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**ELF ON SHELF** Page 2

**COMMUNITY EVENTS** Page 3

> **OBITUARIES** Pages 3 & 4

**CLASSIFIEDS** Page 5



## Pre-Christmas celebrations bring the Range together

www.newshopper.net



Santa (a close associate to the City of Deerwood Mayor Mike Aulie) at Lunch with Santa in Deerwood

By ANN SCHWARTZ

It was a busy and festive Saturday on Dec. 4 in the Cuyuna Range area.

**Lunch with Santa Deerwood** First the Deerwood and Bay Lake Lions made sure that everyone had a good time during Lunch with Santa at the Deerwood Auditorium. City of Deerwood Mayor Mike Aulie played a pivotal role

"Everyone got a free lunch," said Cathe Picek of the Lions. "Families also got the makings of a ham dinner to take home. And the youngest children got

presents from Santa."

"Yes we saw many parents, grandparents and families having a fun outing,"Picek

They had nearly 200 children attend and served over 300 meals served that day. **Cuyuna Christmas in Crosby** Memorial Park

Later on Saturday at Crosby's Memorial Park on the shores of Serpent Lake, there was lots of action. A petting zoo, live entertainment, cutouts and Claus photo ops, hot treats plus more greeted eager families.

It was nippy but the recent snow had not yet fallen.

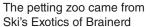
Cuyuna Christmas has grown so much it now is managed by Peggy Stebbins of the Cuyuna Regional Medical Center. It is a perfect way to bring the whole Cuyuna Range together and to welcome the festive season.

"Everything went on as scheduled but without the snow there was no snowshoe hike. The night hike became a luminary hike without snow," said Peggy Stebbins, event organizer. "And of course we didn't have a snowman contest. We think about 1,200 people attended events in the park."



Busy in the kitchen and behind the scenes are Cathe Picek, Jenny and Emma Miles and Julie Fritz at Lunch with Santa at the Deerwood Auditorium. Ann Schwartz photos







Liv and Lucy from rural Nisswa with Santa and Mrs. Claus (close associates of John and Jeannette Radinovich). Sother's Studio photo

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December 11, 2021 www.NewsHopper.net

## Elf on the Shelf injury leads to change in community theatre cast



(Left to right) Marc Oliphant, Ryan Deblock, Rachel Martin, Rachael Kline, Jake Denning, Jesse Brutscher, Jana Johnson, Macy Judd. Photo by John Erickson.

When Brainerd Community Theatre's holiday show 'Elf-The Musical' hits the stage it will not be without some behind-the-scenes drama. Performances will be December 9-11 and 14-16 at 7 p.m. and also as a 2 p.m. matinee on Dec. 11 on the John Chalberg Theatre stage on the Brainerd campus of Central Lakes College.

"We hadn't staged a true Christmas-themed show in some time," noted Spradlin, "and so when 'Elf' was suggested as a possible production we immediately knew that was the show for us. I approached Travis Chaput to direct, and he enthusiastically agreed."

The 25-member cast began rehearsals in early October, and all went well until just

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over two weeks prior to the December 9 opening. According to Chaput, "Jake Denning, playing the lead role of Buddy, was making an exit and thought he saw something lying on the stage floor. He jumped over it, but when he landed we heard this loud pop." The noise was the sound of Denning's Achilles tendon separating, an injury that took him into the emergency room and out

of the show." "There was no way Jake could continue after that," explained Spradlin. "We don't have understudies in community theatre, unlike the professional world. We were really up against it." With two weeks to go until opening night, there was only one person who could realistically step into the role with any real confidence---director Chaput.

"Travis is a seasoned performer," said Spradlin. "He's a really talented performer of musical comedy, so this was clearly a good option, all things considered. It is so unfortunate to lose Jake to this accident. He is also a gifted performer, and would have been a real delight as the main character Buddy."

