, but nearly half of our faculty are now involved," Werschay explained. "This project reduces the financial burden for students, which allows them a greater opportunity for academic success," she said.

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VOLLEYBALL

Ely trips Huskies

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER
Managing Editor

BIG FORK — The Timberwolves' volleyball juggernaut clicked into gear once again here last Thursday as Ely put down the Huskies in straight sets, 25-19, 25-7, and 25-12, to improve to 11-0 on the season.

"The girls found their groove and played well tonight," said Ely Head Coach Andrea Thomas after the match. "Serving was one of our strong points. Annikka Mattson had a string of 14 serves in the second set."

Rachel and McKenna Coughlin proved a powerful combination at the net, said Thomas, which helped keep the Huskies off balance. Rachel posted 17 kills, nine digs and six blocks, while McKenna tallied 14 kills, six digs and three ace serves. Raven Sainio added four kills and eight digs, while Kate Coughlin posted seven digs. Mattson added five digs and three ace serves, while Madeline Kallberg put up 34 set assists.

Grizzlies split with Cherry, NE Range

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP- In a season left in shambles by COVID-19 quarantines and cancellations, the North Woods Grizzlies wrapped up play last week with a healthy team, three consecutive nights of volleyball, and promising prospects for the future.

First up was a postponed home match against Cherry, delayed when Cherry was forced into distance learning for two weeks due to COVID-19-induced staff shortages.

After spotting the visitors the first game 25-17, the Grizzlies turned the tables with 25-23, 26-24, and 25-16 victories to win the match 3-1.

The match turned on a decision by Grizzlies Head Coach Kandi Olson to move junior Morgan Burnett to full-time setter after the first game.

"We needed more cohesion out there and she brought the glue," Olson said. "All of a sudden, our kids were able to execute things that they hadn't done all year long. Hannah Kinsey had a great night out there hitting different types of shots and came out of it with ten kills. And when Hannah wasn't at the ball, it was going to Zoey

See **GRIZZ...**pg. 2B



VOLLEYBALL

Furious finale

North Woods gives unbeaten Ely all it can handle in five-set season ender

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

FIELD TWP — If the high school volleyball season had to end last Friday, and it did per Gov. Tim Walz's latest executive order, it went out with a bang in the North Woods School gym.

Unbeaten Ely finished the season that way, but not before the Grizzlies made a statement that they could stand toe-to-toe with the Timberwolves in a hard-fought 3-2 Ely win.

"North Woods played good defense and made our hitters make adjustments to find ways to terminate the ball," acknowledged Ely Head Coach Andrea Thomas following the match.

The Grizzlies came out hot, surprisingly going up on the Timberwolves by as many as seven points early before Ely fought back to tie the game 13-13. North Woods didn't buckle as the teams alternated points and serves and held a 20-18 edge as Ely's Kellen Thomas stepped up to serve.

The junior server fired three aces in a dominant 7-0 run capped by Rachel Coughlin's game-winning kill to complete the comeback win 25-20.

The Timberwolves kept right on rolling in the second

Above: Ely's Kellen Thomas attempts a block on a hard shot from the Grizzlies' Hannah Kinsey.
all photos by D. Colburn

game, cruising to what seemed to be an insurmountable 14-5 lead. Ely was leading 16-8 when the Grizzlies' Addy Hartway slammed a kill shot and took over at serve, setting the stage for a gutsy comeback.

Getting strong play at the net from Hannah Kinsey and Morgan Burnett, the Grizzlies reeled off six consecutive points to get back in the game 16-14. Skyler Yernatich connected on a deep crosscourt kill to pull North Woods to within 20-19 and a subsequent service ace by Abigail Shuster knotted the score at 20. When a kill attempt by Ely's Raven Sainio sailed long the upstart Grizzlies claimed an improbable 26-24 win.

"I think the girls realized that they were capable of going point-for-point with this team and that they had all the skills needed to win that game," Grizzlies Head Coach Kandi Olson said. "When we would see our team fall behind in the past we really struggled."

Neither team backed down

See **GIRLS...**pg. 2B



Above: North Woods' Addy Hartway receives a serve, while teammate Abigail Shuster offers a cheer of support. Below: North Woods' Morgan Burnett and Ely's Madison Rohr share a hug following the game.



OUTDOORS

Embarrass youth bags his first buck

EMBARRASS — Kolton Orcutt proved that patience can pay off. Kolton, who turned ten just ahead of last month's youth deer hunt, decided to take part in the hunt along with his step-dad Jordan Nelson.

He saw a few does while waiting in the stand, but insisted on holding out for a buck. By late Sunday afternoon, in the final few hours of the four-day hunt,

it looked like he might have missed his chance. But then, just minutes before he and his dad were ready to leave, a deer — walked into view. Kolton, who attends school in Virginia, didn't waste any time, and the rest is history as he notched his first buck. Congratulations to Kolton for his success. Looks like it will make good eating for the family!



