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TO FIND NEW CUSTOMERS



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February brings blue skies and fun to Winterwonderama



Jason Henke, a high school teacher and Aitkin City Council member, keeps the skating rink fire going for Winterwonderama Day. Ann Schwartz photos

By ANN SCHWARTZ
Among the things area families chose to do pre-Valentines Day was a new Winterwonderama Day in Aitkin. It included family-friendly activities that highlighted

Aitkin's parks, skating rinks and trails. The evening featured a chili cookoff at the Moose Lodge, with Timber's Sugar Shack winning the People's Choice Award. At the Landing, The Aitkin

Sno-Drifters held their Annual Vintage Snowmobile ride. The day featured registration and riding to the 40 Club, Sno-Drifters Clubhouse and back to the Landing for prizes.

Meanwhile, back at the Butler Building, insiders were treated to a Farmer's Market and music by Roy Lilienquist.

Continued on Page 6



Bennett Christy, 10, of Aitkin, is ready to try out the smooth new ice at Aitkin City Park's improved hockey rink. Bennett is a squirt in Northern Lakes Hockey.



Children get their skates on to try out the ice in Aitkin. There is just a shed for a warming house now, but a new building is in the plans.



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Governor candidate demands full forensic audit of GOP caucus data



Dr. Neil Shah, conservative outsider and Minnesota Republican candidate for governor.

party issued the directive that Basic Political Operating Units must submit their data to the party first, which will then be compiled and distributed to all statewide campaigns. Typically, each BPOU provides caucus data directly to all statewide campaigns seeking the GOP endorsement.

The campaign alleges that on Friday, Feb. 11, the state party issued a list of caucus data to campaigns that was full of grave errors. Total numbers of caucus attendees in some areas were off by a factor of 40 or more, with thousands of entries from previous election cycles included. Names of caucus attendees did not correspond accurately with address, phone number, email, or even delegate status.

The Shah campaign's attorney contacted Morrison County Republican Party Chair and Gazelka campaign staffer Mandy Heffron to investigate an area with particularly egregious discrepancies on Sunday, Feb. 13. According to the Shah campaign's attorney, Heffron stated she deliberately omitted delegates from the list she sent to the state party. When pressed further on the issue, Heffron also admitted to adding names to the delegate list for people who were not in attendance on caucus night. Delegates must be voted on within their own precinct on caucus night, and cannot be added after the fact. Delegates stricken from the list by Heffron account for a significant portion of total Morrison County caucus attendees.

Additionally, the party is required to issue a convention call to delegates ten days prior to the BPOU convention. Delegates who had their names stricken from the list will not receive a convention call. BPOU conventions are set to start on Friday, Feb. 18, with more on Saturday, Feb. 19. Some delegate lists for these conventions are still being compiled, and evidence of widespread errors and manipulation renders the possibility of free and fair conventions to be very unlikely unless a full forensic

audit takes place. Therefore, the Shah campaign is also demanding that conventions scheduled to take place in February be rescheduled to March, allowing time for a forensic audit of delegate signup sheets used on caucus night.

Discrepancies continue to be widespread across the state, as Shah delegates compare photos of delegate signup sheets to the delegate lists the state Republican Party is currently distributing to campaigns. A statement by Lukas Baker, Political Director of the MNGOP said they are currently looking into the issues with the caucus data. With time until conventions running out, many statewide campaigns have expressed worry that upcoming conventions will be conducted freely and fairly, given the widespread data issues.

"If we proceed with carrying out the BPOU conven-

tions without a full forensic audit, we are guaranteed to not have a fair endorsement process," Dr. Neil Shah stated.

Demands from the Shah campaign can be summarized as submitting original caucus documentation to all statewide campaigns, having that data verified and entered by an independent third party, and postponing all local party conventions until such an audit is complete.

hunger. CLC was one of only 17 colleges nationwide to receive a microgrant in this first cycle of Swipe Out Hunger's inaugural campus pantry microgrant fund.

