

SULFIDE MINING **Court remands PolyMet air permit**

Suggests MPCA may have ignored planning for larger project

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

REGIONAL- The state's Court of Appeals has remanded PolyMet Mining's air permit back to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for further proceedings. That decision, issued Monday, was just the latest setback for the company, which hopes to eventually open its NorthMet copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes. Four of PolyMet's major permits have been

reversed, remanded, or suspended over the past two and a half years.

The decision comes five months after the state's Supreme Court handed PolyMet and the MPCA a partial victory in the same case, when it determined See...COURT pg. 9

that the state regulatory agency had no obligation to investigate whether PolyMet was engaging in so-called "sham permitting," by seeking an air permit for a substantially

Fires threaten BWCAW



Wilderness fires threaten both sides of the U.S.-Canada border. See Outdoors. Page B8

VERMILION RANGE TRADITION







LAW ENFORCEMENT As calls rise, **Ely loses** a squad car

Blown engine prompts rental agreement with Breitung Township

by KEITH VANDERVORT Ely Editor

ELY-The Ely Police Department will operate for the rest of this year, and perhaps longer, with just two primary squad cars due to a blown engine in their third vehicle, a situation which could affect the department's overall response capabilities.

The EPD responded to 2,347

incidents in 2020, about two dozen more calls than in 2019, according to Police Chief Chad Houde, so the number of inci-

MORE Ely Police busy this summer. Page 10

107th Old Settlers Picnic returns after COVID pause

by JODI SUMMIT

Tower-Soudan Editor

BREITUNG TOWNSHIP- It was the end of an era as master booyah chef Nick Tekautz was honored for his 32 years, or perhaps it was 36 years, of chef service for the annual Vermilion Range Old Settlers Picnic on Saturday.

Tekautz has now trained in a younger generation of Tekautzes and Tormas to take over the supervision of the hundreds of gallons of meat-and-vegetable stew prepared each year.

Tekautz wasn't quite sure how many years he had been in charge, after being

Above: Joe Yapel, left, and Stephen Tekautz scoop buckets of booyah, a meat and potato stew, at the annual **Vermilion Range Old Settlers Picnic** last Saturday.

Right: Ed Swanson, 3, helps with cleanup. photos by J. Summit

asked by his father-in-law Herb Lamppa to take over for "just one year" when the committee needed a new head cook.

One year stretched into an almost per-

See...PICNIC pg. 11

dents/calls for 2020

is about typical. However, having one less squad car for at least a year could be a challenge for the overall response efficiency of the department, Chief Houde told city council members Tuesday night.

To solve that challenge, Houde received approval from the budget committee and the full council to work out a rental agreement with Breitung Township to provide a squad car in the event that another Ely police vehicle is taken out of operation.

Interim Mayor Chuck Novak told the council that while the squad car "had a lot of miles on it and is not that

See...POLICE pg. 10

COOK Family breaks ground for Habitat for Humanity home

by DAVID COLBURN Cook/Orr Editor

COOK- When North St. Louis County (NSLC) Habitat for Humanity starts looking into a new build, they most often start with a property in hand and approve a new family for it.Sometimes, however, it unfolds in the opposite

way.

The latter was the case for Tara Cotten, of Cook, and her daughters Natalia, 7, and Brooklyn, 6, who on Sunday participated in groundbreaking ceremonies for their future home at 419 4th Street

NW, a property that neither Cotten or Habitat Executive Director Nathan Thompson knew they would have when she was selected last winter.

Slab already laid as volunteers get to work raising walls

"We found our

See...COOK pg. 12

Tara Cotten, and her daughters Natalia, left, and Brooklyn are backed up by two dozen volunteers and supporters at a groundbreaking ceremony on Sunday for their new Habitat for Humanity home. photo by D. Colburn





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Community notices

Art On The Lake open to the public on Saturday, July 24

TOWER- Art On The Lake, a public showing and sale of fine art by local artists, will be held on Saturday, July 24 at the Lake Vermilion Cultural from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The paintings are ready to be hung in your home or cabin and are both watercolor and oil media. This event is a fundraiser for the LVCC located at 705 Main St. in Tower. While the building is still under renovation, this event will be held in the Halunen Lobby.

5K Glow Run supports mental health programming: race set for Sept. 24

ELY- Run and have some fun at the Northern Lights Clubhouse's 5K Glow Run on Friday, Sept. 24 at 7 p.m. beginning at Ely's Whiteside Park. The run takes you through glow zones as the sun sets. People of all ages and abilities are welcome to participate. Costs are \$30 for adults, \$20 for students and \$5 for kids. Proceeds support the Northern Lights Clubhouse, a place where adults with mental health challenges have the opportunity to make and reach personal goals. For more information and to register, visit www.elymarathon.com/5k.

MnDOT to detour Highway 73 for culvert replacement

DULUTH- MnDOT maintenance crews will detour Hwy. 73 from Hwy. 1 to Cty. Rd. 22 west of Cook on Monday, July 26, through Thursday, July 29, to install a new center line culvert. Important reminders for motorists regarding work

zone safety:

Stay alert, work zones constantly change.

Slow down when approaching every work zone, then navigate through with care and caution. ► Watch for workers and slow moving equip-

ment. ► Obey posted speed limits. Fine for a violation

in a work zone is \$300.

Minimize distractions behind the wheel.

► Be patient; expect delays, especially during peak travel times.

For more information on projects in northeast Minnesota, follow us on Facebook at https://facebook.com/groups/MnDOTnortheast and Twitter at @mndotnortheast. For real-time traffic and travel information in Minnesota, visit www.511mn.org.

History Night on Wednesday, July 28

ELY- Jill Baum of Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps will speak at the fourth and final Ely-Winton Historical Society History Night of the season on Wednesday, July 28 in Auditorium CL 104 of Vermilion Community College at 7 p.m.

Hooked on historic preservation ever since discovering "This Old House" in middle school, Jill is the Executive Director of Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps. She has worked for mission-based organizations most of her career, including extensive experience managing AmeriCorps and field team programming throughout the country with the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Jill majored in geology at Carleton College and earned an MS in Land Resources at UW-Madison.

Learn how Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps is working to build pathways to the preservation trades for young adults, including using the Halfway Ranger Station Historic District just outside of Ely as a hands-on training center for both corps members and the community. All History Night events are free to the public. A free-will donation is greatly appreciated.

TOWER-SOUDAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Information needed for Soudan **Mine Memorial Exhibit**

TOWER-Volunteers from the Tower-Soudan Historical Society continue to work with James Pointer, Interpretive Supervisor at the Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park, to create a new exhibit at the Soudan Underground Mine Visitors Center. The purpose of the display is to honor the memory of those who died of injuries sustained in the underground mine, the open pit mines, and on the nearby property and railroad. A plea went out earlier for information and interesting stories and photos have been received from loved ones of some deceased miners. However, help is still being sought from the public to verify the names and other details about those who died.

Andy Larson, former president of the Tower-Soudan Historical Society and retired Soudan Mine tour guide of 27 years, has created a list of 143 names of those who died from 1884 to 1957. He spent hours painstakingly going through death records, newspaper articles, cemetery records, and other primary source materials to make this list. Larson acknowledges there are inaccuracies in the list due to names being changed, names misspelled, details reported incorrectly, etc. The goal is to update and correct the list as much as possible before it becomes part of the display. If you know of someone who died in the mines or in a mine-related accident and have information, please send copies of documents to the Tower-Soudan Historical Society at PO Box 465, Tower, MN 55790 or scan your information and email it to towersoudanhs@ gmail.com. Documents needed include death records, newspaper articles, cemetery records,

details regarding the cause of death and any other record or memorabilia vou may have.

The three-page list of names has been posted on the Tower-Soudan Historical Society website at towersoudanhs.org. In addition to names, the list includes the date of death, marital status, age of the deceased, country of origin and, in some cases, details regarding the accident. Volunteers from the historical society will be doing further research on this list in the next few months at the Iron Range Research Library in Chisholm. It is hoped that this research along with additional help from the public will allow the exhibit to open by Memorial Day weekend 2022. If you have questions, call the historical society at 218-753-5021 or send an email to the address above.

One of those lost...



Jeannie Burlowski submitted this photo of her grandfather, MattAvikainen, taken in his WWI uniform. Avikainen died in the underground mine on May 14, 1945 at age 55. Avikainen was a "barman" who had gone into a chamber after a morning blast. It was his job to ensure that the rock overhead was safe. He repeatedly jabbed his iron bar into the "ceiling" of the chamber to ensure there was no loose rock above. Unfortunately, there was much loose rock that day. It fell on Avikainen, crushing him to death instantly. Jeannie has her grandfather's silver pocket watch, stopped at exactly the moment when the ore crushed him. She will be donating this watch to the exhibit.

National Night Out celebration planned in Wuori

WUORI TWP- St. Louis County Sheriff's Deputies along with representatives of Wuori Twp. are coming together to host National Night Out. The community celebration will be Tuesday, Aug. 3 from 4:30-8 p.m. at the Wuori Community Center, 7449 Werner Road. The event is free to the public and all are invited to attend.

National Night Out is an annual celebration on the first Tuesday in August held by neighborhoods across the country. The event strives to promote community and strengthen relationships between citizens and the public safety departments in their area. The festivities will feature child-friendly activities and a free community barbecue.

photos of the deceased,

Deputies from the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office will be there along with squad cars, a K-9 demonstration, and the St. Louis County 911 dispatching center. St. Louis County Volunteer Rescue Squad members, local EMS and fire departments also will participate, along with a Life Link III helicopter landing. Other area agencies may

attend as schedules allow. There will be drawings for youth and adult prizes, music by Casey Aro, magic by Amazing Charles and more. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet with community leaders from the area. St. Louis County would like to thank the numerous sponsors who helped make this event possible.

Homer's Odyssey picnic operetta performed July 31

EMBARRASS-Mixed Precipitation presents a new production, traveling and performing on a pickup truck. This year's production is an adaptation of Homer's Odyssey, featuring a musical mix of baroque melodies and Dolly Parton tunes. Using the music of Claudio Monteverdi's 1639 opera, Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria (The Return of Ulysses to His Homeland) and the spirit of a country is at 2 p.m. on Saturday,

carnival, this adventure is filled with summer fun and the joy of being together following difficult and scary times.

Mixed Precipitation's mini-residency on the Iron Range will feature free pop-up performances for residents at Carefree Living, the Tower Farmers Market on Friday, July 30 and area parks and beaches.



July 31 at Early Frost mixedprecipitation.org/ Farms in Embarrass. This summer-2021-dates. hobby farm, founded by The performance is Ericka and Jack LaMar, has offered for a suggested donation of \$10 - \$25 per ice cream treats, berries, honey, chickens, and it's person. But no one will ever a short walk from the be turned away for lack of Darwin Myers Wildlife funds. This performance is Management Area, on the family-friendly and fun for Mesabi Trail. all ages, approximately 75 minutes in length. You can see the full listing of performances Bring your own lawn throughout Minnesota and chairs and a picnic. make reservations at http://





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STATE AND LOCAL NEWS

Senator Tomassoni reveals ALS diagnosis

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even breathe,

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the National

Institute of

Neurological

Disorders and

Stroke. There

is no known

by DAVID COLBURN Cook-Orr Editor

REGIONAL- A longtime Iron Range lawmaker is vowing to continue to represent his constituents after revealing this past week that he has been diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

District 6 State Sen. David Tomassoni, DFL-Chisholm, a 29-year legislative veteran in both the House and Senate, made the announcement in a letter published in the Mesabi *Tribune* on July 16.

"There is no sugar coating it - this is a tough

Tomassoni said."I will feel the effects of it in my speech, my movement, and my life."

ALS is a rare neurological disease, commonly diagnosed between 55 and

75 years old, that causes the nerves controlling voluntary muscle movements to deteriorate. Initial symptoms can include muscle twitches, cramps, tightness and weakness, slurred speech, and difficulty chewing or swallowing. Over time, affected individ-



cure

Tomassoni did not say specifically when he was diagnosed, but he said ALS was something he had to deal with during the recently-completed legislative term.

"I want you to know that I am a person living and working with ALS,' Tomassoni said. "I have had it for a while now as I worked all through the entire legislative session feeling its effects. Initially, I decided to not let anyone know about it, but dealing with it upfront and becoming an advocate seems to be the right direction to go. I intend to look at each day as the best day of the rest of our lives and I'm going to live with this disease. Many have lived and successfully contributed back to the community with ALS."

Tomassoni was firm in his commitment to continue to represent the interests of his district in the legislature.

"I am going to continue representing you to the best of my abilities like I have always tried to do in elected office," he said. "I give you my word that my brain and my body will continue to represent you with the same passion and vigor I've tried to give in the past. I have been fortunate and blessed in my life, my career, in sports, and with friends and a great family. This is the next challenge." A Minnesota Public

Radio report noted that Tomassoni, 68, was first elected to the state House in 1992. He was elected to the Senate in 2000 and is currently the Senate president. The longtime

DFLer is now caucusing as an Independent, although he continues to consider himself a Democrat.

Contacted on Tuesday via email by the Timberjay, Tomassoni expressed gratitude for the response he's received to his announcement.

"I just want to thank everyone who contacted me with their best wishes, prayers and advice," he said. "They mean very much to me and I want them all to know that I feel fine and I'll be around for a while longer. I'm finding that the ALS network is extensive, and I look forward to getting involved."

Suspects charged in Babbitt stabbing, shooting

by KEITH VANDERVORT Ely Editor

VIRGINIA — An ice pick or similar object was allegedly used in a July 10 attack in Babbitt in which a business owner was stabbed multiple times in the stomach and legs, according to court documents filed last week in St. Louis County District Court.

The suspect, Dylan Thomas Peterson, 29, of Grand Rapids, was charged last Wednesday with three felonies, according to the criminal complaint. He was charged with two counts of second-degree assault and one count of third-degree assault.

The victim, the 53-yearold owner of the NE Time NE Wear screen-printing store in Babbitt, was

allegedly stabbed multiple times, court documents say. An online fundraising effort identified the stabbing victim as Leah Marie Bodas. She is reportedly recovering from serious injuries that are not life-threatening.

Meanwhile, a Babbitt man who was working in the store where the stabbing incident took place was charged with

three felonies after he was accused of shooting at the stabbing suspect as he fled in a vehicle. Joel Earl Vandervest, 38, was charged with second-degree assault, intentional discharge of a firearm that endangers safety, and reckless discharge of a firearm.

According to the criminal complaint, Vandervest allegedly shot at the stabbing suspect as he fled the

scene in a truck. Several shell casings were found by investigators at the scene that matched Vandervest's type of gun. A neighbor said he found a bullet that went through his house. No one was hurt from the gunfire.

At the time of the incident, Petersen was free on bond while facing a pending charge that he stabbed a man in the leg in Eveleth on June 4, according to court records. He was arrested later on July 10 after he called 911 to report that he was at the Y Store near Tower and heard that police officers were looking for him. He was arrested there without incident.

Petersen was scheduled to appear in court this week. Vandervest is scheduled for an Aug. 2 court appearance.





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OPINION"CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW...
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OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS;"The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

e-mail: editor@timberjay.com

Editorial Police in Tower City residents have made it clear that local policing is not a high priority

The city council in Tower has an important decision to make in the coming days over whether they wish to contract for coverage with the soonto-be reconstituted Breitung Police Department.

Based on public sentiment, including survey results, officials in Breitung likely made the right decision—for them—in moving ahead with the hiring of a police chief. Yet, as most of us know, these twin towns don't always view things in the same way and that certainly appears to be the case when it comes to local policing. When Breitung suspended its police department back in March, we had expected to hear more from residents in Tower on the subject. Instead, the change, for the most part, generated a collective shrug from the community. When the city council held two well-publicized public meetings to take citizen input on the subject, council members sat in nearly empty rooms. Out of the roughly 500 residents in town, only 23 bothered to return a survey asking for opinions on the question. And only three of those surveys indicated contracting with Breitung as their first choice. The most popular of the eight options offered on the survey was to simply rely on 911 service from the St. Louis County Sheriff.

Perhaps residents in Towerrecognize the tradeoffs involved. Up until March, the police contract consumed about 30 percent of the city's levy. That's a huge expense for a service that, as the past several months have shown, city residents don't care all that much about. If the city missed plowing the streets after the next big snowstorm, you can rest assured that city council members would catch heck for it right away.

They catch grief reg-

already among the highest around, given the size of its tax base. That could save some city residents \$1,000 or more per year, on residential property alone.

What's more, the city could just wait and see how it works out in Breitung. It appears that Breitung is moving ahead with the hiring of a police chief, regardless of what Tower decides to do. That means there's no inconvenience for the township if the city holds off on a decision. As a city that's still recovering from its financial crunch, the city could simply bank the savings it is presently experiencing from the discontinuance of its police contract to bolster its cash flow and begin to rebuild its reserves.