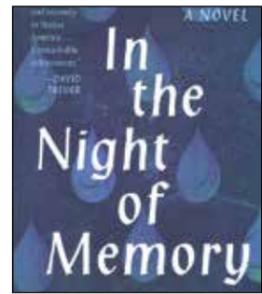
Outdoors briefly

The DNR is looking for your deer photos, too

REGIONAL — If you'd like to show off your deer, and have already sent a photo to the *Timberjay*, consider forwarding photos to the Department of Natural Resources. The DNR maintains the Minnesota Wildlife Facebook page, which includes photos from hunters all across the state. And you don't even have to bag a deer. Photos of deer camp or you or friends and family out in nature are also welcome. They'll appear on the facebook page or may be seen on social media or other communications from the DNR. To upload your photos, go to the DNR website at www.dnr.state.mn.us and type "Share your deer camp and hunting photos" into the search box.

BOOKS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS

Holiday book guide



In the Night of Memory

Linda LeGarde Grover

Now in paperback, this novel by the author of "The Road Back to Sweetgrass," visits some of the most important issues affecting Native Americans today.

When Loretta surrenders her young girls to the county and then disappears, she becomes one more missing Native woman in Indian Country's long devastating history of loss. But she is also a daughter of the Mozhay Point Reservation in northern Minnesota and the mother of Azure and Rain, ages 3 and 4, and her absence haunts all the lives she has touched—and all the stories they tell in this novel.

After a string of foster placements, from cold to kind to cruel, the girls find their way back to their extended Mozhay family, and a new set of challenges, and stories, unfolds. Deftly, Grover conjures a chorus of women's voices (sensible, sensitive Azure's first among them) to fill in the sorrows and joys, the loves and the losses that have brought the girls and their people to this moment. "In the Night of Memory" creates a nuanced, moving, often humorous picture of two Ojibwe girls becoming women in light of this lesson learned in the long, sharply-etched shadow of Native American history.

Linda Legarde Grover is a member of the Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe, and is a professor of American Indian studies at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Swede Hollow

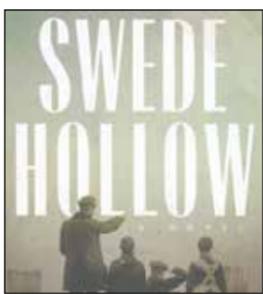
Ola Larsm
Translated by Tiina Nunnally

Now in paperback, this novel follows Gustaf and Anna Klar and their three children who dream of starting over when they leave Sweden for New York, finally settling in Minnesota, on the edge of St. Paul. Extensively researched and beautifully written, Ola Larsmo's award-winning novel vividly portrays a family and a community determined to survive. There are hardships, indignities, accidents, and harrowing encounters, but also acts of loyalty and kindness and moments of joy. This haunting story of a real place echoes the larger challenges of immigration in the twentieth century and today. Ola Larsmo is a critic and columnist for Sweden's largest newspaper, and the award-winning author of nine novels.

The Soup and Bread Cookbook

Beatrice Ojakangas

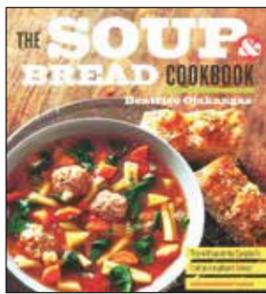
More than one hundred delectable and satisfying soup and bread pairings from beloved James Beard Cookbook Hall of Famer Beatrice



Ojakangas.

When eating out, Beatrice Ojakangas's mother told her, you could never go wrong ordering soup. And then, of course, there should be bread to go with it. Beatrice has been sampling soups ever since, and in "The Soup and Bread Cookbook," Ojakangas takes us along on her "soup travels," giving us delicious tastes from throughout the world and teaching us how to make them at home. International yet rooted in the rhythm of the Minnesota seasons—ranging from the cool, refreshing soups of summer to hearty winter fare—these soups, stews, and chowders take their inspiration from farmers markets and local organic grocery stores: real ingredients, always, and irresistible flavors.

Whether it's a basic broth or stock or



a long-simmering vegetable-filled stew, there is a bread to go along—enough to fill a cookbook on their own, in fact. Here we have new potato spring pea soup together with chive-dill batter bread, or spicy mango melon soup with lemon poppy seed muffins, or super-simple salmon chowder with sour rye buns, or good old chicken and dumpling soup with Dutch raisin bread—or perhaps your craving is satisfied with Asian lemon-ginger soup with sesame sunflower breadsticks, or avgolemono soup with pita bread, or Polish Easter soup with sourdough rye, or brie and apple soup with fougasse. Whatever your palate desires, "The Soup and Bread Cookbook" will, as The Splendid Table suggests, "banish the Campbell's from your cupboard forever." Pull up a chair. Open the book. Soup's on!

