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Sign up to clean up- Pick A Mile Program kicks off third year



Volunteers from Unity Bank in Crosby picked up along CR 31 May 25, 2022.

The Crow Wing County Highway Department is starting the third year of the Pick A Mile Program. The program was rolled out in June 2021 for residents to pick a mile of county roads to assist in roadside cleanup. An easy-to-use app allows residents to reserve an available stretch of road to cleanup as a family, business, or organization. The program also brings a sense of pride and ownership to county roads.

"The program really picked up some speed last year as more groups signed up to clean up in 2022," said Highway Maintenance Supervisor Jory Danielson. "We encourage others to volunteer to help keep our county roads and ditches clean. We know our residents are passionate about pitching in. The Pick A Mile program turns community involvement into cleaner roadsides. It is also a simple



Volunteers from Pelican Lake Conservation Club cleaned up about six miles around Pelican Lake April 23, 2022.

and social way to ensure our roadways are clean and prevent pollution from entering our lakes and rivers."

The Pick A Mile app allows resident to choose a specific two-mile section of county roads to cleanup, see what roads have already been cho-

sen and what county roads remain available.

Residents are encouraged to pick up litter on both sides of the road at least two times a year for at least two years. Many roadside cleanup weekends are coordinated

Continued on Page 2



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10:30am Easter Egg Hunt! weather permitting outside
1:00-3:00pm Arts & Crafts*
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*fees range from \$5 to \$25
3:30pm Bingo Ruttger's Style

SUNDAY, APRIL 9
10:00am-2:00pm
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Catch-and-release pike record tie

An angler caught and released a 46 1/4 inch northern pike on Mille Lacs Lake that the DNR certified as a tie with the current catch-and-release state record.

Brad Lila of Hudson, WI, caught and released the fish Jan. 22.

"I set the hook as the line was quickly peeling out," Lila said. "Immediately, I knew it was a very large fish because it peeled out drag and there was no stopping it. After about 10 minutes of fighting the fish, I knew that it might take more than me to land it." Lila hollered and waved for help and two nearby anglers came to his aid. Lila tried to get the fish to turn its head to come up the hole, but the fish was large and slush under the ice complicated the endeavor.

"Every time she would get near, a few inches of slush



would come up and we couldn't see down the hole," Lila said. "An additional challenge was that my braided line would groove the bottom of the ice and when my knot connecting the fluorocarbon leader would meet the ice bottom, it would get stuck. I'd have to put my rod down into the hole to free up my line and then my line guides would freeze." After about 30 minutes, Lila

was able to get the fish through the ice and get quick measurements before releasing it back into the water. The fish was most likely a female that was carrying eggs before spawning.

"It was so satisfying seeing her swim away," Lila said. "I am so very appreciative of the state of Minnesota for supporting a catch and release [record fish] program. It's great to know that she's out there passing along those incredible genes and that someone else may have a chance of landing her someday."

The DNR announces new state records in news releases, on social media and on the DNR website. Find current records and guidelines for each type of state record on the DNR website.



Mille Lacs Community Trust Board awarded \$15,550 in grants to local non-profit organizations. Front row (left to right): Jenny McGuire, Brooke Nelson, Alex Dominguez. Back row: Chuck Schotzko, Kyla Fredrickson, Kelli Nelson, Carol Wihersk, Jill McKenzie

MLEC Trust Board awards grants

The Mille Lacs Community Trust Board meets quarterly to distribute funds raised through Operation Round Up. This March, the board awarded \$15,550 in grants to local non-profit organi-

zations including: Aitkin County Rivers and Lakes Fair, Aitkin Grad Blast, ANGELS of McGregor, Crosby-Ironton Grad Blast, Food Shelves (Aitkin Area Food Shelf, Aitkin Community Food Shelf, Cuyuna Area, Garrison Area, McGregor Area, Family Pathways @ Onamia, Palisade Area, St. James Food Shelf), Jaques Art Center, Lakes Area Interfaith Caregivers, Mille Lacs Area Social Concerns, Relationship Safety Alliance - Louise Seliski Shelter. The total amount of grants awarded since the start of Operation Round Up has reached an astounding \$1,470,279!