Buddy is the elf in the title of the show. The musical is a stage adaptation of the movie by the same title, which starred Will Farrell. In 'Elf,' a young boy (Buddy) has mistakenly crawled into Santa's toy sack one Christmas Eve and been transported back to the North Pole. There he is raised by the elves, who

think he is one of them. However, when Buddy matures it becomes apparent from his size that he's actually human. Santa encourages him to return to New York to find his biological parents. He does, but faced with the harsh reality that Walter, Buddy's father, is on the naughty list and Walter's child doesn't even believe in Santa, Buddy is determined to win over his birth family and help New York City remember the true

The cast comes from several local communities and includes Jana Johnson, Phyl Bell, Noah Mickelson, Martha Rustad, Elli Salo, Rachel Martin, Peyton Freeman, Lauren Yeager, Kryston Wiseley, Anika Seitzer, Ryan Deblock, Maureen Paulus, and Chaput (Brainerd), Marc Oliphant (Baxter), Brian Rhett (Pillager), Abi Swanson (Crosslake), Rhonda Schmidt, Melissa Peterson, Rachael Kline, and Jesse Brutscher (Little Falls), Mackenzie Pratt, Abby Pratt,

Emily Pratt (Merrifield), Macy

meaning of Christmas.

Judd (Staples), and Lydia Jendro (Fort Ripley).

The creative team, in addition to Chaput, includes choreographer/stage manager Amy Borash, vocal director Koreann Martin, set designer George Marsolek, lighting designer Heidi Eckwall, costumer Deb Binda, and master electrician/sound engineer Curtis Jendrow.

Spradlin sat down with Chaput to discuss the production and some of the challenges encountered in the process of producing it.

Spradlin: Why 'Elf'? What is it you find appealing about this show?

Chaput: Christmas has always been my favorite time of year. A production at Christmas was the thing that got me back into community theatre. The crowds were so receptive and it made me think that after the last 19 months of craziness, our community needed something uplifting to raise all our spirits and remind us of what the holiday season is all about. This musical seemed like the perfect thing to bring us all together again for the holidays.

Spradlin: You've had some real challenges: losing cast members to scheduling conflicts, dealing with COVID protocols. Most recently you lost your lead actor to an accident. How have you and the cast responded to these challenges?

Chaput: My cast is amazing. These folks have been working hard for weeks and have dealt with every blow we have taken in stride. This cast really embodies the true meaning of theatre. They come together when there are challenges and come back even stronger. Everything we have gone through will only make this production better and a real must see.

Spradlin: You've had to assume the lead role of Buddy with less than two weeks of rehearsals remaining before opening night. Nervous?

Chaput: I think nervous is an understatement. This isn't at all what we wanted. Jake Denning was the perfect Buddy and it breaks my heart that folks won't get to see his portrayal of this character. When I was casting the show, he was my top pick from the get-go. We both had conversations about how this was a dream role for us both. But I also wanted to see this show come to life with or without me and Jake was willing to take on the task of bringing this iconic character to life. I am going to do my very best to make him proud. My cast is rallying behind me right now and getting me up to snuff on everything. I promise the audience won't miss a beat. But we are all thinking and praying for Jake right now and wishing him a speedy recovery.

Spradlin: Anything else you'd like audiences to know before they come to the

Chaput: We are still dealing with COVID and cases are rising in our state. So please do your part by abiding by the mask mandate for all patrons of the show. We want to ensure that everyone attending feels as safe as possible when seeing the show, and we also want to protect the actors on stage who have worked so hard over the last 7 weeks to bring this show to life.

Tickets for 'Elf-the Musical' are available from the CLC Theatre Box Office at 218-855-8199.

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## **BITUARIES**

### WAYNE ALTONEN



Wayne "Tez" Richard Altonen, 82, of Ironton died peacefully after a memorable day with his family and friends on Friday, November 19, 2021.

A celebration of life honoring Wayne will be held on Saturday, December 11, 2021

from 1-4 p.m. at Koop Funeral Home in Crosby. He was born in Minneapolis on July 31, 1939 to Hazel VanHala Josephson and Larry Altonen. Wayne was tenacious of the passions in his life: his family, a lifetime member of Minneapolis Pipefitters Local 539, involvement in the Democratic party, a staunch union supporter, his Finnish heritage, and his beloved family cabin.

Survived by his loving wife, and high school

sweetheart, of 62 years, Geraldine Pederson Altonen; children: Richard Altonen, David (Melanie) Altonen, Denise (Deb Gilmore) Altonen, Kathi (Victor) Guzman, Virginia (Edmund) Anderson; grandchildren: Cody Altonen, Jordan (Dylan) Altonen and future great-grandson, Nick Guzman, Riley Altonen, Claire (Wyatt) Lawrence, Anthony Guzman, Allie Altonen, Julia Anderson, Emilija Anderson, Ella Anderson, and Audrey Anderson; sister-in-law, Virginia "Ginny" Larson; and many nieces, nephews, family, and friends.