GIRLS...Continued from page 1B

in a third game that saw eight tied scores and three lead changes, with the final tie coming at 23-23. At the end of one of the longest rallies of the night an Ely shot fell out, and Yernatich followed up with a kill to the middle of the Timberwolves' defense to give North Woods a 25-23 win and a 2-1 edge in the match.

But the undefeated Wolves didn't get that way by buckling under pressure. "Every girl on this team had moments where they stepped up tonight," said Thomas.

North Woods rode the wave of its success well into the fourth game, with Karah Scofield serving at 14-13 to tie the score. But Rachel Coughlin snuffed that threat with a kill, picked up another point on a block, then smashed down another spike to stake Ely to a 13-17 lead.

If the Timberwolves

were in any sort of fog, Coughlin's flurry shook them out of it. They closed out the game on an 8-3 run, getting strong play from McKenna Coughlin and Madeline Kallberg in the 25-16 win that tied the match at two games each.

Ely never trailed in the final game, methodically building an 8-4 lead before going on a 7-2 tear to win the game 15-6 and the match 3-2.

Olson was pleased with her team's effort in the loss. "I don't think anyone from Ely expected us to give them the match we did, she said. "We scared an undefeated team. I think if we had had a few weeks or even a game more than we did due to our breaks due to quarantine I think we would have scared a lot more."

Kinsey and Hartway led the Grizzlies with ten and nine kills respective-

ly, while Burnett dished out 36 set assists and Yernatich was the team leader in digs with 30.

Senior McKenna Coughlin led the way for Ely in the final game of her high school career, racking up 22 kills, 19 digs, four blocks and five ace serves. Rachel Coughlin added 12 kills, 19 digs, four blocks and three aces, while Thomas tallied nine kills, 18 digs, four blocks and four ace serves. Annikka Mattson tallied a team high 29 digs, while Kallberg posted 39 set assists.

"What a great season!" said Thomas after Ely clinched the win and a perfect 12-0 season. "After losing seven seniors last year, I think we surprised a lot of teams. These girls rolled with the punches that came with playing during a pandemic and kept the focus on good volleyball."

GRIZZ...Continued from page 1B

Trip, who was seeing the court all over the place and got 15 kills. To see our senior having such a fantastic season was really exciting."

Silver Bay canceled a trip to North Woods on Thursday, but Northeast Range was looking for an opponent so the Grizzlies hit the road for the impromptu rematch.

North Woods won the first game 27-25, but fueled by a domi-

nating performance by Hannah Reichensperger, the Nighthawks took the match with wins of 25-19, 25-23, and 25-15.

"Compared to the previous time we played them we definitely looked like a different team out there," Olson said. "We played very well that night. There were just many opportunities where Hannah (Reichensperger) was able to capitalize on an opening we had."

The Grizzlies finished the season with a 2-6 record, but will return everyone except Trip next season.

North Woods' late success had the team looking forward to next season, according to Olson.

"I think they saw a glimpse of what the future could look like and that there's something exciting about those possibilities," she said.

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Annual Lights of Love Campaign now underway



REGIONAL- The 30th annual Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners (VHHP) Lights of Love campaign, the group's largest

fundraiser of the year, begins in November to commemorate National Hospice Month and National Family Caregivers Month. Last year's Lights of Love raised approximately \$6,200. Fundraising goals are achieved through the dedicated efforts of our Board of Directors working together with a community of supporting individuals and businesses. Please help us continue the tradition of remembering and honoring loved ones by supporting VHHP through this Lights of Love campaign.

VHHP's mission is to bring comfort care services to enrolled hospice patients and their families as well as hospice eligible patients in our local communities. VHHP also sponsors two education scholarships for students enrolled in the North Woods School and Tower enrollment area, pursuing a medical career, and one scholarship for college students.

Your tax-deductible donations may be given in honor or memory of a loved one. All Lights of Love contributions and dedications will be published in local area newspapers during the month of January, unless otherwise noted on the donation form.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, VHHP will not be hosting any public tree lighting events in the Orr, Cook, or Tower communities. Please visit our Facebook page for a virtual tree lighting ceremony.

For more information about Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners, visit our website at www.vhhp.org or contact Becca Bundy, Program Director at 218-780-5423. To donate, you can find a donation form on our website. Please make checks payable to VHHP Lights of Love and mail to PO Box 244, Cook, MN 55723. PayPal is also available via our website. Donations are tax-deductible.

St. Luke's to host virtual classes on advanced care planning and creating a healthcare directive

REGIONAL- St. Luke's is offering a virtual class on advanced care planning and how to create a healthcare directive. Creating a healthcare directive eases the decision-making process for your loved ones. Plus, it ensures your wishes are respected if you are ever unable to communicate them yourself. Attending one of these classes provides an opportunity to learn about this legal written document and will help you move forward in creating your own.

