

MLEC CEO says new headquarters "desperately needed"



#### READER RIBBETS Page 3

OBITUARIES Pages 4 & 5

CLASSIFIEDS Page 6

CWC COMMISSIONER CANDIDATES' DEBATE Page 7



Call Eric at 218-821-1393



The current building housing Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative on Highway 169/210 east of Aitkin.

Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative (MLEC) in Aitkin is exploring plans for a new building for their headquarters.

In the May 2020 MLEC Outlet newsletter, MLEC CEO Sarah Cron briefly mentioned discussions of a "desperately needed" new



MLEC CEO Sarah Cron

headquarters building with the MLEC board.

Since Cron started at MLEC in January of 2019, employees have expressed the need for a new building. Although the current MLEC headquarters building has undergone several renovations, MLEC's staff, fleet, and technology have outgrown the 1960's facility.

In addition, according to a MLEC press release, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) has advised MLEC that they will be closing the two driveways accessing Highway169/210, forcing the cooperative to reconfigure the existing driveway/parking area. Wetland constraints will not allow an expansion to the east of the current property. MLEC leadership views relocating as the best option.

The press release stated that MLEC staff have determined that the cooperative needs a location that allows MLEC to serve the membership effectively while minimizing the cost to each member. In reviewing a new location, MLEC would want a close proximity to the majority of the member density, ready highway access, an easy tie into the existing infrastructure (poles and wires), and close to diesel fueling. Considering outages, maintenance, and construction patterns, the ideal location would be on

Highway 169 close to Highway 18. With 550,000 acres (51%) of Aitkin County being jurisdictional wetlands, there are not a lot of parcels that meet the requirements.

Recently, a piece of property became available, and MLEC made an offer on the property contingent on obtaining a conditional use permit by the County, and getting MNDOT to authorize a driveway move – two very challenging asks. As of now, here are the things that are factual about this prospect:

• MLEC has not finalized the purchase of the land.

• The land is not zoned commercial and must go through a conditional use permitting process prior to the purchase of and acquisition of land.

• A rough sketch of a potential option of what a development of land could look like was submitted to the county, per the conditional use permitting process. MLEC has not met with an architect or drawn up plans. All of those things will depend on what type of property MLEC is able to secure.

• The cooperative has not discussed this openly

because no land has been purchased and MLEC leadership felt the current property owners deserved their privacy.

•MLEC is currently borrowing just above 1% interest and will likely never see money that low again. The difference between starting to plan and act now and waiting until interest rates go back up to 4 - 5% could add \$5 to \$10 million to the cost of a construction loan. In MLEC's upcoming strategic financial planning session, the Board of Directors and management team will discuss land, building, and financing options to see what the long-term financial implications to the cooperative and our members could be.

• If MLEC does not obtain a conditional use permit, the land will not be purchased, and MLEC will continue to look for another piece of property.

The MLEC press release stated that MLEC does take the principle of Democratic Member Control very seriously and when there is concrete information about future plans, MLEC will update the public.







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#### www.NewsHopper.net

## **Positive COVID-19 cases**

students reverted back to distance learning on Sept. 24, after Brainerd Public Schools announced "students in grades 9-12 encountered a proven and growing cluster of positive COVID-19 cases."

Brainerd Public Schools Communications Manager Karla Sand issued a press release on Sept. 22, informing the public that "high school classes in grades 9-12 at Brainerd High School, Lincoln Education Center, and Brainerd Learning Center will be canceled for Wednesday, September 23. This will allow teachers to prepare for fulltime distance learning.

"On Thursday, September 24 high school classes at BHS, LEC, and BLC will be 'reset' into a distance learning model for two weeks. Teachers and students will follow the hybrid learning bell schedule. During the two

Brainerd High School week reset there will be no high school athletic practices or competitions. Students will return in the hybrid model with B-group students on Thursday, Oct. 8."

#### **COVID CASPER Study**

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) targeted Crow Wing County collecting data for the COVID Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response, or CASPER study in four areas in the county: two in Brainerd, one in Crosslake, and one in Nisswa on Thursday, Sept. 24 through Saturday, Sept. 26.

The team conducted interviews and took blood and nasal swap samples. Participation was voluntary. Team members are public health workers with face masks, vest and nametags. For more information: https://www. health.state.mn.us/diseases/ coronavirus/casper.html





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3

## **READER-RIBBE** Aitkin Public Schools levy Nov. 3

Aitkin Public Schools' budget has been decreasing for the past five years. Approximately \$575,000 in cuts were made in the last three years alone, which has caused major impacts on our school district and the quality of education we deliver. We've lost multiple staff, our programs and services have suffered, and our current budget will not allow us to stay on track with our technology plan and bus fleet rotation.

Additional cuts will be necessary, if we do not receive funding, which is why the school district is proposing a Capital Project Levy on November 3, 2020.

The Capital Project Levy consists of two important needs: technology and transportation. The school district is requesting funding support in the amount of \$500,000 per year for 10 years. \$450,000 per year will be used to cover costs related to the purchase, replacement, support, and maintenance of technology, technology systems, and software. \$50,000 per year will be allocated to the purchase and replacement of school buses and school-related transportation vehicles.

Maintaining and updating our technology across the district is vital to student achievement. We're beginning our fifth year of a one-to-one device program, which provides all students in grades 7-12 with their own device. This year, students in grades k-6 will each have their own device. This program has been especially important during distance learning. Money from the levy will be spent on maintaining our four-year rotation of student and staff devices; updating our infrastructure, including servers, new cabling, and Wi-Fi upgrades; transitioning away from computer labs; replacing smart boards; and maintaining equipment necessary for our career and technical education programs.

Families in our district save considerable amounts of money each year by utilizing post-secondary opportunities, which require current technology. Last year alone our students earned \$184,000 worth of college credits through Central Lakes College. If the levy fails, cuts will need to be made, which will affect our services and programs.

We currently have 25 buses,

## Upside, Downside

Having observed and written about the massive violation of the public trust, the police administration corruption, the violation of data privacy laws, the pending lawsuit, and the political failures of former Crosby mayors and council, a critical eye is still being applied.