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program at Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative where our generous members

roundup their electric bill payment to the nearest dollar. All of the funds raised go into the trust fund which is donated back to the community. Board members include: Lisa Anderson, Kim Waffensmith, Darlene Stigen, Bethany Sellers, Charles Schotzko, Becky Joerger, Bob Nelson, and Doyle Jelsing. To receive a Trust application, contact Deb Chute at 218-927-8221 or 1-800-450-2191.

The Trust Board meets the second Wednesday in March, June, September and December. Applications are accepted at any time. Those submitted a week before the quarterly meetings will go to the board. Anything submitted after will be seen at the next board meeting.

Pick A Mile Program volunteers

in April and October. Volunteers are provided garbage bags, reflective vests, and safety training material. Garbage bags will be picked up by the highway department and brought to the landfill free of charge. The highway department will continue to remove large, heavy, or hazardous materials from county highways.

Crow Wing County has 550 miles of county roads. More information about the Pick A Mile county road program and easy to use app

is available on our website. Residents are encouraged to send in pictures of their groups efforts during roadside cleanup that will be shared on social media. Photos can be shared at PickAMile@crowwing.us. Prizes will be awarded to those that find and photograph the most unusual item during cleanup.

If you have questions about the Pick A Mile Program, contact the Highway Department at 218-824-1110 or PickAMile@crowwing.us

CONSERVATION TIP OF THE WEEK

MARCH 27 - APRIL 2, 2023

TAKE SHORTER SHOWERS!

Get in, get clean and get out. Water is one of our most precious resources, and despite of its abundance in our region - it isn't infinite or free. Save water - AND MONEY - by taking fewer, shorter and cooler showers. A long, hot shower is a luxury that you can enjoy from time to time, but the goal is three minutes or less. If like me, you like to sing in the shower, pick a short ditty and get out before the song is over.

NATURE NOTES

- Maple sap season is not only important for humans. Many birds and mammals, including bats, squirrels, porcupines, warblers, nuthatches, woodpeckers and of course the yellow-bellied sap sucker depend on this early spring food source.
- As deer and other mammals continue to shed their winter coats the songbirds are starting to nest. The soft, warm fur makes excellent nesting material. People have observed birds plucking the hair from living mammals. The Titmouse and Chickadee are especially fond of hair-lined nests.
- The 13-Line Ground Squirrel, better known as the Minnesota Gopher, is waking up for the season
- Eastern Bluebirds typically return about this time of year.

STARGAZING NOTES, provided by the Minnesota Astronomical Society

What is happening in the starry sky this week:
Great opportunities this week for spotting the International Space Station in the evening sky. Watch it appear magically on schedule, brighten as it slowly crosses the sky, and suddenly disappear as it enters Earth's shadow. More details at heavens-above.com

- March 27, appears WNW at 9:18 pm, disappears NE at 9:22 pm
- March 28, appears WNW at 8:30 pm, disappears east at 8:36 pm
- March 29, appears WNW at 9:19 pm, disappears south at 9:22 pm
- March 30, appears WNW at 8:30 pm, disappears ESE at 8:36 pm

As part of its ongoing mission to educate the public about wise use of natural resources, Long Lake's team of Environmental Educators will share simple, everyday Conservation Tips that everyone, including kids, can do. If everyone makes the effort to conserve resources more wisely, we can help ensure a brighter future for the planet and make life better TODAY!

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- Recycling of used oil filters and anti-freeze
- 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.

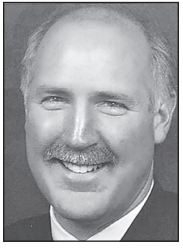
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OBITUARIES

DOUG MILLER



Douglas Brian Miller, 67, died peacefully surrounded by friends and family on March 3, 2023, in St. Cloud hospital after a brief illness. Doug's life will be celebrated in June in the Nisswa area. Doug was born on April 4, 1955. He graduated from Windom High School in 1973 and went on to St. Cloud State where he played Husky basketball for 4 years. He moved to Alexandria, MN where he started his career with Lutheran Brotherhood. Doug spent most of his 27-year career working in Lutheran Brotherhood's/Thrivent Financials' Home Office, where he retired as Vice President, Regional Office. He made great lifetime friendships there and in Eden Prairie, where his Flagship basketball buddies called him "Doogie".

