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Vol. 25 • Issue 51

Sat., December 21, 2024

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Over 500 children get Christmas through local donations



A view of the Operation Christmas store, all stocked and ready for shopping. Ann Schwartz photos

By ANN SCHWARTZ

"If it wasn't for Operation Christmas, my boys wouldn't have a Christmas," one young mother said a few years ago.

She was addressing committee members who raise and distribute about \$20,000 worth of toys and gifts to about 525 children and youth in Aitkin County through Operation Christmas.

Families, four at a time, were able to shop this past week at the 40 Club Convention Center. They could choose \$40 worth of gifts for each child, as well as free blankets, mittens, hats, décor and stocking stuffers.

"That year, that mother was new to the area," explained Tawny Druar, one of the organizers. She had no tree nor

presents for her charming little boys. "She said she was just going to try to make gingerbread cookies with her boys. Well, she left here with presents and decorations and we were all in tears," remembered Druar.

Ann Carlson of McGregor, wife of the late Jim Carlson, who was incredibly involved until he passed a few years ago, talks about the effort.

Operation Christmas has drop boxes in 22 locations around Aitkin County. "All were stuffed full this year," said Carlson.

Items are picked up the Friday before the store opens and Monday is spent setting up the store. Each table is organized by age and type, such as teen items, sporting items, toddler

items and so forth. There are tables for blankets from Project Linus, of homemade hats and mittens and decorations.

Families, who preregistered, shop for their young ones and then check out. The process is orderly, dignified and festive.

A back room, as big as the main, shop, is stuffed full of items with which to replenish stock through Thursday afternoon "A family shopping on Thursday afternoon will have as good of a selection as one who shopped on Tuesday morning," Carlson explained.

Civic clubs and businesses also donate much-needed cash, which is used to buy gifts that are sparse – such as for 13-years-olds and older.

"For example, I deposited \$4,000 today," said Carlson.

Teen gifts are always in short supply. If you want to



(Left to right) Ann Carlson, Tawny Druar and Crystal Munstergeiger are fundamental in keeping the wheels of Operation Christmas turning in Aitkin County.

shop clearance items for next year, think of buying bath and body products for boys and girls, hair appliances and products, makeup cases and purses, backpacks, blue tooth speakers, headphones, sporting equipment, water bottles, coolers, fishing rods and warm, new winter vests and jackets. Teen gifts can be fun or practical – but are sorely needed.

"I'm shopping for my 6-month-old," a young mother explained. "She won't remember her first Christmas, but I will."

The whole community of Aitkin County pulls together, not to feed the 5,000 but to make the season merry for 500-plus babies, toddlers, preschoolers, grade schoolers and teens. And all their parents and guardians as well.



Behind the scenes, Operation Christmas "elves" (left to right) Chloe and Aiden Lang keep the back-up stock sorted.

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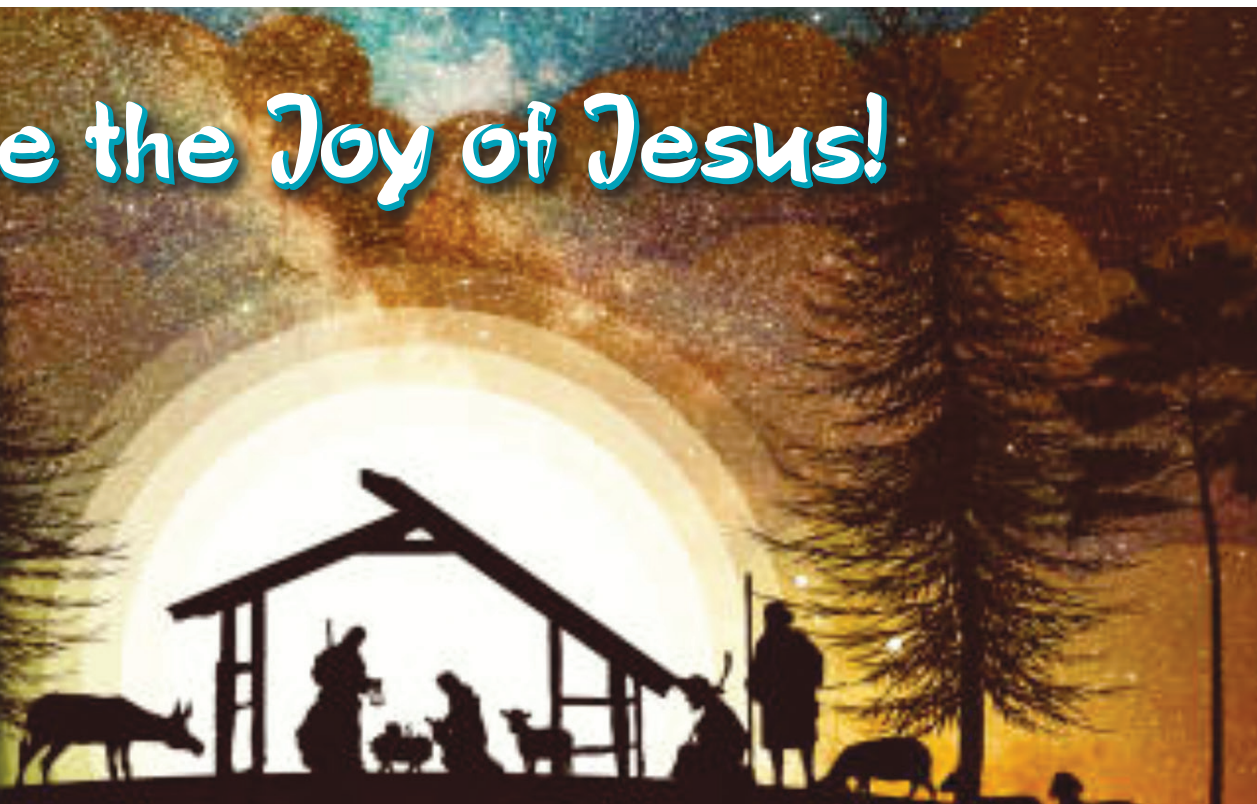
For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:11-14