Situation: the council seat vacated by the council member who took the mayor position

## Covid-19 explanation

I came across this 20 minute vou tube video of a Catholic sermon dated 9/6/20. Fr Altier from the Twin Cities explains

was appointed. Upside: the appointed person is not on the ballot, has no

merit as a candidate or council person. They fill the void as required by statute and little taxpayers money is wasted on this appointment.

Downside: the person is close friends with the former police chief and city administrator so bias and prejudice will be an issue. The person may have contributed to the lawsuit by falsely reporting arbitration findings. Attributing findings from a non-confidential report to a confidential report. Possibly misleading the public, damaging Crosby, attempting to discredit the report, but definitely to protect those friends, and that might be ongoing.

It is difficult to believe the

six of which are nearing the end of their serviceable life. Money from the levy will be used to purchase a new bus every other year. If the levy fails, the district will be forced to run our buses longer than recommended and we will face increased maintenance costs.

We want our students to receive the best possible education at Aitkin Public Schools. Updating and maintaining our technology is crucial for that to happen and reliable transportation is a necessity.

If the levy passes, a median-value home (\$111,600) in the City of Aitkin would see a tax increase of approximately \$2 per month. A median-value home (\$180,000) in Aitkin County would see a tax increase of approximately \$3 per month. Mail in balloting begins September 18, 2020. Please vote on or before November 3, 2020 and stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks regarding our Capital Project Levy.

We care about our students. We care about our community. We are ISO#1.

> Superintendent Daniel J. Stifter **Aitkin Public Schools**

mayor, suddenly volunteers to be mayor, and then appoints a person who contributed to the demise of Crosby to the seat they vacated. There might be something sinister to this orchestrated appointment.

With resignations after resignations, the swamp in Crosby has drained itself but it appears the appointed mayor can't let it go and move Crosby forward.

The election will be the residents voice who represents them, writing in anyone pretending they can make a difference, is a wasted vote.

Crosby is like a train wreck, you don't want to see it, but you can't look away. Kelly Avelsgard, Deerwood

**DIRTY WINDOWS?** 

## **Trailside Tavern & Patio to open**



Trailside Tavern & Patio will have soft opening on Sept. 28, with the grand opening in conjunction with a fund raiser for the Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 8.

The Crosby Bar is well known in downtown Crosby. With its sale to Vern Lewis, Mike Potter and Pete Brooks, the business will be renamed Trailside Tavern & Patio. Customers will see an expanded dining area and a continued bar life and fun atmosphere. Lewis said in an interview that said Potter and Brooks have extensive restaurant, bar and cooking experience. Lewis owns Red Rider Resort and Jacobs Realty.

"We are expanding the patio area for more outside seating and a new bike corral area. Inside, we spruced up and painted, got new bar stools and tables and converted the off-sale space to more dining area. This way, families can dine with a little distance from the bar area.

"We will have the bar area and patio and dining room. We are excited to host private parties in our space as well, for business meetings or whatever events you are hosting," explained Lewis.

The reasons to make the Trailside your destination are craft beers, homemade soups, homemade specials every night and the "best wings in town". A meat raffle will be held every Saturday, (time to be determined). There will be a dart league and live music occasionally on the weekends.

The soft opening is planned for Sept. 28 with the grand opening in conjunction with a fundraiser for the Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 8.

"We'll have a tent set up outside, a fire pit, music, and an open bar. Your ticket for the fundraiser buys you food and a drink. Be sure to buy your ticket in advance. The chamber will also hold a silent auction during the fundraiser." He emphasized that they are not charging for their grand opening - rather helping the chamber, that has

been cut deeply by Covid-19 cancellation of events, to raise some needed operational funds.

More on Page 5

## **Collection correction**

Clear Lake Grange #692 is collecting new or gently used coats, mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and Halloween costumes for kids until October 12. Boxes are located at Aitkin Village Laudromat and Paulbeck's County Market.

There is a correction, dis-

tribution will take place on Saturday, October 17 at Aitkin United Methodist Church, 104 2nd St. NW, Aitkin from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm.

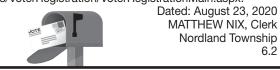
Contact Clear Lake Grange members, Roxy Wigton, 218-927-4885 or Bonnie Mickelson 218-927-3485.



(Published in NewsHopper Sat., Sept. 12 & 26, 2020)

#### **NOTICE TO ELIGIBLE VOTERS OF NORDLAND TOWNSHIP**

On July 27th, 2020 the Nordland Township Board adopted Resolution 20.03 A Resoultion Authorizating Mail In Balloting. This resolution was passed by the board to help prevent the possible spread of COVID-19 at the polling place during the upcoming general election on November 3rd. The Aitkin County Auditor's office will publish mail balloting procedures in the upcoming weeks. If you are an eligible voter in Nordland Township, but are not registered please do so now to ensure that you will receive your ballot in the mail. You may check your voter registration status online at https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/VoterStatus.aspx. You may register to vote online at https://mnvotes.sos.state. mn.us/VoterRegistration/VoterRegistrationMain.aspx.





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appointed mayor selected this person with the best interests of Crosby in mind. There is no way of knowing why a person, who didn't want to be



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# **OBITUARIES**

Raymond Nelson, 53, of school in McGregor and worked for Nistler Trucking. He worked on small engines and mowed lawns Tamarack died Sunday, March 29, 2020 as a result of a car for extra money. Ray enjoyed bowling and building model cars.

accident. Memorial service will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at McGregor Funeral Home in McGregor with Pastor Joel Seibel officiat-

Services will be Saturday,

September 26, 2020 at 11

a.m. in Our Saviors Lutheran

Church, McGregor. Visitation

ing. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Tamarack.

He was born July 2, 1966 to Ronald Burton Nelson, Sr. and Diane Marie (Karp). He attended

Aitkin.

will be one hour prior to the service at the church.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to The

She was born May 12, 1935 in Virginia to George

and Julia (King) Lund. Annabelle married Clyde

Dolan Rich on November 1, 1954 in Isle. Anna-

belle, who was known as "Punk" by her family and

friends, worked in the family business at Lakeside

Manufacturing. She was a member of Our Saviors

Lutheran Church in McGregor, where she was

involved in the Lutheran Women's Missionary

Alzheimer's Association in her name.