St. Luke's Hospital in Duluth will be hosting virtual classes on Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 4:30 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. and on Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 4:30 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. These classes are offered on different days to make it easier for people to attend. Each class is an hour and a half long and you only need to attend one class. The class is offered as part of St. Luke's involvement with the Honoring Choice community initiative. St. Luke's Hospice Social Worker Sonja Winder will be leading the classes.

Classes are free and registration is required to receive a Zoom invitation. To learn more and register, visit slhduluth.com/healthcaredirective.

HOLIDAY GIVING

Operation Santa needs your help; only a few weeks to go!

Donations needed by Dec. 11: toys, gift cards, clothing, and cash welcome

TOWER- Now is the time to start thinking about Operation Santa. We are expecting to at least match last year's tally of 170 children, but are anticipating our total may higher due to the disruptions to families' income and employment this past year. We are also hoping to be able to do our shopping online if possible, so early donations are especially appreciated.

Operation Santa is a local fundraiser which purchases Christmas gifts (toys, gift cards, and warm winter items) for children whose families use the Tower Food Shelf. Last year we served over 170 area children.

Take advantage of the great deals on toys, many of which are being offered right now, to bring some joy into a child's life. Cash donations are welcome; checks should be made out to Operation Santa and delivered or mailed to The Timberjay, PO Box 636, Tower, MN 55790.

We have started to receive some donations, but much more is needed to make sure every child in our community receives gifts and warm clothing this Christmas season.

The effort is organized by the Timberjay and the Tower Soudan Civic Club, with help from many

area groups, churches, organizations, and individuals. If your group or church is planning to donate this year, please contact Jodi at 218-753-2950. (This helps with planning!)

Lake Country Power's Operation RoundUp® program has once again made a very generous donation to the Tower Soudan Civic Club to help cover the cost of purchasing warm items for the children.

We are looking at donations of toys, games, art supplies, and sporting equipment for children, and gift cards to either Target or Walmart for our teenagers (\$10 or \$15). Stocking stuffer type gifts and holiday candy are also appreciated. We are always in need of gifts for infants and babies (must be labeled as safe for children under three). Gift ideas for children include games, action figures, building toys, dolls with accessories, craft sets, art supplies (including crayons and markers), sporting goods (basketballs, footballs, playground balls, sleds), puzzles, cars and trucks, and science kits.

Please don't worry about picking out the right gift; I promise there will be a child on our list who will love whatever you pick out!

If you purchase a toy that



uses batteries, please also send a spare set! Donations of batteries (especially AA and AAA) are also appreciated.

We also accept gently-used holiday decorations and gifts for the adults who use the food shelf.

Donations can be dropped off at the Timberjay in Tower, and will be distributed at the food shelf on Dec. 15. Families who use the Tower Food Shelf and have not yet signed up, should call Jodi at the Timberjay at 218-753-2950, or can email editor@timberjay.com.

Timberjay turkey winners announced

Orr

Orr Municipal Liquor Store - Pelican Bay Foods - N/A Lumber Orr Hardware - Aaron Olson American Bank - Carol Woehrl

Cook

Cook VFW - N/A American Bank - Karen Neuman Waschke Family Chevrolet - Greg Arntz Cook Building Center - Steve Ratai Zup's Grocery Cook - Kim Green 1st National Bank - David Pearson Subway of Cook - Malita Spears

Tower-Soudan

Benchwarmer Grille - Darin Rahko Soudan Store - Annie Hourgen Tower-Soudan Agency - Steve Coy Ubetcha Antiques & Uniques - N/A Frandsen Bank - Tower - Ron Alarcon Zup's Tower Grocery - Jeff Johnson Good Ol' Days - Christian Butzin Vermilion Fuel & Food - Jim Gornick D'Erick's - Melinda Berg

Babbitt

Babbitt Branch - Ely Area Credit Union - Rose Tennala Zup's Grocery Babbitt - Judy Hammond

Ely

Ely Area Credit Union - N/A Potluck Kitchenware - Anonymous Zup's in Ely - Brenda Whiting Frandsen Bank - Ely - N/A Wintergreen Northern Wear - Sophie Dunn Piragis - Barb Anderson Dee's Bar - Deb Maki Ely Auto Service - N/A Grand Ely Lodge - David Quilk Ely Flower & Seed - Cathy Schwartz Ely Surplus - Joanne Carlson Mealey's Gift & Sauna Shop - N/A Front Porch Coffee & Tea - Chuck Kothe Ely Northland Market - Karen Koivisto Merhar's Ace Hardware - Sarah Kahle

Cook Council to raise 2021 levy by five percent

by DAVID COLBURN
Cook-Orr Editor

COOK- Cook City Council members met to review 2021 budget and levy projections on Thursday in advance of their truth-in-taxation meeting, and anticipated final approval, on Dec. 17.