It's not as if the city doesn't have police coverage, no matter which way the council goes. Since the Breitung police department suspended operations last March, St. Louis County Sheriff's deputies have been noticeably present in the community. The sheriff's office is a well-run, professional organization that provides generally prompt response to emergency calls and maintains real investigative resources when crimes are committed. One could argue that Tower-Soudan would be better served having the sheriff's office as the primary responding agency rather than a very small police department with marginal resources. And, since taxpayers are already paying for the sheriff's office through their county levy, there need be no additional cost for that service.

Most residents of the Tower area, including Greenwood, Vermilion Lake, Kugler, and Eagles Nest townships, have long relied on the sheriff's office for law enforcement. Greenwood alone has nearly twice the year-round population, ten times the summer population, twenty times the property value, and at least as many businesses as Tower, and relies, without issue, on the sheriff's office for local law enforcement. If residents there didn't feel they were well-served by the sheriff's office, we suspect we would have heard about it by now. It's understandable if members of the city council don't rely on the feelings of township residents to make their decision. They'll likely rely, instead, on the input they received from residents of Tower, who've made it abundantly clear that a local police department is not a high priority.



Letters from Readers

Why do free people fall for charlatans?

Why do free people fall for charlatans?

The Rise of the Moors group had 200 or more people rally in Philly. It's amazing to me how a free people, such as we are, can fall for the words and ideas these charlatans expound. The Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, Jim Jones, David Koresh, are four that come to my mind easily. The list is much larger though I won't go into it here; I'm sure that the point is clear.

Skip Dickinson Britt

New thinking needed in forestry

Recent breakthrough research has revealed that trees exchange nutrients not only with like species, but with other trees not of their DNA.

"Finding the Mother Tree" by Dr. Suzanne Simard illustrates the importance of fungal mycelia relaying nutrients back and forth along their underground networks to trees and other plants. In short, using the aid of the mycelia, trees help each other with nitrogen, water, and minerals, and also send warnings of disease or insect invasion. In turn the trees can give the fungal networks the sugars that they cannot make. This is must reading for all forestry managers who presently think of trees as only a crop and also think of "weed" or competitive trees as needing elimination. For U.S. Forest Service lands, this has been partly dealt with in the courts whereby herbicides have mostly been eliminated and mechanical brushing is used instead. This gives other species a chance to grow back and re-integrate. However, on state and county lands here in Minnesota, herbicides are still in heavy use. Biologists, botanists and timber managers need to become re-educated as to the intricate and complicated relationships that exist in the world of tree roots and fungal life. Even new horticultural studies and practices have shown the importance of mycelia and their relationship with plants.

management mentality is slow to change. Timber is a valuable and versatile resource, and select cutting while leaving "seed" or "mother" trees (with their established fungal networks) is better than clear cutting, as done in the past.

Mark Roalson Hoyt Lakes

Critical Race Theory is not taught in our K-12 schools

Critical Race Theory, or CRT, which originated in the 1970s, is a body of legal scholarship that seeks to critically examine U.S. laws and how they intersect with race, examining possible disparate outcomes in the legal system based on race. In the 1990s, Critical Race Theory became a research design used by scholars in education focusing on inequities in the context of schools with research on the impact of segregation, relations between race, gender, and academic achievement and pedagogy.

Critical race theory is not a subject taught in schools, but a theoretical concept examined in research designs and methodologies. By scholars. By researchers. Not teachers. Not in classrooms. Not in elementary schools. Not in secondary schools.

Recently, an individual named

Underground Railroad, the Trail of Tears, Indian boarding schools, Sundown towns and green cards, segregation, the lunch counters, and the history of voting rights is not CRT.

In an effective classroom, teachers often plan curriculum units to nurture knowledge and critical thinking skills in students. Students in these classrooms have access to multiple resources, literature, and materials in examining a topic.

In my education courses, I often designed curriculum units. An example was one I developed on Emmett Till. Students utilized multiple resources. Factual news reports. Research. Books. One powerful book was a young adult story by Chris Crow, "Mississippi 1955" along with a factual book by the same author, "Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of Emmett Till." A beautiful poetic tribute to Emmett Till, "A Wreath for Emmett Till" by Farsi Chideya was also offered. The book begins with the words, 'Emmett Till's name still catches in my throat like syllables waylaid in a stutterer's mouth." Students also pondered the meaning of a poem by Langston Hughes, "Mississippi 1955" along with a story song by Emmy Lou Harris, "My Name is Emmett Till."

The response of students was impressive as they pondered, digested, researched, and engaged in meaningful discussions and projects. This is teaching. This is critical thinking. Examining. Learning. Expanding. And growing. For all who are up in arms about Critical Race Theory, you can relax. It is not being taught in any elementary or secondary classroom. It is a meaningless inflammatory buzzword which has alarmingly gained too much traction. As a retired educator, I ask any who are concerned to spend time in classrooms. Talk to teachers. Engage in meaningful discussions. And listen. Listen carefully to those voices so vastly different from your own. Listen to your own children. Discuss books that they read. Read them together, grow, learn, and expand.

ularly for the condition of city streets, or for the city's longstanding failure to enforce its blight ordinance. But the disappearance of the Breitung police? It's been mostly just crickets.

The tradeoffs are very real. When the city spent approximately \$115,000 on its police contract last year, that was money that couldn't be used to improve city streets and alleys. It's money that couldn't be used as the local match on any number of grant-funded projects, or for economic development, or for any of a number of other services that small towns often provide for their residents. Perhaps, most significantly, it's money that could otherwise support a sizable reduction in the city's property tax levy, which is

Unfortunately, government

Christopher Rufo went on a rampage against Critical Race Theory, erroneously claiming that it was being taught in our classrooms as an attempt to indoctrinate students. His bizarre rant incited such an uproar that lawmakers in 16 states have introduced or passed legislation prohibiting the teaching of CRT in public institutions with groups now storming school board meetings and school administrators and holding rallies demanding that CRT be abolished.

The good news for everyone concerned is that CRT is NOT taught in any elementary or secondary classroom. It is a concept and research focus that is only applied in legal and academic research courses and designs.

Teaching accurate facts and history is not CRT. Learning about slavery, the civil rights movement, Japanese-American internment camps, the Tulsa Massacre, the

Ellie Larmouth Retired educator Tower

Flight turns writer 'Blue' with envy

Most folks are familiar with the phrase "green with envy." While some attribute its origins to the ancient Greeks, others turn to William Shakespeare's Othello and his declaration of jealousy as a "green-ey'd

monster" as the inspiration

for the phrase. Whatever its origins, green has long been the color associated with the feeling of envy. But this

DAVID COLBURN DAVID COLBURN DAVID COLBURN DAVID bluish tone for this writer,

a child of the 1960s who grew up in awe

of the Mercurys, Geminis, and Apollos of the race to space. And what was the origin of my abrupt color shift?

The aptly named Blue Origin.

On Tuesday morning, I sat down in front of my computer with my usual cup of extra dark coffee, a couple of pieces of toast slathered with smooth (never crunchy) peanut butter, and pulled up the *Washington Post* website, to which I subscribe. It was to be a typical start to a typical day.

But in the center of the page was a live video stream of the impending launch of Blue Origin, the rocket that was about to take the world's richest man, Jeff Bezos, and three other passengers to the edge of space. Bezos, known as the owner of the online shopping behemoth Amazon, also happens to own the Washington *Post*. While he doesn't get involved in the paper's editorial content, how could the Post not cover live its owner's historic flight? Like millions of other kids in the 60s, space flight fascinated and enthralled me. I bought and assembled models of all of NASA's spacecraft and used them to do my own simulations while watching similar ones on TV. Out in the attic of the barn behind our house was a cardboard

refrigerator box that I had converted into a spaceship that carried me, my sisters, and numerous friends on many a thrilling mission, aborted only by the sound of Mom's voice calling us to dinner. Like millions of other kids, someday I wanted to go to space.

But my dreams of being both a fighter pilot and an astronaut were crushed by an eye exam

See BLUE...pg. 5

America's democracy is in trouble

My father-in-law is 95 years old this year. He is a remarkable man from the "greatest generation" having fought in World War II serving in the Army in the Pacific Theater. His memory and reasoning have not diminished. He is well informed and can speak at length about his thoughts on politics and the state of the union. Recently he said "While probably not in my lifetime, but highly likely in your lifetime, the United States will no longer be a democracy. Weakening of our democracy is already underway and is accelerating."

His words prompted me to consider the foundations of our democracy and to anecdotally assess the status of each. I've applied my own rating where a 0 means "poor" and a 5 means "good".

Democracy is based on everyone having an equal say in choosing our leaders. One person, one vote. A vote in California and a vote in Wyoming should ideally have equal impact in our governance. Due to a historic political compromise during Revolutionary times, we have the United States Senate. So, our democracy starts in a hole. In a perfect world the Senate would be eliminated. The president is selected by the Electoral College, which should also be eliminated in favor of a popular vote. Rating: 2

The Declaration of Independence states that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It doesn't say "white men", and the meaning "of men" has changed to mean over time "mankind", including people of all genders. Today, most state legislatures have submitted hundreds of bills to reduce the rights, including that of voting, of many minority groups: people of color, people of certain religious beliefs, various sexual preferences, at the same time increasing the position of certain religious communities and economic advantage. Rating: 1 The Constitution provides that the government provides education to all in the belief that an education provided on an equal basis will result in a pop-

ulation informed and will ensure the health of our democracy. Many states are now choosing to move public financing away from public schools which are managed by elected leaders to fund various forms of private education which are managed by various leaders who seem to be more concerned with indoctrination of certain religious or political agendas. Other governments are simply reducing educational funding in general. Rating: 1

The Constitution seeks that the least able and most in-need members of our communities are cared for and that all people have equal access to essential services and protection. To do so the Constitution decrees that the government provide certain services such as the U.S. Postal service and other services which have been determined to include Social Security, Medicare, and Affordable Care. As our government is elected to define and make our government work for the wellbeing and safety of our entire nation, it is in our best interest to work to trust (with vigilance) our elected officials and government employee and help them make our government work better and more efficiently rather than advocate for fewer services and to undermine the effectiveness of our government. Rating: 2

The leaders of our nation take an oath, "I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same." We should expect nothing less from our elected officials. President Trump not only incited the insurrection at the Capitol and supported it, but also attempted to secure support of the United States military to take power by a coup. Our own Rep. Pete Stauber, 8th District Congressman, signed an amicus brief in support of the petition filed at the U.S. Supreme Court by Texas to overturn the national presidential election results in a thinly veiled coup attempt, which would have invalidated millions of votes and would

state's constitutional right

to conduct their own elec-

to survive is based on a

nation of people that have

many different beliefs

and values, but at the

end of the day we accept

our differences and work

Finally, a democracy

tions. Rating: 0

together on those items on which we can all agree to move forward. That requires trust in each other and honesty. Truth based on fact and science, not rumor and conspiracies at every turn. The fact that 50 percent of Americans either have not believed the science to get vaccinated or believe that Trump won the election suggests we have a serious foundational problem that does more to undercut our strength in the world and the future of our democracy than any other aspect of our country. Rating: 0

We are doing poorly in all essentials of our American democracy. We are clearly in trouble. Our democracy requires our people to first recognize and acknowledge we are on a course that could make America the next China where our equivalent of the Chinese Communist Party is the American Republican Party and the equivalent of Premier Xi is Premier Trump. If that isn't what we want, we need to take this seriously and begin to work together to strengthen our struggling democracy. The outcome is not certain, unless we do nothing.

Keith Steva Cook

Consider a regional approach to ambulance service

In the *Timberjay*'s report on last week's Greenwood Town Board meeting, there is a paragraph about our ambulance service. Certainly, the Tower Area Ambulance Service, to which Greenwood and four other townships, along with the city of Tower, belong, is having problems. That's the primary reason that the Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board agreed to conduct assessment of a n the TAAS and will be presenting recommendations sometime this summer. The EMSRB regulates all of the ambulance districts in Minnesota.

the Virginia Ambulance Service carries a lot of the responsibility for helping sick or injured people because Virginia is an "Advanced Life Support" service, meaning that Virginia ambulances have paramedics on board. It's an expensive service for Virginia to maintain, and we are very fortunate that they respond to calls throughout the area when injured or sick people need more than an ambulance which offers "Basic Life Support", as the TAAS ambulances do. I believe at some point, primarily due to the monetary and recruitment issues that rural ambulance services face, there will need to be a consolidation of ambulance services, much like we see with the area schools. In our area, Virginia eventually will play a pivotal role, because they have the population and they have a major hospital and fire department to draw paramedic personnel from. It will come, sooner or later. I just hope that the EMSRB is doing a comprehensive assessment and that their forthcoming recommendations will reflect that.

facts around here is that

There is one other thing in the Timberjay article that I'd like to clarify: If Greenwood were to be included in the Cook Ambulance Service, Greenwood would NOT have to join the Cook Healthcare District, as my friend Carmen DeLuca misstated. Actually, a significant part of Greenwood is already in the Cook Ambulance District and is well served by them. But Cook is not an Advanced Life Support service and that is why I have advocated for the regional approach, relying heavily on, and also supporting the Virginia service. Like I said, it will happen, sooner or later, out of necessity and common sense.

> Lee Peterson Greenwood Twp.

have seen some lawn signs up which are meant for name recognition. What a deal, lawn signs but no policies nor goals for our city. Sounds exciting.

In the short past years we have seen numerous new city streets with all new infrastructure added. And, thanks to our now retired county commissioner Mike Forsman, we have seen a number of city streets, which are county designated, newly paved. We can see on our City of Ely website the good number of city streets now in the process of being redone. We have a newer 17th St. which connects Sheridan to Pioneer Rd. Thanks to Mayor Chuck Novak, our city received a \$700,000 grant from DEED and a grant of \$250,000 to complete the project from the IRRRB. No Minnesota city in the last quarter of a century has received a grant this large for a city of our size. Maybe it helped that Gov. Mark Dayton visited our city twice and had amicable discussions with Mayor Novak. Mayor Novak gave our governor the Ely welcome.

Let us add in the numerous refurbished buildings around our city such as the now-prized Ely State Theater and a refurbished VFW building and others around town. We can see the development of the new pocket park, the development of a first class mountain bike facility and the very important West End Project which will be a regional trail head.

The West End Project has received millions of dollars in state bonding money. Considering the large number of state bonding requests just from Northeast Minnesota and we voters can get an idea of how competitive these bonding requests from other cities are. Consider the number of state legislators, from both sides

of the political aisle, that came hundreds of miles to our city to be a part of the West End Project ribbon cutting ceremony. How important is that? All of these state legislators are on the state bonding board that decides which cities get bonding money. Many cities did not get a dime; while we got millions of dollars. It was Mayor Novak who extended the invitation and who gave the warm Ely welcome to these traveling legislators who are the deciders on bonding funding. What a plus that is for our fine city. The two stated mayoral candidates did not show up for this ribbon cutting event ... they could not be seen.

A short time ago Mayor Novak, city clerk Harold Langowski, and economic developer John Fedo put in many hours working together to complete the request for an additional \$4.1 million in state bonding funding for the West End Project. This time they added funding to tear down the old city garage, funding for a workers housing so we can house many summer workers and the completion of Pattison St. to Central Ave.

The real significance of this bonding request is that none of this money will impact our needed local government aid. We can continue to use our LGA for projects that we have in Ely such as our infrastructure and streets. And, we can keep our taxes low, a strategy of Albert Forsman and Paul Kess, our two city council members who work on our city's budget committee and Mayor Novak. It's about making our City of Ely a great place to live, which is why I most certainly support his leadership as our mayor and his goal and policies.

> John Esse Ely



Letters from Readers

in fourth grade - unable to read the teacher's chalk writing on the blackboard 15 feet away, I knew right away I'd never qualify to be either. It didn't lessen my interest or desire one bit, but it did change my reality. I've said for decades that the one regret I have about my mortality is that I'll never have the opportunity to fly through outer space to "seek out new worlds and new civilizations" or more mundanely to simply wave at an orbiting satellite on my way past it. It's something I've always wanted to do that won't ever happen.

So, as I watched on Tuesday I was totally envious of billionaire Bezos and his three passengers blasting off in Blue Origin as I sat and watched, wholly incapable of following.

It's just not fair - I wanted the experience as much as any of them. With Bezos, Richard Branson, and soon Elon Musk, space has become the new playground of the filthy rich. I didn't watch Branson's flight, didn't intend to watch Bezos's flight, and won't watch Musk's.

The reason is simple I'm sorely afflicted by Shakespeare's green-ey'd monster. In this, I am completely derelict in adhering to the Tenth Commandment, for in truth I totally, completely, 100 percent covet my neighbor's rocket ship. Unless Marshall and Jodi Helmberger give me one super-sized Christmas bonus, I'll never be able to afford to buy a multi-million dollar ticket into space in my lifetime. Unlike the

I contacted the have interfered with the EMSRB's Holly Jacobs early on and recommended that the EMSRB take a regional approach in the assessment, looking at the nearby ambulance districts of Ely, Cook, Virginia and ours. They form kind of a corridor for emergency services. One of the

support Novak's goals and policies

Here's why I

It is about one month until our important mayoral election. We still have not heard a word from either mayoral candidate about their expected policies or goals that they have for our city, nada. Instead we

inclusiveness of the future portrayed in the numerous iterations of Star Trek, commercialization has for the time being turned space into yet another realm of the haves and have-nots. So, Mr. Bezos, a fast phooey on you and your billions and the nanny-nanny-booboo of a ride on your Blue Origin rocket ship. It's of little solace that it was named New Shepard in honor of astronaut Alan Shepard, the first American in space. That Mercury flight opened a dream every American kid could aspire to. This one did not.