"The Swipe Out Hunger grant gives us the opportunity to continue to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables for our students," said Erich Heppner, CLC Director of Student Life. "

Central Lakes College was awarded a \$3,000 microgrant to support its campus food pantries from Swipe Out Hunger, a national nonprofit committed to ending college student

hunger. CLC was one of only 17 colleges nationwide to receive a microgrant in this first cycle of Swipe Out Hunger's inaugural campus pantry microgrant fund.

The campaign of Dr. Neil Shah, conservative outsider and Republican candidate for governor, is demanding the full release of the original delegate signup sheets from the Republican Party's precinct caucuses conducted on February 1, 2022.

According to a press release from the campaign, demand follows a series of unusual data releases and policy changes from the state Republican Party. After several party officers across the state refused to allow the Shah campaign access to their caucus data, the state

Food pantries awarded microgrant

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LEGAL NOTICES

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., February 12 & 19, 2022)
BAY LAKE TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Bay Lake Township, County of Crow Wing, and State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. In case of inclement weather the meeting and election may be postponed until March 15, 2022.

The Election Poll hours will be open from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at which time the voters will elect:

- 1 - Supervisor (3 year term) presently held by Don Hales
- 1 - Supervisor (1 year term) John Enright to complete office term vacated by Jon Steblay
- 1 - Clerk (2 year term) presently held by Carol Pundt

The Annual Meeting will commence at 8:30 p.m. to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. Board of Canvass will convene after the annual meeting.

The Annual Election and Meeting will be held at the following location:

Bay Lake Town Hall
13861 Co Rd 10
Deerwood, MN 56444
Dated: January 28, 2022
CAROL PUNDT, Clerk
Bay Lake Township 6.7

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., Feb. 19, 26 & Mar. 5, 2022)
LIBBY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF AUDIT

The Board of Audit of Libby Township will meet at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at the Palisade Community Center. In case of inclement weather, the meeting may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March.

Dated this 7th day of February 2022
JANE GRIMSBO JEWETT,
Clerk Libby Township 2.5

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., Feb. 19, 26 & Mar. 5, 2022)
LIBBY TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of Libby Township will be held beginning at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at the Palisade Community Center. In case of inclement weather, the meeting may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March.

Dated this 7th day of February 2022
JANE GRIMSBO JEWETT,
Clerk Libby Township 2.7

(Published in NewsHopper Saturday, Feb. 19, 2022)
ORDINANCE AMENDMENT SUMMARY CITY OF CUYUNA

On February 8, 2022, the City of Cuyuna adopted a zoning map amendment, RZ-01-22. The amendment rezones 11 parcels, 19090500, 19290510, 19290512, 19290517, 19290518, 19290519, 19290520, 19290521, 19290522, 19290523, 19290524, from "Open Development/Extraction District" to "Single and Two-Family Residential District"

This notice is a summary of the zoning map amendment that was adopted by the City. A copy of the Cuyuna Zoning Map and the City Land Use Ordinance are available upon request. This amendment goes into effect upon publication.

Dated this Feb. 9, 2022
AMANDA PETERSON,
Community Development
Administrator
City of Cuyuna 4.75

Ruud co-authors teaching bill

Bill that temporarily modifies substitute teaching licenses, gets teachers back in the classrooms

Senator Carrie Ruud (R-Breezy Point) has co-authored a bill that allows the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to expand the pool of qualified candidates to

receive teaching licenses. Minnesota has seen a steady decrease in available substitute teachers, a problem that was only further exacerbated by Covid. Prior to the pandemic, substitute

teachers were in short supply as teacher retention numbers fell. Distance learning and the accompanying challenges have kept candidates from entering the pool of educators. SF-2861 would allow a person with an Associate Degree, professional certification, or five years of relevant work experience along with a background check to fill in the teaching gaps in our schools. This change would go into effect starting July 1 of this year, to allow schools to fill openings for the 2022-2023 school year.

"Students across the state have had interrupted learning schedules for over two years, and now that they're back to in-person learning, we need to address the shortage of teachers," said Sen. Ruud. "This bill expands the pool of candidates for substitute teacher positions, ensuring kids once again have proper instruction and guidance in the classroom."

