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NewsHopper

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Busy mom of three dreams of better home for her sons



Sofia Heesaker and her three sons are the newest partner family for Aitkin County Habitat for Humanity. Submitted photo

By ANN SCHWARTZ
Having experienced some rough times when she was a teen, Sofia Heesaker, Aitkin, puts all her energy into making a great life for her three sons.

Indeed Jasper, 7, Sven, 4 and Michael, 2, will challenge any adult's energy as they enthusiastically plan and talk about why they want a better home. Sofia and her family were selected as the latest partner family for Aitkin County Habitat for Humanity. The goal is to provide a

new-to-them home on land about two miles outside of Aitkin. This is the local Habitat's first experience building with a well and septic system on the land, but lots were sought within towns and weren't to be had.

In order to keep the budget as low as possible, Habitat is planning to recycle a home for Sofia and her family. The ideal home would be a one-level, three-bedroom, one bath home with room for a laundry area. It is hoped that someone in the lakes area

can donate such a structure if they plan a new building for themselves on their nice lot.

The size of the acquired home will define whether a slab-on-grade cement pad

or a basement is required for the foundation. There is natural gas available at the property, as well as a Mille Lacs Energy power pole, so it is well situated for a new

building. If possible, Habitat would like to provide in-floor heating for the family.

It is hoped that with moving a home, plus a found-

Continued on Page 2

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NOV. 11 VETERANS DAY HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

On Veterans Day we honor all, Who answered to a service call. Soldiers young, and soldiers old, Fought for freedom, brave and bold. Some have lived, while others died, And all of them deserve our pride. We're proud of all the soldiers who, Kept thinking of red, white and blue. They fought for us and all our rights, They fought through many days and nights. And though we may not know each name, We Thank All Veterans just the same.

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Make & Take
Ceramic Pumpkin Floral Centerpiece Class
Thursday, November 16 • 6:00 p.m.
at the White Oak Grill

The Backyard Greenhouse is hosting this fun make & take event. You will receive instructions & demonstrations on how to assemble the florals. All the equipment, design products, flowers & tutorials are provided.

For more details or to sign up go to Ruttger's Facebook or directly to ruttgers.com

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Gun show and summerfest fate uncertain as DCC considers options

Deerwood Civic & Commerce (DCC) has determined that the 2024 Deerwood Gun Show and Summerfest events will not be held.

Chartered in the 1940's, DCC has existed to meet the diverse and ever-changing needs of its membership and to promote the growth and economic prosperity of the greater Deerwood area.

A press release issued by DCC President Jim Mayne stated that the DCC coordinates two annual events: the Deerwood Summerfest for 36 years and the Outdoor and Gun Show for 25 years.

Although, over the past eight years, this organization has donated and provided over \$85,000 from event proceeds to benefit area civic and non-profit groups, times are changing and the DCC and its

membership are struggling to continue and are challenged to determine the organization's future.

The press release continued, "Board of Director positions and Event Committee volunteers from area businesses and community organizations have steadily declined over the past eight to 10 years.

"Beginning in early 2023, local business, community group and civic leaders were interviewed and surveyed to gain their input to chart the future course of DCC. Valuable feedback received included:

- Mission of DCC is largely understood with many speaking to the contributions made possible by event net income
- Charitable activities should be communicated more
- Annual events are the right

thing to do as traditions for communities are important, but only a few businesses and community organizations see tangible value

• Shortage of staff makes it very difficult to ask employees to volunteer for community or company sponsored activities. Business/Community leaders, employees and members are 'too busy'

• Population shift, generational differences/priorities, and many competing volunteer organizations further limit the pool of willing volunteers

"In August and September, DCC's current, active members and volunteers developed and considered three options:

- Dissolve DCC and distribute assets to area community and civic groups
- Consider partnering with

Cuyuna Lakes Chamber • Develop a leadership plan for guiding DCC forward

"At an October meeting, DCC decided that at this time it will not dissolve or partner with the Cuyuna Lakes Chamber. However, 2024 Outdoor and Gun Show and Summerfest events will not be held. The handful of current, dedicated volunteers determined they cannot realistically produce events while planning for the future of DCC.

"Instead of working in the organization, DCC will work on developing leadership capacity and capabilities. Requests for DCC donations from area community groups are encouraged and will continue to be considered throughout the coming year. Jim Mayne also announced his plan to retire as DCC

President in September 2024.

"Next steps include creating a business/community group/civic Task Force by January 1, 2024 to develop a concrete leadership plan that will 1) seat Board Members, 2) recruit Event Committee Chairpersons, and 3) identify an adequate roster of Event Committee Volunteers.