An anticipated tax levy increase of five percent will generate an additional \$21,202 to offset projected increases in expenses for the general and airport funds.

General fund expenses will increase by \$10,763, about two percent, to \$583,408, according to information presented by City Administrator Theresa Martinson. The largest share of the increase, \$9,950, is in funds allocated to streets and alleys. Through minor adjustments across other categories, the 2021

budget will also allow for a 1.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment to employee wages.

Projected expenses for the airport, which are separate from the general fund, are \$94,520, \$8,230 more than expected revenues of \$86,300.

The levy increase will cover the increases in both funds and create a positive budget balance of \$2,209.

Airport maintenance

During the regular council meeting, members approved initiating a grant application process to

obtain federal assistance to rebuild the taxi lane at the airport and to construct a 40x40-foot building adjacent to the maintenance garage for storing snow removal equipment.

The 950-foot strip is the oldest section of pavement at the airport, and Martinson said its condition has deteriorated to the point that it is beyond using crack sealing to maintain it. The maintenance building doesn't have enough space to store the snow removal equipment and various

attachments.

The total project cost of the upgrades is \$675,000, of which \$607,500 would come from the federal government. An additional \$33,750 would be covered by state aid, leaving the remaining \$33,750 to be paid directly by the city.

In other business, the council:

► Approved resolutions to have a Community Development Block Grant wastewater treatment pond improvement proposal

included in St. Louis County's Consolidated Action Plan, and to authorize application to the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board for additional funding.

► Approved \$23,300 for Walker, Giroux & Hahne, LLC of Virginia to conduct the 2020 financial audit. ► Approved the election of 2021 library board officers, including Eric Trip, Chair, Theresa Drift, Vice-Chair,

and Lisa Bedi, Secretary. ► Received library and ambulance reports.

► Approved the appointment of Jody Bixby as the council's representative on the Cook Housing and Redevelopment Authority board.

► Increased the monthly rent for the apartment at the airport from \$700 to \$710.

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Answer if your health department calls.

m MINNESOTA STAY SAFE MN

Obituaries and Death Notices



Penny M. Joelson

Penny Marie Joelson, 64, of Virginia, died on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020, at Aspen Grove Assisted Living in Chisholm. A funeral service was held on Monday, Nov. 23 at Bauman-Cron Funeral Home Chapel in Virginia with Pastor Cory Rintala officiating. Interment was in Calvary Cemetery in Virginia.

Penny was born on May 17, 1956, in Cook, the daughter of William and Donna Marie (Lakosky) Edwards Jr. She was a graduate of Orr High School and also attended bartending school. In her own words, "I was born and raised in a bar." She married Robert A. Joelson on July 25, 1982, and moved from Orr to Virginia.

Penny was the Assistant Manager at the Orr Muni for several years, worked at the Chocolate Éclair in the Thunderbird Mall, and began an 18-year career at L&M in 1982. Penny loved the outdoors. She enjoyed canoeing, fishing, grouse hunting, and deer hunting. She never met a stranger, only friends she hadn't made yet; she had an infectious smile, and loved to be in parades with "Tin Lizzy".

Penny is survived by her husband, "the man I'm married to" Robert "Bob" Joelson; siblings, Delta (Leonard) Zabrocki of Orr, Gary (Debbie) Edwards of Boise, Idaho, and Terry "Tick" (Judy) Edwards of Britt; brothers- and sisters-in-law, Janice Kramer of Seattle, Kay Joelson of Virginia and James Joelson of Virginia; nieces and nephews, Dean (Terri) Zabrocki of Aldon, Darren (Angel) Zabrocki of Silver Bay, Terry (Angie) Edwards of Minneapolis, Mike (Claudia) Joelson of Eveleth, Chris (Mike) Tveit of Minneapolis, Rachel (Adam) Reich, Joe (Natalie) Kramer, Becca Kramer, David (Carol) Joelson of Sartell, Danny (Debbie) Joelson of Virginia and Kathy (Ken) Kemen of Virginia; grand-nephews and

grand-nieces, Danielle and Zach Zabrocki, Jacob, Carter and Owen Zabrocki, Kaylee Lovett and James Burke; and numerous other extended family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; nephew, Seth Burke; sister-in-law, Nancy Joelson; and brothers-in-law, Dick Joelson and Gary Kramer.

Margaret Kajala

Margaret Kajala, 74, of Virginia, passed away of natural causes on Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2020, at Edgewood Vista in Virginia. Margaret's family would like to thank the staff at Edgewood Vista, special "cousin-in-law" Robert Tomassoni, nephew Todd Zaun, and her wonderful friends, for all of their caring and kindness as her health declined over the past several years. A private family graveside service will be held at Lakeside Cemetery in Biwabik. Memorials are preferred in lieu of flowers. Arrangements are by Ziemer-Moeglein-Shatava Funeral Home in Gilbert.