Preceded in death by grandmother and grandfather Ida and Charles "Swampy" Swanpeg; mother, Hazel Josephson; father, Larry Altonen, and brother Gerald Altonen.

Arrangements were with the Koop Funeral Home of Crosby. To leave a message of condolence go to www.koopfuneralhome.com

### KENNETH WISCHMANN



91, of Aitkin, died Monday, November 29, 2021 at Riverwood Health Care Center in Aitkin with family at his side. Memorial Service with full military honors and burial in Bennettville Cemetery will

Kenneth Merle Wischmann,

be held in Spring 2022. In lieu of monetary gifts or flowers, the family asks to please consider giving to the, Kenneth Wischmann scholarship fund

at Aitkin high school. Please contact Andrea Lipovetz at lipovetza@gmail.com.

He was born December 11, 1929 in Litchfield to Harold David and Ruth Marie (Seline) Wischmann before the family moved to his childhood home on the west side of Farm Island Lake. He attended Farm Island Country School and Aitkin High School. Kenneth was a US Navy Veteran serving in the Korean War. During the Korean Conflict he was stationed in the Far East for the final three years of his tour, serving aboard the Destroyer Harry E. Hubbard, DD. 748, as a metalsmith. He worked for Reserve Mining Co. in Silver Bay, as a welder for 23 years. He moved back to Aitkin in 1977 and started The Engineering Manufacturing Company (TEMCO) in the early 1980's. Known to his friends as Ken or Kenny, he enjoyed playing golf, dancing, karaoke, family time and visiting with friends and strangers. The family offers heartfelt thanks to Lynn Zontelli for assisting Ken in the past year and to Bob Orazem whose friendship and golf outings our father cherished.

Kenneth is survived by his daughters: Terry Ann Hopkins of West Fargo, ND; Gail (Laurie Baker) Wischmann Moorhead; Phyllis (Rick) Gratton East Bethel; Andrea Lipovetz Golden Valley; sister Elaine Wischmann, Aitkin; nine grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren and great-great-granddaughter.

He was preceded in death by his first wife Dorothy (Mason) Wischmann in 1994, his second wife Shirley (Johnson) Wischmann in 2020 and daughter, Rebecca Marquardt in 2020, parents Ruth and Harold Wischmann, sister Ruby Watters, brothers Harold and Wallace Wischmann, and great grandson Mitchell Marguardt.

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

### SEWARD CHRISTENSEN, JR.



Seward Christensen, Jr., 87, a lifetime resident of Aitkin County, died peacefully at home on Tuesday, November 30, 2021.

A memorial service with military honors was held for immediate family at Avon, IN, on December 4, 2021. Burial was in Lakeview Cemetery,

He was born August 24, 1934,

on the family farm near Portage Lake, Davidson Township, the son of Seward and Esther (Gustafson) Christensen. He graduated from McGregor High School in 1953. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and served with the 3rd Armored Division "Spearheads" driving tanks. He married Marie Sweet on October 27, 1961. During his early career Seward worked for the Minnesota Forest Service as a Forest Guard at Itasca State Park, and at the Elbow Lake and Sandy Lake Ranger Stations doing fire tower duty and fighting forest fires. In the 1960s, Seward and Marie purchased the Christensen family farm near Portage Lake and operated a dairy farm until the mid-1970s. In addition to farming, Seward worked as a lumber grader at Northern Timber

Company in Aitkin on the green chain, and for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife services at Kimberly Marsh Wildlife Management Area. In the late 1970s, he worked for the Carlton County Land Department as an Inventory Forester and in the 1980s for the United States Forest Service as a Forest Technician planting thousands of trees in the Superior National Forest. He was then stationed at Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge with the United States Department of Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife Division doing duck surveys and maintaining the waterfowl habitat. In the 1990s, he worked for the City of Aitkin. He retired in 1996. Seward loved northern Minnesota and the great outdoors, westerns, politics, and spending time with family and friends. He was a member of the National Rifle Association, the Arbor Day Foundation, and belonged to the American Legion Post 86. As a Christian man, he was always the gentleman and treated everyone with kindness.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 60 years, Marie (nee Sweet) and children: Kathryn (Ed), Anthony (Denielle) and Joy and five grandchildren. Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. Leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.