Wishing you a joyful Christmas season,

The Staff of the
NewsHopper

Minnesota Family Council rally amid Capitol satanic display controversy



Minnesota Satanists display at the Minnesota State Capitol. Facebook photo

The Minnesota Family Council (MFC) scheduled a rally to be held on the steps of the Minnesota State Capitol on Wednesday, December 18, featuring caroling, prayer, and a message of religious resolve, following the recent installation of a Satanic display at the Capitol. The display, which was erected by a group named the Min-

nesota Satanists has drawn sharp criticism from across the state. Jeff Evans, CEO of the Minnesota Family Council, condemned the Satanic display while urging for a reaffirmation of Christian values in the public sphere. "Local Satanists have put up a Satanic 'holiday' display at our state Capitol," Evans said in

a statement. "Although many latter-day Satanists don't actually believe in Satan, they keep reminding us that Satan the Deceiver really exists. In fact, Satan played a huge part in the Christmas story. King Herod, inspired by Satan, was so intimidated by the prophesied birth of Christ that he set out to destroy Him by killing countless children." Evans connected the historical story of King Herod's actions to contemporary concerns, particularly regarding issues like abortion and gender ideology. "Does that story sound familiar?" he asked. "We've been living it the last two years here in Minnesota. Satan continues to deceive rulers and nations, lie to women, and profane the image of God through abortion, trans ideology, and other deceptions." The rally, which included attendees singing Christmas carols and offering prayers, was organized in response to what the MFC views as an inappropriate display of religious expression at the

Capitol. Evans stressed that while the Satanic display is a challenge to Christian values, it should not overshadow the true meaning of the holiday season. "We're celebrating Christmas next week—and then we're on our way to Easter. Never forget that Jesus took on flesh so that through death He might render Satan powerless," Evans stated, referencing Hebrews 2:14. "The reality is that in the contest between Jesus and Satan, Jesus always wins." Evans emphasized their belief in the supremacy of Christian teachings over what they described as "idols" and "paper mâché" representations. "This pathetic attempt to draw glory to man cannot stand against the glory of God," Evans declared, urging Christians not to be intimidated by the display. "Idols are weak and powerless—they will fall." Evans concluded with a message of compassion, urging attendees to pray for those who have dedicated themselves to ideologies they see as contrary to Christian teachings. "Though God laughs at the foolishness of rebellious and ignorant men, we also know that He loves to save them through His Son," Evans said. "So, pray for the Satanists and all those who have consecrated themselves to the idols of our age, that

they might come to know Jesus and the 'good news of great joy' of His coming." State Rep. Ben Davis, R-Mission Township, strongly condemned a satanic display that has been erected at the Minnesota State Capitol. Davis called the display "absolute evil wickedness" and said he hopes it will be removed. "I condemn this vulgar display because it grieves my soul," Davis said. "Just because you can do something doesn't mean you should. They have a First Amendment right to do put up this display, and I have a First Amendment right to speak against it. 'I'm praying for the people who erected this satanic display to come to Jesus. The Bible says, 'bless those who curse you' and I'd say that applies here. This exhibit serves as an ode to evil during the Christmas season.'" Davis, a pastor by trade, is an ardent freedom of religion supporter. Earlier this year, he adamantly opposed House Democrat actions he said placed the state's view over people's religious beliefs. This issue, he said, cuts differently. "This almost looks like a ploy intended to cause such massive backlash that the state just throws up its hands and bans religious displays of any kind at the Capitol – nativity scene and

all," Davis said. "It would be incredibly unfortunate for that to happen, with the state choosing the same godless path Satan himself would lead us down. That is the last thing we want." House Republicans recently sent a letter to Capitol officials demanding that the satanist display be "removed or relocated to a less prominent position within the Capitol." "I realize House members have no jurisdiction over displays in the Capitol and the permitting process that's involved," Davis said. "That said, there are questions that need to be asked. As you study history, Satan is a vulgar enemy to humanity and especially children. Look no further than the child sacrifices committed throughout history in his many names. Satanic temples today are declaring abortions as a sacred religious ritual. And now a shrine honoring him has been placed in our blessed Capitol. I'm all for religious freedom, but this is pure evil." A somewhat similar issue has arisen in Iowa, where the state recently canceled an event the Satanic Temple of Iowa scheduled for the Capitol building in Des Moines. Reports indicate that decision was linked to concern for elements of the event deemed harmful to minors.



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OBITUARIES

JOAN TICHENOR

Joan Tichenor, 93, of Crosby died on December 16, 2024 at Heartwood Senior Living in Crosby.

A service is being planned for February. Arrangements are with the Koop Funeral Home in Crosby.

READER RIBBETS

Condemns Capitol satanic display

There is no beating around the bush today: I strongly condemn a satanic display that has been erected at the Minnesota State Capitol. It is absolute evil wickedness that grieves my soul and needs to be removed.

Just because you can do something doesn't mean you should. They have a First Amendment right to do put up this display, and I have a First Amendment right to speak against it.

I'm praying for the people who erected this satanic display to come to Jesus. The Bible says, 'bless those who curse you' and I'd say that applies here. This exhibit serves as an ode to evil during the Christmas season.

I am an ardent supporter of freedom of religion, which is woven into the fabric of our state and nation. Earlier this year, I adamantly opposed House Democrat actions which placed the state's view over people's religious beliefs.

That said, this issue regarding the satanic display at our Capitol cuts differently. It almost looks like a ploy intended to cause such massive backlash that the state just throws up its hands and bans religious displays of any kind at the Capitol – nativity scene and all. It would be incredibly unfortunate for that to happen, with the state choosing the same godless path Satan himself would lead us down.

That is the last thing we want. House Republicans recently sent a letter to Capitol officials demanding that the satanist display be "removed or relocated to a less prominent position within the Capitol."

I realize House members have no jurisdiction over displays in the Capitol and the permitting process that's involved. On the other hand, there are questions that need to be asked. As you study history, Satan is a vulgar enemy to humanity and especially children. Look no further than the child sacrifices committed throughout history in his many names. Satanic temples today are declaring abortions as a sacred religious ritual. And now a shrine honoring him has been placed in our blessed Capitol. I'm all for religious freedom, but this is pure evil.

A somewhat similar issue has arisen in Iowa, where the state recently canceled an event the Satanic Temple of Iowa scheduled for the Capitol building in Des Moines. Reports indicate that decision was linked to concern for elements of the event deemed harmful to minors.