In 2004 Doug and Mary achieved their dream by moving to Mary's grandfather's resort on Lake Margaret, MN where Doug said "The stars were brighter and the air was cleaner." In 2010 Doug and Mary bought Turtle Town Books & Gifts in Nisswa. There Doug enjoyed his voracious reading habit and entertaining customers with his bad Dad jokes. He also served 16 years on Lake Shore's City Council, trying to protect the north woods' environment, and encouraging the meetings to end on time. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Mary Miller (McClintock), siblings Denise Miller, Ann Gannon, and David Miller.

Doug was preceded in death by his father, Donald Miller, and his mother Patricia Miller (Nolte) of Windom, MN. Arrangements are entrusted to Brenny Family Funeral Chapel, Baxter.

IRMA GAGNON



Irma Albie Gagnon, 95, formerly of Crosby died at her daughter's home in Kinnickinnic, WI on Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

A celebration of Irma's life will take place on Saturday, March 25, 2023, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crosby at 1:00 p.m. Visitation will be held one hour before the service at the Church. Burial will be at the Lakewood Cemetery in Crosby.

Irma was born on February 6, 1928, to Isaac and Ida Talvitie at home above Talvitie's Shoe Shop on Main Street in Crosby. She graduated from C-I High School, class of 1946, and went on to study Nursing at Hamline University in St. Paul. She worked as a Nurse at Asbury Hospital in Minneapolis before moving back to Crosby to marry and raise her three children. Irma was married to Dick Albie for 39 years before his passing. She then married Clem Gagnon in 1993. Irma deeply loved her family, friends, and faith. She was also proud of her Finnish heritage. Her kindness and caring, along with her wonderful sense of humor, will live on in those who knew and loved her.

She is survived by her husband Clem; daughter Jean (John) Rock, along with greatly loved grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Preceding Irma in death by her parents, husband, Dick; two sons Jim and Ralph Albie; along with two brothers and one sister.

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

More obituaries on Page 4

COMMUNITY EVENTS

March

- 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)
- 25th - Northland Arboretum presents Maple Syrup Farm Tours at Clayhill Farm, 12607 Red Pine Rd, Brainerd, follow instructors through the woods as you help tap trees, collect sap and learn about how it is boiled down for delicious batches of maple syrup. Learn the difference between light and dark syrup as you sample and taste this amazing local product. Two sessions will be held at 9a.m. and 1pm. 218-829-8770.
- 25th - Northland Arboretum presents Journaling, 14250 Conservation Dr., Baxter, 10am - noon. Class includes a spiral bound journal, basic set of colored drawing pencils, and a graphite drawing/writing pencil. There will be three more sessions on Nature Journaling as we progress through the seasons of the year. Each session will introduce you to different ways to observe, record and rejuvenate. 218-829-8770.

April

- 1st - Northland Arboretum presents Stress/Anxiety Release Workshop, 14250 Conservation Dr., Baxter, 6pm-7:30pm. Be guided through methods to let go of recurring or chronic stress due to negative life experiences. During the session, participants will learn and practice an expressive writing method, TELL, that will encourage the reduction of stress and/or anxiety. After quiet writing time, participants will engage in a guided coaching session of yoga breathwork and stretching, which can reduce stress, decrease anxiety, lower blood pressure/heart rate and stimulate the relaxation response. What to bring/wear: Comfortable clothing and a beach towel or yoga mat. Class size is limited! Call 218-829-8770.
- 6th - Business After Hours at Unity Bank in downtown Crosby from 5 to 7 p.m. Hosts are Unity Bank and Jame Koop Insurance. For more information contact the Cuyuna Lakes Chamber at 218-546-8131.
- 13th - Business After Hours at Common Goods on Main Street in Crosby, 5 to 7 p.m. For more information contact the Cuyuna Lakes Chamber at 218-546-8131.
- 20th - Northland Arboretum presents Journaling, 14250 Conservation Dr., Baxter, 10am - noon. Learn how to use common ingredients from your kitchen to dye eggs naturally. All materials are provided. Participants should be 10 years of age or older. Class size is limited! Call 218-829-8770.