Margaret was born on Dec. 8, 1945, in St. Paul, to Louis and Rose (Huss) Beckman. She grew up on the family farm outside of Jordan. She attended St. John's Catholic School in Jordan through eighth grade and graduated from Jordan High School in 1963. She then attended Mankato State University, graduating in 1967 with a B.S. in Math. Upon graduation, she began teaching math in Virginia, where she met George Kajala, her future husband. They were married on June 21, 1969. Following their marriage, they moved to St. Paul. While living in St. Paul, Margaret taught at S.M. Grass Junior High in West St. Paul while George finished dental school. Upon George's graduation, they moved back to Virginia where Margaret started work as the bookkeeper in George's orthodontic practice, a position she took over fulltime a few years later as his practice grew.

They made their home on Virginia's South Side. George and Margaret first lived on Fifth Avenue and later moved to Eighth Street, where Margaret lived for nearly 40 years. In 1973, they purchased a cabin on Lake Vermilion which they later remodeled into a home for an eventual retirement. The "lake place", as she called it, provided countless hours of fun with family and friends. However, it also

demanding many hours of hard work, as she kept the place spotless both inside and out.

In 1979, her son Steven was born. Margaret cherished being a mother and stepped back from some of the duties at George's office so that she could care for Steve. Margaret was a kind, caring, and patient mother. She also became the de facto caretaker to the menagerie of pets that Steve kept in the house. Margaret was very willing to lend a hand for whatever projects or events Steve was involved in. She was always just a phone call away to provide rides for Steve and his friends.

Margaret loved to cook. At their home and the lake place, Margaret hosted many luncheons and dinner parties. In addition to formal parties, she welcomed George and Steve's friends into their home for a meal at any time. She was a wonderful hostess who paid attention to the smallest details to make sure her guests felt welcomed. Her other interests over the years included sewing, golfing, gardening, downhill and cross-country skiing, boating, canoeing, camping, fishing, and especially traveling. She cherished time spent with her many friends, especially after George passed away in 2000.

The last chapter of Margaret's life began when she moved into Edgewood Vista in 2016. She loved living at Edgewood Vista. While there, she especially enjoyed socializing with fellow residents, visits from family and friends, and taking rides around Virginia to look at the places that were important to her. She also enjoyed an occasional stop at Grandma's Restaurant or Dairy Queen.

Margaret is survived by her son, Steven Kajala; daughter-in-law, Scarlett Kajala; grandchildren, Parker, Evan, Vincent, Lila and Chloe Kajala; twin sister, Mary Jo (Gary) Carstens; sisters, Jenny Gunderman and Karen Zaun; brothers, Ron (Liz) Beckman and Mike (Donna) Beckman; sister-in-law, Linda (Paul) Orazem; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Dr. George Kajala; father-in-law, Eino "Kikier" Kajala; mother-in-law, Hilma Kajala; brothers-in-law, Loren Gunderman and Dennis Zaun; nephew, Gregg Zaun; and her beloved golden retrievers, Max, Duke and Ben.

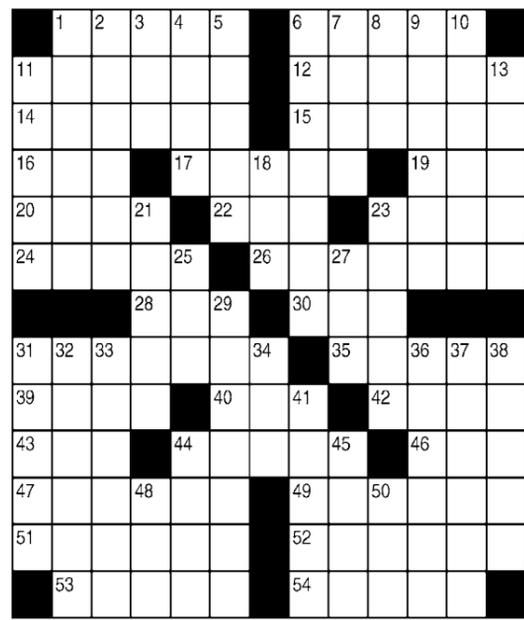
Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her daughters, Gayle (Daniel) Padgett of Embarrass and Glori (Brett) Lundstrom of Pike-Sandy; stepdaughter, Melonie (Dwayne) Westley; granddaughters, Aleena, Autumn and Calli; step-granddaughter, Sheena; step-grandsons, Nathan and Isaac; and eleven great-grandchildren.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Off
- 6 Handed out hands
- 11 Drunk (Sl.)
- 12 Wickerwork willows
- 14 WWI president
- 15 "The Compleat Angler" writer
- 16 Furthermore
- 17 Farewell
- 19 Coloration
- 20 Requirement
- 22 Right angle
- 23 California wine region
- 24 Contribute
- 26 Got rid of the bumps
- 28 Tummy muscles
- 30 Morning moisture
- 31 Not as prevalent
- 35 Bar legally
- 39 Frilly, in a way
- 40 Minor worker
- 42 Bygone times
- 43 Inseparable
- 44 Baby-sitters, often
- 46 Dead heat
- 47 IBM computer that won on "Jeopardy!"
- 49 Trumpeter Marsalis