I'm praying for a swift resolution that puts an end to this vile display at our Capitol and hope you will join me.

Ben Davis, District 6A State Representative

Crosby City Council's blatant abuse

How is it that the management of the Hallett Community Center can escape accountability by disregarding city department spending limits and authorize and implement a repair of over \$50,000 towards a seasonal, limited use area of their private membership facility?

This council continues to allow this community center to operate free will. Yet tries, at least in appearance, to hold other city departments —such as the library—fiscally accountable.

And who authorized this center's general manager to contact the Hallett trust to manipulate already earmarked building improvement funds to pay for repairs that benefit only a fraction of the centers members?

Finally, how in good faith can this council, at the very same meeting, discuss potential reprimands against another city employee for actions taken outside their job description and yet not even consider discussing this blatant abuse.

It appears this council hoped nobody would notice this infraction or just except that the general manager's excuses and the management teams previous disregard for policies would somehow justify the council taken a blind eye.

Maybe our mayor and sidekick council needs to take a refresher course on what city policies are and why its so important to follow them before other department heads follow suit and authorize purchases such as a much needed new roof for the fire department or a public works pickup truck.

Chris Ryan, Crosby

New Year's resolution to contemplate

We live in a world of liars and cheaters. In a world of Wolves in Sheep's clothing. I've had some time to contemplate, since this election cycle, and I am REALLY disgusted with the whole system. Liars come in all shapes and sizes... all colors, male and female, shy and bold. If we think about how screwed up all this deception has made our political system in the last 200 years, wait till we find out how screwed up our religious system has gotten in the last 2000 years. Jesus come quickly.

I am so tired of and disgusted with people who say they will do or not do something and then they don't follow through with what they say. I am truly tired of people who lead with deception. I grew up with a dad that didn't speak much, but when he said something, it was Truth and you never had to doubt him. I miss those days.

When my kids were little, it was the parents that would literally DO the science project for the kid and then Win the Prize... I used to tell my kids, "there are two spirits in you, the good spirit/angel that sits on your Right shoulder and encourages you and give you positive thoughts and ideas... then there is the bad spirit/angel on the left shoulder, the one that tells you it's okay to lie, cheat and deceive people... when you hear those BAD ideas/thoughts, you flick that little sucker off your shoulder and concentrate on what the GOOD/Right side is telling you." I Pray they still remember this and will teach it to their own children someday.

We have a New Year coming up, a new opportunity to start over and do good... Remember the God you serve, He sees it all... every lie, every deception, everything. So, let's really TRY to speak Truth, even if it makes your voice shake. Be Blessed ~ Seek Truth

Diane Webb-Skillings, Aitkin

NEAL RIETVELD



Neal Timothy Rietveld, 63, of Deer River, died peacefully on Friday, December 13, 2024, at Riverwood Health Care Center in Aitkin.

Services to honor Neal's life will be held on Friday, December 20, 2024 at 12 p.m. at Aitkin Assembly of God with Pastor Andrew Jergenson officiating. Visitation will take place from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the church.

A graveside service with military honors will follow at Pine Ridge Cemetery in Deer River at 2:30 p.m. From 3 to 5 p.m., a celebration of life gathering will be held at Blueberry Bowl in Deer River.

He was born on December 22, 1960, in Saint Paul Minnesota to Cornelius and Nancy (Fell) Rietveld. A man of deep faith, Neal accepted Jesus into his heart and lived with a profound appreciation for his relationship with God. Neal proudly served his country as a veteran of the United States Army. Neal owned and operated Cedar Crafts of Deer River.

He was an avid outdoorsman who found joy and solace in hunting, fishing, and trapping. Neal also had a love for antiquing and collecting treasures. Neal's greatest pride and joy were his children, Laura Rietveld and Nathan Rietveld. He cherished them deeply and held his role as their father close to his heart. Known for his infectious laugh and warm personality, Neal made countless friends over the years and left a lasting impression on all who knew him. He will be remembered for his kind spirit, unwavering faith, and love for his family.

He will be missed by his children: Laura Rietveld and Nathan Rietveld; his father Cornelius (Ruth Ann) Rietveld; siblings: Connie (Daniel) Kingsley-Ford, Angela (David) Strommer, Ronnie (Jaci) Rietveld, Daniel (Roxanne) Rietveld, and Robert (Jessica) Rietveld; and many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and dear friends.

Neal is now reunited in heaven with his mother, Nancy; stepmother, Gert; and uncles: Jack and Bob.

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

JENNIFER SMITH



Jennifer Joy Smith, 39, of Aitkin, died unexpectedly on Friday, December 13, 2024 in Riverwood Health Care Center, Aitkin.

Services will be Saturday, December 21, 2024 at 11 a.m. in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Aitkin followed by a luncheon.


She was born April 29, 1985 in Sandpoint, Idaho to Kelly and Colleen (Haffner) Smith. Jennifer enjoyed crafting, genealogical research for both her family and others and helping people in general. Jennifer loved her dogs, especially Oliver.

Jennifer is survived by her mother, Colleen Smith; sisters, Heather McGowan and Jessica Smith; several aunts, uncles, other relatives, friends and her dog, Oliver.

Jennifer was preceded in death by her father, Kelly Smith.

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

ELEANOR AMIDON



Eleanor Louise Amidon, 85, of Aitkin, died Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at her home.

Services were held Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 11 a.m. in Northwoods Community Church, Aitkin with Pastor William Verbeke officiating. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the church. Private Interment will be in Bennettville Cemetery. Memorials are preferred to Northwoods Community Church, Aitkin or the charity of your choice.

She was born October 13, 1939 in Edina to Thomson and Elisabeth (Findley) Amidon, Jr. Eleanor loved tending to her horses and caring for her numerous dogs throughout the years. She was also a plant enthusiast. Eleanor enjoyed spending time at the local nursing homes, visiting with her friends and bringing them "special" gifts. She was also involved in Riverwood Auxiliary. Church was a very important part of Eleanor's life.

Eleanor is survived by her sons: Craig (Rhonda) Tibbetts and Bryan Tibbetts; two grandchildren: Caitlin Tibbetts and Kayla (Stephen) Tibbetts-Mayor; and other relatives and friends.

Eleanor was preceded in death by her parents; siblings: Thomson Smith Amidon III and Elisabeth "Betsy" King.