**ANNABELLE RICH** 

RAYMOND NELSON

Annabelle Lou (Lund) Rich, League, the quilting group and taught Sunday 85, of McGregor, died Sunday, School. She enjoyed Saturday night dancing at September 20, 2020 in Golden the Larson Barn, spending time in her garden, Horizons Assisted Living of embroidering and especially time spent with her family and friends.

> Annabelle is preceded in death by her parents; sister, Ida Mae Lund; brother, Jim Lund.

Ray is survived by his sister, Anita Nelson;

half-brother, Erik Arndt; half-sister, Melanie Char-

hart; nephews: John Noble III and Justin Nelson;

niece, Jen Noble; great-niece, Ashlynn Noble; and

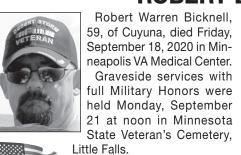
Annabelle is survived by her loving husband, Clvde Rich; children: Susan (Guy) Wilkes of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma and Cynthia (David) Serrine of Maple Grove; grandchildren, Dana (Nick) Schutz, Randy (Bill) Murphy, Nicholas Gearhart and Kelsey Gearhart; great grandchildren, Graham Schutz and Alaina and Kellen Murphy; sister, Phyllis (Charles) Haggberg of Isle; brother, John (Peggy) Lund of Eden Prairie; other relatives and friends.

Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. You may leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.

• Sorensen-Root-Thompson **McGregor Funeral Home** & Cremation Services **Funeral Home & Cremation Services** Aitkin, MN McGregor, MN 218-927-2614 Traditional Funerals • Cremation Services

Celebration of Life • Pre-Planning Services

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He was born March 25, 1961 in Aitkin to Henry and Emily (Barron) Bicknell. Robert graduated from Aitkin High School and joined the United States Navy in 1979. Robert was em-

> **ROSE REICH** Rose Marie Reich, 83, of Cohasset, formerly of Aitkin, died Tuesday, September 15, 2020 in Autumn Lane Assisted Living in Cohasset.

Services will be Monday, September 28, 2020 at 11 a.m. in Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home, Aitkin. Visita-

tion will be one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Interment will be in Macville Cemetery, Macville Township, Aitkin County.

She was born June 7, 1937 in Grand Rapids. She was the daughter of Oscar Halvorsen and Pauline (Frovold) Halvorsen of Swatara. Rose was the youngest of 14 children, of whom four passed on during birth or infancy. She was baptized and confirmed into the Lutheran faith, and attended elementary school in Swatara and high school in Hill City. On September 4, 1954, Rose married Warren Leroy Reich of Palisade at Trinity Lutheran Church in Hill City. They resided in Aurora and Palisade, settling on the farm in Palisade. To this union four children were born: Kevin, Kelvin, Kim, and Kelly. The family were members of Bethany Lutheran Church in Palisade, where Rose was a charter member of the Bethel Lutheran Church Women in 1965. The family moved to Aitkin in 1966, where Rose began her career working in the retail business. She worked for many years at the Ben Franklin store, eventually serving as assistant

## **ROBERT BICKNELL**

ployed at Grand Casino Mille Lacs and worked the loading dock. Robert was a member of the American Legion Post. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, riding motorcycles, video games and especially his pets.

He is survived by his brother, James Bicknell of St. Paul; sisters: Barbara Hilliard of North St. Pau;, Donna O'Brien of Dayton, NV and Juanita Bicknell of Richfield; other relatives and friends. Robert is preceded in death by his parents and brother, John Bicknell.

Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. You may leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.

manager. Rose finished her retail career working in the pharmacy department of Holder Drug and Snyder Drug in Aitkin, working to the age of 75. The family became members of the First Lutheran Church in Aitkin in 1966, where Rose still held membership. Rose was regularly active in church, all of her able years, most recently serving with the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She also served with the Aitkin Lioness Club. In 2016, Rose relocated to assisted living facilities in Grand Rapids. In 2018 she moved to Autumn Lane assisted living at Cohasset where she resided until her passing. Rose was known for her home baked goods which were always available for family and friends. Many will miss her Christmas cookies, date bars and homemade treats.

Rose is survived by her daughter, Kim Reich of Grand Rapids; sons: Kevin (Sheila) Reich of Red Lake Falls; Kelvin Reich of Arcadia, FL; Kelly (Rita) Reich of Owatonna; 12 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; many loving nieces, nephews and friends.

Rose was preceded in death by her parents; sisters: Prudence, Mabel, Evelyn, Ella Mae, Luccille, Wanda, Helen; brothers: Phillip and Leroy; special uncle and aunt, Lloyd and Leona Frovold. Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. You may leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.



218-768-3136 www.srtfuneral.com

# R

\* Indicates handicap accessible. NOTE: All times are Sunday morning (a.m.) unless indicated otherwise.

#### ALLIANCE

Aitkin\* - New Life; Larry Burg & John Baker, pastors; Worship in the church building beginning on July 5th 10:15 am & 6:30 pm;youth group for 7th-12th graders Wed 6:15 pm; 112 - 1st Ave. SW 218-927-2823.

Baxter\* - Pointway Alliance Church; Rev. Charles Bolstridge, 218-537-6505; 7756 Highland Scenic Road; Worship 10; www.pointway.org

Garrison\* — Pastor Michael H. Palkie; Worship 9; SS 10:30. Onamia - Vineland Native American Chapel, Hwy. 169 north of casino; Worship 11; Pastor Boeringa 320-532-4449

#### ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Aitkin - Heritage Church, Rev. Hayden Loven ; Sunday Morning Service 10:45

Crosby - Pastor Dustin McCaleb; Worship 10:30 Crosslake - Crossroads Christian, Rev. Gary Espeseth; SS at 9:30, Worship at 10:45

#### **CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Baxter, Lakes Area — Nondenominational; 7001 Highland Scenic Road; Bible Study every Wed. 7 pm; Worship 10:30-11:30. 218-828-1362

Tamarack — Pastor Terry Banker, 608-475-1528, Worship 9:30; SS 10:45; Wed Youth 4 pm.

#### CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF

#### LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Aitkin - Co. Rd. 12, Chapel Ph. 218-927-4454; Kevin Haffner 218-792-5684; Sacrament Mtg. 10

COMMUNITY Aitkin - Nondenominational; 927-2749; at 219-1st Ave. NE., Aitkin, Services Sun.10, 218-927-6959

Brainerd - Community of Hope Church of the Nazarene-

Pastor Dave McGaffey Sunday worship at 10:45, SS 9:30 -16549 Johnson Rd -church phone 218-829-9005 Glen —

Pastor R. F. Stauter, 218-838-1981; Worship 9

is live streamed on YouTube (First Lutheran Church Aitkin); broadcast on KKIN (94.3FM); community meal every Mon. & Thu. 5 pm; food shelf 2nd & 4th Thu. 9:30 am-5 pm. Aitkin — St. John's (Missouri Synod), Pastor D. Becker; Worship Sun. 9, SS 10

Baxter - Christ Lutheran Church and Preschool (WELS). Pastor Bill Werth. Sunday Worship 9. Sunday School/ Adult Bible Class 10:15, 13815 Cherrywood Dr. in Baxter. (Corner of Inglewood and Cherrywood). 218-829-4105. www.christbaxter.com.

Baxter - Prince of Peace (LCMS); Communion every Sunday 9, Fellowship 10:15, Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am 218-829-7092 www.popbaxter.org

Beaver Township — Finnish EA, Hwy. 27, Worship 1st & 3rd Sun., 10:30.

Brainerd — Good Shepherd Free Lutheran Church, AFLC, Sunday School 9, Worship 10 coffee fellowship 11, Wednesday evening 7 pm adult Bible study. Located at 5878 Pine Beach Road, Brainerd, 218-824-3052, www. goodshepherdfreelutheran.church

McGregor — Our Savior's (Missouri Synod), Pastor Joshua C. Reinke; Worship 9; SS 10; Bible Study Tue. 9, Wed. 7 pm Outing - Our Saviors ELCA; Pastor Peter Rosenkvist, Worship 9.

Palisade - Bethel (ELCA), Rev. Wm. J. Sass; Worship 9:30. Pequot Lakes\* - Our Savior's Lutheran Church (ELCA) Rev. Stephen Blenkush Worship 9:00 a.m., SS 9:15 a.m., Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Wed. Adult Bible Study 11:00 a.m.

Rossburg - Bethesda (ELCA); Comm. 1st & 3rd Sunday each month. Tamarack (AFLC) — Pastor Ron Staudinger; 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and

4th Sundays 10 am; 41163 Kestrel Ave 3.3 mi. South of Hwy 210

Thor — Zion, Worship 11; 1st and 3rd Sun. April through December.

Wright -Bethlehem, Worship; SS 9.

Wright - St. John's (Missouri Synod), Pastor Joshua Reinke; Worship 10:30; Bible Study and Sunday School

many other special relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Ronald Nelson, Jr.; and nephew, Derek Nelson. Arrangements were with the McGregor Funeral Home and Cremation Service in McGregor. Leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.

- Hill City Interim Pastor John Koppel, Staff Pastor Lisa Jordan; Worship 10; hillcityagchurch@gmail.com; 218-697-2662
- Palisade Pastor Ed Sornberger; SS 9; Worship 10; Kids Church; Small groups during the week 218-845-2726

#### BAPTIST

- Aitkin The Journey North, Pastor Lynfield Hines, 218-824-5617, Worship 9: 30 and 11, thejourneynorth.com
- Baxter The Journey North, Pastor Mark Biorlo. 218-824-5617, Worship Saturday 5, Sunday 9, 10:30, 11:45, thejourneynorth.com
- Brainerd\* Faith Baptist Church, Pastor Chris Erickson, 218-829-3191; SS 9:00, Worship 10:30 and 6 p.m., Wed. Classes and Clubs 6:30 p.m.; fbcbrainerd.com
- Brainerd- The Church On The Wise Road, Pastor Todd Stumbo 218-829-4673, Worship 11:00, SS 9:45 www.thechurchonthewiseroad.org
- Breezy Point Eagles Nest, Pastor Zach Broom 218-562-5252, Worship 10:30, SS 9:30.
- Crosby Bible Baptist, Pastor G. Fisher; SS 9:45; Service 10:45 and 6 p.m., Bible Study and Our Kids for Christ Wed. 7 pm
- Deerwood\* Pastor W. Skog; SS 9:30; Worship 10:30 and 6 pm; Wed. Service, 6:30 pm.
- Glory\* Pastor Chris Meirose; 927-3678; SS 9:15; Worship 10:30 am.; Wed 6pm Glory Family night, KidMin grades kindergarten - 6, Mad4Christ grades 7-12.
- Hill City Pastor Lonnie Lee; 218-697-2645; Adult SS 9; Worship 10 am; Bible Study, Fri., 7 pm.
- Isle Pastor Nick Skogen; 676-3171; SS 9:30; Service 10:30; Bible Study, Wed., 7 p.m.
- Opstead 676-8859; SS 9:30; Worship, 10:30; Bible Study Wed., 7 p.m.

#### CATHOLIC

- Aitkin\* St. James, Fr. David Forsman, 218-927-6581; Mass Sat. 5 pm, Sun. 10. Confession Sat. 10-10:45 am and 4-4:45 pm.
- Brainerd St. Andrew's, Fr. Daniel Weiske, Sat.4:30; Sun. 10:00 and St. Mathias Sunday 8:00.
- Brainerd St. Francis , Fr. Anthony Wroblewski, Sat. 5:00; Sunday 7:30, 9:00, 11:15 and All Saints Saturday 4:00 and Sunday 10:30.
- Cromwell/Wright Immaculate Conception, Mass: Sat. 5 p.m.
- Crosby\* St. Joseph's, Fr. Anthony Craig, Mass: Mon. 8, Tues. Noon, Thurs. 6 pm, Fri. 8, Sun 8:30 & 10:30 ( 10:30 outdoors weather permitting)
- Crosslake Immaculate Heart, 218-692-3731; www. ihmstemilys.org; Mass: Sat. 4 pm; Sun. 8:30; Confession Sat. 3 pm
- Emily St. Emily, Mass: Mon. & Wed. 8; Sun. 10:30; Confession 1st Sat. 11 or by appt. 218-763-2101.
- Garrison Our Lady of Fatima, Fr. Anthony Craig, Mass Wed. 9 & Sat. 4 pm, Confession Sat. 3:30 - 3:50 pm
- Grand Rapids St. Joseph's, Fr. Jerry Weiss, Mass: Sat. 5 pm; Sun. 8 & 10:30. 218-326-2483
- Hillman Holy Family; Sun. 10 to Mass Sat. 6:30 pm (only through Labor Day) w/ confession before or by appt.
- McGregor Holy Family, Fr. David Forsman, 218-927-6581; Mass Sun. 8 am. Confession 7:15-7:45 am.
- Vineland St. Therese, Mass Sun. 11; Holy Days 8:30.

