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Vol. 23 • Issue 49

Sat., December 3, 2022

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TO FIND NEW CUSTOMERS



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Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District photo winners



First-place winner, Blue Vervain with Dragonfly submitted by Courtney Neifert.

As the weather turns frigid we are treated to snapshots of warmer days.

The Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has announced the winners of their 10th annual 2022 Native Plant and Tree Photo Contest.

The first-place winner, Blue

Vervain with Dragonfly by Courtney Neifert, will receive a 20"x16" canvas of the photo. The second-place winner, Blazing Star with bees by Rick Meyer, will receive a 12"x16" canvas of the photo; and the third-place winner, common Yarrow with Monarch by Jennifer Quam, will

receive a 12"x16" canvas of the photo on it.

Yearly SWCD invites photographers of all ages and abilities to submit their photos for the contest, which are due in October.

"Thank you to all the photographers who submitted the photos," said Tasha Lauer Crow Wing SWCD Office/ Grants Manager in a press release. "It was a tough decision with a lot of great pollinator shots. The images demonstrate the incredible beauty of native plants in the Brainerd Lakes Area."

Other photo contest entries can be viewed at www.cwswcd.org/photo-contest.

SWCD is currently featuring 2020 photo contest winners in



Third-place winner, common Yarrow with Monarch submitted by Jennifer Quam. Other photo contest entries can be viewed at www.cwswcd.org/photo-contest.

the 2021 Crow Wing County Plat Books, and plan to give a canvas away at the county fair or other event.

Currently SWCD staff is

working on the 2023 Plat Book, and the 2022 Photo Contest Winners will be featured in that book.

Plat book sales will begin in April of 2023.

Lauer also reminds area residents to stay tuned for the 2023 Tree and Plant sale where you can create your pollinator oasis in your own backyard as a perfect place to snap next year's winning photo. Ordering will be available from January 1 to February 25, 2023 or until trees are sold out at www.cwswcd.org/shop. Pick up of the order will be at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds May 11-12, 2023 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Second-place winner, Blazing Star with bees by Rick Meyer.

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Northland Foundation and 12 AGE to age launch programming



Northeastern Minnesota includes seven counties covering 18,185 square miles with 325,803 total residents, or just 18 people per square mile. The population is 20% 18 and under and 36% over age 55. Overall, 15% live in poverty with some areas as high as 30%.

The Northland Foundation was recently awarded an American Rescue Act/ARP AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Demonstration grant of \$500,000 over two years to support intergenerational programming in northeast

Minnesota, leveraging the Foundation's well-established AGE to age: bringing generations together network of sites across the region. Engaging older adults with children and youth is a winning combination. Twelve

AGE to age communities have launched innovative programming that will tap the skills and experience of 500 older adult volunteers to support children and youth in tutoring, out-of-school time, and summer enrichment activities. Examples of activities include reading programs, homework help, art clubs, sewing projects, fitness activities, holiday gatherings, and much more. "AGE to age sites are in a perfect position to use this new federal funding to build on their existing programs and continue to reduce social isolation across generations," Tony Sertich, President. The new grant is made possible by the historic \$1 billion investment in AmeriCorps through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to provide immediate relief from the pandemic, with a specific focus on support for underserved and disproportionately impacted communities.

AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers stay healthy and active through service, improving their own lives as they improve the lives of others. A growing body of research affirms the numerous mental and physical health benefits of volunteering, including lower mortality rates, decreased rates of depression, and increased strength and energy.

"The covid 19 pandemic has caused separation from school and community and contributed to learning loss and increased the need for social-emotional supports for students. We are excited about ramping up our programming to ensure students get the help they need with the support of caring older adult volunteers so they can thrive in and out of school," stated Cheryl Meld, AGE to age coordinator in McGregor.