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



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Wed., Jan. 22 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Spaghetti Dinner

Wed., Jan. 29 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
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LEGAL NOTICE

(Published in NewsHopper Saturday, December 21, 2024)

BAY LAKE TOWNSHIP ORDER SETTING FORTH INITIAL DESCRIPTIONS AND SETTING HEARING DATE

WHEREAS, Bay Lake Township Board was presented a petition requesting the vacation of Pine Street within the Plat of Bay Lake Shores;

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2024 the petition was brought under Minnesota Statute (Minn. Stat.) § 164.07 in which Robert Sponsel and Dane Anderson request that Bay Lake Township vacate the following road:
Pine Street within the Plat of Bay Lake Shores, as shown in Exhibit A

WHEREAS, the Petition contained a description of the platted street to be vacated and the names of the owners over which the street passes; and

WHEREAS, under Minn. Stat. § 164.07, Subdivision (Subd.) 2, this Town Board resolves to describe the street to be vacated, the two (2) tracts of land through which the street passes, as well as setting the time and place and location for a hearing pursuant to the petition;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. The affected property owners are Robert Sponsel and Dane Anderson (i.e., the property owners through whose property the street passes) as well as William B. Ramsay and Donna Ramsay, Bruce Ravensborg, David A. Ness and Nancy L. Ness, the Peterson Lake Cabin Revocable Trust, and Scott L. Burns and Patty M. Burns (i.e., the property owners of inland lots within the Plat of Bay Lake Shores).

2. A public hearing shall take place to examine the street, receive public comment, consider the proposed action, and make a determination on the petition at 2 p.m. on January 7, 2025, located at the Bay Lake Township Hall building (12861 County Rd 10, Deerwood, MN 56444).

3. Petitioners shall personally serve Robert Sponsel and Dane Anderson, as well as William B. Ramsay and Donna Ramsay, Bruce Ravensborg, David A. Ness and Nancy L. Ness, the Peterson Lake Cabin Revocable Trust, and Scott L. Burns and Patty M. Burns, with this Notice at least ten (10) days prior to the Hearing Date.

4. Petitioners shall cause this Notice to be posted on the described property, nearest the current road, for at least ten (10) days prior to the Hearing Date.

5. Petitioners shall serve this Notice of Order and Order upon the commissioner of natural resources at least sixty (60) days prior to the Hearing Date.

6. Per Minn. Stat. § 164.07, Subd. 2, a landowner is entitled to judicial review of damages, need, and purpose under Subd. 7 following a determination to establish or alter a road.

Dated this 25th day of October, 2024
CAROL PUNDT, Clerk for Bay Lake
baylaketown@gmail.com
218-678-3256

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OBITUARIES

JAMES GRIMES



James Grimes of Crosby, 81, died on December 8, 2024. Funeral services will be held at 11a.m. on Friday, December 27, 2024 at St. James Catholic Church in Aitkin. Military honors will be presented by the Myrin-James American Legion Post #443, Ironton. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service. Memorials are preferred in lieu of flowers.

He was born in Minneapolis to Cyril and Marian (McDonough) Grimes on January 23, 1943. Jim married Jean Tinker/Treacle on July 22, 1968 in Minneapolis. He was a Vietnam era U.S. Navy veteran. Jim was the retired owner/operator of the Custom Rubber Stamp Company,



After graduating from Crosby-Ironton High School in 1970, Ed enlisted in the U.S. Army, receiving his honorable discharge in 1974. He married Linda Boelter-Phillips in 1980 and worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Minneapolis for many years. Ed loved to hunt and fish. He was an avid player of pool, horseshoes, and golf. He was a knowledgeable collector of agates and other valuable stones – and a sharp-eyed collector of antiques. He was a talented crafter of jewelry made of

and was a local organist, pianist and singer for several area churches. He wrote several cantatas. Commissioned by Heartland Symphony Orchestra, he composed “Civil War Memories” with a World Premiere performance by the Brainerd Symphony Orchestra in their “Americana” concert in 2013. Jim directed several musicals, and was also a member of the Geritol Frolics.

Jim is survived by his wife, Jean; son, Steve (Cindy) Grimes of Indianapolis, IN; daughter, Paula (Tom) Powers of Fridley; brother, Richard (Marie) Grimes of St. Louis Park; five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Preceding him in death are his parents; son, Timothy; brothers, Charles and Michael; and sister, Patricia Grimes.

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

EDWARD ATWATER



Edward Ray “Eddie” Atwater, 72, of Emily, died peacefully at home on December. 8, 2024. A Celebration of Life for Eddie will be held in the Spring.

He was born in Crosby on July 2, 1952, the seventh of nine children born to Randle ‘Kelly’ and Ruth (Hite) Atwater.

After graduating from Crosby-Ironton High School in 1970, Ed enlisted in the U.S. Army, receiving his honorable discharge in 1974. He married Linda Boelter-Phillips in 1980 and worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Minneapolis for many years. Ed loved to hunt and fish. He was an avid player of pool, horseshoes, and golf. He was a knowledgeable collector of agates and other valuable stones – and a sharp-eyed collector of antiques. He was a talented crafter of jewelry made of

agates and other non-precious stones and enjoyed sharing and selling his jewelry at festivals and flea markets. Ed had a great memory, a quick wit and sense of humor. This all enabled him to easily make and keep friends wherever he went.

He is survived by his daughters: Kelli Baker of WA, Emily (Sharale) Atwater of Duluth, and daughter Michelle Atwater of Ashland, WI; son, Michael Atwater of Minneapolis; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; brothers: Don (Peggy Gates) Atwater; Charlie (Andrea) Atwater; and Paul Atwater, all of Emily; sisters: Judy Zettervall, Brainerd; Polly Balken, Fargo, ND; Elaine Atwater, Cross Lake.

Preceding Eddie in death are his parents and two siblings: infant brother in 1957 and brother Jim Atwater in 2015.

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

SCOTT DEHNING



Scott Wayne Dehning, 63, of Merrifield, died unexpectedly on December 11, 2024 at his home.

A Memorial service will be 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 21, 2024 at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crosby. Military honors will be presented by the Myrin-James American Legion Post #443 of Ironton. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the church on Saturday.