RECIPE: Easter Dip Goodness

Easter is about coming together with loved ones, enjoying beautiful spring weather and eating your family's favorite foods. The kids will be playing, adults will be chatting and all will be patiently waiting for the table to be set.

If you're visiting and making memories with family and friends you haven't seen in a while, there are few things better than diving into a marvelous Easter spread. While eyeing the table, you notice all the colors popping off the dishes. Fruits and veggies make the feast come to life, but a warm Easter dip paired with rolls for dipping is a perfect way to start the festivities.

These Easter Bunny Rolls with Spinach Dip are as eye-catching as they are delicious. Not only will the kids love its shape, but the layers of taste will wow your Easter crowd.

To make this recipe, start by combining a 16-ounce package of frozen spinach, cream cheese and garlic in a skillet. Once heated, add mayonnaise, salt, onion powder, chili powder and Italian seasoning.

Add in Parmesan and mozzarella cheeses then stir until combined. Next, roll out crescent rolls. Stretch the dough then cut into 24 rolls.

Form the bunny shape and scoop your spinach dip mixture into the center of the bunny and its ears. Sprinkle the spinach dip with mozzarella cheese before baking at 375 F for 18 minutes.

This dish is made for a crowd, served warm and full of cheesy goodness. You can watch as your family dips into the spinach and one-by-one, before you know it, the rolls will have disappeared and the dip will be devoured!



Easter Bunny Rolls with Spinach Dip

Serves: 24

- 16 ounces frozen spinach, thawed
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- 2 crescent roll tubes (8 ounces each)

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. In skillet, over medium heat, cook spinach, cream cheese and garlic 3-4 minutes until cream cheese is melted. Stir in mayonnaise, salt, onion powder, chili powder, pepper and Italian seasoning. Stir in Parmesan cheese and 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese. Cook until cheese is melted. Keep skillet on burner over low heat.
3. Remove dough from tubes. Leaving dough intact, roll and stretch into 18-inch ropes. Cut each rope into 12 pieces for 24 total.
4. On baking sheet with parchment paper, form bunny head by placing one piece of dough in middle then surrounding it with six more pieces. Use 13 pieces to form round body. Use remaining pieces to form ears on top of head.
5. Scoop hot spinach dip into center. Spoon small portions on each ear. Sprinkle ears and belly with remaining mozzarella cheese.
6. Bake 18 minutes, or until crescent dough is golden brown and thoroughly cooked.

Send Us Your Photos and Community Events!



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

LEGAL NOTICES

CORRECTION: It was incorrectly stated in the March 21 NewsHopper that tickets can be purchased at the Taconite Canteen in Ironton for the Cuyuna Range Whitetails 22nd Annual Banquet to be held at the Hallett Community Center in Crosby on Saturday, April 15 at 5 p.m. We apologize for the error. Instead tickets can be purchased by calling Neil Dotzler at 218-429-1326 and Priscilla Blom at 218-851-7332.

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., March 25, April 1 and 8, 2023)
LIBBY TOWNSHIP MEETING

The Libby Township Board will meet online at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 11 to discuss matters that may come before the board. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. Please contact Jane Jewett, clerk, to request the Zoom link: jane@janesfarm.org or 218-670-0066.

Dated this 16th day of March, 2023
JANE GRIMSBO JEWETT,
Clerk, Libby Township
2.8

(Published in NewsHopper Saturday, March 25, 2023)
CITY OF CUYUNA NOTICE TO RESIDENTS

The City of Cuyuna is accepting letters of interest for a council position vacancy to be filled by appointment. A person must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the city, a qualified city voter, and at least 21 years old. Individuals should submit their written "letter of interest" to the City of Cuyuna, PO Box 536, Deerwood MN 56444 no later than April 3, 2023.
Bill Bedard, Clerk Treasurer
City of Cuyuna



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