Whew, glad to get those sour grapes off my chest so that I can return to fully reveling in my life here on terra firma in the North Country. For I am quite content with

my station in life in the early years of my seventh decade on the planet, with a better job, house, truck, camera and cat than I need or deserve, living in beautiful country among terrific people. I find it more than OK that station is firmly planted on the ground instead of circling the globe high above. Possibilities realized are ever so much better than dreams never achieved.



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BLUE...Continued from page 4

6 July 23, 2021

TOWER-SOUDAN LOCAL NEWS

TOWER-SOUDAN SUMMER BASEBALL

THE TIMBERJAY

Week of July 26

Monday

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

Tower City Council- 5:30 p.m. on July 26

Tuesday

Tower Area Food Shelf-Open on the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-5:00 p.m. Located in the back of the Timberjay building on Main Street. Next food shelf day is Aug. 17.

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

Wednesday

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

Thursday

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

Vermilion Country School **Board- Meetings** posted online at vermilioncountry.org.









Tower-Soudan-Embarrass Coach-Pitch and Little League Minors have both wrapped up their seasons. Pictured clockwise from top left: Dylan Crego, the coach-pitch dugout, Minors during the National Anthem, Kasen Dostert adjusts his helmet before a successful at bat, Alli Vesel speeds towards home base, Levi Clemenson races to first, Kayla Dougherty gets ready to smack the ball, Nixon Levens pitching, Corey Goodbird takes a strike, Audriana Olson smiles as she runs. photos by J. Summit









Tower-Soudan Historical Society oral history project underway



by JODI SUMMIT Tower-Soudan Editor

TOWER-Tower-Soudan Historical Society volunteers Kathy Wagenbach Siskar and Cookie Hendrickson conducted an oral history interview with Lynn Olson and Carol Bystrom Chiabotti, both former Tower residents and friends since childhood, in the Tower coach car on July 19. The interviews are part of a series of oral histories being recorded by professional videographer Rod Lundstrom, who grew up in Soudan, and is volunteering his time and equipment on this project.

The society has done approximately 10 oral history interviews since last year, and has another five or six scheduled this summer.

Interviewers asked questions such as what was it like growing up in Tower-Soudan, what children did in the summer, historical contributions of family members, memorable school experiences, memories of downtown Tower, and what the impact of the closing of the Soudan Mine had on their family and community.

The interviews are available for viewing on-

line on Facebook; search for Tower Soudan Historical Society and click on videos. The group plans on having the most interesting clips from the oral histories available for viewing in the old fire hall, once it is open to the public.

The TSHS is interesting in finding more community members willing to contribute oral histories. Please contact Kathy Siskar at 218-290-6013, or email fksiskar@gmail. com, to get more information on the project.

Kids Day and Opera Performance at **Tower Farmers** Market on July 30

TOWER- The Tower Farmers Market will hold its annual Kids Day on Friday, July 30, with free snacks and outdoor activities for all kids. Market hours are 4-6 p.m.

a pop-up performance by Mixed Precipitation Theater at about 5 p.m. that day. This excerpt from "The Pickup Truck Opera, Volume 1: The Odyssey" is based on Homer's epic



The market will host

tale of Odysseus and the shenanigans that ensue as he travels home after the Trojan War. The performance is suitable for all ages and interests in ancient Greek literature. Mixed Precipitation will bring a 25 foot-long trailer to serve as a stage for the performance, which is about 25 minutes long.

Bring your lawn chairs. Free-will donations will be accepted after the performance.

A full-length performance of "The Pickup Truck Opera, Volume 1: The Odyssey" can be seen on Saturday, July 31 at Early Frost Farms, 7273 Palo Tia Rd. in Embarrass.

Visit Mixed Precipita-

tion on Facebook for more info.

Tower-Soudan Class of 1966 to meet Aug. 8

VERMILION LAKE TWP- The Tower-Soudan Class of 1966 will meet on Sunday, Aug. 8 at 4 p.m. at Neighbor's BBQ (the old Black Bear Café). All classmates and spouses are welcome to attend. Everyone will order off the menu. Please RSVP by calling Pat S. at 218-741-9225 or Faye T. at 218-753-4877.

St. Martin's **Summer Schedule**

TOWER- Holy Cross of Orr, St. Mary's of Cook, and St. Martin's of Tower are all clustered under one pastor, Father Beau Braun. Mass schedules also available online at www.stmmhc.com.

St. Martin's Catholic Church summer schedule

Sunday Mass at 10:30 a.m

Wednesday Mass at 9 a.m. with Adoration at 8 a.m.

Friday Mass at 8 a.m. with Adoration at 7 a.m. Monday Adoration

from 2 - 8 p.m.

Confessions are held

30 minutes before Mass or by appointment.

Brooklynn Berg named to lowa State University spring 2021 dean's list

AMES, IOWA-Brooklynn Berg, of Tower, has been named to the spring 2021 dean's list in the College of Human Sciences at Iowa State University. The dean's list honors students who have earned a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

ELY LOCAL NEWS

OUR COMMUNITY **Tribute to a baseball mom** <u>by Keith VANDERVORT</u> ELY - Renee Lassi the lease

ELY – Renee Lassi was more than a baseball mom. Some say she lived at Veterans Memorial Field here for many summers while she managed the concession stand.

The Ely baseball community meant so much to Renee that it was only fitting for her family to hold a special tribute to her for friends and fans last Thursday night on the field at Veterans Memorial Field.

With her famous pulled pork sandwiches on the menu and her name in lights on the scoreboard, her extended family gathered at the pitcher's mound and all who knew her filled the grandstand to celebrate the life of Renee Lassi.

Lassi, a 1969 Ely High School graduate, died last October, and with public health restrictions in place due to COVID-19, her family made the decision to wait until a proper memorial service could be held under safer conditions.

The time was right last Thursday in between Junior and Senior Legion baseball games. The ISD 696 athletic director, Tom Coombe, listed off many titles for Renee, including concession stand manager, ball park mom, Ely supporter and ambassador. even wedding coordinator (she helped to plan the first baseball field wedding at the Ely venue) as he spoke about the impact Renee made on so many people.

Her son, Ely school teacher and coach Cory Lassi, said he could think of no better place to honor Renee than at the ball park. "During the summer months, if you wanted to find my mom, your best bet was to check the concession at the ball field," he said. "She spent countless hours each summer, slinging burgers, stocking the fridge, painting, being a second mom to so many of the young men that walked

through that gate." Fans gathered at the





large poster of photographs. And they ate pulled

And they ate pulled pork sandwiches. Lots of them. Jessi Leeson and Amy Kromer helped serve in the concession stand. "We are on our second batch already," Leeson she said as she assembled a couple of sandwiches. "We started out with 45 pounds and we will run out soon."

Coombe, also the Ely Legion team coach, said, "Our ball park's concession stand is the best anywhere and that's all thanks to Renee. She grew that stand from a place for just a hot dog and soda, to a place where anyone could get a full meal."

A scholarship fund in Renee's name was recently established by her family. Two dollars from every pulled pork sandwich and every serving of pulled pork nachos was donated toward the fund. Many people just added dollar bills to a donation jug.

"Without a doubt, my mom woke up every morning wanting to make a difference in the lives of others, especially the students of Ely Memorial



Renee Lassi's family, top, gathered at the pitcher's mound at Veterans Memorial Field last Thursday for a special tribute. Renee's supporters viewed a poster of photographs, above.



Renee's grandson, Clark Lassi, threw out a ceremonial first pitch. His father, Cory, a teacher and coach at Ely school, was impressed by his throwing form. photos by K. Vandervort

dents at EHS," Cory Lassi said.

In between the baseball games, Renee's family gathered at the pitcher's mound and a short cer-

were thrown in her honor, as her two granddaughters, Morgan and Harper, and the rest of the family hugged each other and fought back tears because of the relationships that she made with so many people," Cory Lassi added. According to Coombe,

theElyBaseballAssociation is looking into permanently

Tuesday Group

ELY – The Tuesday Group community lunch gathering meets at noon every Tuesday at the Grand Ely Lodge.

▶ July 27: Minnesota
State Senator Tom Bakk
▶ Aug. 3: Tanner Ott,
Alley A Realty

Higher Ed

Snyder graduates from UW-Platteville

PLATTEVILLE, Wis.-The University of Wisconsin-Platteville awarded diplomas to nearly 900 students, including an Ely student, from its three campuses for the spring of 2021. Wesley Snyder earned a degree in Industrial Engineering.

Because of COVID-19, no ceremonies were held, but will be rescheduled at a later date.

Breathing Out

by Cecilia Rolando © 2021



a blueberry blast creativity explodes

art, music, and eats

ibraries

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: 827-33	45

Support groups AA - Alcoholics

Anonymous

OPEN AA - 7:30

p.m. Wednesdays and

ball park and reminisced about Renee, signed a memory book, and laughed and cried as they enjoyed a High School. We wanted to make sure that we carry on her legacy in providing opportunities for the stuemony was conducted. Ceremonial first pitches by Renee's grandsons, Colton and Clark Lassi,

"This baseball program was so special to her for many reasons, but certainly at the top of the list is honoring Renee with a plaque that would be placed at the Veterans Memorial Field concession stand.

ELY SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT



A pile of scrap material and a large hole in the ground are all that remain of the former boiler plant building on the campus of the Ely school district. With the Washington building in the background, demolition crews continued work this week on the \$20 million renovation project. A new structure will link the elementary school with the Memorial school building. Work is expected to be completed in time for the start of the 2022-2023 school year. photo by K. Vandervort

Saturdays, in-person, First Lutheran Church, 915 E. Camp St., Elv. **ELY WOMEN'S OPEN** AA - Every Monday at noon at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, 231 E. Camp St., Ely. BABBITT AA - 7 p.m. Tuesdays, Woodland Presbyterian Church AL-ANON - Sundays 8-9 p.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely. For persons who encounter alcoholism in a relative or friend. **BABBITT AL-ANON** Thursdays, 7 p.m., at Woodland Presbyterian. **CO-DEPENDENTS'** 12-step support group, noon Fridays, St. Anthony's Catholic Church, Ely. **ELY FOOD SHELF -**Third Wednesday each month, 15 W. Conan St. ADULT BASIC **EDUCATION GED** Study materials and pre-test available. Call 218-365-3359, 218-827-3232, or 1-800-662-5711. **CAREGIVER SUPPORT** GROUPS: Babbitt: 3rd Monday of Month: 6-7:30 p.m. at Carefree Living Ely: 4th Monday of Month: 10-11:30 a.m. at Ely-Bloomenson Hospital

Conference Room B

Family finds new life direction as resort owners Once guests at Island View Resort, Brodeens enjoying second season at the helm

by DAVID COLBURN Cook-Orr Editor

ORR- Folks might have given a skeptical look to Brett and Alaine Brodeen last year upon discovering that the couple was looking seriously into buying a lake resort, right as a global pandemic began hammering the hospitality industry, but that's OK. Brett and Alaine had questions of their own, too.

"We did have to think about it," Brett said. "We had to weigh the pros and cons and think about life for our kids and the future."

"It was a big decision because it was a huge life change," Aileen said. "I never thought I'd live in a town so small. That was probably one of the things I was nervous about. Before we decided on this, our faith is important to us, and we prayed a lot about it. And we really felt like this is where we were supposed to be."

And now a little over a year later and well into their second full tourist season at Island View Resort on Pelican Lake, the Brodeens and their four daughters – Evelyn, 15, Corra, 12, Anelise, 10, and Esme, 7 – have taken to life running the resort with vigor and joy, as reflected in online reviews by recent guests.

"The owners are incredible and made our stay this year the best yet!" one customer wrote.

"New owners, same giant fish! The new family running the place has been fantastic," wrote another.

A seed planted

The Brodeens are former educators, and for 15 or 16 years had been vacationing twice a year at resorts across the Minnesota North Country and Wisconsin, Brett said. On a rainy day while vacationing on Lake Vermilion a number of years ago, they decided they should "check out this Pelican Lake place," Brett said. That's when they first came across Island View

ter and better. Then we met (former owners) John and Lisa Matthews, and they're super great people and really good hosts, and we started vacationing here.

The Brodeens vacationed at Island View for the next three years. The thought of taking over the resort began that third year with what Brett first assumed was some joking around with John.

"He said, 'I suppose you're going to change things when you own this place," Brett recalled. 'And I laughed and said, 'Yeah, it's a dump, John,' which obviously it's not. It's beautiful. And he goes, 'No, seriously, I want to talk to you about this.' So, we started talking."

"It was never something we thought we would ever do," Alaine said.

But the Brodeens' life in Superior, Wis. had changed significantly after Brett left the school district where he had been working as an elementary school principal in 2017. Right after he was finished with school, Alaine was diagnosed with breast cancer, with months of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation to follow. Alaine had been schooling their children at home, and that continued as the family found ways to make ends meet. Alaine's treatments were successful, but the young family found themselves searching for new directions. "There wasn't a good reason to be there anymore," Alaine said.

So, the Matthews' interest in selling the resort became a matter of being in the right place at the right time for a new opportunity for the Brodeens.

Overcoming obstacles

Things were falling into place for the transaction early in 2020 when the coronavirus pandemic hit, and it didn't take long for banks to become wary of hospitality investments.

"The two banks we



Brett and Alaine Brodeen pose with their daughters Anelise, Corra, Esme and Evelyn in front of their Island View Resort sign at Pelican Lake. submitted photo

Alaine had a recurrence of her cancer and would need additional chemotherapy through the summer, right when they would be taking over the resort.

"We were like, 'Can we really do this?" Brett said. "But we were ready for a change."

So, John and Lisa Matthews developed an alternative financing arrangement with the Brodeens, and after 16 years of ownership they turned the keys to the resort over to Brett and Alaine in May 2020. The Brodeens were committed to making it work, knowing the rest of the family would have to pick up the slack to accommodate Alaine's treatments and reduced energy levels.

Full speed ahead

Quite familiar with the variety of amenities and activities resorts offer, the Brodeens fell into that aspect of the work naturally, but not everything came easily that first summer.

"Our skills were

And while Alaine got right to work trying to master QuickBooks, Brett was in for a shock of his own.

"It seemed like everything was breaking down all the time," he laughed. "I didn't know what had been fixed when. Now that we're a year into it I can tell you what things are starting to wear so I can keep my eye on them. Now we've got a good handle on it.'

Creating excellent guest experiences has always been the Brodeens' top priority, and that's perhaps illustrated best by an example in which they went the extra mile for someone who never stayed a single night at the resort. A man named Scott Haugen related the tale in an online review.

"My family and I did not stay at this resort, but did experience the kindness and generosity of the owners," he wrote. "On the way up to Voyageurs National Park for a few days of camping, the axle on our fishing boat trailer disintegrated just as we pulled into Orr."

Brodeens learned about predicament, Haugen's "They immediately went to one of their storage sheds and retrieved a boat trailer for us to use so we could continue north. When I returned the trailer, they refused that I pay a rental fee. Now that is incredible," Haugen wrote. While the first season was largely about learning the ropes, the Brodeens have gradually started to put their own personal touch on the resort, whichw officially became theirs earlier this month. Over the winter, Alaine and a teacher friend turned nearly three football fields worth of fabric into new curtains for the cabins. They turned to Ryan's Rustic Railings to replace some of the furniture. They've added apparel and gift items in the lodge, including handmade pottery mugs customized for the resort. Walkers and bikers have new paths to travel down, and the Brodeens have fulfilled a wish

None were, but when the

year," Brett said.

The transition has been made easier, too, because of family connections in the area. Brett's father, Randy, grew up south of Cook, the oldest of six kids. As a child, Brett came to visit his grandparents during summers.

"It's fun to be up here and run into people that are like, 'Oh, Brodeen - I went to school with your uncle or your grandpa,"" Brett said.

The Brodeens are also grateful for the reception they've received from the other resort owners on Pelican Lake.

"They have been really awesome," Brett said. "If we get in a jam, they help us out. If we're looking for boats, we'll just trade back and forth. If we're full and someone calls, we'll point them in their direction, and they do the same thing. It's really nice. I think that the resort association and the people in it all want to work together to make Pelican

Resort.

"We drove in and Alaine and our girls and my mom loved the beach," he said. "My dad and I loved the fish house and marina. And as we drove up, it just kept getting bet-

were talking to said, 'We'd love to be partners, but we can't right now," Brett said. "That was a curveball."

Then life hurled another curveball their way.

working with people in hospitality, and I can fix things," Brett said. "But not bookkeeping."

"That was probably the biggest shock for me," Alaine agreed.

Believing they were stranded, Haugen said they stopped at Island View to see if any of the 13 cabins were available.