He was born August 12, 1961 in Crosby to Jim and Marlys (Petersen) Dehning. Scott grew up in Cuyuna and attended Crosby-Ironton High School. After High School, Scott enlisted in the United States Navy in 1979, serving for four years as a boiler technician. His military training and knowledge of heavy equipment helped shape his successful career in the industry where he ultimately retired as a heavy equipment operator. Following his honorable discharge, he returned to Crosby where he married his childhood sweetheart, Lynette Kruse,



in 1983. Together they shared 41 years of love and companionship. Scott was a dedicated and active member of his community where he retired from the Crosby Fire Department after 16 years of service, and also worked as an EMT at Cuyuna Regional Medical Center. For the last 25 years, Scott was known as a handgun permit instructor passing on safety and his expertise of firearms to others. Beyond his work and devotion for firearm safety, Scott was passionate about many things including trucks, and Harleys. He loved to drive fast and take chances. Above all, he treasured his family and friends. His larger than life presence and generous spirit will be deeply missed.

Scott is survived by his loving wife, Lynette; daughter, Paula (Jason) Kovatovich; son, Nicholas; grandchildren; Abby and Brody; brothers; Kevin (Diane) and Kurt (Kelly), as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins and dear friends.

Preceding Scott in death are his parents.

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



MAEVE TRUDEAU

Maeve Eleanor Trudeau, a girl, weighing 9 lbs., 10 ozs., was born December 10, 2024, in Aitkin, to Gretchen and Giles Trudeau of Aitkin.

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CHURCH DIRECTORY

* Indicates handicap accessible. NOTE: All times are Sunday morning (a.m.) unless indicated otherwise.

ALLIANCE
Aitkin* — New Life Church of the CM&A; Worship 10:15 am; Services on Sunday at 10:15am and 6pm; 11-1st Street SW; newlifeaitkin.com 218-927-2823.
Baxter* — Pointway Alliance Church; Rev. Charles Bolstridge, 218-537-6505; 7756 Highland Scenic Road; Worship 10; www.pointway.org
Garrison* — Worship 10:30am
Onamia — Vineland Native American Chapel, Hwy. 169 north of casino; Worship 11; Pastor Boeringa 320-532-4449

ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Aitkin — Pastor Andrew Jergenson; Sunday Morning Service 10.
Baxter — Heritage Church, Pastor Heath Beard; 8:30, 10 & 11:30 Sundays, 6:30p Wednesdays, iamheritage.org
Crosby — Pastor Dustin McCaleb; Worship 10:30
Crosslake — Crossroads Christian, Rev. Gary Espeseth; SS at 9:30; Worship at 10:45
Hill City — Interim Pastor John Koppel, Staff Pastor Lisa Jordan; Worship 10; hillcityagchurch@gmail.com; 218-697-2662
Palisade — Pastor Charlie Bell; SS 9; Worship 10; Kids Church; Small groups during the week 218-845-2726

BAPTIST
Aitkin - Northwoods Community Church, Pastor William Verbeke, Worship 10:30, northwoodscommunitychurch.org
Baxter - The Journey North, Worship 9 & 10:30; 218-824-5617 thejourneynorth.com
Brainerd* - Faith Baptist Church, Pastor Jim Stephens, 218-829-3191; SS 9:00, Worship 10:30 and 6 p.m., Wed. Classes and Clubs 6:30 p.m.; fbcbrainerd.com
Brainerd- The Church On The Wise Road, Pastor Todd Stumbo 218-829-4673, Worship 11:00, SS 9:45 www.thechurchonthewiseroad.org
Breezy Point — Eagles Nest, Pastor Zach Broom 218-562-5252, Worship 9:30, SS 11.
Crosby — Bible Baptist, Pastor Jon Thorson; SS 9:45; Service 10:45 and 6 p.m., Bible Study Wed. 7 pm
Deerwood* — Jeff Shadrick, SS 9:30; Worship 10:30 and 6 pm; Wed. Service, 6:30 pm.
Glory* — SS 9:15; Worship 10:30 a.m.; Wed 6pm Glory Family night, KidMin grades kindergarten - 6, Mad4Christ grades 7-12. aitkinchurch.com
Hill City — Pastor Lonnie Lee; 218-697-2645; Adult SS 9; Worship 10 am; Bible Study, Fri., 7 pm.
Isle — Pastor Nick Skogen; 676-3171; SS 9:30; Service 10:30; Bible Study, Wed., 7 p.m.
Opstead — 676-8859; SS 9:30; Worship, 10:30; Bible Study Wed., 7 p.m.

CATHOLIC
Aitkin* — St. James, Fr. Mike Patullo, 218-927-6581; Mass Sat. 5 pm, Sun. 10:30. Confession Sat. 10-10:45 and 4-4:45 pm.
Brainerd — St. Andrew's, Fr. Gabriel Waweru, Sat.4:30; Sun. 10:00 and St. Mathias Sunday 8:00.
Brainerd — St. Francis, Fr. Michael Garry, Sat. 5:00; Sunday 7:30, 9:00, 11:15 and All Saints Saturday 4:00 and Sunday 10:30.
Cromwell/Wright — Immaculate Conception, Mass: Sat. 5 p.m.
Crosby* — St. Joseph's, Fr. Eli Gieske, Mass: Thurs. and Fri. at 8; Tues at noon, Sun. 8:30 & 10:30.
Crosslake — Immaculate Heart, 218-692-3731; www.ihmstemilys.org; Mass: Sat. 4 pm; Sun. 8:30; Confession Sat. 3 pm.
Emily — St. Emily, Mass: Mon. & Wed. 8; Sun. 10:30; Confession 1st Sat. 11 or by appt. 218-763-2101.
Garrison — Our Lady of Fatima, Fr. Eli Gieske, Mass Wed. 9 & Sat. 4 pm, Confession Sat. 3:30 - 3:50 pm
Grand Rapids — St. Joseph's, Fr. Jerry Weiss, Mass: Sat. 5 pm; Sun. 8 & 10:30. 218-326-2483
Hillman — Holy Family; 10:30 to Mass Sat. 6:30 pm (only through Labor Day) w/ confession before or by appt.
McGregor — Holy Family, Fr. Mike Patullo, 218-927-6581; Mass Sun. 8; Confessions Tues. 5:30-6:30 pm
Vineland — St. Therese, Mass Sun. 11; Holy Days 8:30.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Baxter, Lakes Area — Nondenominational; 7001 Highland Scenic Road; Bible Study every Wed. 7 pm; Worship 10:30-11:30. 218-828-1362
Tamarack — Pastor Terry Banker, 608-475-1528, Worship 9:30; SS 10:45; Wed Youth 4 pm.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Aitkin — Co. Rd. 12, Chapel Ph. 218-927-4454; Kevin Haffner 218-792-5684; Sacrament Mtg. 10

