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Low income families feel pinched as food support cut

By ANN SCHWARTZ
Since the COVID Public Health Emergency has ended, supplementary SNAP benefits are ending as well.

Low-income families have been getting extra SNAP (food stamp) benefits throughout the pandemic. Because the emergency is over, nationwide, March is the last month families will receive extra benefits.

Starting with the April 2023 benefit payment, many families will see their food support reduced.

Coming at a time when food prices are up 12 percent, it is known that this will be a hard adjustment for some families.

Call the WIC program in Aitkin 927-7201 or 1-800-328-3744 or Crow Wing county public health. 218-824-1073 to schedule an appointment or with any questions you may have. For

more info, log onto <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/wic/eligibility/step1.html> to see if you, as a pregnant mom, or your babies or small children qualify for WIC

Also, food resources are available in Aitkin and Crow Wing County.

Aitkin County
• Aitkin Area Food Shelf, 612-803-1839, 102-4th Street NW, Aitkin, is open every Wednesday: 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

• Community Food Shelf-First Lutheran, 218-927-2028, 107-2nd St SE, Aitkin, is open 2nd and 4th Thursday: 9 .am.- 4 p.m. Pick up only one time per month

• St. James Catholic Church Food Shelf, 218-927-6581 or 218-927-2745, 299 Red Oak Dr, Aitkin, Tuesdays: noon-3 p.m. Can only be used twice per month

• Hill City Food Shelf, 218-697-8263, Trinity Lutheran

Church-lone Ave NE, Hill City, 3rd Saturdays; 8 a.m.-12 p.m. call to set-up an

appointment
• Jacobson Food Shelf, 218-426-4799 or 218-426-

4712, Carmel Lutheran Church- MN-65, Jacobson, **Continued on Page 3**

Boy drowns after fall through ice



A six-year-old boy dies after falling through the ice on a small lake near McGrath.

On Sunday, March 12 at 1:36 p.m. the Aitkin County Sheriff's Department received a call about a six-year-old

boy who had fallen through the ice.

A fundraiser started to support the boy's family identified the six-year-old as Owen Benjamin. A Facebook post shared by East Central Schools ISD 2580 in Finlayson on Monday, March 13 confirmed that Owen was a first-grader at the school.

According to the Sheriff's Office, the location was next to a dock on a small lake in an area was usually used as an ice skating rink, but was covered with snow.

Owen was removed from the waist-deep water by a

family member.

He was not breathing and CPR was started.

Multiple agencies were dispatched and lifesaving efforts were continued.

Approximately 14 inches of snow affected the response and a snowmobile was needed to transport Owen to an ambulance waiting on a passable road.

Life-saving efforts continued until Owen was in the emergency room where he was pronounced dead.

The Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office has confirmed the cause of death as freshwater drowning.

To donate to Owen's family search littleowen on www.spotfund.com.

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MnDOT responds to Garrison feedback by altering Hwy. 169 layout

By ANN SCHWARTZ
In response to community advice from meetings held last November, MnDOT has adjusted the proposed new layout for Hwy. 169 and the Garrison Roundabout.

The updated layout considers changes to the proposed concept that addresses what the MnDOT project team heard during the Nov. 30, 2022, public meeting. The new concept shifts the proposed roundabout at Highway 18 and Highway 169 to the north and provides access to Monroe Street.

The revised layout adds a dedicated northbound acceleration lane on Highway 169 for motorists turning left from Crow Wing County Road 26. It also reduces Highway 169 from four lanes to two lanes from County Road 26 through the city limits—one lane each direction. These changes will reduce motorists' speed, dis-

courage weaving and passing, and improve safety as they approach and depart the city of Garrison, according to a MnDOT press release.