### LESTER VAN HORN



Lester Lin Van Horn, 62, of Wolford Crosby died in Craig, CO unexpectedly.

Funeral Services will be 11:00 a.m. Saturday, December 11, 2021 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Crosby. Burial will be at the Mission Township Cemetery. A vis-

itation will be on Friday at the Koop Funeral Home in Crosby from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and on Saturday one hour prior to the service at the church.

He was born in Crosby on July 11, 1959 to Lester and Emma (Bodle) Van Horn. Lester lived for his family and for his love of the hunt. He was an avid outdoorsman known for his German Shorthairs Pointers. When he wasn't chasing a dog over pheasants in Dakotas, he was elk hunting in Colorado, mountain lion hunting in Wyoming or fishing any chance he could. Throughout his life he was a member of Muskies Inc, NAVHDA and most recently started Northern's Inc. fishing

tournaments with his son. Lester's ability to make people laugh and smile was contagious. Lester's real love was his wife Brenda, his world revolved around any and everything Brenda.

Lester is survived by his wife, Brenda; daughter, Carrie (Nick) Hofmann of Crosby; son, Lester (Lacy) Van Horn of Brainerd; four grandchildren: Ella Mae Everson, Lester James Van Horn, Aurora Lynn Addison and Tanner Michael Johnson; Patrick Jay his lifetime hunting protege; three brothers: Dale (Patty) Van Horn, Earl (Cincy) Van Horn and Mike (Judy) Van Horn all of Crosby; four sisters: Cis Ourham of Wenatchee, WA, Gail (Fred) McGuire of Lino Lakes, Esther (Steve) Reem of Palmer, AL and Carolyn Engholm of Brainerd.

Preceding Lester in death are his parents; four brothers: Warren, Loran, Jack and Arthur Van Horn and three sisters: Faye LaMar, Kay Krein and Carol Ann Van Horn.

Arrangements were with the Koop Funeral Home of Crosby. To leave a message of condolence go to www.koopfuneralhome.com.

## Send Us Your Photos and Community Events!



Got an interesting photo and story to share? Just send it to hopper@crosbyironton.net along with your name, city and a description of the photo. We also accept news and community events. And who knows, you may see your submission next week in the NewsHopper!

## READER RIBBETS

## Rep. Dale Lueck legislative update

The Aitkin County ATV Trails Committee recently met to review the status of the Northwoods/ Mille Lacs-Malmo East Loop ATV trail system. I carried legislation that provided \$1.5 million in funding to Aitkin County for this project.

Work on Phase 1 of the project, which involves the first leg of the system, is close to completion. Phase 1 focuses on identifying the many terrain characteristics including wetlands, stream crossings, private versus public property, and archeological considerations that the first leg of the route will encounter.

Phase 1 is close to transitioning from concept to potential trail route options on a map and then that detail will be introduced to the public for consideration.

The Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board has been working on a detailed

review of the "payment in lieu of taxes" program commonly referred to as PILT. I recently attended a presentation by the board on that subject. The program was created by the legislature in 1979 to compensate counites, townships and school districts in consideration that public lands are not part of the local property tax base which funds the public services provided by these local entities.

Over time, the program has evolved into ways that were not foreseen. Today, six counties, beginning with Aitkin County and north, contain over 62 percent (over 5.2 million acres) of public lands but receive about 39 percent of the annual PILT dollars.

In Aitkin County, along with Koochiching and Lake of the Woods, public tax-exempt lands make up over half of the total acres within those counties. PILT payments for those countries has

stayed at less than \$5 per acre, while in counties to the south per acre PILT payments now range between \$10 and several hundred dollars per acre.

The program was never intended to reward counties with huge property tax bases and hold PILT payments at less than \$5 per acre for northern Minnesota counties with very limited property tax bases and huge amounts of tax-exempt public lands.

The challenge is how to rebalance the compensation formula to better meet the original goals of this 40-plus-year-old program. It is important that we proceed with some caution to ensure that we don't create any new unintended consequences. It's clearly time to make some common sense some adjustments to this program.

Representative Dale Lueck Minnesota House District 10B

## Don't let us down

Having followed letters to the editor for only a couple months, Dan Stiner is the new source to what is going on in the area. It is his time to shine, his time to tell us his research, what he has found. His experience and qualifications will protect you from other letters to the editor, and he will be fighting windmills every week. He is the savior, a true hero.