COMMUNITY
Aitkin — Nondenominational; 927-2749; at 219-1st Ave. NE., Aitkin, Services Sun.10, 218-927-6959
Brainerd - Community of Hope Church of the Nazarene- Pastor Dave McGaffey Sunday worship at 10, SS 9; 16549 Johnson Rd -church phone 218-829-9005
Glen — Pastor R. F. Stauter, 218-838-1981; Worship 9 May-Oct.
Grand Rapids — Solid Rock Church of God, Pastor Robert Kimberling; 218-326-0711; Sun. BS 9:30, Worship 10:30; Wed. BS 6:30 pm
Jacobson — Jacobson Community Church, Pastor George Collins, 218-252-5938, Sun. SS (All ages) 9:30, Worship 10:30; Family Time 2nd & 4th Sundays; Wed. BS 7 pm
Kimberly — Nature Ave. Rev. Rick Perry; Worship 9; Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30; 218-927-6256.
McGregor — The Lighthouse Christian Church; Worship 10; 99 South 1st Street (at the McGregor United Methodist church [shared] in downtown McGregor) Pastor Joel Seibel.
McGregor — Victory Mission, Pastor J. Gould, 218-768-2160; Sun. 10; Wed. Bible Study, 7:30 pm.
Merrifield — Community Church of the Nazarene, Pastor Ron Christenson; Service 11 & 6 pm. Wed. Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.; 218-829-7536.
Merrifield — Ossipee Community, SS 10; Service 11; Wed. Bible Study Prayer, 7:00 p.m.
Nisswa — Christ Community Church, Pastor Richie Bean; Service 10; Fellowship 9:30-10
Outing* - Narrows Community Church, Pastor Kenny Holm, 218-792-5530 Worship 9:30; 6297 Woods Bay NE, just north of Hwy. 6 bridge
Palisade —Hilltop Chapel (Waukenabo Twp)*- service 10 a.m.; Adult and Children's SS 9 a.m.; 49448 Osprey Avenue, Palisade.
Tamarack — Church of Christ, 218-768-3898; Service 9:30; SS 10:45.

EPISCOPAL
Aitkin — St. John's, Holy Communion or Morning Prayer 9 Brainerd* — St. Paul's, Rev. Joyce A. Rush. In-person worship service at 10 am Sunday. Online at 5 pm Saturday. Call the church 219-829-3834 and leave a message with email to receive a Zoom invitation.

EVANGELICAL FREE
Baxter — Lakewood EFC, Pastor Matt Nagel; Worship at 9:00 and 10:45. Wednesday for all ages 6:30 pm.
Crosslake — The Log Church 9:30, Pastor Troy Nelson; 218-692-4141, 37218 County Road 66, www.crosslakeefc.org
Isle — Pastor Mark Lee; Sunday School 9:00 am; Worship 10:30 am; Sun. Youth group 6:00 pm, Wed. Adult Prayer 6:30 pm and Kids Knekt 6:30 pm
Malmö — Pastor Glenn Browning; SS 9:30; Fellowship 10; Worship 10:15
Wright — Pastor Ken Mitchell, 218-426-5115; SS 9:30; Worship, 10:30; Thu., Bible Study, 7 pm.

HEBREW/MESSIANIC
Glen — Beth Shalom Tabernacle of Truth, for information 320-684-2804

LUTHERAN
Aitkin — Bethlehem (ELCA), Rev. Rebecca Hinz; Worship 9:30; Holy Comm. 1st & 3rd Sun each month.
Aitkin — First* (ELCA) Pastor Reggie Denton; worship Sun. 99am (9am service also available via livestream on YouTube — First Lutheran Church, Aitkin and broadcast on KGIN 94.3 FM radio at 10am), take out community meal every Mon. & Thurs. 5pm and Tues. 12pm; food shelf 2nd & 4th Thurs. each month 9am- 4pm.
Aitkin (Cedarbrook) — St. John's (ELCA) Pastor Sarah Stadler, 602-318-6876, 27452 St. John's Church Road, Aitkin. Worship on Sundays at 9:00 am followed by Sunday school at 10:00 am. stjohns-cedarbrook.weebly.com.
Aitkin — St. John's (Missouri Synod), Pastor D. Becker; Worship Sun. 9, SS 10
Baxter — Christ Lutheran Church and Preschool (WELS). Pastor Bill Werth. Sunday Worship 9. Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 10:15. 13815 Cherrywood Dr. in Baxter. (Corner of Ingleswood and Cherrywood). 218-829-4105. www.christbaxter.com.
Baxter — Prince of Peace (LCMS); Communion every Sunday 9, Fellowship 10:15, Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am 218-829-7092 www.princeofpeace-lutheran.church
Beaver Township — Finnish EA, Hwy. 27, Worship 1st &