"The deadline for the Task Force to complete recruitment and orient individuals in their respective roles and responsibilities is September 30, 2024.

If successful in refreshing the leadership of DCC, planning for 2025 Outdoor and Gun Show and 2025 Summerfest will begin, immediately. Otherwise, the liquidation of DCC will commence."

Individuals interested in joining the Task Force, Board of Directors and/or Event Committees should contact DCC at info@deerwoodcommerce.org, Jim Mayne at 612 810-5825 or Jon Campbell at 612 849-3232.

Hunting for the Holidays

The Deerwood American Legion Auxiliary Unit #557 is hosting its 9th Annual Hunting for the Holidays Craft and Vendor Show on Saturday, Nov. 18 from 9

a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Deerwood American Legion located at 23659 Forest Road in Deerwood.

A sloppy joe lunch is available for \$5.

Better home for her sons| Continued from Page 1

ation, hookups, remodeling and new finishes that a home could be provided for this family for \$100,000 or less. That would keep Sofia's payments as low as possible to pay back the no-interest mortgage that Habitat provides.

Donations of new flooring, fixtures, appliances, and other building materials will be accepted for the home.

Sofia now works as a certified nursing assistant and she will work closely with Christy Rian, a Habitat homeowner

in Aitkin from 2018. Rian will help Heesaker along through the process of planning and building the home, as well as keeping track of sweat equity working hours, recruiting volunteers and completing training.

So that she has success with her new-to-her home, Sofia will be required to take financial literacy training in partnership with Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union. Sofia will also study home maintenance and all other

aspects of being a homeowner with material supplied by Aitkin County Habitat for Humanity and Housing and Urban Development.

The well, septic system and a garage on the land will be re-used. The existing garage needs some tender loving care, but it does have a solid structure.

The existing mobile home is not salvable, as it is quickly deteriorating. Efforts will be made to salvage the furnace, appliances and other usable

items.

"I can't wait to have a home that is not molding and leaking and where the pipes don't freeze every winter," said Sofia. "I just can't see putting in any more money or time to repair our old mobile home that is falling down around us."

"I can't wait to get my own room," shared Jasper. Now, all three youngsters are in one small bedroom. If a three bedroom is completed, two of the boys will still share,

but Jasper, being the oldest, is probably the first in line for his own space.

Sofia spends her spare time with boys. They find tons of things to do outside – bonfires, games, hide and seek and helping mom with yardwork.

"Someday, I hope to take an international mission trip," Sofia said of her goals. Her Christian faith is very important to her.

The excitement of Sofia

and her boys is contagious. Aitkin County Habitat for Humanity respectfully asks you to ponder on how you can help: donate money or items, work on the house or support the family.

Please contact Aitkin County Habitat for Humanity at 218.927.5656, Aitkinhabitat@gmail.com or stop in at the Morris Accounting Building, 214 1st Ave NW Aitkin, MN, Monday through Friday 8-5, for more information.

CONSERVATION TIP OF THE WEEK

NOVEMBER 13-20, 2023



UPCYCLE IDEA: ORGANIZE USING OLD CANDLE JARS

Use empty candle jars to contain clutter around your home. They're a great size for toiletries: makeup brushes, cotton swabs or cotton balls, hair ties and clips. If you're grappling with a messy desk, use empty jars to categorize your home-office supplies.

Nature Notes:

- Look for bright red rose hips. This is prime time to gather rose hips for tea, jelly or even eat them raw. Rose hips are rich in vitamin C. They are also important late fall food for wildlife.
- Other berries to be on the lookout for; the red winterberry and orange American bittersweet. These berries should be enjoyed for their beauty, not eaten by humans. Birds and small mammals do eat them.
- Unfrozen water can be as hard for birds to find in winter as food. If you have bird feeders out consider adding a heated birdbath. A dependable supply of fresh water will attract many birds to your yard, including species that do not normally visit feeders. Don't forget to refresh the water and clean the birdbath.




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 consume resources more wisely, we can help ensure a brighter future for the planet and make life better TODAY!

STARGAZING NOTES, provided by the Minnesota Astronomical Society

What's happening in the starry sky this week?

- Nov. 13:** new moon
- Nov. 17 - 18:** Leonid meteor shower peaks. Best viewing between midnight and dawn.
- Nov. 17:** International Space Station (ISS) appears SW at 6:50 pm. Enters Earth's shadow at 6:52 p.m.
- Nov. 18:** ISS appears SW at 6:01 pm, travels across the southern sky, and enters Earth's shadow at 6:05 p.m.