It is with high expectations Dan Stiner is the person for the job, he will expose ethics violations, bring a balanced viewpoint to every letter he writes and provide us with the full story. A piece of unsolicited advice Dan, use accurate, verified, information, and actions. Don't make it personal, that will require legal protection.

It will be difficult waiting a week to see what Dan's windmill will be. Hopefully, Dan will be able to stay focused on his topic during his writing campaign, people will attempt to poke holes in his letters at

every opportunity, and hopefully they won't attempt to make him a threat to the public but take his message as it is intended. It will be fun to read his perspective on the actions, information, and documents he uses. His balanced, non-judgmental viewpoints on abuse of power, corruption, and ethics will certainly make a fan and supporter out of me. Good luck Dan, you have us all excited,

don't let us down.

Kelly Avelsgard, Deerwood

December

11th - Crossing Arts Creativity Kit Giveaway 10am-noon, located in the heart of downtown Brainerd at 711 Laurel Street. For more information contact Crossing Arts at 218-833-0416, info@crossingarts.org. 11th - Santa at the Ironton Fire Department 1-4 p.m. Get a photo Santa and goodies for the kids.

11th - Brainerd Elks Lodge 615 will host their 50th annual hoop shoot for youth ages 8-13 at Forestview Middle School in Baxter. Registration opens at noon and the contest begins at 1pm. This event is open to all boys and girls in the Brainerd Lakes area and entrants will compete in one of six age groups. The age groups are Boys 8-9-year-old, 10-11-year-old, and 12-13-year-old plus Girls 8-9, 10-11, and 12-13. Ages are determined by what the Shooters age will be by March 31, 2022. Winners at the local level will advance to the Central District Hoop Shoot January 22, 2022, at Lake Region Christian School in Baxter. Winners from the District will advance to the State Hoop Shoot in Hutchinson, the Regional Hoop Shoot in Iowa City, and the National Hoop Shoot in Chicago. Questions may be directed to Dick

Lyscio (218) 851-1753 or the Elks (218) 829-2643. Visit https://www.elks.org/hoopshoot/ to learn more! 11th - Brian Pribyl Benefit starting at 4pm at the Ironton American Legion with 4:30-7 pm All-You-Can-Eat Lasagna and Pasta Buffet for \$15. A silent auction, live auction, Italian and bake sale, live music by "Silent Partner" and more. If you are unable to attend, any donation of cash given directly to the Pribyls, a gift certificate, new merchandise, etc. toward the benefit would be greatly appreciated. An account has been established in Brian's name at the Deerwood Bank, PO Box 520, Deerwood, MN 56444.

th - The Cuyuna Iron Range Heritage Network annual board meeting at 5 p.m. at the Jessie F. Hall Memorial Library, Crosby. The public is welcome.

15th - Blood Drive at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crosby, 9am-3 pm. Call 1-800-RedCross 1-800-733-2767 or RedCrossBlood.org to make an appointment.

15th - Holiday Gathering Crosslake Area Garden Club at 1pm. Everyone is welcome to attend. For more info call Linda Gates at (507) 202-9374.

16th - Cuyuna Range Miners 4-H meeting, 6pm, at the Deerwood Auditorium. For more information contact club leader Susan Schroer at 218-330-0305



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## **OBITUARIES**

### ROBERT KOKESH



Robert Randall Kokesh, 81, of Aitkin died Friday, December 3, 2021 at the VA Medical Center in Saint Cloud.

Funeral service were held 11 a.m. on Thursday, December 9, 2021 at Saint James Catholic Church in Aitkin with Father David Forsman

officiating. Military honors were accorded by Aitkin VFW Post #1727 and Aitkin American Legion Post #86. Burial will be

in the Garrison Cemetery at 2 p.m. on Tuesday. December 14. Robert's family kindly ask to wear a mask if you are attending the services.

He was born October 2, 1940 in Minneapolis to Robert John and Jeanette Ida (Randall) Kokesh. He graduated from Brainerd High School in 1958 and soon after enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he was a Boilerman. He was honorably discharged in 1962. Robert married Nancy Hannah Siemers

Preaching the Biblical

on June 1, 1963 at Our Lady of Fatima in Garrison. He worked as a Lineman for Mille Lacs Electric for 19 years. In 1982, Robert established Kokesh Stump Removal and Tree Service. He was a faithful member of Saint James Catholic Church in Aitkin.