COOK- Patrons of

Cook Public Library be-

gan enjoying expanded

on-site access this week

as the library continues

to thoughtfully ease away

from restrictions imple-

mented to protect citizens

from the coronavirus pan-

nounced that the library

is now open Mondays

through Thursdays from

9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hand

sanitizer is available and

social distancing is still

recommended and en-

couraged. Bathrooms are

also now open. Individu-

als who feel ill are asked

to visit the library on a

indoor programs, head-

phones, and children's

toys are still on hold and

unavailable, but the bulk

of services patrons are ac-

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ing the collection and

checkouts, hold pickups,

public computers and

The meeting room,

day when they are well.

Phillips

open hours

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Crystal

Library

of their daughters - the lodge now sports a new ice cream shop.

"The first year with COVID restrictions it didn't make sense, so they're really excited we got to open it up this

Lake a better place.'

For more information about Island View Resort, call 218-757-3469, view their webpage at islandviewresort.com, or look for their page on Facebook.

PHILANTHROPY **Heiam Medical Foundation** gives \$100K to hospital

COOK- A new bedside ultrasound machine and an Omnicell medications dispenser will soon add to the quality of patient care at Cook Hospital, thanks to a \$100,000donation from the W.C. Heiam Medical Foundation from their spring fund drive.

A significant portion of that gift, \$60,000, came from the Jordan Family Foundation, established by former Cook dentist Dr. John "Jack" Jordan III and his wife, Joan. The couple moved from Cook to California many years ago, and then eventually to Brentwood, Tenn. But they remained a part of the area community here with a house on Lake Vermillion where they have been part-year residents, and as such have made significant charitable donations to diverse area organizations and causes over the years.

Board President Sally Ludlow said that the Jordans have donated to the Heiam Foundation in the past, and that Jack Jordan contacted them earlier this year wanting to fund the purchase of the ultrasound machine. Jordan was suffering from cancer at the time, and Ludlow said she learned that he passed away this past Friday, July 16. She expressed deep gratitude for Jack and Joan's desire to look to Cook Hospital and make such a generous charitable gift during a challenging time personally.

Ludlow and her fellow board members are looking forward to welcoming supporters to the foundation's 28th annual benefit on Saturday, Aug. 14 at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade building. Limited to a virtual auction last year because of COVID-19 restrictions, this year's event will see

the return of the silent and live auctions, dinner by Boomtown Woodfire Grill, and refreshments.

But the success of the virtual auction has earned it a repeat edition as well, Ludlow said. It will be prior to the annual benefit.

All are invited to participate in the annual benefit. To purchase tickets, sponsor the event, or bid in the virtual auction, visit http://heiam.cbo.io. More information is also available by contacting Tifany at info@heiamfoundation. org or calling 218-750-1352.

The W.C. Heiam Medical Foundation was established in 1993 to support local healthcare. More than \$758,000 has been given to local healthcare providers, in addition to growing an endowment for future healthcare needs.

COMMUNITY NEWS Library expands tech help, newspapers,

Director

an-

printing, copying, and faxing. Wi-Fi access is seven days a week.

Stay updated on library hours and services by visiting www. cookpubliclibrary.org, or contact Phillips at 218at crystalphillips@alslib. info.

The Hutter Bunch returns for Music in the Park

COOK- A favorite regional band, The Hutter Bunch, will again perform for the free Music in the Park series on July 28 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the city park gazebo on River Street.

The Hutter Bunch is a large and diverse group of talented Iron Range musicians who love to make music and deliver a good show each and every performance. They perform a variety of music

Bring your appetite, a lawn chair, a blanket, or sit in your car to hear and

enjoy the concert. St. Paul's (Alango) Lutheran Church will be serving food and available 24 hours a day, refreshments from their burger and bratwurst stand during the concert. In the event of rain, the concert

will be moved to the Cook VFW.

Music in the Park 666-2210 or via email is made possible by the Cook Lions Club, Cook VFW Post 1757, the Cook Chamber of Commerce, the Cook Timberwolves Snowmobile Club, Northwoods Friends of the Arts, and free-will community donations.



of funding for ATV trails

RECREATION

Eagles Nest residents cry foul over proposed ATV route

Traffic, noise, dust and public safety concerns cited

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

EAGLES NEST TWP- Residents here are upset over a plan to open an ATV route as early as this month across a series of gravel roads in the township, but it's not clear what county or township officials can do to head off the plan.

The route would connect a portion of the Taconite Trail between Tower and Ely that is currently off limits to ATVs because it lies within the boundaries of Bear Head State Park. Current state park policy and rules generally prohibit ATV use, although snowmobiles, which primarily operate on frozen ground, are allowed.

The route is being promoted by the Prospector Trail group, which has been instrumental in building the Prospector Loop trail system connecting Ely, Tower, and Babbitt. Trail administrator Ron Potter said the planned route is not ideal, but short of opening up the Taconite Trail through the state park, there really aren't any good alternatives.

But township residents say they worry the trail,

which is attracting significant numbers of off-road riders, will prompt a large increase in ATV traffic, noise, and dust, as well as potential public safety concerns. Those concerns have prompted township officials and representatives of the Eagles Nest Township Lake Owners Association to reach out to county and state officials looking for help in redirecting the ATV traffic elsewhere.

But St. Louis County policy already allows ATV use on county roads located outside of municipal boundaries and most of the roads in question, including Bear Head State Park Road, Walsh Road, and Swanson Shores Road, are county-owned. A segment of Swanson Shores Rd. is township-owned, but town board chair Rich Floyd said it's not clear how the township would restrict ATV traffic on that segment without also limiting the ability of township residents to use their own ATVs on that portion of road.

Mostly, said Floyd, township residents are concerned that the trail

club will publish maps directing ATV riders onto the township roads.

Floyd said an alternative route that would take riders to the south and east of the populated portion of the township could help reduce ATV traffic around the Eagles Nest lakes themselves. But the Prospectors ATV Club will need to complete a stream crossing at the Beaver River in order to allow ATV riders to reconnect with the Taconite Trail near Purvis Lake, located to the east of the state park. Potter said the club already has funding for a new bridge at the river, but the project has been delayed because the club has decided to coordinate the work with the need to reconstruct a nearby snowmobile bridge crossing on the same river. Rather than build two crossings, the snowmobile trail will be re-routed to make use of the ATV crossing, which will need to include hard matting across about 1,000 feet of wetlands in addition to the bridge. The change will require that the bridge be built to a much higher weight standard, Potter noted, in order to accommodate snowmobile trail groomers. Potter said much of the work requires frozen ground, so it's currently scheduled for this coming winter.

While Potter said the alternative route could siphon some traffic off the township road route, he said it probably goes too far south to really be a practical connection between Tower and Ely. "It would get you there, but it's almost twice as long," Potter said. "We still need a northern route."

Potter said there's been some talk about allowing use of ATVs along the Taconite Trail through the state park, which would eliminate the need to use county roads in the township. He notes that the current route is in the northern part of the park, well away from most park facilities and hiking trails. "It's all public land, which makes it easier,' said Potter. While ATV use has long been prohibited in state parks, Potter noted that the Department of Natural Resources has allowed ATV use in a portion of Tettegouche State Park. The DNR also recently accommodated ATV use in a portion of the Lake Vermilion State Park located south of Hwy. 169, by converting its designation to a state recreation area, which allows for ATV use.

A number of township residents indicated they see the proposed routing of ATV traffic through the heart of Eagles Nest as a way to pressure the Legislature and the DNR to allow for the use of the Taconite Trail through the state park.

Rep. Rob Ecklund, DFL-International Falls, agreed the proposal looks sensible on a map, but said such a plan would face strong opposition in the Legislature. "It would be a heavy lift," he said, noting that a recent effort by a GOP lawmaker to open a lightly-used park in northwestern Minnesota to ATV use never advanced. He said he'd be willing to attempt such a solution, but only if it had the full support of local residents in the township.

he's been a strong backer

but said there needs to be a more coordinated effort as the state develops trails to prevent a "helter-skelter" approach. He said that's why he pushed for \$250,000 to help draft a statewide ATV master trail plan. "I think that could help fix future Eagles Nest-like problems," he added. Ecklund said he was surprised to learn during a recent meeting with township officials and County Commissioner Paul McDonald that the Prospector Trail had such a sizable gap. "I helped get the money appropriated but I kind of assume the trail groups are doing their job in putting their plans together," he said. While county roads are open to ATV use, Ecklund questioned whether that means large stretches should be incorporated into official trail systems.

Ecklund said it's worth it to take the time to get the trails issue right. "I will continue to work with all the groups to resolve it," he said."The ATV use isn't going away, so we might as well make it work for all of us."

Ecklund noted that

COURT...Continued from page 1 -

smaller facility than the company intended to build. But the high court had

sent the case back to the appellate level for further proceedings on other outstanding questions. Among them was whether the MPCA erred by refusing to consider a Canadianproduced technical report, issued by PolyMet just days after the close of public comments on its air permit, which indicated the company would achieve substantially greater profitability by pursuing a much larger project than the 32,000 ton-per-day operation it had proposed for permitting. As it was, the company was able to apply for what's known as a "synthetic minor source permit," although the larger projects the company was then exploring would have required a major source permit, which requires a considerably more involved process. The Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, one of several plaintiffs in the case, had petitioned the MPCA after release of the technical report urging a supplemental environmental impact statement be completed

before any air permit was granted. But the MPCA, with little comment, dismissed the environmental group's plea and failed to include its primary explanation, provided in a letter to the MCEA rejecting their request, in the administrative record that courts rely on when reviewing agency decisions.

In issuing the permit, the MPCA concluded that PolyMet would likely comply with the permit as written."But the agency did not explain why this was so," wrote Judge Lucinda Jesson for a three-judge panel. "And the agency had before it documents that called into question whether PolyMet could be expected to comply with the throughput limits of the synthetic minor source permit," wrote the court. "The Canadian report suggested that the profitability of the project would be limited with the throughput limitations and that PolyMet was evaluating the profitability of the project with higher throughput. And the [MCEA's] expert opined that it was unlikely that PolyMet would have included the increased-throughput analyses in the Canadian report if it did not intend to

expand the NorthMet mine."

While the court ruled that the Canadian report didn't create a "hard-andfast" duty for the MPCA to investigate whether PolyMet was seeking a sham permit, the judges found that the MPCA was required to provide substantial evidence and a clear explanation of its decision-making process when it issues permitsbut failed to do so for the PolyMet air permit.

The court also determined that the MPCA had failed to provide evidence to show that PolyMet had been forthcoming in providing information as part of the permitting process. "Nothing in the technical support document or the responses to comments addresses whether PolyMet complied with its disclosure obligations and refrained from knowingly making false or misleading statements," wrote the court. "This silence stands in contrast to the documents before the agency suggesting that PolyMet was exploring expansions of the NorthMet mine that would not comply with the terms of the synthetic minor source permit."

of the agency, the appellate court declined to simply reverse the permit, opting instead to give the MPCA a chance to get it right. "We have not concluded that the record could not support a reasoned decision by the agency to issue a permit. We have simply determined that the agency did not make such a reasoned decision. Accordingly, we deem remand the appropriate disposition."

Plaintiffs claim another victory

"Monday's decision is yet more confirmation that PolyMet is a failed proposal," said Kathryn Hoffman, CEO of the MCEA, in response. "It comes on the heels of a Minnesota Supreme Court decision that rejected the permit to mine and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stepping in to put the brakes on the proposal over downstream water pollution. It's time to move on from PolyMet and find better alternatives for northeastern Minnesota."

been speaking out of both sides of its mouth trying to keep its plans for a bigger, dirtier mine hidden from the people of Minnesota," he said."Now,GovernorWalz and his administration have an opportunity to look at all the facts and science behind this toxic and dangerous proposal."

Meanwhile, PolyMet officials remained confident that the concerns expressed by the court will eventually be resolved. "While disappointed in the court's decision, we stand firmly in our belief that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency appropriately accounted for the potential effects of the NorthMet project and will expeditiously provide the supporting explanation requested by the court," stated the company in comthe ruling. "The facts and science that prove the project can meet air quality standards are not in doubt."

The company noted, as well, that the metals they hope to produce, such as copper,nickel,palladium and cobalt are in high demand for infrastructure projects and the production of electric vehicles and renewable and clean energy technologies including solar panels, wind turbines and batteries. "These mineral resources need to be mined to support future clean energy and electric mobility technologies consistent with the priorities of the Biden Administration and as outlined in a June 2021 White House report on vulnerabilities within essential supply chains," the statement added.

While highly critical

ChrisKnopf, Executive Director of the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, accused the company of misleading the public. "PolyMet has

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

Traffic stop by Ely police leads to felony charges More charges filed following joyride, garage crash by KEITH VANDERVORT aware that Lawrence lived

Ely Editor

ELY - Increasing crime across America this summer has not spared the Ely area. Officers from the local police department have also been busy investigating reports of crime and charging suspects.

In a July 4 incident here, felony charges were filed against a Babbitt man who allegedly possessed a loaded handgun when he fled law enforcement officers following a traffic stop.

According to a criminal complaint released by the Ely Police Department, Trevor Buchite, 27, of Babbitt, was charged with possessing a handgun with an altered or missing serial

number and possession of a controlled substance (fifth degree). He was also charged with a gross misdemeanor for obstructing the legal process, and another misdemeanor for avoiding arrest by fleeing on foot.

According to the complaint, police pulled over a truck driven by Buchite near Central Avenue and Miners Drive in the early hours of July 4 because the rear license plate was not illuminated. Officers allegedly smelled marijuana inside the vehicle and removed the occupants. After locating a handgun in the pickup, officers detained the passengers. Buchite argued with the officers and started to run. He was captured and arrested.

A deputy sheriff located a loaded pistol with a scratched off serial number in Buchite's left pocket, according to the complaint. An Ely police officer found more than \$7,500 in cash and several Alprazolam pills in a small baggy in Buchrite's possession.

In cooperation with the Babbitt Police Department, it was determined that an amount of cash, \$7,500, was reported stolen from a

Babbitt resident earlier in the day. Police also found a glass smoking device and a pill bottle wrapped in electrical tape with tubes coming out of it containing a white residue.

The felony charges carry a maximum penalty of five years in prison and/ or \$10,000 fine. The misdemeanor charge of obstruction carries a penalty of one year in jail and/or \$3,000. Fleeing an officer carries a penalty of 90 days in jail and/or \$1,000 fine.

Joyride charges

An Ely man faces a felony charge of theft of a motor vehicle and a

misdemeanor charge of failure to report damage to property following a July 10 incident.

Dallas Lawrence, 20, allegedly took his housemate's vehicle for a ride and crashed into two garages, according to a criminal complaint from the Ely Police Department. The police report indicated that on July 10 officers were dispatched to a report of a male driving a black Yukon that hit two garages as it backed out of a parking stall. The reporting party, according to the complaint, identified the driver as Lawrence. Police were

at the reporting party's residence near Harvey Street and Sixth Avenue.

Police located Lawrence, who admitted to driving the Yukon. The owner of the vehicle told police he did not give Lawrence permission to drive the vehicle because he knew Lawrence did not have a driver's license.

During questioning, according to the complaint, Lawrence stated that he "just went for a joyride" and confirmed that he backed into the garage door of one structure, then pulled forward and hit another garage. The garage owners will submit damage estimates to police.

POLICE...Continued from page 1

new" the city is unable to replace the equipment until next year "when vehicles become available."

Budget committee member Al Forsman added. "It will take a little bit of time to get a replacement. We can get by with two squads, but what if we have another breakdown or something else happens. It is nice to be able to work with another community for help. We should have the agreement in place this week.'

On the recommendation of the budget committee, the council also approved the purchase of a tablet computer for the police department's squad truck for \$2,122.

Last year, the police department had 274 traffic stops to lead the list of incident responses provided to the council. Medical assists totaled 181. Law enforcement responded to 125 disturbance calls and dealt with 118 call-backs. Other notable incidents in the 2020 dispatch report included three responses to burglaries in progress, five burglary reports and one robbery. Animal disturbance calls were at 85. Officers responded to 97 requests to check the welfare of someone. Garbage calls totaled 16. There were 17 reports of fireworks. Two reports of a fight were answered, along with 11 incidents of loud music and 10 reports of loud parties. Police responded to 29 reports

of neighbors not getting along, and 23 reports of "unknown trouble."

The complete list is available at the Ely Police

Other business

Department.

In other business, the council:

► Heard from Aaron Kania, district ranger for the Kawishiwi Ranger District of the Superior National Forest, about local response efforts involving the ongoing

forest fires in the Ely area this summer.

► Approved new grave marker size rules for the Ely Cemetery, on recommendation from the Cemetery Committee, eliminated the need for post footings for gravestone placement, and rejected the wording of new rules signage, indicating the notices were "not positive enough and too wordy."

► Approved the Ely Public Library staff to attend the Association of Rural and Small Libraries conference in Sparks, Nev., Oct. 20-23. The library will be closed for those days.

► Accepted the resignation of Tom Conaway from the Library Board and agreed to post for the opening.