LLCC students awarded \$14,000 in scholarships

The Long Lake Conservation Foundation (LLCF) awarded more than \$14,000 in scholarships to students who attended outdoor school at Long Lake Conservation Center in 2023. In total, 2,126 students received scholarships.

Every student who attended Long Lake received a scholarship of some amount, offsetting costs to families and schools. In addition to scholarships to attend Long Lake's overnight, outdoor school, the LLCF also provided scholarships to young people to attend summer camp.

"It is a great blessing to have a partner like the Long Lake Conservation Founda-

tion walking side by side with us in support of our mission of environmental education," Long Lake Manager Dave McMillan said.

The LLCF raised scholarship dollars throughout the year with fundraising campaigns, events such as Nature Rocks – a Concert for Conservation and the Frozen Forest 5K, raffle drawings, and by selling walking tacos at the Aitkin County Fairgrounds.

The LLCF is a 501(c)3 that exists to support Long Lake by raising, receiving, and appropriating funds with a goal to enhance environmental education. If you would like to support or learn more about the LLCF, go to www.llcfoundation.org.





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*Stores will close at 2p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9 for Showcase prep.

NEWSHOPPER Deadlines are normally Mondays at Noon. However, there will be an **EARLY DEADLINE** of Friday, November 17th for the issue of November 25th.



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OBITUARIES

KENNETH DZIEWECZYNSKI



Kenneth Anthony Dziejewczynski, 90, of Garrison died at the Minneapolis VA Hospital on October 28, 2023.

A Memorial Mass will be held at Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Garrison on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Visitation will be one hour

prior to the service on Tuesday at the church. Burial will be at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Little Falls on Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. with full military honors.

Ken was born in Holdingford, MN on May 24, 1933 to Anna and Anthony Dziejewczynski. He was the youngest of six brothers. Ken married the love of his life and soulmate, Bernie, on June th, 1953. They raised their seven children in Inver Grove Heights, where he lived and worked for more than 40 years. His primary places of employment were Armour Stockyard and the Air Force Base in Minneapolis. He had a number of side jobs helping family and friends. Ken wore many different hats: Sheet met-

alist, facilities engineer, Union Steward, Locksmith, Board member at Armour Credit Union were just a few. Ken and Bernie retired to "God's Country", in Garrison in 1997. He spent many happy hours hunting, fishing, volunteering, playing cards, making rugs on his loom, traveling, gardening, listening to country music, and gambling at the casino. Ken and Bernie spent 11 years volunteering at the grade school in Isle. He loved to help others.

Ken is survived by his children: Pam (Tom) David, Brian (Vicki), Bruce (Heidi), Patti (Joe) Jugovich, Keith, and Kevin (Kari); grandchildren: Mark (Katie), Paul (Erin), Nicole (Brian), Emily, Noah, Anna (Travis), Ben (Emily), John, Bill, and Caralynn (Zach); great-grandchildren: Sophia, Hazel, Ella, Caleb, Nora, Addison, Reagan and his brother David (Vickie) as well as many godchildren.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Bernadine; daughter, Brenda Bahns and five angel grandbabies.

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

MARGARET BOS



Margaret "Mikie" Jeannette Bos, 81, of Aitkin died Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at Aicota Health Care Center in Aitkin after a courageous five year battle with metastatic Breast Cancer.

A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 11, 2023 at New

Life Church in Aitkin with Pastor Jason Erickson officiating. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the church.

She was Born August 6, 1942, in Ireton, Iowa to Gerrit and Johanna (Petersen) Bos who were immigrants from Harderwijk, Holland. "Mikie" as she was affectionately known by her family and friends, spent most of her younger life enjoying her large family of 13 siblings. She attended school in Ogilvie and the Ogilvie Christian Reformed Church. Sunday afternoons were for softball and she is still known back home as "quite a softball player". She later went to work for the Plastic Factory in Mora where she

met her former husband of 29 years, Douglas Falk. They married on September 18, 1964, and divorced in 1993. They remained good friends, enjoying time with their kids and grandchildren. In 1970, they moved to Aitkin where she worked part time at the Aitkin Hospital in the Admissions Department. Later she joined the Aitkin County Treasures Department as Deputy Treasure for approximately 25 years until her retirement in 2007.