Robert is survived by his wife, Nancy; children: Christina "Tina" (Jerry) Dagen of Aitkin, and Bob Kokesh (Mary Peters) of Brainerd; three grandchildren: Shelby (Jay) Thran of Aitkin, Kelsey Dagen of Aitkin, Jack (Karlee) Dagen of Aitkin; four great-grandchildren: Jayden Dagen-Fryxell, Jakob Dagen, Weslynn Thran, and Braelynn Thran; brothers and sisters: Mary (Jim) Henry of Virginia, Jan (Dale) Post of Twin Cities, Chris Kokesh of Brainerd, Mark (Colleen) Kokesh of Eden Prairie, Neil Kokesh of Grand Forks, and Tony (Melinda) Kokesh of Baldwinville, New York; and many other special relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers and sisters: Guy Kokesh, Katherine Kokesh, Andrew Kokesh, Connie Kokesh, and Luke Kokesh.

> Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Aitkin. Leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.

> > Births, Open Houses, Engagements, Weddings & Community Events are published FREE! Send your e-mail to hopper@crosbyironton.net

### TARA BENJAMIN



Tara Ann Benjamin, 38, of McGregor died Tuesday, November 30, 2021.

Tribal Rites began at 10 a.m. on Saturday, December 4, 2021 at the East Lake Community Center in East Lake -McGregor with Vincent Merrill leading the services. Visitation

will begin at dusk on Friday. She was born March 10, 1983 in Duluth. She attended school in Cloquet and enjoyed being in nature, ricing, making maple syrup, wigwam building, bead work, and quilling with porcupine quills. She is survived by her daughter Suriah, mother Lisa (Benjamin) Smekoffke, and step-fathe John Smekoffke, two brothers: Travis Benjamin and Mikel Greensky; sister Andrea Benjamin; and many other special relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her father Charles Lee Greensky, sister Tishina, uncles: J.R. Benjamin and Rick Benjamin, and grandparents: Jerry and Katherine Benjamin.

Arrangements were with the McGregor Funeral Home and Cremation Service in McGregor. Leave online condolences at www.srtfuneral.com.

### **DONALD DWYER**



Donald Lee Dwyer, 72, of Aitkin, died Thursday, December 2, 2021 in The Estates at Roseville with his family by his side. Services were held Friday,

December 10, 2021 at 11 a.m. in Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home, Aitkin with Pastor Barry Hite officiating. Visitation was one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Burial with military honors will be

in Fort Snelling National Cemetery, Minneapolis. He was born May 5, 1949 in Huron, SD to Robert and Marilyn (Blocker) Dwyer. Donald was a veteran of The United States Navy who served on the U.S.S. Tutuila during the Vietnam War. Donald owned and operated the Green Roof Store in Fairfield Township near Emily from 1977 until

2001. He was also a mail carrier for 20+ years. Donald enjoyed hunting, trapping, fishing and ricing with his best friend, Jerry Fletcher. Donald was a great father and grandfather and was so proud of his kids and grandkids.

Donald is survived by his children: Joe (Jess) Dwyer of North St. Paul and Kim (Steve) Panushka of South St. Paul; four grandchildren: Alec (Brittany), Ella (Nick Hann), Benjamin and Mildred; great-grandchild, Brooks; siblings: Audrey Dwyer (Roy) of Owatonna, Monica (Terry) Madsen of Albertville, Vonnie (Kent) VanRay of Pingree, ND and Bert (Sharon) Dwyer of Owatonna; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Donald is preceded in death by his parents; siblings: Kathy, Ronnie and Tim.

To sign the guestbook online, go to: www. srtfuneral.com. Arrangements are with Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Aitkin.

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### NewsHopper

Deadlines are normally Mondays at Noon.

However, there will be **EARLY DEADLINES** 

Friday, December 17th for the issue of December 25th

Friday, December 24th for the issue of January 1.