▶ Restarted Tim Riley's term on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

► Appointed election judges for the Aug. 10 special election for mayor.

CITY OF TOWER

DNR sides with developers in pilings removal dispute with city officials

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

TOWER – Two developers can remove a portion of a retaining wall in the East Two River here to accommodate docking for customers- without facing criminal prosecution by the city of Tower.

City officials had

threatened two men, Dave Rose, and Geoff Griffin, with prosecution if they moved forward with their plan to remove the pilings, which were installed by the city about a century ago to maintain a channelized connection between the city's downtown harbor and Lake Vermilion. The two developers had maintained that the city lacked authority over the pilings, because they were located beyond the "ordinary high-water mark," which is typically under the jurisdiction of the Department of Natural Resources.

DNR officials sided with the developers and after consultation between city and state attorneys, city officials acknowledged that they have no ability to prevent the removal of the pilings.

"On the advice of our City Attorney, it is clear the City of Tower does not have jurisdiction below the Ordinary High Water Mark on the East Two River, including over its historic river pilings, and that continued delay in response may constitute violation of the exercise of your riparian rights (aka water access rights)," wrote Tower Clerk-Treasurer Victoria Ranua in a July 16 email to developer Dave Rose, who is in the process of building an RV park along the river. "The City will not pursue criminal prosecution for removal of the pilings. As you

are aware, any docks you install must follow MN DNR regulations," Ranua continued.

Ranua noted that the city continues to have an interest in maintaining the river channel and said the city will work with both the DNR and the Army Corps of Engineers to ensure that those concerns are addressed.



Seventy years and hoping for many more

Russ and Theresa Berg celebrate a life of wedded bliss

by JODI SUMMIT Tower-Soudan Editor

EAGLES NEST TWP- The two met in junior high at Tower-Soudan High School and were dating by the time they both graduated in 1948. Russell and Theresa (Pavlich) Berg were married on July 14, 1951, at St. Martin's Catholic Church in Tower. They hosted their wedding reception at the VFW Hall, now the *Timberjay* building.

"The reason we are still married is because we've been living this long," said Russ with a laugh, as he and his wife celebrated their 70th anniversary at their home on Eagles Nest Lake with family, friends, and neighbors dropping in all afternoon.

The two started dating their senior year in high school and attended prom together. Russ was the captain of the basketball and football teams.

"I just did okay on grades," he admitted.

Theresa remembered how things were different for girls back when she was in school. One of her sisters, Aggie (Pavlich) Yapel, was the first female student to wear pants at the school, back in the 1940s when it wasn't allowed. The girls' mother, Angela (Zobitz) Pavlich, was a seamstress who made all their clothing.

Theresa moved to Chicago right after her high school graduation to help a sister with her young family, and Russ spent some time



Russell and Theresa (Pavlich) Berg were married on July 14, 1951, in Tower. They celebrated 70 years together with family and friends at their Eagles Nest home. photo by J. Summit

working in Milwaukee. The two would meet up in Chicago, often going to the Chicago Theater to see music legends like Glenn Miller, Louis Armstrong and Lawrence Welk.

Russ went on to work in the Soudan Mine before joining the Air Force. He served for 20 years, moving from state to state, and even spending time in Okinawa, Japan, before retiring, getting a teaching degree, and settling down in Rockford, Ill., where he taught physical education, driver's education, and served as a school counselor.

By the time Russ retired from the Air Force, the family included three children, Dan, Michele (Mica), and Mitchell, who passed away a few years ago. Theresa worked as a secretary while Russ was serving in he military. After Russell retired, she also went to college and got a teaching degree. Eventually, both had masters' degrees in education. Theresa taught third grade.

"My mom was accepted at Harvard," Michelle (Mica) Cascarano Berg said. "But she didn't go because we were living in Rockford." Theresa was also a talented singer, studying voice while living in Chicago and performing on stage there.

But the family's focus has always been on the Tower-Soudan area, especially the lake home they built in Eagles Nest Township.

"We love to come to the lake," said Theresa, "this is such a nice place to be."

"We built this cabin when I was in the Air Force," Russ said. "My brother Ray and I nailed every single board in this house, and Theresa painted and stained every single one."

At first, they only came for part of the summer. But when both parents had teaching jobs, they extended their stays when school wasn't in session. Once Russ retired from teaching in 1994, they tried to spend closer to half the year at the lake.

This allowed them to once again be active in the Tower-Soudan community. Russ joined his brother Ray as an active member of the Nelson-Jackson Legion Post in Tower. Theresa was a volunteer in the Slovenian Women's Union, as well as volunteering at St. Martin's, including teaching Vacation Bible School. Russ said he especially enjoyed participating in the Tower Fourth of July Parade. Mica said her father marched with the Legion Color Guard in the parade for as long as she can remember, at least 50 years, only missing a year in 2018 when he was undergoing treatment for cancer (and he is now cancer-free). Russ was also a member of the Tower-Soudan Lions Club

Russ fell in love with the water early. He remembers walking the mile-and-a half from Tower out to Hoodoo Point as a schoolboy to swim most days in the summer, walking home for lunch, and returning afterwards for more swimming. Sometimes, he whispered to me, they would jump the freight train that came out to the old box factory, instead of walking. Russ wasn't sure he wanted to share that tip but noted since there weren't any active trains in Tower anymore, children wouldn't be tempted to try it out.

They both love everything about the lake: the wildlife, the scenery, the swimming, and the fishing. Earlier that week they had watched a bear wander through their front yard. Several families of mallards visit daily, and of course, always plenty of deer.

Nowadays, their home gets filled with family during the summer months.

"All our grandchildren and great-grandchildren come," Russell said. "And they rarely leave the dock."

With both Russ and Theresa in their early 90s, their daughter Mica, who was also a teacher, is helping care for her parents almost full-time, with help from other family members. Theresa has struggled with health issues and now has trouble walking, but was having a wonderful day visiting with family and friends."My mother is the most gracious and loving woman," said Mica, who has been living with them fulltime since last year and was lived with them during their summers the past six years. Russ is still very active and independent.

Mica has inherited her parents' love of the lake.

"There is no place I would rather be than at home on the Range," she said.

"I've been coming here by whole life," she said, "and now that we are all retired, we get to be here longer."

PICNIC...Continued from page 1

manent position. Tekautz had plenty of experience on the supply end, having worked at Zup's Grocery, and ably oversaw the ordering of the hundreds of pounds of beef, pork, and vegetables needed to fill the antique iron cooking pots at the park on picnic weekend. Several dozen committee members and family friends always showed up the afternoon before the picnic to chop all the potatoes, celery, carrots, cabbage, and onions that are simmered along with the meat.

"It's still the same recipe I was given a long ago," Tekautz said, but he noted that the price of meat had really gone up this year, with the order for beef alone nic-goers waited for their turn to get their pot filled with the steaming hot stew.

Steve Solkela and his one-man accordion band proved a very popular entertainer, filling the spot held by Art Lehtonen and his accordion for many years. As a high-schooler, Solkela also put in a performance of the National Anthem at the 100th anniversary picnic, which he had attended with his relatives from the Korpi family of Soudan.

Pauly Housenga, of the Tower-Soudan Historical Society, asked for any information on the 143 miners who died working in the Soudan Mine. The state park is working on hibit commemo ing the miners; any family members with stories, photos, or memorabilia they wish to share are asked to contact James Pointer at the Soudan Underground Mine State Park at 218-300-7000.

oversaw the short program. Past presidents Jodi Summit and Jennifer Fredrickson were presented with certificates by Old Settlers President Muriel Scott. Other officers include first vice-president Matt Tuchel, second vice-president Stephen Tekautz, and secretary/treasurer Kathy Hoppa. Board of directors members are Mike Korpi, Eric Norberg, Ari Picard, Kristine Jonas, and Gary Torma.

Old Settlers is open to anyone born or living on the Vermilion Iron Range, which stretches from Tower-Soudan to Ely. The picnic was originally sponsored by the Oliver Mining Company as a summer ou ting for its employees, and then turned into a community-wide celebration. At one time, Old Settlers could boast over 1,000 people in attendance. Cars would line the road all the way up to the Soudan Community Store, and the township would run buses back and forth to ferry

people to and from the park. **Booyah magic**

Preparing as much as 200 gallons of booyah takes some good old-fashioned elbow grease. The afternoon before the annual gathering, a couple of dozen volunteers gathered to peel and chop the hundreds of pounds of onions, carrots, potatoes, celery and cabbage that this year filled up four large cast iron booyah pots. Volunteers bring their own knives. This year professional chef Bryan Morcom stopped by and put all the amateur vegetable cutters to shame with his speedy chopping of carrots and potatoes.

The booyah recipe, passed down for 100 years, also includes almost 200 pounds of beef and pork, tomato puree, corn, green beans, peas, rice and pepper.

There is a specific order and time for adding each ingredient, said Nick Tekautz. The fires are lit at 6 p.m. and by 8 p.m. the water is just about boiling.

The cooking itself is down to a science, and Tekautz said he doesn't even need to taste it along the way.

Something magic does happen as the booyah simmers overnight. Tekautz said the recipe is impossible to duplicate at home; he's tried and failed several times.

The cast iron kettles, used only once a year for the Old Settlers picnic, may hold the key to the special flavor of the meat and vegetable soup. Their age is uncertain. But they certainly date back to the early years of the Old Settlers tradition.

"The kettles get so hot," said Tekautz."Maybe they burn the broth at the edges. It has to have something to do with the kettles."

It makes sense that the magic of the metal is the key to a successful Old Settlers picnic.

costing \$1,000.

But with 217 picnic-goers registered at this year's 107th annual reunion, memberships covered the cost of the meal, which is the only activity sponsored by Old Settlers, every year on the third Saturday in July.

Last year, the picnic was canceled due to the pandemic. Memberships have trended down in past years, especially compared to the 369 paid memberships at the 100th anniversary picnic in 2014, though average attendance has been around 250.

Committee members were unsure of how large attendance would be this year, due to the cancellation of the picnic last year and some family members still not able to travel. But their projections were good, and there was plenty of booyah for everyone who attended.

The picnic saw plenty of old and new faces, with a picture-perfect day at Breitung's McKinley Park. Organizers noted that the crowd was trending a bit younger than in past years, which meant younger generations are continuing the family tradition and bringing their children along.

The booyah was ready right on time, at high noon, and the lines, as usual, moved quickly as picMaster of Ceremonies Jennifer Fredrickson

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NORTHWOODS PARTNERS

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5PM - HAPPY HOUR

7:30-9PM DANCING

MUSIC PROVIDED BY ED ELY

Tickets: \$35

6PM - DINNER

CELEBRAT

>

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August 9, 2021

For more information please contact:

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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Officials remain vigilant as COVID cases creep upward

Iron Range communities have majority of July county cases

by DAVID COLBURN

REGIONAL-St. Louis County's top health official cautioned Tuesday that while COVID-19 case counts in the county are rising at a slower pace than elsewhere in the state, people should assume that they can still be exposed to any of the coronavirus variants anywhere and at any time.

Public Health and Human Services Director Linnea Mirsch said that at the moment it's difficult to determine a specific trend in the 43 new COVID cases recorded in the county in July, although overall the numbers are slightly higher than in previous weeks. Still, she said, two factors are likely major contributors.

"From June 29 to July 12, we had 19 new cases, but then immediately following, we had 19 cases in just three days," Mirsch said. "That trend hasn't continued at that level, so right now it's just up and down."

Numbers released by the Minnesota Department of Health on Tuesday showed 11 new COVID cases for the county from last Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

"I think it's really important to note that 70 percent of those cases (in July) are in our Iron Range communities," Mirsch said. "Because our case numbers have dropped, we're not able to separate them out quite as much on a daily basis by geography (due to confidentiality concerns). But I think that's really important to talk about. Thankfully, we haven't had a new death reported in more than three weeks."

Among the six North Country zip codes monitored by the *Timberjay*, two new cases in Orr reported by the state last week are the only new cases since three were reported in Ely on June 17.

Mirsch re-emphasized data from MDH showing that 99.9 percent of new COVID cases are among people who have not been vaccinated againstCOVID-19. Case increases around the state and country, and most likely in the county, have two major contributing factors, Mirsch said.

"It's clear that both variants, and not adhering to COVID prevention measures, are driving increases," she said. "The rise in variants is highlighting the fact that the pandemic isn't over yet."

State infectious disease director Kris Ehresmann confirmed on Tuesday that the more highly contagious Delta variant is now responsible for an estimated 75 percent of the cases in the state. The Delta variant is also associated with more serious illness in COVID-19 patients.

Vaccinations stalled

The rapid emergence of the Delta variant comes at a time when statewide vaccination rates have almost flatlined. Progress toward the goal of vaccinating 70 percent of Minnesotans age 16 and over with at least one shot has been measured in tenths of a percent in recent weeks, and currently stands at 67.9 percent.

Gov. Tim Walz and other state officials have for several weeks now largely ignored the state's long-held and stubbornly elusive goal for vaccinations, instead touting a less lofty measure of achievement, that of reaching President Joe Biden's goal of at least one vaccination for 70 percent of adults. Achieving Biden's goal has been touted in releases announcing the closure of most state-operated vaccination facilities, including the one at the DECC in Duluth.

St. Louis County has also narrowed and retargeted its vaccination efforts, Mirsch said.

"There are areas where vaccination rates are lower and we're targeting those with more outreach and vaccination drives," she said. "All the research is showing how much work it takes to get each vaccination at this point, and it's multiple conversations, usually with somebody that someone knows or is a trusted person, a medical provider or family who shares their story. We are still doing vaccination clinics, but we're doing less

and less because our uptake is really low."

The shift away from clinics means a greater emphasis on making connections with people out in the community, in places where they might feel more at ease asking questions. So, county health personnel will be at upcoming county fairs and national "Night Out" observances the first week in August, including one in Ely.

"I think it's a good time to connect with people who have questions, questions about variants, and to have opportunities to do vaccinations," Mirsch said.

And Mirsch was emphatic that anyone who received a first dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccines who skipped the second should still come back to get that final shot.

"Get fully vaccinated," she said. "It's not too late. Studies are showing that people have dramatically better odds of not getting sick, even from variants, once they've gotten that second dose."

She also recommend-

ed that unvaccinated and partially vaccinated people follow the oft-repeated COVID precautionary measures.

"It's the same simple precautions of wearing a mask, social distancing, avoiding large crowds, washing hands, and getting tested regularly," Mirsch said.

The overall decline of the pandemic has led to shifts in the duties of county health department personnel to pick up on other important health-related needs, but in anticipation of the upcoming school year and all the questions surrounding it, Mirsch said the department will keep school specialist and public health educator Aubrie Hoover fully focused on helping schools.

"Especially with all the planning this fall, I think it will be very busy," Mirsch said. "We hear from our schools the importance of having that partner interpreting data, interpreting guidance, and just being a local resource. Let's all hope that job starts declining. I hope we're in a better place by the winter."

COOK...Continued from page 1 _

partner family, Tara, here about six months ago or so," Thompson said. "We knew there was land around, that we needed to pursue. But even as we selected Tara, we got a call from a potential donor saying, 'Hey,I've got some property up in Cook, would you guys be interested?"

The call came from Kirk and Angela Weidner, a couple who live in the Twin Cities area. Cargill, the company Kirk works for, has been involved with Habitat for Humanity builds all across the country, and the Weidners volunteered for a Habitat build in Hibbing last fall, Angela said. The fact that the Weidners have an interest in the Iron Range is no coincidence.

"I grew up on Sand Lake in Britt," Kirk said. "Our family's always been from the Range and we still have a brother living in Virginia. We spend the summers up here."

Regionalties and past involvement explain the Weidners' interest in reaching out to NSLC Habitat for Humanity, but it took a twist of fate for a couple with ties to Britt, Virginia, and the Twin Cities to end up with land in Cook to donate. "We weren't looking for property in Cook," Kirk said, "but somebody else who owned this property needed some help, so we helped him, and part of that is that we ended up with the land. But again, we didn't mean to have land in Cook. We hoped we could find a great fit and Habitat was first and foremost on our minds. Nathan has been fantastic to work with and it's just a treat that it's worked out so well."

was largely symbolic, as foundation and slab work started more than a week earlier, Thompson said, but still more than two dozen volunteers and supporters turned out for the event, including St. Louis County Seventh District Commissioner Mike Jugovich, of Hibbing.

'My experience (with Habitat) started when I was mayor of Chisholm, when we had a number of homes built," Jugovich said. "People don't understand that these homes aren't free. These homes are built with sweat equity. And these homes keep kids in school districts. They get to stay around. They have a beautiful new home, it improves neighborhoods, it does so many good things that people don't necessarily see. There are so many good things that come from it. This is something that I've really enjoyed over the years and something I will continue to be a part of."

It also wasn't the first time Tara, a 2007 Cook High School graduate, and her daughters had been to the site, and the girls appeared to be excited walking around and exploring the recently-completed slab. They just asked now where their bedrooms are."