May-Oct.

- Grand Rapids Solid Rock Church of God, Pastor Robert Kimberling; 218-326-0711; Sun. BS 9:30, Worship 10:30; Wed. BS 6:30 pm
- Jacobson Jacobson Community Church, Pastor George Collins, 218-252-5938, Sun. SS (All ages) 9:30, Worship 10:30; Family Time 2nd & 4th Sundays; Wed. BS 7 pm Kimberly - Nature Ave. Rev. Rick Perry; Worship 9; Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30; 218-927-6256.
- McGregor Amazing Grace Christian Church; Worship 10; 99 South 1st Street (at the McGregor United Methodist church [shared] in downtown McGregor) Pastor Joel Seibel.
- McGregor Victory Mission, Pastor J. Gould, 218-768-2160; Sun. 10; Wed. Bible Study, 7:30 pm.
- Merrifield Community Church of the Nazarene, Pastor Ron Christenson; Service 11 & 6 pm. Wed. Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.; 218-829-7536.
- Merrifield Ossipee Community, SS 10; Service 11; Wed. Bible Study Prayer, 7:00 p.m.
- Nisswa Christ Community Church, Pastor Richie Bean; Service 10; Fellowship 9:30-10
- Outing\* Narrows Community Church, Pastor Stanley Mikles, 218-792-5530 Worship 9:30; Children's Sunday School 9:30; 6297 Woods Bay NE, just north of Hwy. 6 bridae
- Palisade/Waukenabo Twp. Hilltop Chapel, Pastor B. Hite; Service 10 a.m.; Adult and Children's SS 9 a.m.; between Esquagama & Round Lake. Handicap Accessible.
- Tamarack Church of Christ, 218-768-3898; Service 9:30; SS 10:45.

#### CONGREGATIONAL

Aitkin - First (UCC) Rev. Lilja Behr; Sun.10; Comm. 1st Sun; Council Mtg. 2nd Sun. Spiritual fellowship, Sun. 9.

#### **EPISCOPAL**

Aitkin — St. John's, Holy Communion or Morning Prayer 9 Brainerd\* — St. Paul's, Holy Communion Sunday 10

#### EVANGELICAL FREE

- Baxter Lakewood EFC, Pastor Steve Anderson; Worship at 9 & 10:45; Wed for all ages 6:30 pm
- Crosslake Pastor Mark Holmen; Call for Service Times at 218-692-4141, email thelogchurch@crosslake.net
- Isle Pastor Kerry Johnston; Worship 9; SS 10:15; Wed. Youth Group 6 pm; Adult Prayer 6:30 pm
- Malmo Pastor Glenn Browning; SS 9:30; Fellowship 10; Worship 10:15
- Wright Pastor Ken Mitchell, 218-426-5115; SS 9:30; Worship, 10:30; Thu., Bible Study, 7 pm.

#### HEBREW/MESSIANIC

Glen — Beth Shalom Tabernacle of Truth, Rabi Frank Dell, for information 320-684-2804

#### LUTHERAN

To become a sponsor of the church

directory contact Eric at 218-821-1393 or

hopper@crosbyironton.net

- Aitkin Bethlehem (ELCA), Rev. Rebecca Hinz; Worship 9:30; Holy Comm. 1st & 3rd Sun each month.
- Aitkin First\* (ELCA) Pastor Reggie Denton, Pastor Jordan Gades; worship Sat. 5 pm, Sun. 8 am & 10 am, Wed. 5:30 pm w/supper; contemporary services 2nd & 4th Sun.; nursery staffed during 10 am Sun. service; Sunday service

- Brainerd Laestadian Lutheran Church: 1501 So. 8th St. - Sunday Worship Services 11 am. (www.llchurch.org) Brainerd - Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) 1420 South 6th
- Street Brainerd Pastor Hans Anderson Worship times September through May are 8:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.; Summer Worship time is 9:00 a.m. Phone: 218-829-5147 Website: www.trinitybrainerd.org Email: trinity@trinitybrainerd.org
- Brainerd Truth Lutheran Church (LCMC, Pastor James Walth, Corner of 5th and Kingwood, Worship 9

Cedar Lake, Norwegian Lutheran — Third Sun 11, May - Oct. Cedarbrook - St. John's (ELCA); Worship 8:30; Holy Comm. 1st & 3rd Sun.