This shortage has hindered in-person learning and has caused schools to shuffle their staff and schedules. Proposed legislation focuses on recruiting candidates so Minnesota can get its education system back on track, allowing schools and educators to focus on improving literacy and education with proper personnel.

The bill was referred to the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee.



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Winterwonderama Day in Aitkin | Continued from Page 1



Vintage snowmobiles bring back memories for many riders at Winterwonderama Day in Aitkin.



Nallely Koehler explains how to use her hand-made oil defusers to make your car smell great. She was a vendor at the Aitkin Farmer's Market on Feb. 12.



Roy Lilienquist plays guitar to brighten up the atmosphere at the Aitkin Farmers Market.

Crosslake Fire Department's 78-foot ladder truck



Crosslake Fire Department's Seth Wannebo atop their new 78-foot ladder truck. The new ladder truck will not only benefit the City of Crosslake, but a much larger area. The Crosslake Fire Department is part of the Cuyuna Range Mutual Aid agreement along with fire departments in the counties of Morrison, Aitkin, Crow Wing, southern Wadena, and Cass. They can assist anywhere they are needed and recently deployed units to the Big Lake recycling fire and the Sartell paper mill fire.

Crosslake is getting bigger – in population, quantity of buildings, and in structure size. The Crosslake Fire Department's (CFD) recently upped its fire-fighting and emergency response capabilities to keep pace with the thriving region.

The CFD was established in 1967 with nine charter members who built a two-stall, brick firehall. The crew now includes 27 firefighters and 24 of them are EMS-certified. They had 84 calls in 1996, 196 in 2009, and 2021 reached close to 500—about 80% of their calls are medical emergencies. The firehall is now located in the Crosslake

Emergency Services Center and an extensive remodel was recently completed.

Ladder up to keep up

At the recommendation of its insurance office, the crew added an aerial ladder truck to its fleet.

"With the new, 78-foot ladder truck, we'll be able to get after higher fires and rescue situations," said Chip Lohmiller, Crosslake's fire chief of 12 years. "It's also safer for our firefighters who won't have to scramble up roofs coated with snow and ice or that may be hazardous structurally."

The truck is a 2021 E1 HP78. As well as being a ladder truck, it is also an engine

that pumps 2,000 gallons per minute, can deliver an elevated master stream of water, elevated rescue, and other rescue-type incidents.

Take command

Around the same time as the ladder truck's arrival, the department updated its technology in the firehall's training room. The room's primary function is for trainings/meetings; however, in the event that something would happen to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Brainerd, Crosslake's room is now well equipped with new technology to serve as the backup EOC.

Match made in heaven

The department's new ladder truck and updated

technology in the firehall is thanks, in part, to support from Sourcewell's Community Match Funds program.

"We rotate our vehicles every 20 years and engine 2 was up for replacement," said Lohmiller. "When we started looking for a replacement engine, we found a ladder truck that Community Match Funds enabled us to purchase. We also included the income we brought to the city when our firefighters helped fight Oregon's wildfires."

While remodeling the firehall, they also saw the need to expand its capabilities with additional technology.

"During the remodel, our training room was developed into an Emergency Operations Center with technology that was made possible through Community Match Funds," said Lohmiller. "The training room can now be utilized as an EOC for our county, if needed. As an alternate command site, it is equipped to be used as a unified location for county and regional agencies, such as county sheriffs, FEMA, and others. The EOC has many resources, such as high-quality AV equipment and monitors that would enable multiple resources and agencies to work together and unify command during a large-scale emergency."

The room can also be used by anyone in the area for trainings, corporate gatherings, or meetings.

Gray wolf court ruling

Rep. Josh Heintzman, R-Nisswa, Republican Lead on the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee, and Rep. Spencer Igo, R-Grand Rapids, issued the following joint statement regarding the district court ruling that put gray wolves back on the endangered species list.

"Once again we have coastal elite judges telling Minne-

sota what's best in our own state. Over the past decade Minnesota has surpassed the state's goal by wide margins, which was completely ignored by today's ruling. We know our state far better than a judge from California. We need these interlopers to butt out, let Minnesota retain control over its wildlife, and for our federal delegation to step up and right this wrong."

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