DOWN

- 1 Straightened
- 2 Gave shape to
- 3 "Monty Python" opener
- 4 Old promise
- 5 Device for testing physical conditions
- 6 Fastened with pegs
- 7 Birthright barterer
- 8 Have a bug
- 9 Deadly
- 10 Theatrical company
- 11 Master, on safari
- 13 Golf's "Slammin' Sammy"
- 18 Well, — be!
- 21 Blog, basically
- 23 Full of info
- 25 Jimmy Fallon's network
- 27 Churchill's gesture
- 29 Cosines' reciprocals
- 31 Decelerates
- 32 Venice's thoroughfares
- 33 Vinegar radical
- 34 Director Howard
- 36 Stagger
- 37 Baltimore athlete
- 38 Hammerhead parts
- 41 Stares stupidly
- 44 Asking too many questions
- 45 Agreement
- 48 Red or Black
- 50 "The Matrix" role

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ATTENTION GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

The Greenwood Township Board of Supervisors is working with CTC communications to bring high-speed internet and phone services to the township with Fiber Optic cable.

Currently interest is at a low level of 14% of households.

We need to show CTC there is an interest for these services.

Please go to the websites below and complete the surveys
CTC Survey: https://join.connectctc.com/front_end/zones
Speed Test: <http://mnruralbroadbandcoalition.com/speedtest>

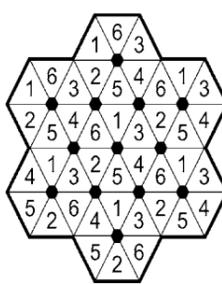
Your help is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,
Greenwood Township Board of Supervisors

FIND It HERE

SNOWFLAKES

solution



TIMBERJAY CLASSIFIEDS

Considerations of personal privacy, time and resources prevent the newspaper from investigating ads placed in the classified section. If you respond to an ad, we urge you to use the same care and prudence that you would use when conducting business in any other situation.

HAIR CARE

DREAMWEAVER SALON & DAY SPA - Open Monday-Friday 8:30 - 6:30. 218-666-5594. tfn

HOSPICE

VIRGIE HEGG HOSPICE PARTNERS can provide help for patients and their families in ways such as: comfort care, massages, last wishes and more. For more information, contact Program Director Becca Bundy at 218-780-5423 or vhhpdirector@gmail.com. This ad is paid for by Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Ely AA OPEN GROUP MEETINGS- in person meetings, Wednesdays & Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, 915 E Camp St., Ely

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

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

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

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

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

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP- Are you troubled by someone's drinking? Al-Anon Family Group is a community-based mutual support program for the friends and families of alcoholics. It is confidential and open to anyone affected by someone else's drinking. Hope Lutheran Church in Embarras 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.

ELY WOMEN'S OPEN AA MEETING- Every Monday at noon at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, 231 E Camp St., Ely. Enter through side door.

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

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

King Crossword

Answers
Solution time: 24 mins.
AMISS DEALT
BLOTTO OSIERS
WILSON WALTON
AND ADIEU HUE
NEED ELL NAPA
ADDIN LEVELED
ABS DEW
SCARCE ESTOP
LACY COG YORE
ONE NANAS TIE
WATSON WYNTON
SLYEST KNEELS
SLAYS SCORE

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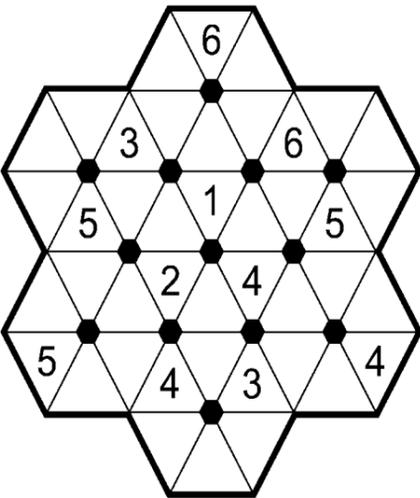
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SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

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



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆◆◆
◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆◆◆ Difficult

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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