3rd Sun., 10:30.
Brainerd — First Lutheran Church (ELCA) Pastors: Patty Bjorklund and Jordan Gades, Sunday worship 9, Sunday School following worship. Services also available on YouTube and Facebook. 218-829-9552 flicbrainerd.com
424 8th Street South, Brainerd
Brainerd* — Good Shepherd Free Lutheran Church (AFLC), Pastor David Franz, find service info at www.goodshepherdfreelutheran.church, 5878 Pine Beach Road, Brainerd, 218-824-3052
Brainerd — Laestadian Lutheran Church, 1501 So. 8th St. - Sunday Worship Services 10:30 am. (www.lchchurch.org)
Brainerd — Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) 1420 South 6th St. Brainerd, Worship time September through May 8:15am & 10:30am; worship (June through August) 9 am. 218-829-5147. Website: www.trinitybrainerd.org. Email: trinity@trinitybrainerd.org
Brainerd — Truth Lutheran Church (LCMC, Pastor James Walth, Corner of 5th and Kingwood, Worship 9
Brainerd - Zion Lutheran Church (LCMS) Pastor Steve Benson, Sunday Worship 9, Monday Worship 6 pm. Education hour Sunday 10:15 am. 220 N. 8th St. Brainerd. 218-829-4317. www.zionbrainerd.com.
Cedar Lake, Norwegian Lutheran — Third Sun. 11, May - Oct. Crosby — Immanuel (LCMC, NALC) Rev. Paul Mattson; Sun. 9 & 10:30 worship; SS (Sept.-May) 10:40.
Crosby — Zion (LC-MS) Worship 9 (alternates with Immanuel Iron Hub) 218-546-6910.
Crosslake Lutheran Church (ELCA) www.crosslakelutheran.com Kristin Oltmann, Pastor / Becky Swanson, Pastor 218-692-3682 September 8-Mid-May: Sunday at 8:30am & October-Mid-May: Wednesday at 6:15pm
Crosslake —Mission of the Cross (LCMS), Pastor Leslie Uhrinak; Worship 9:30 with every Sunday Communion, Fellowship 10:30, Adult Bible Class 11, 218-692-4228, www.missionofthecross.org
Deerwood* — Salem (ELCA), Pastor Amanda Kempthorne; Worship: 9; Sunday School 9:50.
Garrison — Light of the Cross (ELCA), Worship 9 SS 9; 320-692-4773 or 877-406-9101.
Garrison — Shepherd of the Lake (LCMS), Rev. Caleb Worrel. Worship 10 with Communion Every Sunday. Adult Bible Study 8:30am, Sunday School Sept-May, 8:30am. Fellowship 11am. 320-692-4581. www.shepherdofthelake.org.
Giese — Immanuel, Rev. R. Langhorst & Rev. R. Lovaa; Worship 9; SS 10; Holy Communion 1st Sun. of month 8:45.
Hill City — Trinity, (Missouri Synod), Pastor M. Eckert; Worship 9; Bible Study 10:15.
Hillman — Immanuel, (ELCA) Sun. Worship 11, fellowship follows. Located on the corner of Hwy. 27 and Co. Rd. 47. (Handicap accessible)
Iron Hub — Immanuel (LC-MS) Worship 9, (alternates with Zion of Crosby) 218-534-3069
Isle — Faith (ELCA), Pastor Josh Blair; Worship 9:30; handicapped accessible.
Isle — Holden (ELCA), SS 9:30; Worship 10:30.
Isle — Trinity (Missouri Synod), Rev. Mark Maunula; Worship 9; Fellowship follows: SS 10:30; Adult Bible 10:15.
Jacobson — Carmel, Vicar Mark Wagner; SS 1st & 3rd Sun. 10, Service 11, fellowship follows.
Lake Shore — Living Savior Lutheran Church, 8327 Interlachen Rd.; Worship 9 Sunday mornings, followed by fellowship and Bible study. (Located on Co. Rd. #77 N)
Malmö — Bethesda (ELCA) Rev. James Muske: Sun. Worship 9am. Fellowship following Service. Communion every Sunday.
McGrath — Grace; Wed. potluck 5 pm, Bible study 6 p.m.; SS 10; Worship 11.
McGrath — Zion (ELCA), Worship 9; SS 9.
McGregor/Big Sandy Lake — Grace Lutheran Log Church (LCMC), Pastor Lorelei Robinson; Worship 9, Fellowship follows, SS 10.
McGregor — Our Savior's (Missouri Synod), Pastor Joshua C. Reinke; Worship 9; SS 10; Bible Study Tue. 9, Wed. 7 pm Outing — Our Saviors ELCA; Pastor Luke Lekander, Worship 9.
Palisade* — Bethel (ELCA), Pastor Steven Teff; Worship 9:30.
Pequot Lakes - Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (LCMS) Pastor Monte Meyer Worship 9 am, Fellowship 10 am, Sunday School and Adult Bible Study 10:15 am
Pequot Lakes* - Our Savior's Lutheran Church (ELCA) Rev. Stephen Blenkush Worship 9:00 a.m., SS 9:15 a.m., Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Wed. Adult Bible Study 11:00 a.m.
Rossburg — Bethesda Lutheran (LCMC Congregations in Mission for Christ) 11:30 service. Communion 1st & 3rd

Sunday each month.
Tamarack (AFLC) — Pastor Ron Staudinger; 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays 10 am; 41163 Kestrel Ave 3.3 mi. South of Hwy 210
Thor — Zion, Worship 11; 1st and 3rd Sun. April through December.
Wright — Bethlehem, Worship; SS 9.
Wright — St. John's (Missouri Synod), Pastor Joshua Reinke; Worship 10:30; Bible Study and Sunday School Sun. 9:30; Lent services Wed. 5:30 pm.)

NON-DENOMINATIONAL
Brainerd—Oak Street Chapel, Pastor Todd Wooden, Worship service is Sunday at 9:30, 523 SE 11th Street, Brainerd, 218-454-0984
Brainerd—Remnant Ministry Center, Pastor Ben Davis, Worship service is Sunday at 10am, 512 S 8th St., Suite 2, 218-829-2989.

PENTECOSTAL
Baxter — Christ Alive, 12485 Forestview Drive, Baxter, MN 56425. Pastor Walter Starr, 763-316-7270, Sunday Worship 10:00am, Wednesday Bible study 6:30pm
Emily — Cornerstone Church; Pastor Earl Ready; Worship 10, 41536 Birchwood Drive, Emily; 218-763-2939.
Ironton — Iron Range Christian Center; Pastor Dwight Semler; 218-546-6523; meeting at Irontonale Town Hall", Co. Rd. 12, (Deerwood Shortcut); Worship 10 & Wed. 7 pm.
Tamarack — Warriors of the Rainbow Ministry, Pastors Ken and Ron Fairbanks, Sat. 11. 218-768-3585

PRESBYTERIAN
Crosslake — Pastor Mark Ford, 218-692-4769; Worship 9; Fellowship 11. 14444 Daggett Pine Road, Crosslake, just passed the Community Center; www.crosslakepres.org.
McGrath — Calvary, Pastor - Todd Oltmann; Worship 9.
McGregor/Round Lake — Pastor Talley; Worship Sat. 5 pm. Tamarack — First, Rev. J. Yingling; Worship 11.