- Crosby Immanuel (LCMC, NALC) Rev. Paul Mattson; Sun. 9 & 10:30 worship; SS (Sept.-May) 10:40.
- Crosby -Zion (LC-MS) Pastor Dean Stolz; Worship 8:30; SS 10; Bible Study Wed. 7 pm; handicap accessible. 218-546-6910
- Crosslake ---(ELCA) Pastor Kristin Oltmann, Pastor Kurt Hagestuen, 218-692-3682, In-Car Outdoor Worship, Sundays at 10 am at 14019 Daggett Pine Road, Crosslake View Worship online at crosslakelutheran.com
- Crosslake ---Mission of the Cross (LCMS), Pastor Leslie Uhrinak; Worship 9:30 with every Sunday Communion, Fellowship 10:30, Adult Bible Class 11, 218-692-4228,
- www.missionofthecross.org Deerwood Salem (ELCA), Pastor Michael Briggs; Worship: 9; Sunday School 9:15.
- Garrison Light of the Cross (ELCA), Pastor Juli Sutton-Deem; Worship 9 SS 9; 320-692-4773 or 877-406-9101.
- Garrison Shepherd of the Lake (LCMS), Rev. Tom Petersen. Worship 10 with Communion Every Sunday. Adult Bible Study 8:30am, Sunday School Sept-May, 8:30am. Fellowship 11am. 320-692-4581. www.shepherdofthelake.org.
- Giese Immanuel, Rev. R. Langhorst & Rev. R. Lovaas; Worship 9; SS 10; Holy Communion 1st Sun. of month 8:45.
- Hill City Trinity, (Missouri Synod), Pastor M. Eckert; Worship 9; Bible Study 10:15.
- Hillman Immanuel, (ELCA) Sun. Worship 9:30, SS 10. Located on the corner of Hwy. 27 and Co. Rd. 47. (Handicap accessible)
- Iron Hub Immanuel (LC-MS), Pastor Dean Stolz; Worship 9 am Alternating with Zion of Crosby; 218-534-3069
- Isle Faith (ELCA), Interim Pastor Rev. Henry French; Worship 9:30; handicapped accessible.
- Isle Holden (ELCA), SS 9:30; Worship 10:30.
- Isle Trinity (Missouri Synod), Rev. Mark Maunula; Worship 8:30; Fellowship follows; SS 9:45; Adult Bible 10.
- Jacobson Carmel, Vicar Mark Wagner; SS 1st & 3rd Sun. 10, Service 11, fellowship follows.
- Lake Shore Living Savior Lutheran Church, 8327 Interlachen Rd.; Worship 9:00 Sunday mornings, followed by
- fellowship and Bible study. (Located on Co. Rd. #77 N) Malmo — Bethesda (ELCA) Sun. Worship 9 (winter) 8:30 & 10 (summer); Fellowship after first service; Comm. 1st
- & 3rd Sun. McGrath — Grace; Wed. potluck 5 pm, Bible study 6 p.m.;
- SS 10; Worship 11. McGrath -- Zion (ELCA), Pastor Elliott Malm; Worship 9: SS 9.
- McGregor/Big Sandy Lake Grace Lutheran Log Church (ELCA), Pastor Ericka Foss; Worship 9, Fellowship follows, SS 10.

Jim

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Sun. 9:30; Lent services Wed. 5:30 pm.

#### NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Brainerd-Oak Street Chapel, Pastor Todd Wooden, Worship service is Sunday at 9:30 am, 523 SE 11th Street, Brainerd, 218-454-0984

#### PENTECOSTAL

Emily — Cornerstone Church; Pastor Earl Ready; Worship 10, 41536 Birchwood Drive, Emily; 218-763-2939. Ironton - Iron Range Christian Center; Pastor Dwight Semler; 218-546-6523; meeting at Irondale Town Hall\*, Co. Rd. 12, (Deerwood Shortcut); Worship 10 & Wed. 7 pm. Tamarack — Warriors of the Rainbow Ministry, Pastors Ken and Ron Fairbanks, Sat. 11. 218-768-3585

#### PRESBYTERIAN

- Crosslake Pastor Tony Oltmann, 218-692-4769; Worship 10; Fellowship 11:15; Bible study on Wednesdays at 10;14444 Daggett Pine Road just passed the Community Center; www.crosslakepres.org
- McGrath Calvary, Pastor Todd Oltmann; Worship 9. McGregor/Round Lake - Pastor Talley; Worship Sat. 5 pm. Tamarack — First, Rev. J. Yingling; Worship 11.

#### REFORMED

Crosby - Lifespring Church, a member of Fellowship of Independent Reformed Evangelicals, 9:30, 30 Hallett Ave NE 218-545-5433, www.visitlifespring.com

#### SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

- Aitkin Pastor Roger Hagen; Worship Sat. 9:30 a.m., Bible Study 10:30 a.m.; Prayer Mtg. Wed. 5:30 p.m.; www. aitkinadventist.org; 423-805-0933
- Brainerd Pastor Roger Hagen; Worship Sat. 11:20 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m.; Bible Study & Prayer Mtg. Wed. 6:30 p.m.; 2910 Oak Street, Brainerd, 218-829-1676

#### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Pequot Lakes - 28877 State Hwy 371, Pequot Lakes 10:30 1st and 4th Sundays. 218-330-3476

#### UNITED METHODIST

fellowship follows.

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- Aitkin\* Pastor Dawn Houser; high school & adult SS 9; Worship 10:30; fellowship follows, Wednesdays at 5:30 pm Bible & Brew at Block North Brew Pub.
- Crosby/Deerwood\* Cascade, Reverend Dr. Genia Garrett; Worship 9:45; fellowship follows.
- Cutler Pine Lake Chapel, Rev. Laurence Foote; Worship 9.
- Cromwell Pastor Tim Homstad; Worship 10; SS 9
- Emily\* Pastors Luke and Bethany Nelson; Worship 8:30; fellowship follows.
- Fleming\* (Northern Lights Parish) SS 9:15; Worship 10:30; fellowship follows. Hill City — Pastor Roger Lynn; Worship 10

McGregor\* — (Northern Lights Parish) Worship 8:45;

Onamia - Pastor Rick & Judy Wilder; Worship 11; fellowship

Emily — Pastor Ryan Fish; Worship 9; Friendship Time

10; SS 10:30; Wed. Activities 6:30 p.m.; 218-763-HOPE.

3150; office: 218-546-7656; cell: 218-360-1947

10; 2 blks north of Post Office; handicap ramp; 320-532-

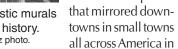
#### www.NewsHopper.net

## Rollin' on the Range — Growth and changes in Cuyuna County Part Two



The Range is Rollin' with artistic murals which preserve tradition and history. Ann Schwartz photo.

By ANN SCHWARTZ Downtown Crosby has gone through a couple of evolutions in the last 30 years or so. In the early 90s, when mining had left and the area was suffering, it tried to hang onto its traditional downtown - with a five and dime store, department store, two grocery stores and more spaces





North County Café is expanding into the former Crosby Crystal Cleaners building. Photo from North County Café's facebook page.

OBITUARIES

#### the Twentieth Century.

As people began to commute to work and shopping continued to expand in Brainard and Baxter, many traditional storefronts closed their doors, to be replaced by a

sprouting up of antique and secondhand stores. Crosby-Ironton became known as a tourist destination for antique and thrift store shopping. With the development of

the Cuyuna Recreation Area

#### bike and flat bike trails, bicycling has thrived. The Cuyuna Range has once again reinvented itself. The "old" downtown is new again -- chock full

small shops,

and mountain street, North County Café is expanding into the building next door formerly Crosby Crystal Cleaners. North County Café remain open for breakfast and lunch during the expansion.