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Super Crossword

DIRECTLY ON TOP

ACROSS

- 1 "Everwood" actor Wolf
- 6 Pigs' home
- 9 Dutch brew
- 15 — of Mexico
- 19 * Ship's load
- 20 Lead-in to historic
- 21 Durango dish
- 22 Baseball's Hersher
- 23 * Subject to interpretation
- 25 * Old Greek squares
- 26 "Stretch" car
- 27 Steak, e.g.
- 28 Prefix with lethal
- 29 * Second U.S. first lady
- 31 At a distance
- 33 Tattles
- 34 * Chum
- 38 Give slack to
- 42 Son of Eliel Saarinen
- 43 * Dr. Evil's cat in Austin Powers films
- 47 1801-05 veep Burr
- 51 Beatles song on "Let It Be"
- 52 Observe
- 55 Song for one
- 56 Linguist Chomsky
- 57 Political plot
- 61 Knight's glove
- 63 "Serpico" actor M. — Walsh
- 65 * Jumping up and down on a bouncy stick
- 69 Comb buzzer
- 70 Native suffix
- 71 See 8-Down
- 73 * Pairs of consecutive letters
- 75 Spying setup
- 77 Likely (to)
- 80 Meadow
- 82 Birds building homes
- 84 Poster pins
- 88 Buzzing home pest
- 91 Large 1940s computer
- 93 "Huh?"
- 94 Female kin
- 95 Artist's base
- 99 * Suffer a lot
- 101 Dog variety
- 103 * She cat in Austin Powers films
- 107 — Sea (salt lake in Asia)
- 110 Coy
- 111 Revisions
- 112 * Too much self-esteem
- 116 Beloved of Tristan
- 119 * Bay off Nigeria and Togo's coast
- 123 — de plume
- 124 Brit's "Bye!"
- 128 Ye — Shoppe
- 129 Rendezvous
- 130 Really succeed (or what literally appears six times in this puzzle)
- 132 Old Greek concert halls
- 133 Shahs, e.g.
- 134 Shoot (for)
- 135 Sermon text
- 136 Philosopher Immanuel
- 137 Grand home
- 138 Hosp. staff
- 139 Sea vessels

DOWN

- 1 Union enemy
- 2 Arrived
- 3 "Eat — eaten" (survival adage)
- 4 9-to-5er's cry of relief
- 5 Dress (up)
- 6 Flatware item
- 7 Move as if on wheels
- 8 With 71-Across, boot camp affirmative
- 9 Run up — (defer payment)
- 10 Wise men
- 11 Air pollution
- 12 Reid and Lipinski
- 13 "Seinfeld" gal
- 14 Nielsen of "Mr. Magoo"
- 15 Ghana's former name
- 16 Dickens' — Heep
- 17 "— tell ya!"
- 18 Dental string
- 24 It uses 108 cards
- 29 In — (single-file)
- 30 Gillette razor brand
- 31 Toon bear
- 32 Canon camera
- 34 Compound with nitrogen
- 35 '83 Keaton-Garr film
- 36 Letter-shaped girder
- 37 Easy puts, informally
- 39 Weep loudly
- 40 Sooner than, in poetry
- 41 Ultimate degree
- 44 Health supplement store, familiarly
- 45 Jump
- 46 Pig
- 48 Part to play
- 49 Bullring cries
- 50 Observe
- 53 R&D center
- 54 Song for two
- 58 Singer Dylan
- 59 Opposed to, in dialect
- 60 Theater box
- 62 Orderly
- 64 Floor piece
- 66 Tax org.
- 67 Election analyst Silver
- 68 FBI guys
- 72 Umpt's kin
- 74 — Lanka
- 76 Oklahoma tribe
- 77 "Moby-Dick" captain
- 78 Flow out
- 79 Fix a flat?
- 81 Height: Abbr.
- 83 Former Swedish car
- 85 Toddler, e.g.
- 86 Buzzing musical toy
- 87 Is in a huff
- 89 Source of warmth on some trains and ships
- 90 Belly laugh
- 92 Special FX technology
- 96 Poppa
- 97 Native suffix
- 98 Unit of resistance
- 100 Mean beast
- 102 "Doggone!"
- 104 Totally spoil
- 105 Century divs.
- 106 Dark modern film genre
- 108 Breakdown of social norms
- 109 Long-term inmates
- 112 Download on a Kindle
- 113 Radner of comedy
- 114 Nash of comedy
- 115 "My heart skipped —"
- 117 Weaving frames
- 118 Driver's lic. issuer
- 120 Sicilian volcano
- 121 Night, in Nice
- 122 — dixit (assertion with no proof)
- 124 Song for three
- 125 "Waterloo" quartet
- 126 Lean
- 127 Gets mature
- 130 Rove (about)
- 131 Flow out

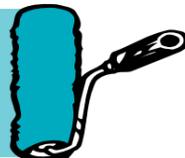
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