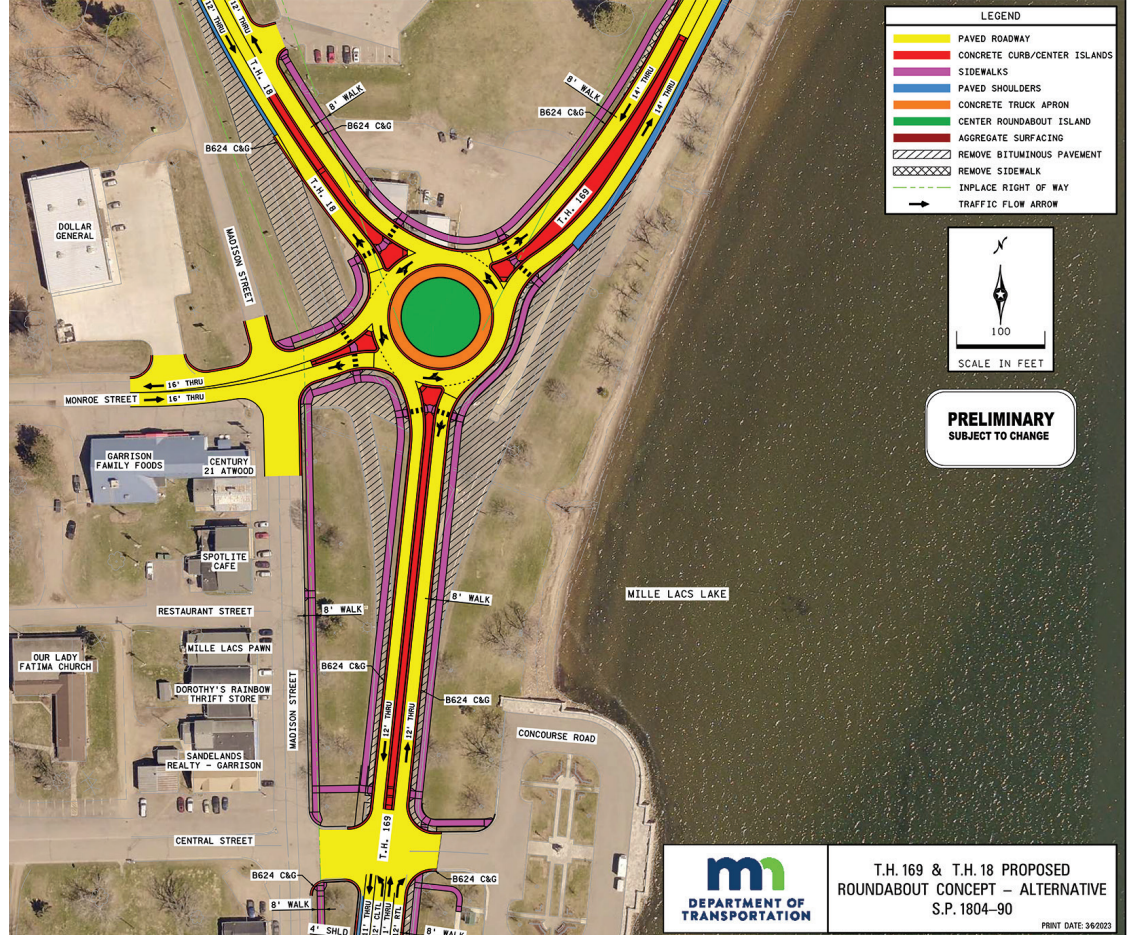
The public may view the latest layout and alternatives on the project webpage at Hwy 169 – Garrison.

The proposed project will reconstruct or resurface five miles of Highway 169 from south of Garrison at the Crow Wing County Road 26 intersection to Pike Avenue. The 2025 project will improve access and traffic flow; reduce congestion; improve ride quality and drainage; and increase motorist and pedestrian safety. Preliminary design and environmental review are currently in progress.

"We heard support for the needed improvements, but we also heard concerns about lack of direct access to Monroe Street through the roundabout as well as other

concerns related to speed, weaving, safe access and congestion," explained Engineer Eric Schiller of the Brainerd MnDOT office, project manager. "Among other design modifications, the updated alternative provides a safe intersection of Monroe Street to the roundabout, and the shifted placement will offer more flexibility in managing area traffic and access during construction when compared with previous alternatives."

"We appreciate the community's patience as we



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work toward a solution that best addresses the project needs while incorporating

local feedback," Schiller continued. "These projects can be challenging as we strive

for alternatives that balance all the unique objectives now and into the future."

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LLCC NATURE NOTES
Spring is officially here. Historically, this is the beginning of the time when the first Red-winged Blackbirds return to the region.

Garter Snakes begin to emerge from their hibernacula. Look for writhing balls of snakes soaking up the sun. Very cool.

Otters can be seen year round in rivers or near open water. Lake Otters, on the other hand, become more active in late March, actively

feeding on frogs. With temperatures reaching the 40s in the day and below freezing at night, the maple sap is likely to be flowing.

RAIN! This is the typical time when we receive our first rainfall of the year.

STARGAZING NOTES, provided by the Minnesota Astronomical Society

What is happening in the starry sky this week:

The Vernal Equinox, the official start of spring in the northern hemisphere, is on

March 20 at 4:24 p.m. The sun rises due east and sets due west on this date, with 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night.

The Moon: New moon occurs on March 21. A slender crescent moon will be extremely close to Jupiter on March 22, but will be challenging to see in the twilight sky. Look due west between 7:30 and 8 p.m. The moon will be close to Venus on March 23 and 24 - a beautiful sight!

Cuyuna Range Whitetails donate deer skin gloves



Kent Olson holds a donation 10 pairs deer skin gloves made by Cuyuna Range Whitetails Minnesota Deer Hunters Association to Sentence to Serve in Aitkin. The Cuyuna Range Whitetails 22nd Annual Banquet will be held at the Hallett Community Center in Crosby on Saturday, April 15 at 5 p.m. Tickets for the event can be purchased at the Taconite Canteen in Ironton.