Work was scheduled to resume on Monday with volunteers putting up wall framing, and Thompson said the exterior shell should be largely complete within two weeks. With many volunteers moving on to other sites after that, interior work will move at a slower pace.

Tara will be required to put in a minimum of 200 hours of work on her home and get 100 more hours of sweat equity from family and friends, Thompson said. Many other volunteers will be working over the next few months to make the home a reality, utilizing materials mostly procured from Cook Building Center. Once she moves in, Tara will begin making payments to Habitat on a zero-percent 30-year mortgage, with the funds turned over to support additional builds, Thompson said.

The Cottens will have several neighbors to the south, and will eventually have more to the north, too, as the property donated by the Weidners is large enough to accommodate four more homes. For now, Thompson anticipates relatively smooth sailing with this build, even in the face of high lumber costs and some constraints in the supply chain. "We've done some preordering of materials to make sure we have what we need," he said. "We and our community and our volunteers are ready to step up to the plate and meet the challenge." Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical Christian ministry dedicated to providing decent, affordable housing by building strength, stability and self-reli-



Sunday's groundbreaking

"We come by every day," Tara said. "We drive by to see the progress and that has been amazing. It's just such an awesome and amazing experience to watch your house being built step-by-step. The girls are beyond excited. Right now, they're sharing a bedroom, so they just can't wait to have their own space and own bedrooms to decorate. It's a learning experience for them to have already been plotting out where everything is going to be.

Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Nathan Thompson helped Brooklyn Cotten with her shovel at the groundbreaking ceremony. photo by D. Colburn

ance in partnership with people and families in need. Habitat for Humanity operates in more than 70 countries and all 50 U.S. states. This will be the fourth build in Cook by NSLC Habitat.

Colorado man dies in canoe accident on Loon Lake

REGIONAL- A 73-year-old Colorado man died Monday as a result of a storm-related boating accident on Loon Lake, according to the St. Louis Sheriff's Office.

St. Louis County dispatchers received a call at 11:41 a.m. from Canoe Country Outfitters in Ely reporting that a canoe carrying Wayne L. Morrow, 73, of Fort Lupton, Colo. and Denis M. Guenther, 65, of Grand Junctions, Colo.

Online at timberjay.com

had capsized in East Loon Bay. Both men, neither wearing life jackets, were thrown into the water when a wave generated by heavy storms passing through the area overturned the canoe.

Guenther reported-

ly swam to shore with their gear while Morrow remained with the canoe. When Guenther returned to the canoe, Morrow was missing.

e. Responding initially l- to Handberg's Marine on Crane Lake, the St. Louis County Rescue Squad conducted a search using their remote operated vehicle with scanning sonar and discovered Morrow's submerged body in 61 feet of water. The incident is

under investigation by the sheriff's office and the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office.

The Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, Crane Lake Fire/First Responders and Orr Ambulance Service assisted sheriff's deputies and the St. Louis County Rescue Squad with the call.



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creating art from OLDBARNS

The look and feel of old barn wood inspire Embarrass craftsman

Left: Don Taylor and his son Steve are shown working on framing projects that feature vintage tin (below).

Right: A bin of old square nails pulled from the vintage barn boards.

photos by K. Vandervort





by KEITH VANDERVORT Ely Editor

EMBARRASS-Don Taylor grew up spending time on his neighbor's farm in Menahga, where he helped with the dairy cows, went on the milk route and did other various chores. He took something away from those formative years that has stayed with him as he nears the end of his seventh decade. He developed a respect and admiration for old barns, and the wood they are made of.

"I've always liked the look, the feel, even the smell of barn

wood," Taylor said earlier this month in his workshop at his home east of Embarrass.

And in Taylor's hands, old barn wood becomes decorative craft pieces and functional furniture, a hobby he enjoys when he is not tending to his full-time remodeling and custom cabinetry business.

His love of repurposing barn wood will be on full display this weekend at the Elv Blueberry/ Art Festival in Whiteside Park. The festival runs Friday through Sunday and features hundreds of arts and crafts for sale.

holders with tin Harley-Davidson "We are always looking for signs lanterns (electrified) and barns. It takes a great effort

to tear an old barn down in a way that preserves the wood," he said. "We literally take a barn apart piece by piece."

One of the first barns he recycled, located south of Chisago, had an original section built in 1874.

"There were lots of dovetailed sections of full logs, and we even found many sections of rough-sawn white oak. It was a real gold mine to have one of our first barns to be made of so many types of wood," he said.

Taylor crafts different styles and lengths of log benches, key shelves with coat rack pegs. He also makes a variety of wine racks, some with deer antlers, others with old recycled square barn nails to hold the wine glasses.

"We also make old windows, some four-pane, others six-pane in size, and frame those with barn wood," he said. "Those will be new this year."

The will be Taylor's fourth Blueberry/Art Festival displaying his unique craft work. He also makes it back to Ely for the Harvest Moon Festival in September. Other than a couple of shows in the Chisago area, Taylor shows his craft exclusively in Ely.

"I am busy all year with my

remodeling and cabinet business, and getting to a bunch of shows every year is just not in the cards," he said.

He related a recent job he did for a couple who live on Birch Lake near Babbitt.

"They saw what I do, and she wanted a bathroom made to look old-fashioned with barn wood. We found an old claw-foot tub. The vanity is made completely out of barn wood. The window is framed in old wood. We even put in a roller-mounted barn door," he said. "It turned out beautiful."

See ARTIST...pg. 4B

Blueberry/Art Festival

July 23-25, 2021 in Whiteside Park



Join us for the 40th annual Blueberry/ Art Festival featuring 220 booths filled with arts, crafts & food.

> Friday & Saturday 10 am - 6 pm Sunday 10 am - 4 pm

Operation Blueberry runs July 16-25. Visit participating businesses for blueberry products, food, and specials. Live music too! Map available at Ely.org.

NEW THIS YEAR: Experience Ely Expo featuring area non profits.







Visitor & Information Center 1600 E. Sheridan St. Ely - PH: 218-365-6123 Ely.org/Events @BlueberryArtFestival



198.199 Easy Times Textiles, wind socks

EBCH Foundation

Community Hospital EXPO demonstrating new

Commerce Information

Ely Fire Department

Food (Pork chops/corn

Ely Hoop Club Food

Ěly Kiwanis Club

Textiles, machine

Ely Rotary Club

EXPO information 169.17 Empty Nest Creations

Enchante Textiles,

(Pop, water, Timberwoves

Pavilion (Blueberry pie)

Ely Northern Stitches

embroidery, tea towels

Home & garden décor

Ely Bloomenson

robotic machine

Ely Chamber of

on the cob)

gear)

200

94

0

60

0

53

130

1.2

Your guide to the 2021 Blueberry/Art Festival

Use the map below to locate all your favorite artists and food booths





and the	1.2	Eneriance roxulos,
一里		clothing & scarves
3	165	Eric Helland Creations
		Jewelery, photography,
		wood lathe items
	84.85	Felicity's Closet
1 600		Textiles, baby items
	31	Felixery, L.L.C.
		Silver, gold, copper
		jewelry
	0	Finn Loki's Funnel
		Cakes & Food wild rice
		sausage
	24	Flock Duluth LLC
		Metal art using recycled
		materials
	123.124	Flying Carpet
and the second		Fiber
		textiles, rag rugs
/ [193	Fredrick's Forest
		Woodcrafts,clocks,
,		growth boards, jewelry
	155	Gifts Made By Hand
		Hmong sand creatures,
7		purses
	67	GLeeM Designs
2		Gold & silver jewelry
	0	Gobbler Concessions
illow Dreams		Food (New Mississippi
g, grilling		Mud sandwich)
fire pokers,	119	Good Wolf Bowls
		Hand-turned bowls, vases
nam	0	Greek-Bobby
book		The Greek Food (Gyros)
and Cards		
ards, quilling		
and-made		

VENDORS... pg. 3B



See Virtual Tours & Every Agency's Property Listings On Our Easy Map Search!

boxes, small furniture

sweats

218-780-6644

80.81

Deershirts.com Clothing,

wildlife themed t-shirts &

NEXT TIME COME HOME!

38

Dragonflies

3D pop-up ca

cards from h

paper



ELY, MN 1 level living & incredible sunsets! Pvt lake home at waters edge on White Iron Chain, excellent shoreline. 8 mi to Ely. Almost all rooms lakeside. Att & det garages.

OFFERED	AT \$724,		Walkou	
		2,174 SF	Level	from
DETAILS	380 ft shoreline 2		house	to
	Sou it shoreline 2		lake.	Dock.



ELY, MN BWCA resort. Development opportunities! On White Iron & Farm Lake. Small cabins, lg group cabins, motel suites, camping & RV sites, bar, dining, kitchen,

OFFERED AT	\$2,625,000)	marina, boat
DETAILS 12 CABIN	S & 42 CAMPSI	ΓES	gas sales, &
3,040 ft s	shoreline 60 a	cres	rental boats.



TOWER, MN Vermilion yr-rnd home w/sunset views, close to town, golf, dining. LR w/fp & glass lakeside open to deck. Wlkout LL w/2 BRs, sauna & rec rm. Sound of

OFFERED /	AT \$398,5	500	water	lap-
DETAILS	AT \$398,5 3 BD/2 BTH 165 ft shoreline	3,186 SF 0.6 acres	ping &	lake
			bree	zes.



ELY, MN Beautiful Farm Lake home designed to showcase art collection. S.-facing. 7 mi to Ely. Vaulted great rm w/fp, Kitch open to 3 season porch, great rm &

OFFERED /	AT \$649,500		dinin side		
DETAILS	3 BD/3 BTH 3,616 SF 285 ft shoreline 2.4 acres	.	Wlko		
	205 11 31101 2111 214 461 23	•	w/ho	t	tub.



TOWER, MN Secluded Vermilion beach retreat & sauna guest cabin at waters edge on 1,920 ft lakeshore & 19 Main cabin has vaulted ceiling, skylights, wd stove ac

		neu c	0, , ,		
OFFERED	ΔΤ	\$498,	500	& glass to bea	s doors
	2 00/000///		500	to bea	chside
DETAILS	2 BD/PRIVY		540 SF	dock	Dock
	1,920 ft shor	eline	19.6 acres	UEUK.	DOCK.

	and the second second
. 0	
	Balances Provent

TOWER, MN Lake Vermilion. Simplicity & tranquility just 7 mi to town, 2 mi to golf & dining. SW facing furnished 2BR cedar milled log cabin, bunkhouse, boathouse

OFFERED	AT \$324,5	500	on	gen-
DETAILS	1 BD/PRIVY	494 SF	tiy	sloping Dock.
	100 ft shoreline	1.5 acres	IOT.	DOCK.

"The finest Realtor I've ever worked with in my life." - Tim K.





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Blueberry/Art Festival back, but some changes in place

Safety measures mean more space between booths and fewer vendors

nuts/food)

photography

Smokey Photo

Wildlife and nature

Spinning Wheels

Spiritwood Music

Publishing Author and

Performing/selling CDs

Stacey Johnson Jewelry

Gemstones/fresh water

publisher/children's books

by KEITH VANDERVORT Ely Editor

ELY - After a year on hiatus because of public health concerns due to the coronavirus pandemic, the community's signature art and craft event, the Blueberry/ Art Festival, is back for 2021, hosted by the Ely Chamber of Commerce.

The Blueberry/Art Festival begins on Friday, July 23 and runs through Sunday, July 25.

"This year's festival will concentrate on arts, crafts, and

VENDORS. from page 2B

VE.	NDUK5 from	page	e ZB ———
34	Harpstona Jowalny		coope & lotions
54	Harpstone Jewelry Wire earrings	101 102	soaps & lotions Levandowski Pottery
103	Heavenly Designs	101.102	Functional stoneware
105	Woodworking		pottery
	Woodcrafts, cutting	54	LHR Images
	boards, coasters	54	Nature photogrpahy,
16.17	Heim-Made Designer		BWCA and nearby area
10.17	women's hats & clothing	21	Master of None Hand-
185	Hey boo Creations	21	forged iron work, knives
100	Sustainably made	152	Millie's Corner Gifts
	jewelry	102	Driftwood stones, glass
159	Hidden Grains		& bead original art
100	Creations	55.56	Minnesota Emu Rancl
	Mixed media, kitchen	00.00	Health/beauty emu
	utinsils w/ turned		products
	handles	143	Monkey Bandit Shop
58	Homespun Traditions	110	Yard games
00	Ornaments, hand painted	48	Morning Glory Creation
	snowmen	40	Pressed flower art
131	International Wolf Center		pictures
101	Information	105	Naena Jewelry
0	PIEROGi Food	100	Stones, leather, beads
	Iron Range Apparel	106	Natural Expression
10.11	Clothing designer &	100	Rock Art Lake Superio
	maker		rock shadow boxes
190	Iron Range Custom	8	Nature Daydreams
150	Lures Painted lures	0	Watercolor paintings
28	Jeff Hoff's Wildlife Art	180 181	Nature's Therapy
20	Original paintings	100.101	Candles & potpourri
47	Jeff Renner Wildlife Art	166	Night Flight Images
	Original oil paintings		Wildlife photography
42	Jenifer LeClair	11	Norsemen Products
	Author, Books		Fur hats, mittens
104	Jim the Carver	5.006	Northwoodsfish
	Woodcrafts, hand-	0.000	Chainsaw carved and
	carved items		hand-painted
46	Joni's Barkery Pet	0	Now That's Waffles, LL
	products, dog & cat gear	-	Food (Waffles)
3	Kaufenberg Arts	139.140	Oak Outlet Hickory
•	Oil paintings		sapling & oak furniture
35.36	Keepsakes Antler	0	Oasis Del Norte
	baskets, basket sculptures	•	Food (Authentic Mexica
	& wreaths	0	Orange Treet
83	Kettle Mania Food	•	Food (Blended fruit drink
	(Italian ice)		corn dogs, lemonade)
10	Ledge Wood Creations	187	Orange Treet ETC
	Woodcrafts, turned bowls		Food (Lemonade)
18.19	Ledin's Jewelry	114	P & L Construction
	Jewelry designer/maker		Hand-made wood items
191.192	Legends of Africa	32	Pebble Valley Glass
	African shea butter		Studio Glass art



SMOOTHIES COOKIES * NEW *

food," said Ely Chamber of Commerce Event Coordinator Ellen Cashman. Public health guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic

led Chamber officials to downsize the festival this year. The 2021 Blueberry/Art Festival and Experience Ely Expo will be capped at a total of 220 vendors. down from a high of 300 vendors prior to 2019.

"We are going to put an addi-

BWCA and nearby areas

Minnesota Emu Ranch

Morning Glory Creations

tional six feet between each of the vendors which is decreasing our space," said Chamber Executive Director Eva Sebesta.

"There may be fewer booths this year, but the quality of artists, crafters, and makers is amazing,' Cashman said.

Food vendors

Festival goers can also expect a reduction in the number of food vendors as that area of the park is also spread out.

"We also have to modify the way the food court is laid out. That is always a huge congestion point," Sebesta said. "We are trying to make sure we have a safe event, and we are giving vendors and our visitors the space to be safe."

That being said, the food court will feature many returning favorites, such as the Kiwanis blueberry pies, Schweiby's tasty burgers, and the Ely Fire

Department's pork chops on a stick.

"We have several new food vendors, including Bob-A-Q with delicious barbequed sandwiches, Now That's Waffles featuring a variety of breakfast and dessert waffles, and Zoe's Gone Bananas with sumptuous banana breads," Cashman added.

The traditional Blueberry

Watercolors by Bonnie

Jewelry made from coins WICOLA

EXPO Water Association

Wild Fern Herbal Soaps

Natural herbal soaps, lip

balm, sauna steamers etc

Custom mosaic ceramics

Wise Guyz Gadgets

Handmade gadgets,

Hand-dyed wool kits

Zoe's Gone Bananas

Food (Banana Bread)

Quilts

Wif-Man Weaving

Wilson Install

grill tools

108.109 Woolderness

Zubrod

Hand-woven textiles

See...FESTIVAL pg. 4B

Painting 163.164 Wearable Coinage

77

132

22

65

111

15

0

178

57	Pengal's Basswood	
	Trading Co Clothing	39.4
	designer & maker	
76	Personal Touch Designs	50
113	Jewelry, cuff bracelets	52
113	Prairie Sun Design Hats and purses	
86	Pretty Doll Collections	23
00	Doll clothes	
37	Products of Northern	162
	Minnesota/Clough	
~~	Wooden Bird Art	70
82	PYNG Paint Your Nails	79
0	Girl Vegan nail polish Quality Food International	122
0	Food (Seafood)	122
45	Quilts for Zoey	71.72
	Quilts, baby items, kid	
	purses	147.148
120	Rachelle Orr	
121	Acyrlic paintings	174
121	Raucous Jewelry Hand-made jewelry	1/4
153	Raven Knives	110
100	Hunting knives	
161	Reduce, Reinvent, Relove	
	Gourds & jewelry	175
41	Richard Yacelga	100
63.64	Clothing designer/maker RJ Collection	186
03.04	Repurposed pieces	146
69.70	Root River Photography	
50.10	Wildlife and night sky	0

Metal painting, custom designed blueberry décor

- Log furniture Ryan's Rustic Railings
- & Furniture Wood furniture
- Food (Cheese, corn dogs, soda, water) Schweiby's Concessions
- Food (American) 167.168 Silverfish 'N' Things
- windchimes 197 **Simply Homemade** Food (Packaged jams
- 61.62 Simply Nuts (Packaged

pearls Standing Buffalo Knives Hunting knives Sue Redfield Pottery Wood-fired pottery Super Cub Flyers Handcrafted jewelry Superior Photographs MN landscapes, nature images Suz and Roo Jewelry, silver & leather Suz's Country Candles Candles, "smelly jelly", **BBO** sauce

The Fish Market Pottery fish, stoneware

- The Kernel's Best Kettle Korn Food The Personal Touch
- Hand-sculpted pottery The Rolling Yo
- Food (Frozen yogurt) 7 The Weagelworks Hand-blown glass with
- metal **Three Rivers Farm** 96.97
- Maple syrup **Tischer Photographic** 25.26 Gallery Photography, Lake Superior & more
- Tom Soucek 2 Northwoods watercolors

149.15 Tonka Bay Fountains



- 117.118 Ultra Bubbles Toys, bubble wands
- 141.142 UNEEK Tie-Dye Apparel Tie dye clothing
- 160 Vug Jewels Brass &
- silver jewelry 9
- Walking Wood 49







Walking sticks

Ely-Winton Historical Society is **OPEN** during **Blueberry/Art Festival!** FREE ADMISSION to our museum...

which displays the history of the Ely area. Many historical books and local artworks for sale.