REFORMED
Crosby — Lifespring Church, a member of Fellowship of Independent Reformed Evangelicals, 9:30, 30 Hallett Ave NE 218-545-5433, www.visitlifespring.com

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
Aitkin — Pastor Josh Jeresek; Worship Sat. 9:30, Prayer Meeting & Bible Study Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.; www.aitkinadventist.org; 423-805-0933; 830 Minnesota Ave S Brainerd — Pastor Josh Jeresek; Worship Sat. 11:10, Bible Study 10; Bible Study & Prayer Mtg. Wed. 6:30 p.m.; 2910 Oak Street, Brainerd, 218-829-1676

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Pequot Lakes — 28877 State Hwy 371, Pequot Lakes 10:30 1st and 4th Sundays. 218-330-3476

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Brainerd — First Congregational UCC, 415 Juniper St, Brainerd. Sunday worship at 10. Pastor; Leslie Moughty. Handicapped accessible.

UNITED METHODIST
Aitkin* — Aitkin - Pastor Dawn Houser; Worship 10, Wednesdays at 5:30 pm Bible & Brew, Facebook live.
Crosby/Deerwood* — Cascade, Pastor Gary Taylor; Sunday Worship with Youtube live streaming 10 am with fellowship to follow. Cascade Ladies meet on the first Wednesday of each month at noon. Come & Eat Community dinner on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm. Please call the office to sign up: 218-534-3507.
Cutler* (South Aitkin County) — Pine Lake Chapel, Pastor Gary Taylor; Worship Sunday 1 p.m. Fellowship follows.
Cromwell — Pastor Tim Hornstad; Worship 10; SS 9
Emily* — Pastor Gary Taylor; Sunday Worship with Facebook live streaming 8:30 with fellowship to follow. UWF meet on the first Sunday of each month following worship. Men's prayer breakfast 2nd Saturday of each month at 8. Bible Study Thursday at 6 pm.
Fleming* — (Northern Lights Parish) SS 9:15; Worship 10:30; fellowship follows.
Hill City — Pastor Roger Lynn; Worship 10
McGregor* — (Northern Lights Parish) Worship 8:45; fellowship follows.
Onamia — Pastor Rick & Judy Wilder; Worship 11; fellowship 10; 2 bks north of Post Office; handicap ramp; 320-532-3150; office: 218-546-7656; cell: 218-360-1947

WESLEYAN
Emily — Rev. Jason Gressman; Worship 9; Friendship Time 10; SS 10:30; Wed. Activities 6:30 p.m.; 218-763-HOPE.

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New eagle pair and nest featured on Minnesota DNR EagleCam



With viewers in all 50 states and more than 150 countries, eagle enthusiasts across the globe will get a front-row seat to a new chapter in Minnesota's wildlife story. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) EagleCam will feature a brand-new pair of bald eagles and their nest, adding a fresh perspective to the popular live stream. The original EagleCam, which captivated viewers for years with the previous eagle pair, will remain live as well, providing a dual viewing experience.

The new camera is focused on a breeding pair of bald

eagles that have successfully nested in the area for over four years, rearing multiple broods of eaglets. Meanwhile, the original camera will continue to showcase the territory of the previous pair, whose nest tragically fell in April 2023.

Both cameras went live Thursday, available on the DNR's website (mndnr.gov/eaglecam) and their YouTube channel (youtube.com/channel/UCKibG4ONyUmGInOR3F3qq6Q). The webpage also features a new video on the camera installation and the critical work of the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program,

which supports the restoration of eagles and other species.

"While the DNR EagleCam brings Minnesota wildlife into homes and schools in an exciting and educational way, the Nongame Wildlife Program has helped restore and support populations of eagles, loons and many other species," DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division Director Katie Smith said. "This vital work is supported by donations on our webpage, on state tax forms, and through bequests and other gifts."

The new camera's location was selected because electricity couldn't be routed to the original nest. Xcel Energy once again provided services for the project, ensuring the second camera could be installed without charge.

The EagleCam gives viewers an intimate look at the eagles' nesting behavior. As the season progresses, viewers will witness the pair's courtship rituals, nest upgrades, and, by mid-February, the hatching of eaglets. These live-streamed moments provide not only educational

content but also offer proven mental health benefits, as research shows that watching wildlife cameras can bring the same calming effects as being in nature.

Catch the live action and follow along as Minnesota's bald eagles continue their incredible journey.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

- December**
- 20th - Call 218-546-5975 by Friday, Dec. 20 to reserve your Community Christmas Meal sponsored by the Deerwood and Ironton American Legions. All donations benefit the Cuyuna Range Food Shelf.
 - 21st - Emily Lantern Festival Participants will show off handmade lanterns, as they walk from city hall to the park where there will be a bonfire and treats.
 - 22nd- MN Adult and Teen Challenge Choir will perform at Heartwood Senior Living Community during worship services at 3 p.m. in the Conference Center. All are welcome.
 - 22nd - Gather at Rafferty's Pizza on Main Street in Crosby for the Cuyuna Area Christmas Sing at 4:30 p.m. Sing favorites from the Christian Christmas song book. Sponsored by Lifespring Church.
 - 25th - Deerwood Fire Department Turkey Bingo at the Deerwood Auditorium located at 23770 Forest Road in Deerwood, starting at 7 p.m. All ages are welcome. There will be 20 rounds of games and also 10 rounds of meat raffle packages during bingo. Turkey bingo raffle tickets are \$2 each. First prize is a Minnesota Sportsman's Lifetime License, second prize is \$500 cash, and third prize is \$200 cash.
- January**
- 4th - Breezy Point Resort Ice Fest 2024
 - 4th & 11th - Northland Arboretum Full Moon Snowshoe Hike, 7:30 8:30 p.m., guided by Bryan Pike. Bring snowshoes and/or winter boots, and a headlamp for an hour hike. Class size is limited. The cost is \$10 for members and \$20 for nonmembers. Payment is due at registration.
 - 16th - Cuyuna Lakes Chamber Annual Dinner at Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort. Social hour 4:30 p.m., dinner 6 p.m. and presentations begin at 7 p.m. Tickets \$80. Call 218-546-8131 for more information.
- Send your community events to hopper@crosbyironton.net**

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

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