Mikie is survived by her cat "Riley" along with her daughters and sons-in-law: Kristin (Tony) Jacobson and Kathi (Bob) DeFlorin; two grandchildren: Allison Fairchild and Arika (Matthew) Christensen; two great-grandchildren Willem and Margaret "Millie" Christensen; sister, Ruthie (Jerry) Fenus; brothers: Gerrit (Elsie) Bos and John (Elsie) Bos; sister-in-law, Diane Bos along with many cherished cousins, nieces, nephews and special friends.

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

More obituaries on Page 4



Experience Boiled in Lead Celtic punk band at former opera house

Boiled In Lead, the longest-running Celtic punk band in America, will perform on Saturday, November 11 at 7 p.m. at the historic Ripple Center, a multi-purpose venue for arts, entertainment, meeting space in downtown Aitkin.

It's been 40 years since pioneering Celtic-punk-folk band *Boiled In Lead's* first show at the Upper Deck in 1983. With their star still on the wall, *Boiled In Lead*, roar back after a three-year hiatus with new material and radical rearrangements of old favorites.

Bob Mould was among those who praised the band's first self-released LP ("Even the fiddles rock,") and the Hüskers invited the band to play an early show at Goofy's Upper Deck. Today, the band's star is still on the wall at First Avenue.

While in high school, bass player and founder Drew Miller became obsessed with traditional folk. He started the band in 1983 to turn the

volume up and bring those tunes and songs to new audiences. Following their first LP, he met guitarist / vocalist Todd Menton at an Irish session. With distribution from Twin\Tone, the band was soon playing the First Avenue Mainroom, the Winnipeg Folk Festival; that led to a UK record deal and tours in Europe and around the country. The group and the individual musicians have won many Minnesota Music Awards, and toured throughout the US and in Europe.

Over the years, the band's sound has changed with its membership. Violinist David Stenshoel, who passed away in 2021, pushed the band to expand beyond Ireland to tackle many world folk

music traditions. Menton says: "...when we play... the very coolest thing is the tune itself. The original tradition is the power."

Reborn for the band's 40th Anniversary, core members Todd Menton and Drew Miller add drummer Mo Engel and violinist Haley Olson to the lineup, moving forward with a wealth of new material, as well as looking backward to reframe old tunes.

Built in 1903 with locally-fired bricks made from the river town's Mississippi mud, the Hodgden Opera House with its ornate paneling and elaborate details continues as the backdrop to the region's cultural flair, as the Ripple Center.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

November

- 11th - Spirit of Christmas Bazaar, 8:30 a.m.- 1 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crosby.
- 11th - Christmas Shopping Extravanga and Craft Show hosted by the Outing Area Chamber of Commerce.
- 11th - Hilltop Chapel Hunter's Supper, 4:30- 7 p.m. at the Waukenabo Community Center/Town Hall located at 36797 Grove Street in Palisade. Turkey with all the trimmings is offered at \$12 for adults; children ages six to 12, \$5 and children under five eat free.
- 11th - *Boiled in Lead* at 7 p.m. at The Ripple Center, Downtown Aitkin
- 13th - Grief Support Group, 5 p.m. Heartwood Senior Living in Crosby
- 13th - Unlimited Learning presents Winter Birds in Minnesota by Bill Marchel, 1:30 p.m. The program will be in the Forum Room at Crosby-Ironton High School. It's free for members and \$5.00 for non-members.
- 14th - Cuyuna Regional Medical Center Testimonial Tuesday, 5 p.m. Heartwood Senior Living in Crosby
- 15th - Walk with a Doc, 4:30 p.m. Hallett Community Center
- 15th - Rangerettes Preview Show with JFK Wee Jazz and Hip-Hop, Mini Hip-Hop guest performances at C-I High School.
- 16th - Cancer Support Group, 12 p.m. Cuyuna Regional Medical Center
- 16th - Remembrance Ceremony free to the public at Brainerd American Legion at 1:30 p.m. Jim Knudsen nephew of Julius Knudsen-MIA, will share story of 194th Battalion and represent 194th Tank Regiment, a volunteer organization non profit 501 C 3 Mission to keep memory alive of all US Soldiers of 194th Battalion. Family members can share their story or place a photo on Never Forgotten Collage POW/MIAS. Everyone is welcome to sign a message on Never Forgotten Collage.
- 16th - Breast/Cervical Cancer Screenings, 5-7 p.m. Cuyuna Regional Medical Center Crosby Clinic
- 18th - Hunting for the Holidays Craft Show, 9 a.m.-4 p.m at the Deerwood American Legion located at 23659 Forest Road in Deerwood. A sloppy joe lunch is available.
- 20th - Free Meals for Seniors, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Deerwood Auditorium
- 20th - Grief Support Group, 5 p.m. Heartwood Senior Living in Crosby
- 21st - Red Cross Blood Drive 12-5 p.m. in the Deerwood Auditorium, sponsored by Garrison Bay Lake Area Lions
- 21st - Weight Loss Support Group, 6 p.m. Cuyuna Regional Medical Center - Virtual
- 22nd - Walk with a Doc, 4:30 p.m. Hallett Community Center

Want to see it in the NEWSHOPPER?