Air Conditioning • Plenty of Parking!







Breakfast in the Garden

Saturday, August 7 from 10 am - 12 noon

by Whiteside Park Pavilion • Art for Kids & Adults!!

- Wildlife photography 6 **Norsemen Products** Fur hats, mittens 194.195 Rustic Metalz Northwoodsfish 196 Chainsaw carved and 182.183 Rustic River Mosaics Now That's Waffles, LLC
- 27 140 Oak Outlet Hickory sapling & oak furniture
 - 0 SB Concessions **Oasis Del Norte** Food (Authentic Mexican)
 - Food (Blended fruit drinks. 0
 - Jewelry, bracelets, rings,
 - & jellies)
- Orange Treet ETC Food (Lemonade) P & L Construction Hand-made wood items
 - **Pebble Valley Glass**
- Studio Glass art
- corn dogs, lemonade)



STEGER MUKLUKS

Patti's Annual Garage Sale!! Starts Monday July 26 • 9am to 5pm **ONLINE & CURBSIDE PICKUP Only!** Online mukluks.com or call 218-365-6634 to be fitted over the phone and schedule a pickup time.

ARTIST...Continued from page 1B

Working with reclaimed barn wood has many challenges.

"Always check for nails," he warned."I use a hand-held metal detector so I don't ruin all my saw blades."

Taylor rarely stains his wood. "Varnishing will bring out the natural colors," he said. "It gets dark because of its age. It has its own natural beauty. Weathering and thickness will play into what pieces of wood I use for a particular project, such as framing. It is hard to get the consistent look. Barn wood can sometimes be very fragile to work with."

People will come up to him at his booth and say they could smell the barn wood before they saw it.

"The old timers know that smell of aged barn wood," he said.

Taylor and his wife moved to the Embarrass area about seven years ago.

"My good friend Scott Edgett (North American Bear Center director and dog sledder) found us the perfect place to buy up here, and we weren't really looking to relocate," he said. "To be clear, we had to kick out our youngest son (he joined the National Guard) and then we moved up here when we were free of all our kids." The couple has seven boys and two girls, and so far, eight grandchildren.

'We just love it up here," he said. Another son, Tim, also loves the North Country and is setting up his own cabinet shop in Tower.



FESTIVAL...from page 3B

Pancake Breakfast, most recently hosted by the Incredible Ely group, is gone this year, as are the Ely Jaycees beer and beverage tent, the kids play area, and live musical entertainment.

New to the festival is The Fish Market. "Artist Dennis McMahan makes colorful and fanciful pottery fish and a variety of other pottery items," Cashman said. "Tonka Bay Fountains creates organic stone fountains generating the soothing sound of water that are perfect in garden settings. These are just two of the new artists participating in the festival."

Of course, returning artists are showing new work, including Root River Photography, Watercolors by Bonnie, and 2019 firstplace winner William Close, according to Cashman.

"Our featured local artist this year is Don Taylor with Barnwood Creations. Don has participated in the Blueberry/Art

forward to seeing what new items he has created from reclaimed barn wood and other unique woods.

Experience Ely Expo highlights area non-profits

Local non-profits have relied on the major tourist event to raise money for operations, but fewer will be participating this year. The new Experience Ely Expo format for the local organizations, originally planned to launch last year, will debut this year in a separate area of the Whiteside Park festival grounds.

While space was available for 20, only ten local Operation groups applied, and just four organizations followed through to particiretail businesses pate in the event, according to officials. Those organizations include the International Wolf Center, ElyRotaryClub,WICOLA (White Iron Chain of Lakes Association), and the Ely Health and Hospital Foundation. Chamber is again holding The Ely Health and this event which started July 16 and runs through Hospital Foundation, in Northwoods Splendor! **Stay with Us** Permilion Park Inn Rooms start at \$110 Includes continental breakfast! **Book Online:** vermilionparkinn.com Close to lakes, trails, state parks, casino 218.753.2333 • 30 Center St., Soudan MN

coordination with Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital, will offer a mini "health fair."

"On Friday, their booth will provide free blood typing with representatives from Memorial Blood Center," Cashman said. "On Saturday, they are offering 100 Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccinations to be given on a first-come, first-served basis. Saturday will also feature a demonstration of the da Vinci surgical robot."

Their booth will be located by the Whiteside Park band shell.

Blueberry features

Last year, the Chamber created Operation Blueberry to support the business community during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Operation Blueberry was so successful that the



Ely Kiwanis Club will again be selling blueberry pies. file photo

the festival weekend," Cashman said.

Participating Ely businesses will be vying for prizes for the best banners or window displays.

Some businesses are offering blueberry products, special discounts, or other activities. The Operation Blueberry map is available online at Ely.org, or pick up a paper copy at the Chamber office at 1600 E Sheridan St.

Participating businesses include: Dorothy Molter Museum, Ely Folk School,

Mealey's Gift & Sauna Shop, Mealey's Tiki Deck, Piragis Northwoods Co., Piragis Outlet Store, Ely's Historic State Theater, International Wolf Center, The Cabin, Art & Soul Gallery.

Festival for several years now," she said. "We look

For

All Your

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Needs

EED and

262-3049

HIBBING

Scenic 🗮 Rivers -Clinics-**COVID-19** Vaccine **Appointments Available**

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



music, featured artists, Sisu Designs Yarn Shop.



TOWER **Gundersen Trust Board to look at switching investments to** a community foundation, dissolving current trust accounts

by JODI SUMMIT Tower-Soudan Editor

other city officials.

strictions on the type of invest-

ments allowed, as well as the

requirement for an annual audit

and incidental attorney fees.

The trust assets currently sit at

approximately \$990,000 and are

estimated to earn \$80 in inter-

est this year, according to trust

working for the past several

years to find a way to increase

the investment income from the

trust. Currently, Wilson, along

with Tower Mayor Orlyn Kring-

stad, has been working to unrav-

el the history of the trust, which

was formed in 1992 with the proceeds from the sale of for-

est and lakeshore lands given to

the city by Martin and Elizabeth

The trust board has been

board treasurer Steve Wilson.

Scant investment returns in recent years prompt re-evaluation TOWER- Confronted with Gundersen, for the express purpose of benefiting the city and the finding that they are earning its residents. less than \$100 annually on near-

Hanson's research into the ly \$1 million in assets, the Gunissue was presented at the July dersen Trust Board here will 14 meeting. His opinions mosthold a special meeting on Thursly reinforced the research done day, July 29 to consider the fuby Wilson, which showed how ture of its investments. Attorney previous errors by the city's Bradley Hanson, who has been auditor, attorneys, trust board, retained to find the best option for the trust's future, will attend and other city officials led to the trust losing its tax-exempt this meeting in Tower to review options and answer questions status. Subesequently, the trust was restricted to investing in raised by board members and what are now, and most likely will continue to be, very low-in-The trust is earning less in terest CDs and money market investment income than its annual expenses. This is due to reaccounts.

> The letter from Hanson gave the board options for future management of the near million dollars in the trust account.

Though Hanson laid out three possible options, he strongly encouraged the board to look at terminating the trust in its present form and transferring the funds to a separate privately-managed 501c3 community foundation, which would then take over managing the investments "in a more efficient and effective manner." Such a change would require approval by the court, state attorney general, and the IRS. If this change is approved, the city would no longer be required to do an annual audit or filings with the IRS on the trust monies.

Keeping the trust in its current form could create risks for the city, Hanson noted, because of its history as a 501c3 that never was converted to tax-exempt status as initially planned, and therefore was technically a taxable non-profit entity.

Kringstad noted that the city did not have any actual tax liability at this point in time because the trust had not made any capital gains in the time frame of the statute of limitations.

A non-profit community foundation would manage the funds in accordance with the wishes of the trust board but would have much wider latitude for safe investment options. The trust board would retain oversight of how the income from the trust would be distributed. Currently the trust is set up to distribute 75 percent of its income above its principal amount, adjusted to annual inflation, to the city's general fund, and the remaining 25 percent is set aside for recreation in the Gundersen Forest area, as well as community education needs.

Wilson said the board has been in contact with three community foundations in Minnesota and will solicit proposals from them on how they would manage the Gundersen dollars

and the costs and fees associated with such management.

The board would need to petition the court to allow the change, setting income distribution parameters reflecting the foundation the city has selected to manage the money.

The foundations they have looked at so far, Wilson noted, have been earning four to five-percent income a year, and while they would charge management fees, this would still create significantly more investment income annually for the city

There would be three options for the city to consider as far as setting up a management agreement with such a foundation in respect to how the investments are handled, Hanson wrote. The first would be to keep the trust as initially set up to be a permanent endowment, with the principal (plus annual additions to account for inflation) to be kept intact. The second would be to have the court remove that restriction and set what is deemed a "prudent person standard", which would allow a distribution of four or five percent a year, which could include some of the principal. The third option would be to have the community foundation adopt a spending policy for the fund.

Since the Tower City Council initially set up the trust, Hanson said the court will want the trust board to obtain the council's consent if they wish to change the permanent endowment status.

"By transferring the trust assets to an organization like a community foundation," Hanson wrote, "the city will more readily achieve better results without the associated costs and risks."

Trust board members, at their last meeting, said they are hoping to get this process underway as quickly as possible. But they noted they still would need to get council approval, would need to select a community foundation to work with, and then would need to get permission from the IRS, and the state attorney general and local courts to make the change.

Kringstad estimated the attorney fees associated with getting the trust dissolved and moved to a community foundation to be between \$12,000 and \$15,000.

"It is worth it to get this trust settled once and for all." Kringstad said. "It's a tangetown right now....Our attorney will let us make a good decision based on good data."

Obituaries and Death Notices



Sally I. Christopherson

Sally Ilene Christopherson, 81, of Lake Vermilion-Tower, died on Sunday, July 18, 2021, at Edgewood Vista Senior Living Center in Virginia. A memorial service will

be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, July 23 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower. Pastor Erika Foss will officiate. A gathering time for family and friends will begin one hour prior to the service at the church. Memorials are preferred and may be directed to Immanuel Lutheran Church, PO Box 466, Tower, MN 55790. Family services are provided by Bauman-Vermilion, a Bauman Family Funeral Home in Tower.

Sally was born on Sept. 27, 1939, in Virginia, the daughter of Roy and Ruth (Salminen) Rankila. She was a graduate of Virginia Roosevelt High School in the class of 1956 and earned her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Sally married Ralph F. Christopherson on Dec. 22, 1962, at Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church in Virginia. She was a longtime resident of Virginia, moving to Lake Vermilion-Tower in 1988.

Sally was employed as a teacher for the Virginia School District, was an entrepreneur, was the office manager for Ferrellgas, and returned to teaching as a substitute teacher in the St. Louis County School District. She was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tower and PEO Chapter DX. Sally enjoyed ceramics, painting, the Minnesota Vikings, and anything outdoors. Her greatest joy came from spending time with her family.

Sally is survived by her husband of 58 years, Ralph Christopherson; children, Amy (Todd Vlasaty) Christopherson of Coon Rapids and Chad Christopherson of Maple Grove; grandchildren, Nick Christopherson, Jack Vlasaty and Cassidy Christopherson; brother, Gary Rankila of Minneapolis; nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and her in-laws, Ralph and Bernice Christopherson.

Erma V. Mattila

Erma V. Schmidt Mattila, 86, of Babbitt, died on Monday, July 5, 2021. A private memorial service will be held. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

She is survived by her husband, John Donald Mattila; children, Tom (Jess) Mattila and Jody Mattila; grandchildren, Willow and Jay; sister, Norma (Orville) Koland; and numerous friends and acquaintances.

Wayne R. Metsa

Wayne Roger Metsa, 79, of Cook, died on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021.

A graveside memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, July 23 at the Alango Cemetery. Arrangements are with Range Funeral Home in Virginia.

Donald O. Niska

Donald O. Niska, 85, of Ely, a proud veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, passed away at his residence on Thursday, July 15, 2021. Family arrangements have been entrusted to Kerntz Funeral Home of Ely.





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Make sure your next home project is done right the first time. Protect your investment by ensuring your contractor is licensed.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

HIRE LICENSED CONTRACTORS

Public hearing set for proposed RV

TOWER- The Tower Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing to take comment on a proposed RV park located on Pike Bay, just west of the Standing Bear Marina, on Tuesday, Aug. 3 at 5:30 p.m. at the city's civic center. An earlier hearing on the issue was scheduled for Tuesday, July

20, but the date had to be changed to meet legal notice requirements.

Developer Justin Renner is seeking a conditional use permit for a proposed 49-unit RV park on a 56-acre parcel. As part of that process, a public hearing is required. Per state law and city ordinance, the project will still require completion of

an environmental impact statement before it can move forward.

Anyone with concerns or questions about the project is invited to attend the hearing. More

information about the project is available on the city of Tower's website at cityoftower.com.

A Good Read....

"If you want to read a book that instills the feel of a warm handshake, read She Won't Mow the Daisies by local author, Leo Wilenius. This collection of short stories covers a life in the northland, its people, world events and secrets on how to get along in a manner that is both mirthful and wise. I thoroughly enjoyed lessons on our environment and critters in the northland and the author's playful approach had me laughing out loud....more than once!"

-Judith Ulseth, Northwoods Friends of the Arts

She Won't Mow the Daisies is available at the Piragis Book Store in Ely, Ubetcha Antiques and Nordic Home North in Tower. It can be found also at the Country Store, Furniture Plus, Comet

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Theater, MooseBirds and Northwoods Friends of the Arts in Cook, Irma's Finland House and the Newsette in Virginia, the Cherry Greenhouse in Chisholm, Ryan's Rustic Railings and Norm's One Stop in Orr, and the Side Lake Store in Side Lake.



7148 Cty Rd 715, Embarrass, MN 55732 218-741-1536 or 218-750-0475 (cell) www.finnishethniccreations.com debwiitanen.etsy.com



Ely-Winton Historical Society

Last Summer History Night

History Nights are held in Vermilion Community College Classroom 104. Programs are on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and FREE, donations gratefully accepted.

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

www.timberjay.com

PUBLIC NOTICES

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

Assumed Name: J & R Water Utility Service PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 12650 Ableman Road, Gheen, MN 55771

NAMEHOLDER(S): J & R Wastewater Inc., 12650 Ableman Road, Gheen, MN

I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signa-ture would be required who

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

Dated: May 7, 2021 SIGNED BY: Johnnie C. Huismann, President MAILING ADDRESS: 12650 Ableman Road, Gheen, MN

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<u>Radiology</u>

<u>Hospital/ER</u>

Care Center

PT ADS Assistant

FT Radiologic Technologist

\$34.06/hr - Sign-On Bonus)

Adult Day Services

Central Services Assistant

Central Services

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	© 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.													

King Crossword





OPEN POSITIONS

Registered Nurse (Wage starting at

Nursing Assistant (Wage starting

at \$16.36/hr - \$1,500 Sign-On Bonus) PT RN or LPN (\$4,000 Sign-On Bonus)

Equal Opportunity Employer/ Affirmative Action Employer



Dietary PT Dietary Aide/Cook **Activities**

Casual Activities Assistant Environmental Services

PT Housekeeper Casual Laundry Aide Casual Housekeeping & Laundry

TO APPLY:

More Info? Contact Human Resources



The Cook Hospital & Care Center offers competitive pay and benefits including PERA retirement, Health and Danial coverage. Life and LTL

EMPLOYMENT

Information Receptionist

The Ely Chamber of Commerce has an opening for a full-time, year-round Information Receptionist. We are seeking a customer service-oriented individual to assist residents and visitors with business and area information. The position requires knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, internet and email programs, and use of office equipment. A full job description and application are available at Ely.org/chamber/workforcedevelopment. Please submit job applications to director@ely.org or stop by the Chamber office at 1600 E. Sheridan Street, Ely.