LEGAL NOTICE

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., March 18, 2023)
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR BAY LAKE TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING
The Bay Lake Township Board of Supervisors will be holding a special meeting for the Public to present options regarding a building project

for the Bay Lake Town Hall on April 1, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Depending on the option chosen by those attending the meeting a vote by registered electors of Bay Lake Township may be needed to approve the project. Once the project has been approved the Town Supervisors will enter into a final contract with the lowest responsible bidder.

Location of Meeting
Bay Lake Town Hall
13861 County Rd 10
Deerwood, MN 56444
Dated: March 2, 2023
CAROL PUNDT
Clerk, Town of Bay Lake
4.3

COMMUNITY EVENTS

March

- 17th - St. Francis Catholic Church Community Fish Fry 4:30-7pm at 411 N 10th St., Brainerd, menu includes: fried & baked fish, grilled cheese sandwiches, scalloped potatoes, baked potatoes, baked beans, green beans, dessert, lemonade, water & coffee. The cost is \$15 for adults and \$8 for children age 11 and under. For more info call 218-822-4040.
- 17th & 18th - Lifespring Church in Crosby, has invited Bible Teacher and Evangelist Justin Peters, 6:30-8:30pm on Friday and 8:30am-3:00pm Saturday to present his well-received seminar "Clouds Without Water." This is a free event, all are welcome. Register by calling 218-545-5433.
- 20th - Challenger Courses for Fathers, 6:30-8:30pm at 315 E River RD Suite 1 in Brainerd. Topic will be "Legacy Legends." Refreshments and snacks provided. For more info and to register call Sherri Borowicz at 218-825-0793.
- 21st - You are invited to the Aitkin Lions membership meeting at 6pm at the Forty Club in Aitkin.
- 24th - Knights of Columbus spring Walleye dinner serving 5-6:30pm at Aitkin American Legion. Dinner is Walleye fillet, baked potato, salad, roll, dessert for \$15 per person.
- 24th - St. Francis Catholic Church Community Fish Fry 4:30-7pm at 411 N 10th St., Brainerd, menu includes: fried & baked fish, grilled cheese sandwiches, scalloped potatoes, baked potatoes, baked beans, green beans, dessert, lemonade, water & coffee. The cost is \$15 for adults and \$8 for children age 11 and under. For more info call 218-822-4040.
- 24th & 25th - Brainerd Lakes Home Show & Expo at Essentia Health Sports Center, Brainerd. Admission: \$5 Adults (16+), \$4 Seniors (65+), Free - 0-15 years (must be accompanied by an adult)

Area food shelf list | Continued from Page 1

- 1st & 3rd Thursdays; 4-6 p.m. at 8:00 a.m., food bundles available 8:00-9:30 a.m. hosted by: The Journey North Church
- McGregor Food Shelf**, 218-218-426-3330 (Sharon), 2 N Maddy St, McGregor, 2nd & 4th Thursdays; 9:00 a.m.-12 p.m. Can only be used twice per month
- Isle Food Shelf**, 320-676-8890 (Karen), 250 2nd Ave S, Isle, 1st Tues. 3:30-5:30 p.m. & 3rd Tues. 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- Free community meals are served at First Lutheran Church in Aitkin, Monday and Thursday evenings at 5 p.m.
- Ruby's Pantry. Economical food purchase once a month Aitkin location: 810 2nd St NW, 1st Saturday of the month, registration begins
- Ruby's Pantry. Economical food purchase once a month Brainerd location: 1511 Northern Pacific Road, Brainerd, 2nd Tuesday of the month, registration begins at 4 p.m., food bundles available 4:30-6 p.m., hosted by The Journey North Church
- Crow Wing County**
- Emily Food Shelf, 218-763-3663.
- Garrison Area Caregivers Foodshelf 320-692-5399
- Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen, 218-829-4203, 923 Oak St., Brainerd
- Cuyuna Range Food Shelf, Crosby, 218-546-7444.
- Lakes Area Foodshelf, Pequot Lakes, 218-568-8474
- Crosslake Food Shelf, 218-692-1004, Crosslake,
- Salvation Army Food Shelf, Brainerd, 218-829-1120
- Carlton County**
- Cromwell Park Pavilion, 5577 Cromwell Park Drive, Cromwell, 2nd Thurs. 9-10:30 a.m., doors open at 9 a.m.
- Mille Lacs County**
- Onamia Community Center, 806 West Kathio Street, Onamia, 1st Mon. 10:30-12:00 p.m., doors open at 10 a.m.

Send Us Your Photos and Community Events!

Got an interesting photo and story to share? Just send it to hopper@crobyironton.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!

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