## CHURCH DIRECTOR

\* 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 10:15 am & 6:30 pm, check the website for the time of service NewLifeAitkin.com; 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 - Interim Pastor Mark Boone; Sunday Morning Service 10. Crosby — Pastor Dustin McCaleb; Worship 10:30

Crosslake — Crossroads Christian, Rev. Gary Espeseth: SS at 9:30, Worship at 10:45

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

Aitkin - The Journey North, Pastor Lynfield Hines, 218-824-5617. Worship 10:30, theiournevnorth.com

Baxter - The Journey North, Pastor Lynfield Hines, 218-824-5617, Worship Saturday 5, Sunday 9 & 10:30, thejourneynorth.com

Brainerd\* - Faith Baptist Church, Pastor Jim Stephens, 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. aitkinchurch.com 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. Gabriel Waweru, Sat.4:30; Sun.

10:00 and St. Mathias Sunday 8:00. Brainerd — St. Francis, Fr. Michael Garry, 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: Tues. Noon,

Thurs. 8, Sun 8:30 & 10:30 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.

### **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

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

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 Kenny Holm, 218-792-5530 Worship 9:30; 6297 Woods Bay NE, just north of Hwy. 6 bridge

Palisade/Waukenabo Twp. — 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.

### **EPISCOPAL**

Aitkin — St. John's, Holy Communion or Morning Prayer 9 Brainerd\* — St. Paul's, Rev. Joyce A. Rush. In-person worship service at 10 am Sunday. Online at 5 pm Saturday. Call the church 219-829-3834 and leave a message with email to receive a Zoom invitation.

### **EVANGELICAL FREE**

Baxter — Lakewood EFC, Pastor Matt Nagel; Worship at 9:00 and 10:45. Wednesday for all ages 6:30 pm. Crosslake — Pastor Mark Holmen; Call for Service Times at

218-692-4141, email thelogchurch@crosslake.net Isle — Pastor Mark Lee; Sunday School 9:00 am; Worship 10:30 am, Sun. Youth group 6:00 pm, Wed. Adult Prayer

6:30 pm and Kids Konnect 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** Aitkin — Bethlehem (ELCA), Rev. Rebecca Hinz; Worship 9:30; Holy Comm. 1st & 3rd Sun each month.

Aitkin - (ELCA) Pastor Reggie Denton; worship Sun. 8am, and 10am (10am service also available via livestream on YouTube - First Lutheran Church, Aitkin and broadcast on KKIN 94.3 FM radio), Wed. 5:30pm with supper; Sun. school at 9am, take out community meal every Mon. & Thurs. 5pm and Tues. 12pm; food shelf 2nd & 4th Thurs. each month 9am-4p

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.princeofpeacelutheran.church

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

Brainerd\* — Good Shepherd Free Lutheran Church (AFLC), Pastor David Franz, find service info at www. goodshepherdfreelutheran.church, 5878 Pine Beach Road, Brainerd, 218-824-3052

Brainerd - Laestadian Lutheran Church: 1501 So. 8th St. Sunday Worship Services 10:30 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) www.crosslakelutheran.com • 218-692-

3682 Kristin Oltmann, Pastor • Kurt Hagestuen, Pastor Labor Day-Mem. Day: Sun. 9:30am, Wed. 6:15pm Mem. Day-Labor Day: Sun. Indoor 8:30am, Outdoor 10am14019 Daggett Pine Rd

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; Wor-

ship: 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

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 10:30 am 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.

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

Jacobson — Carmel, Vicar Mark Wagner; SS 1st & 3rd Sun.

& 3rd Sun. McGrath — Grace; Wed. potluck 5 pm, Bible study 6 p.m.; SS 10; Worship 11. Zion (ELCA), Pastor Elliott Malm; Worship

McGregor/Big Sandy Lake — Grace Lutheran Log Church (ELCA), Pastor Ericka Foss; Worship 9, Fellowship follows, SS 10.

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; 1st, 3rd 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 Sun. 9:30; Lent services Wed. 5:30 pm. NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Brainerd-Oak Street Chapel, Pastor Todd Wooden, Wor-

ship service is Sunday at 9:30 am, 523 SE 11th Street, Brainerd, 218-454-0984 Brainerd—Remnant Ministry Center, Pastor Ben Davis,

### Worship service is Sunday at 10am, 512 S 8th St., Suite 2, 218-829-2989.

**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.

### 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.

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**

aitkinadventist.org; 423-805-0933

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

Aitkin\* - Aitkin - Pastor Dawn Houser; Worship 10 am, Wednesdays at 5:30 pm Bible & Brew, Facebook live. Crosby/Deerwood\* — Cascade, Reverend Dr. Genia Garrett; Worship 9:45; fellowship follows.