5



North County Café serves home-style food like their Tuesday Lunch Special Swedish Meatballs

#### DOMINADOR SORIANO



Dominador Balisi Soriano. 93. of Deerwood died Friday. September 18, 2020 at his home surrounded by his loved ones.

Funeral services will be 11:00 a.m. Monday, September 28, 2020 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Crosby.

Visitation will be at the Koop Funeral Home in Crosby on Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a Rosary at 4:00 p.m. and on Monday one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will be at the Lakewood Cemetery in Crosby.

He was born on January 27, 1927 in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, Philippines. He was the eldest of nine children. As a young boy his father would reprimand him for not paying attention to his studies. It was then he learned the value of education. When he was a sophomore in high school, WWII hit and their houses burnt, which forced them to move to the next town and as if that was not enough, his father was killed. A few years later, he graduated from high school, but his parents could not afford to send him to school, so he looked for a job and became a street foreman which paid for his education. In 1957, he successfully graduated from the Far Eastern University Medical School and eventually moved to Minneapolis, MN. This is where he started his medical career at St. Barnabas Hospital (Hennepin County Medical Center) as a surgical resident. He then moved to St Luke's Hospital (United Hospital) for general practice;

Cuyuna Range Clinic (Cuyuna Regional Medical Center), Willmar State Hospital (Willmar Regional Treatment Center) and Onamia State Hospital (Mille Lacs Health System). In 1994, he officially retired from the clinic and hospital, but continued to work in Ne-la Shing Clinic. He was a member of numerous organizations including Philippine Minnesotan Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, and after 50 years of providing excellent care, love and dedication to his patients, he could not give up his passion and he continued to attend Medical Conventions until last year, at the age of 92. In his younger years, he enjoyed fishing, hunting, and splitting wood for the winter. In his later years, he enjoyed watching politics, and spending time with his family and friends, and most of all, watching his only grandchild learn and grow. He had a genuine interest for everyone he met and was loved and respected by everyone.

He is survived by his wife, Zenaida (Belarmino); son, Mark Jeremy "MJ"; daughter-in-law, Donna (Valera); one grandchild, Marco Joaquin, all of Richfield; brother, Daniel; sister, Zenaida (Tan); first wife, Belen (Flores); many brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces and other relatives and friends.

Preceding him in death are his parents, Domingo and Remedios Soriano; brothers, Domingo Jr., Damaso, Diosdado, and Delfin; and sisters, Dolores and Domitila.

Arrangements were with the Koop Funeral Home of Crosby.

#### RONALD WEBER Ronald Lyle Weber, 63,

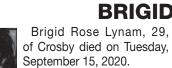
Ron is survived by his mother, Shirley Weber of Crosby; two sons: Charles (Sarah) Weber of Garrison and Steven Christenson of Waco. TX: five grandchildren; four brothers: Richard (Pam) Weber of Northup, Raymond (Sarah) Weber of Mankato, Philip Weber of Mankato and Daniel Weber of Mapleton; three sisters: Sheryl Thompson of Brainerd, Laurie (Bill) Shields of Blue Earth and Julie Weber of Brainerd.

He is preceded in death by his Father, Lyle Weber.



a later date.

She was born July 2, 1933 in St. Paul to James and Marie (Andersen) Kehoe. Noreen married Darold Schneller on October 1, 1955 in Virginia. She worked as a Nurses Assistant at both Hastings State Hospital and Anoka State Hospital. Noreen later worked as a Security Guard at Target in Fridley, as a Hostess and later Manager at Roadside in McGregor, as an Aide at Oak Ridge Homes, as a Teacher's Aide at Rippleside Elementary School in Aitkin as well as a Bus Driver and Kitchen Aide. Noreen enjoyed crossword puzzles, cards, scrabble, dice, knitting, crocheting and watching the Twins. Noreen especially enjoyed Wednesday Night "Chicken Night" with her family which was



September 15, 2020. A private service is being held.

She was born on October 24, 1990 in Fridley to Robert and Patricia (Keeley) Lynam.

Chris M. Holm, 54, of Brainerd, died Monday, September 21, 2020 at Essentia Health -St. Joseph's Medical Center. Celebration of Life will be held 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 10, 2020 at Nelson - Doran Funeral Home in Brainerd.

### NOREEN SCHNELLER

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installations and eateries that cater to the new bicycle

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cooking on Crosby's main

North County Café

Noreen June Schneller, 87. of Palisade, died Saturday, September 12, 2020 at her home.

tourists.

Due to COVID19, a private family Graveside Service will be held in Fleming Cemetery, Fleming Township with a Celebration of Life to be held at a family tradition for 19 years. Noreen will be remembered for her wonderful sense of humor.

Noreen is survived by her children: Anthony Schneller of Palisade, Robin (Bill) Pratt of Palisade, Dawn (Eric) Myhra of Brainerd and Suzanne (DuWayne) Fredrickson of McGregor; nine grandchildren: Shanna Pratt. Chelsie Rose. Sabin and Suzanne Myhra, Nathan and Tyler Fredrickson, Lacey Wilkie, Kelly and Jackson Schneller; 10 great-grandchildren. Ellie. Flynn and Will Rose. Darren and Brinlee Fredrickson, Wayde Fredrickson, Valerie, Barrett, Forrest and Konnrad Wilkie; sisters. Virginia "Ginny" Schneller of Aitkin and Lynn Diederich of Crosby; several nieces and nephews. Noreen also leaves behind her dear friends from the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses of McGregor.

Noreen is preceded in death by her husband, Darold and her parents and her step-father, Louis Raitor.

Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. You may leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.

#### **BRIGID LYNAM**

Brigid is survived by her parents of Crosby and three children.

Preceding Brigid in death are paternal grandparents, Glenn and Helen Lynam and maternal grandparents, Lambert and Rosalie Keeley (retired owners of Keely Drug in Crosby).

Arrangements are with the Koop Funeral Home in Crosby.

#### **CHRIS HOLM**

Chris was born December 16, 1965, in Brainerd, the son of Otis and Sheila (Stensrude) Holm.