Anyone in the following areas aged 55+ interested in becoming an AGE to age/AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer is encouraged to contact the local program coordinator:

- Aitkin - Lara Parkin lparikin@isd1.org 218-927-7736
- Barnum - Roxy Olsen-Hurst rolsen@isd91.org 218-389-0108
- Bigfork - Sandra LeBlanc-Boland sleblanc-boland@bigforkvalley.org 218-743-4home356
- Chisholm - Cristina Myers - myers_cristina@yahoo.com 218-966-3788
- Cloquet - Erin Bates - ebates@isd94.org 218-879-1261
- East Range - Rachel Doherty - rdoherty@isd2711.org - 218-229-5318
- Ely - Julie Hignell - julie@elycommunityresource.org - 218-365-5254
- McGregor - Cheryl Meld - cmeld@isd4.org - 218-768-5139
- Moose Lake - Vic-



ki Radzak - vicki.radzak@isd97.org 218-485-4435 X 1602

- North Shore Area - Colleen Wallin - cowallin@gmail.com 218-226-3418
- Proctor/Hermantown - Drew Jensen - djensen@isd700.org - 218-626-6029
- Two Harbors - Bruce Remme - bremme@isd381.org - 834-8201 X 8227

The AGE to age program was originally created by the Northland Foundation in 2008. Since then, the program has provided new opportunities to bring generations together in participating communities across the region. AGE to age has received numerous state and national awards includ-

ing being recognized as a Program of Distinction by the Washington D.C.-based Generations United.

The Northland Foundation is a publicly supported foundation serving the northeast Minnesota counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis and all or parts of five Tribal Nations in the region: the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Through grantmaking, small business assistance, KIDS PLUS Program, Maada'ooking, and special initiatives.

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- Free oil recycling at the landfill and several drop-off locations within the County. Visit our webpage for drop-off locations: www.crowwing.us and search "oil."
- Demolition materials may be disposed in the demolition landfill for a fee
- Large appliances, electronics, tires with or without rims, and scrap metals can be disposed at the site for a nominal fee for recycling.

The landfill is open only to residents of Crow Wing County for recycling and disposal needs.

For more information, please call 218-824-1010.

Area scam alert

The Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office would like the public to be aware of a scam that they have seen before, but has been used again in recent days.

The Sheriff's Office has received reports of community members getting calls from individuals claiming to be deputies or investigators with our agency, using the names of both current and retired employees. The scammer will tell potential victims they have a warrant, or missed a court date, and owe bail or fine money. The scammer will explain how to purchase gift cards or

iTunes cards to be accepted as payment.

Scams using legitimate law enforcement agencies and real phone numbers are not new, and unfortunately, are still being used across the country. The Sheriff's Office or other law enforcement agencies do not call community members seeking payment for anything.

If someone should get a communication similar to this that just doesn't seem right, please call the non-emergency line to the Sheriff's Office at 218-829-4749.

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Balmy weather for fishy fun at the Famous Fish House Parade in Aitkin



Crunch, the Timberwolves Basketball Team mascot, led the parade. He was sponsored by the Office Shop. Here he is with Zach Johnson, sports fan. Office Shop Photo

er, Kristen Kraimer and Abby Mies for women and Tyler Franke, Scott Nelson and Noland Dervetski for men.

Parade float winners
Aitkin All Starz/Deena's Dance company won Coolest Kids in Town, Aitkin Pet and Farm Supply won Fantastic Fishhouse and ASAP Towing was awarded Rock the Float.

Raffle winner largest prizes
Sharlyn Stevens won the \$250 Wildcraft Meats prize from Paulbeck's County Market.

Don Carlson, Jackson Olson, Deb Weimer were the \$100 winners, sponsored by Data Comm, and Aitkin Eyecare Center.

The Friday after Thanksgiving is anything but black in Aitkin, as colorful ping-pong balls indicating discounts are shot out to eager deal-seeking shoppers. And the street is filled with floats and candy.



Left: Mille Lacs Energy's float entry was a keeper. Mille Lacs Energy photo



Right: Steve Johnson's children are all smiles as they were photographed with Santa. Marilyn Johnson photo

By ANN SCHWARTZ
It's one for the books. Aitkin's World Famous Fish House Parade weather shone warm and sunny. You read it right— warm and sunny. The day included many events in the town, culminating with the 1 p.m. Fish

House Parade down Minnesota Avenue.
Fish House 5K winners
Forty-two runners ran in the race that kicked off Aitkin's World Famous Fish House Parade events. Top athletes in the Fishhouse 5K were Megan Weav-



Santa and Mrs. Claus wave as the World Famous Fish House Parade route is lined with eager shoppers on Black Friday in Aitkin.



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Ideal Transfer Station - 33503 W Island Lake, Pequot Lakes

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