Deadlines are Mondays at Noon

Send your photos, stories and community events to hopper@crobyirontontn.net

RECYCLE MORE!

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- Metal Cans (Please wash)

*No containers used for chemicals or automotive products (oil, antifreeze, etc)

- DROPOFF LOCATIONS -

- Crow Wing County Landfill - 15732 State Highway 210, Brainerd
- Nisswa Community Center - 25636 Main St, Nisswa
- Ideal Transfer Station - 33503 W Island Lake, Pequot Lakes

Recycling is good for the environment and our community. LEARN WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME! For more information on recycling in Crow Wing County please visit our website www.crowwing.us.

LEGAL NOTICE

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., October 28, November 4 and 11, 2023)

LIBBY TOWNSHIP NOTICE

The Libby Township Board will meet online at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 to discuss matters that may come before the board. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. Contact Jane Jewett, clerk, at jane@janefarm.com to request the Zoom link.

Dated this 19th day of October, 2023
Jane Grimsbo Jewett
Clerk, Libby Township
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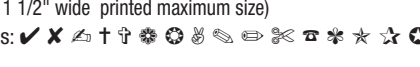
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School referendums

In both Crosby-Ironton and Pequot Lakes, voters said no to their respective school districts' referendums on Tuesday.

In Crosby-Ironton, a mere 35 votes (955 votes or 50.93 percent against and 920 or 49.07 percent in favor) shutout the funds that was hoped to address next year's expected budget deficit of \$718,000.

High school electives, mental health services and extracurriculars maybe on the chopping block, as a result of this failed vote. Also kindergarten class sizes could increase from 18 to 25 students per class.

In 2019, Crosby-Ironton voters passed a \$25.96 million referendum to improve district buildings and a small portion of those funds were for technology upgrades.

In Pequot Lakes, voters also said no to the school district's special election referendum questions.

After the votes were tallied there were 1,070 no votes or 53.63 percent and 925 yes votes for Question One — asking for an annual \$500,000 capital projects levy for the next 10 years .

Pequot Lakes voters also denied Question Two with 1,183 voters or 59.51 percent, against and 850 or 40.49% of voters for the measure that requested \$76.5 million in bonds to improve school buildings and facilities. This measure could only pass if Question One also passed.

Pequot Lakes school district had a successful referendum in February 2011 for \$33.175 million.

SWCD Native Tree Photo Contest winners



First-place winner SWCD Native Tree Photo Contest was Jennifer Quam, with a Robin perched on a Staghorn Sumac.

Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) invited photographers of all ages and abilities to submit their photos for the 2023 Native Tree Photo Contest due in October.

The first-place winner of the contest was Staghorn Sumac with Robin by Jennifer Quam. She will receive a 20"x16" canvas of her photo.

The second-place winner was Eastern White Pine with

with a lot of great pollinator shots," said Tasha Lauer, SWCD Office Manager in a press release. "The images demonstrate the incredible



Jennifer Quam also placed third with her entry of a Butterfly/Moth on a Willow Tree.

Porcupine by LeAnn Plinske. She will receive a 12"x12" canvas with her photo on it.

The third-place winner was Willow Tree with Butterfly/Moth by Jennifer Quam. She will receive a 8"x10" canvas with their photo on it.

SWCD is currently featuring 2022 photo contest winners in their 2023 Crow Wing County Plat Books, and plan to give a canvas away at the county fair or other event. All the entries will be featured on the SWCD Facebook page, SWCD website and potentially other educational or promotional items for the Crow Wing SWCD.

"It was a tough decision

beauty of native plants in the Brainerd Lakes Area."

For more information on the contest and all photos go to <https://www.cwswcd.org/photo-contest> or on Facebook/cwswcd/.

Part two of this year's photo contest will feature trees and shrubs in the fall and winter. It will run from October 1, 2023- March 31, 2024, so please check their website for more details.

Also in 2024, SWCD will conduct and tree and plant sale and where you can create your pollinator oasis in your backyard. See www.cwswcd.org/shop for more information.



The second-place winner was LeAnn Plinske with her entry of a porcupine in an Eastern White Pine.

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