He is survived by his son, Thomas (Emily Kadlec) Fairbanks; dad, Otis Holm; brother, Craig (Lisa Haberman) Holm; sister, Cindy (Brad) Hanson; nieces and nephews, Nathan and Allison Holm, and Meigan (Eric) Wills; and great-niece and nephew, Olivia and Drake Wills.

He was preceded in death by his mom.



He was born on October 24, 1956 in Blue Earth to Lyle and Shirley (Berndt) Weber. Ron was the owner of Weber Construction in Emily and was a medical driver of Almond House in Brainerd.

2020.

Arrangements were with the Koop Funeral Home of Crosby.

## **KNICOLI KEPHART**



Knicoli Jean Kephart, 54, of Garrison died Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at Allina United Health Hospital in Saint Paul.

of Crosby died in Garrison

Township on September 13,

Funeral services were held

Monday, September 21, 2020

at the Koop Funeral Home in

Crosby. Burial will be at the

Pine Ridge Cemetery in Emily.

A gathering of friends and family to Celebrate Knicoli's life was held Friday, September 18, 2020 at the Garrison

(Jake Regan) Park in Garrison.

She was born March 29, 1966 in Sterling, CO to Keith O. and Shirley E. (Bullock) Kephart. She grew up in Commerce City, Colorado and graduated from Lester Arnold High School. She moved to Garrison and worked many jobs including as a Culinary Chef for different restaurants in the

area. She loved the Holidays, music, and to have a good time with friends and family.

Knicoli is survived by her spouse Mary Jo Flynn; children: Kylee (Robert) Franks of Commerce City, CO; Jeff Kephart (Baili Guse) of Garrison; sister: Richelle Kephart of Commerce City, CO; three grandchildren: D.J., Faith, and Buddy and one on the way; best friend, Luvae; many other special relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, granddaughter Anastasia Hope, brother Michael Jurgens, and sister Kris Jurgens.

Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. You may leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.



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## **Crow Wing County Commissioners Candidates' debate forum** One emphasizes liberty and freedom from government another has experience and great relationships



Tom Martin, R and J Broadcasting, was the moderator for the Crow Wing County Commissioners Candidates' Debate held at the Community Center in Crosby in Crosby on Sept. 16.

#### By ANN SCHWARTZ

The setting for the Candidates' Debate for District 5 and District 1 Crow Wing County Commissioners was held at the Community Center in Crosby. Sponsors Cuyuna Lakes Chamber, R and J Broadcasting, the Hallett Center, League of Minnesota Voters and University Women from Brainerd ran a tight and professional show on Sept. 16.

However, there was a little shock at the beginning that long-time Commissioner Paul Koering and write in candidate Tom Nixon were no shows. That left Arlene Jones, a write-in challenger for Koering, to give her opening statement only and most of the debating was done between Incumbent Doug Houge and challenger Michael Starry. It was later clarified that Nixon was in the audience and barred from debating, because he lost the primary, but remains a write-in candidate for District 5.

After Tom Martin, modera-



Arlene Jones, write-in challenger to Commissioner Paul Koering in District 1.

tor for the event, announced that Koering had "declined the invitation," Arlene Jones, write-in challenger to Koering, gave her opening statement. She talked of being a farmer, a business owner and an operator of a non-profit. She is the owner of The Farm on St. Mathias, an 80 acre vegetable and destination farm located in Crow Wing Township.

Jones started the first farm to school program in Crow Wing County by working with many "farmers to gather enough local product to get [them] into our school districts," she said. "That work lead me to co-found and continue to serve as executive director of Sprout MN located in Morrison County. It is a non-profit food hub working with over 100 small family farms in central Minnesota."

Jones said her district is the biggest farming district in Crow Wing County and she knows the district and its farm community. She also holds a state of Minnesota management job which gives her over 20 years of experience in administration.

She then exited the stage and the rest of the debate was between Houge and Starry with the two write-ins in the audience.

Starry said, "Taxation is theft."' His closing statement summed up his philosophy. He is for less state and federal government interference and holding the line on taxes.

"I'm a far more hardline kind of guy when it comes to taxes, when it comes to increases, when it comes to liberty, when it comes to the Constitution," Starry said. "I admit, I'll say it outright, I'm extremist, because I believe that the idea of freedom and what we have in this commu-



Crow Wing County Commissioner District 5 challenger Michael Starry.

nity is pretty extreme in other parts of the world. There are always going to be disagreements in the county board, there are going to be disagreements amongst people, that's what happens. It's how you handle it as an adult. I think I've proven myself to be able to overcome all of these things in my lifetime, from drug addiction to homelessness to where I'm at now with a loving family, farm and sitting up in front of all of you having a debate."

"I can say that District 5, from the day I got on to today, has changed dramatically in a good way," said Houge. "And I've been involved firsthand with some of those changes and others I haven't. Kudos to those folks that have been passionate about some of this change, but we've got a long way to go," Houge said. "I think it helps to get there with experience and knowledge that I've got through the past 13 years."

On different items discussed, Houge talked of cooperating with local and state officials, while Starry advocated limited-government.

They both were pro-recreation, saying the trails and other amenities were good for the area.

In talking about the county budget, Starry was adamant about holding the levy to a zero percent increase each year. Houge noted that the county board did that for several years and the budgeting process is extensive. Over six



Crow Wing County Commissioner District 5 Incumbent Doug Houge.

months, they start with all the requests from departments and then whittle it down, separating sheep from goats or wants from needs. Then they come up with a final budget and levy figure. Houge had the most extensive budgeting experience with the county and his small businesses while Starry has overseen his personal and business department budget.

Starry challenged Houge's budgeting experience with the county. "It sounds like your experience preparing the budget is letting others prepare it," Starry said.

Houge was glad the county could help business survive the pandemic with CARE act dollars while Starry wanted to push back on such things as the mask mandate. Houge said the state, not the county, is pushing the mask mandate. Starry was in favor of challenging the federal and state government on many of the regulations imposed on counties.

The election is on November 3, although absentee voting has begun.

You can watch the debate on YouTube https://www. youtube.com/watch?v=0ktdzRvb2aM or search Crow Wing County Commissioner Candidate Debate.

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