POSITION OPENING Ely Public Schools Playground Aide

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications for the 2021-2022 school year for a Playground Aide to supervise students and ensure their safety on the playground/indoors as assigned. A background check is required.

- Qualifications include:
- High school graduate
- Ability to work cooperatively with staff
- Ability to work effectively with students Willingness to work outside in adverse
- weather conditions > Ability to supervise large number of students

Application available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us

A complete application must include the following

- District Application
 2 letters of recommendation

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

Starting Rate of Pay: \$14.00/hour

Hours: up to 5.5 hours/day; student contact davs

Start date: August 31, 2021

Deadline to apply: August 4, 2021; open until filled.

Ely Public Schools Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

for a Grades 6-12 Math Teacher beginning the 2021-2022 school year; competitive sal-ary and fringes as per the master agreement. Background check is required.

Qualifications include:

 Previous teaching experience preferred
 Excellent verbal and written communication skills

Application and full job description available at: www.ely.k12.mn.us

Deadline to apply: July 26, 2021; open until filled.

POSITION OPENING Grades 6-12 Math Teacher

NOTICE

CITY OF TOWER

PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the City of Tower

will be hosting a public hearing per Ordinance

82 Article XVI. Section 16.01 on a Conditional

Use Permit request at 10 Marina Drive (PID 080-0020-00100, 080-0020-00110) located in the Tower Harbor Renaissance North. Requested Conditional Use is for a Seasonal,

Recreational Vehicle Park with 49 sites, 20

Public Hearing Tuesday August 3 at 5:30 pm

Tower Civic Center

402 Pine Street, Tower, MN 55790

For copies of the submitted Conditional Use

Permit or other questions, contact Zoning Administrator Cliff Koski at zoning@cityoftow-

er.com. Written comments on this Conditional

Use Permit will be accepted through August 3

City of Tower

Attn: Zoning Administrator 602 Main Street PO Box 576

Tower, MN 55790

Or emailed to zoning@cityoftower.com

Published in the Timberjay, July 23, 2021

EMPLOYMENT

FULL-TIME BARTENDER

The City of Orr is accepting applications for a

full-time bartender for the Orr Municipal Liquor Store. This is a salaried position that includes

vacation package, health insurance, life insur-

ance, retirement and sick leave. Looking for individuals who can interact with customers in a professional, friendly manner. Must pass background check. The City of Orr is a

drug-free work place and Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications may be picked up at the Orr City Hall, 4429 Highway 53, Orr. Call City Hall at 218-757-3288 with any questions.

and may be mailed to:

boat slips, and on 58 acres property.

Ely Public Schools is accepting applications

Start date: August 31, 2021

Published in the Timberjay, July 16 & 23, 2021

teger Mukluks

& MOCCASINS

Steger Mukluks is Hiring!

Factory Work: FT Year-round Sales Work: FT, PT & Seasonal

Competitive Wages & Benefits

Apply at 100 Miners Dr. in Ely

Super Crossword

Answers

or call 218-365-6553 tfn

55771 Published in the Timberjay, July 16 & 23, 2021

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Current Minnesota teaching license





741-1481

FOR **RENT**

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Up to 1,150 square feet of prime office space on the main level of the Frandsen Bank & Trust building in Tower. Formerly law offices. Private entrance off Spruce Street.

CONTACT: **GREG BUCKLEY** 218.753.6100 JIM ERTZ 651.253.5568



"Friends Helping Friends"

7/30

263-3276

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Legal notices online at timberjay.com



by Linda Thistle

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: $\blacklozenge \blacklozenge$



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112 Sushi staple

113 Some male

dolls

114 Doc bloc

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69 Tach abbr.

70 "My

Rover!" 33 "Tara Road"

novelist

MARINE

7B July 23, 2021 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.



OPEN MEETING-AA Thursdays at 7 Woodland Presbyterian Church,

Acacia Blvd, and Central Drive in Babbitt.

and parking

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

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

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

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

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

— **King** Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

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around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.

There are 13 black hexagons in the

puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6



Weekly SUDOKU

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CLIMATE

Water levels plunge as drought intensifies

Drought ranges from moderate to severe across northern St. Louis County

by KAREN BARTUNEK Contributing Writer

REGIONAL- Watch for rocks. That's the best advice area marina operators can give right now as water levels have plunged in recent weeks to levels not seen in several years. It's been one of the hottest and driest

summers in the region in more than a decade, and those conditions have been intensified by the flash drought that began impacting the area over the past month.

Since late June, most local weather stations have reported less than half an inch of rain, during a period when normal rainfall amounts to

nearly an inch a week. Hotter than normal weather has only increased the evaporation of water from lakes and streams, while transpiration from struggling plants has left soils exceedingly dry.

"Every lake has a unique water budget, and that takes a lot of individual study and analysis," said Sandy Fecht, A ahost forest on the Pike **River Flowage emerges** from the depths as a result of low water levels photo by M. Helmberger

the lake level Minnesota monitoring program coordinator and surface water

See WATER....pg. 9B



Wildflower Watch

This week's featured flower PURPLE-FRINGED ORCHIDS



Purple-fringed Orchids, Platanthera psycodes are among our showiest mid-summer wildflowers. Look for their spikes of magenta, lace-like flowers amidst sedges or near bogs, ditches, or other wet areas right now.

The species name, psycodes, should have been spelled psychodes, with an "h," which means butterfly-like. That's an excellent description of these flowers, which do appear like tiny, lace-winged lepidopterans.

It does appear that the ongoing drought has impacted the abundance of this flower this year, since they prefer to keep their feet wet. There were a few in bloom this week along the grassy access path to the Ancient Cedars trail in Tower, so that might be a good place to



IMPACT OF WILDFIRE Much of BWCAW closed

Multiple Quetico fires potentially threaten area from Basswood to Crane; progress made on Delta Lake fire

by MARSHALL HELMBERGER Managing Editor

REGIONAL- The U.S. Forest Service has closed a significant portion of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness



due to the threat posed by a half dozen wildfires burning in Quetico Provincial Park, just north of the border.

The closed area includes all of the northwestern-most portion of the wilderness area, stretching from just west of Basswood Lake, near Ely, west to Crane Lake. According to Forest Service officials, those fires have become more active in recent days and have the potential to spread to the U.S. side of the border, where they could pose a danger to canoeists in the area as well as potential rescuers. The closure includes all lakes, entry points, portages, and campsites located within the closed area.

The closures went into effect in two stages, with an initial closure that began last Saturday that focused on routes to Crooked Lake. The second much larger closure took effect last Sunday and included a roughly thirty-mile stretch of the border country north and west of Ely. That closure will remain in place at least until July 25, and comes on top of the Delta Lake closures enacted earlier this month. In addition, the Forest Service has enacted burning restrictions across the Superior National Forest, including the BWCAW, as drought conditions intensify in the region. Temperatures across the area have been running well above normal this summer, while rainfall has been far below average in recent months, leaving forests tinder dry. "We've been using the word 'historic' to describe the conditions," said Aaron Kania, district ranger on the Superior's Kawishiwi

District."We'd have to go back to the early 1970s to find something similar," he added.

So far, firefighters have been aided by generally light winds, but there is no guarantee that those conditions will continue,

We've been using the term 'historic' to describe the conditions.

Aaron Kania Kawishiwi District Ranger

which is why Forest Service officials have opted for caution with the closures in the northwestern part of the wilderness. "Travel times to these areas in the BWCAW are measured in days, not hours, and this would not allow for rapid evacuation of the area," stated the Forest Service in a statement issued this week. Forest Service officials note that

it can take considerable time to locate wilderness travelers in the event they might need to evacuate from an active fire. Several Forest Service employees nearly died a decade ago while warning canoeists to evacuate ahead of the 2011 Pagami Creek fire, which torched about 92,000 acres southeast of Ely.

Kania said forest officials opted to give wilderness travelers plenty of notice of the closure so they could evacuate without feeling rushed. Wilderness rangers began alerting canoeists of the closures late last week and expanded their efforts with the latest closure order.

At least seven fires are currently burning within the Quetico Provincial Park, including a new one reported in the wake of a thunderstorm that passed through the area on Monday. Three of those fires are located just north of the border. The largest, centered near Ted Lake, had scorched 4,892 acres as of Tuesday morning, accord-

Top: A squad of firefighters makes its way along a path cleared through the Delta Lake fire, east of Ely.

Above: A map of the closure zone in the BWCAW.

images courtesy USFS

ing to Quetico park officials. The Crooked Lake fire, which began earlier this month on the Canadian side of the border lake, had scorched 4,447 acres, while a third fire, near McIntyre Lake had burned 2,261 acres. Combined, the seven fires currently burning in the park have scorched more than 16,000 acres. Those fires are among nearly 120 currently burning in northwestern Ontario, which have contributed to days of smoky conditions across northern Minnesota.

Given the remote location of the Quetico fires, along with a number of higher priority fires in the province, Canadian officials are conducting aerial

See CLOSURE...pg. 5B

scout for this fine orchid.

Nature Notes

This week's feature **BUNCHBERRY**



It can look like Christmas in July when you come upon a patch of bunchberry, Cornus canadensis, this time of year. This is a showy wildflower in the spring, and its white, four-petaled bloom turns into a tightly-packed ball of bright red berries by mid-to-late summer.

These berries are edible and are actually an excellent source of vitamin C and various flavinoids, although they taste rather bland, which is one reason most folks don't take advantage of these berries when they're out foraging.

The bunchberry is actually a member of the dogwood family, which is comprised almost exclusively of shrubs and small trees. The bunchberry, however, is content to creep along the forest floor, preferring acid soils found under pine.

CLOSURES...Continued from page 8B—

reconnaissance of the fires, but are not actively seeking to control them. Quetico Superintendent Trevor Gibb said Monday's line of thunderstorms brought variable amounts of rain to the park, but nowhere near enough to significantly impact fire danger in the area.

Like their American counterparts, Quetico officials have instituted their own closure across a wide swath of the southwestern portion of the 1.2 million-acre park, from roughly Agnes Lake in the east to Lac La Croix in the west.

Outfitters impacted

While the closures in the Boundary Waters were instituted for safety, they've left Ely area outfitters scrambling to accommodate clients whose permits for trips into the affected areas have been canceled. Ely outfitter Jason

Ely outflitter Jason Zabokrtsky said his staff had been able to manage the more limited closures from the Delta fire and the Crooked Lake fire that had been announced late last week. "With the dramatic closure of such a large area, however, we just don't have good options for redirecting people," he said.

Finding alternatives has been made even harder by the fact that virtually every Boundary Waters permit has already been reserved for many peak periods this summer. While that's not unusual for those seeking the very limited number of motorized permits, Zabokrtsky said this year is the first time that he's seen days when no canoe permits are available. "It's a shocking thing to look at the reservation site and see all zeros," he said.

The shortage of permits points to the sharp increase in interest in visiting the BWCAW since the COVID-19 pandemic. Zabokrtsky said his business was booming, at least until the closure hit. Now, given the lack of permits and the uncertainty created by the fires, he's seeing a significant number of trip cancellations. "We were on track to have our busiest season ever, but based on the cancellations I'm seeing, I don't know that that's going to be the case," he said. The final results will depend on how long the closures last, but Zabokrtsky isn't optimistic given the weather so far this summer. "My thoughts are that we may be dealing with this until the snow flies," he said. Ely outfitter Steve Piragis agrees that the closure could remain in effect for some time, and that it's likely to affect the bottom line. The good news, however, is that Piragis's company was already having an exceptional year so they'll likely weather this new bump in the road.

Ely has been packed with summer visitors in recent weeks and Piragis, who runs a retail store in addition to his outfitting business, said sales have been the best ever this year.

But Piragis is more concerned with the longterm outlook."This may be an indication that climate change is finally catching up with us," he said, noting that the summer has been exceptionally hot and dry all across the western half of North America. While Piragis said he remembers one previous Boundary Waters closure years ago, he said that was in September, which is frequently a period of higher fire danger in northeastern Minnesota. "We've never had fire conditions like this in mid-summer," he said, and he's concerned the fire situation could still get significantly worse.

Zabokrtsky agrees and said that's one reason he's not second-guessing the Forest Service's decision to close such a broad stretch of the Boundary Waters. "These are really significant fires, and conditions are such that they have to take really significant precautions," he said.

Considering options

While the Quetico fires have, so far, remained north of the border, the growth in the fires in recent days has created large fire fronts that could easily explode during the next windy, dry day, as the Pagami Creek fire demonstrated in 2011. That prospect prompted Forest Service officials to reach out early on to Canadian authorities in an effort to coordinate monitoring and contingency planning, assuming the fires continue to grow.

"We have a crew up there assessing the area, if and when it does cross the border," said Joanna Gilkerson, chief information officer for the Superior. For now, at least, U.S. firefighters will be confining their activities to the U.S. side, said Gilkerson.

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Fishing reports

Ely area

Walleye fishing remained steady this last week. Anglers continue to find walleyes fairly shallow in 10 feet of water or less, in most area lakes. Here anglers are either finding walleyes on shallow boulder flats with night crawlers or on shallow weedlines with leeches. There are a handful of lakes where anglers have been catching big walleyes out in sunken islands in 20-25 feet of water, with jigging raps, during

the evening hours.

Smallmouth bass fishing remains excellent on many area lakes, as the shallow water, early morning, topwater bite continues to be excellent for many anglers. Here, whopper ploppers, pop-r's and torpedoes have been hard to beat. As the sun gets up, the topwater bite cools off, so anglers switching to wacky worms or senkos and continue to catch good numbers of bass. Large boulder flats on points and around islands have been areas to check for active bass.

Pike anglers continue to report catching lots of pike, but the majority of them have been on the smaller side. Anglers continue to find active pike in classic summertime locations like weedlines and river mouths. Spoons, spinnerbaits and large minnow baits have been very consistent producers for anglers.

Courtesy of Arrowhead Outdoors, Ely

WATER...Continued from page 4B

hydrologist at the Department of Natural Resources, "but obviously precipitation is a very large factor."

The region is currently in the midst of drought, which ranges from severe in much of northwestern St. Louis County, to moderate elsewhere. That's according to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor map, published July 15.

The falling water levels have inconvenienced boaters, translating into an increase in prop repairs at places like Aronson Boat Works on Lake Vermilion, as even the experienced have struck rocks in unexpected places. "We're even seeing mud trails when people leave," said Gretchen Niemiste, who owns and operates the boat works with her husband John. The water is so low that some buoys placed by St. Louis County have toppled or drifted partially off the reefs or rock piles they're meant to warn against.

It isn't just lake levels that have been affected. Area rivers across the region are at some of the lowest levels in more than a decade. The Vermilion, Littlefork, Basswood, and Rainy rivers are all running well below their annual Q90, which means they're around the fifth percentile or below for water flow. And for most area lakes and rivers, the lowest water levels typically aren't seen until August or early September, at the end of the summer season. In other words, it could get worse before it gets better.

Locals on Lake Vermilion and its surrounding towns have taken notice.

"We have a beach where we had none before," said Judy Sonnenberg, pointing to the area near her boat dock.

Though drought is natural to Minnesota's weather patterns, extreme weather fluctuations are raising questions as to whether this is indicative of something bigger. "I do believe in global warming and I think that we're in a crisis," said John Aronson, who has lived in the Lake Vermilion area his entire life. "I think the whole planet is in a crisis right now, and things are changing," Aronson said. He notes that the water level on Vermilion is down about 24 inches since the spring. "At the rate it's evaporating, we're really gonna be in trouble," he predicted.

Climate change models actually

point to a wetter Minnesota in the future. But DNR climatologist Luigi Romolo notes that the climate may simply become more variable, with really wet years interspersed with really dry years in the future. As to whether the current dry season, lasting from the previous summer to this summer, is pointing to climate change, it is still uncertain, said Romolo. "For me, to pin one specific drought on climate change would be difficult," he said.

By themselves, fluctuations in water levels are natural and can actually benefit the aquatic ecosystem, notes Lee Frelich, director of the Center for Forest Ecology at the University of Minnesota. "That's because there are some plant species that do really well with high water levels and others that do well with low water levels so if you have this fluctuation, it kind of maintains all the species."

"I'm actually happy to see that we're getting some fluctuation in water levels even though I know it's not convenient for everyone. I just hope it's not a sign that climate change is speeding up faster than we thought it would." Frelich said.





CLEAN

🕑 Boats, trailers, and gear

 Remove all weeds, mud, and hitchhiking contaminants
 from axles, wheels, undercarriage, motor, prop, nets, and gear before leaving boat landing

DRAIN

Water from boat, bilge, motor, and live well

> Remove drain plug and open all water draining devices

2 Trash unused bait

Everything at least five days before going to other waters

(Or) Decontaminate with high pressure water (120"F or warmer)

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