Cutler — Pine Lake Chapel, Worship 9, fellowship follows. 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

10; 2 blks north of Post Office; handicap ramp; 320-532-3150; office: 218-546-7656; cell: 218-360-1947

fellowship follows.

WESLEYAN Emily — Rev. Jason Gressman; Worship 9; Friendship Time

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## **Deadlines are normally** Mondays at Noon.

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## www.NewsHopper.net Positive test on one area deer extends CWD management to 2024

A newly discovered instance of chronic wasting disease in the Brainerd Lakes area will result in three more years of sampling and other disease management efforts for that area. In addition, following the confirmation of a CWD-positive deer in late October in Polk County near the North Dakota border, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will expand its deer feeding and attractant ban to include most of northwestern Minnesota.

"These are precautionary but necessary measures," said Michelle Carstensen, wildlife health program supervisor for the Minnesota DNR. "Continued sampling allows us to monitor the extent of CWD in the Brainerd area. Expanding the feeding ban around Climax and Bemidji eliminates one layer of controllable risk associated with the concentration of wild deer at food

### placed by humans." Brainerd Lakes CWD discovery

One of the 1,234 deer that hunters harvested thus far this fall in deer permit area 604 tested positive for CWD. The area, which stretches north from Brainerd to Pine River and eastward to Aitkin, was in its final year of planned CWD surveillance and management because the disease had not been detected there since a wild doe tested positive in 2019. That initial discovery in wild deer came after testing in 2016 revealed that a deer farm within permit area 604 was infected with CWD.

"Like us, area residents and hunters were optimistic that deer management could return to normal," Carstensen said. "It's unfortunate but this discovery resets the clock, and CWD management measures will remain in place through at least the fall of 2024."

With nearly 15,000 wild deer in the area tested since 2017 and only two positives found, the DNR is confident CWD is not prevalent or widespread in this area's wild deer population. But continued testing as well as other efforts to help reduce risks of CWD spread – such as more liberal harvest regulations, carcass movement restrictions and a ban on feeding and attractants - are the best ways to minimize the risk of CWD becoming established in the

### Deer feeding, attractant ban expands

Minnesota's deer feeding ban will expand on Thursday, Dec. 30, to include 44 of Minnesota's 87 counties.

The discovery of a CWD-infected wild deer near Climax along the Minnesota-North Dakota border adds Clearwater, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk

and Red Lake counties to the list of counties where deer feeding and the use of attractants such as salt, minerals and urine is not allowed.

Counties already part of the feeding and attractant ban are Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, Dakota, Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Hennepin, Houston, Hubbard, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Mower, Olmsted, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Steele, Todd, Wabasha, Wadena, Washington and Winona.

Detection of CWD on a deer farm in Beltrami County adds Beltrami, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods and Roseau counties to the list of counties where deer feeding is not allowed. Deer feed includes grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, hay and other food that is capable of attracting or enticing deer.

Counties already part of the deer feeding ban are Carlton, Chisago, Douglas,

Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, Pope, and Stearns.

Feeding bans and attractant bans are part of the DNR's CWD response plan and necessary because feed and attractants often cause deer to concentrate, greatly increasing the risk of deer-to-deer

### disease transmission. Preliminary fall sampling results

Southeast: CWD testing of 4,705 deer revealed 17 new cases of CWD. All deer that tested positive were harvested in locations near areas where the disease was previously detected. Despite the new discoveries, CWD prevalence remains steady and continues to be low - less than 1% in both areas where the disease appears to be persisting in the wild deer population.

North central (Brainerd Lakes area): Of the 1,234 deer tested so far this fall, a single 11/2-year-old male tested positive. The infected deer was harvested about 8 miles from the location where the first wild infected deer was detected. Since 2019, this is the only deer that tested positive from all 6,107 deer sampled in this zone.

South metro: Testing detected CWD in two of the 1,063 deer sampled. One case was in the northwestern corner of permit area 605. The other was near locations where infected deer were previously detected

East central: No CWD detected in the 1,369 deer tested.

West central: No CWD detected in the 369 deer tested.

Northwest: No CWD detected in the 1,782 deer test-

Climax area: No CWD detected in the 65 deer tested.

surveys have been conducted on Lake Vermilion, all during the open water season.





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