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**WHAT'S
INSIDE**

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MARKETPLACE
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Lakes Area Food Shelf to open new branch in Brainerd/Baxter

The Lakes Area Food Shelf announced Monday, Oct. 27, that it plans to open a new branch to serve the Brainerd and Baxter communities — expanding its reach at a time when more families are feeling the pinch of food insecurity.

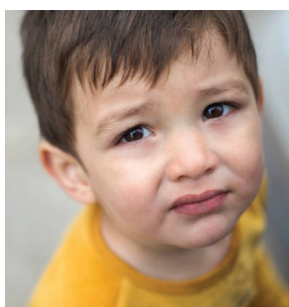
The announcement comes as food shelves across Minnesota brace for an expected surge in demand, with federal food assistance programs like SNAP and WIC temporarily halted due to the government shutdown.

Leaders of the Pequot Lakes-based organization said the expansion decision grew from months of conversations with Brainerd Lakes Area nonprofits working to address rising local hunger. According to the food shelf's data, nearly 200 households served each month come from Brainerd and Baxter, compared to about 120 from Pequot Lakes. For many of those families, that means a round trip of 50 miles or more just to access food.

To meet that growing need, the Lakes Area Food Shelf is now in talks to acquire a retail or commercial building in the Brainerd/Baxter area to house the new facility, while continuing full operations in Pequot Lakes. The estimated cost of expansion is \$1.7 million, covering the purchase, renovation, and operation of the new site. The goal is to open the doors by April 2026.

In a news release, the agency shared that it plans to follow the same successful model used in 2023, when community support helped raise over \$500,000 to renovate the Pequot Lakes location and launch a Community Resource Center. That center now connects clients with vital social services, offering more than just food assistance.

Residents and businesses are encouraged to get involved early by visiting the Lakes Area Food Shelf website www.lakesareafoodshelf.org for details on how to donate or volunteer.



Other donations also sought

As colder weather and Thanksgiving approaches, the Cuyuna Range Food Shelf in Crosby is gearing up to make the holiday season a little brighter for local families in

need—and they're asking for the community's help.

The food shelf is assembling supplies for complete Thanksgiving meals and welcomes donations of traditional favorites, including:

- ☐ Boxed stuffing mix
- ☐ Instant potatoes
- ☐ Pre-made gravy
- ☐ Pickles and olives
- ☐ Canned cranberries
- ☐ Canned pumpkin

Continued on Page 2



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JAC Christmas Marketplace in Aitkin

Ruttger’s Resort fall fun continues

The Jaques Art Center in Aitkin has transformed into a holiday wonderland just in time for its annual Christmas Marketplace, opening Friday, Nov. 1, and continuing through Dec. 23.

Shoppers will find the galleries filled with the work of talented local and regional artisans — the perfect spot to discover unique, handmade gifts for everyone on the list. From jewelry and pottery to

ornaments, textiles, and fine art, each piece reflects the creativity and care of Minnesota makers.

The marketplace will be open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, at the Jaques Art Center, 121 Second St. NW in Aitkin, conveniently located across from the Aitkin County Courthouse, in the shadow of the town’s iconic water tower.

Admission is free, not only

to the marketplace but also to the center’s two art galleries, where visitors can enjoy current exhibits while browsing for holiday treasures.

For more information, call the Jaques Art Center at 218-927-2363.

Come experience the charm, creativity, and community spirit of the season at the Jaques Art Center — where art and holiday cheer come beautifully together.

The indoor pool also remains open for guests and locals to enjoy — a warm retreat for these cooler days. Pool Punch Passes are available for purchase at the front desk, and private pool parties can be booked for kids, friends, or family celebrations by calling 218-678-2885.

Then, mark your calendars for what will soon be one of Ruttger’s popular fall traditions: the Flannel & Fabulous Girls Weekend, happening Friday through Sunday, Nov. 14–16. This cozy, laughter-filled getaway promises a weekend of “Sip • Spa • Shop • Sparkle!” Gather your

besties, throw on your most fabulous flannel, and indulge in a lineup that includes craft fairs, spa specials, wine and craft spirit tastings, DIY crafting sessions, fabulous food, and plenty of retail therapy—all with a generous sprinkle of holiday sparkle.

To learn more or reserve your spot, visit ruttgers.com/events or book your stay directly at ruttgers.com.

Ruttger’s Bay Lake Lodge isn’t just where summer memories are made—it’s where fall fun lingers, friendships grow warmer, and every weekend feels a little more fabulous.

Hunt next artist Nov. 7 at Nisswa



New Orleans-based Kelly Hunt is the next artist on the Grassroots Concerts schedule this fall in the Journey Church at Nisswa.

Seating is first-come, first-served in the Journey Church, 5459 Lakers Lane (next to the school in Nisswa). The music starts Friday, Nov. 7 at 7 p.m., with doors open at 6:30 p.m.

At each concert, decidedly the best family entertainment in the Brainerd Lakes area, Grassroots welcomes your nonperishable food, cash or check donation to a local

food shelf.

“Kelly Hunt sings with the lilting cadence of a folksinger born somewhere far away, sometime long ago,” says Robert Crawford of Rolling Stone Country.

Hunt was raised in Memphis, TN, amidst a motley melange of musical influences ranging from Rachmaninov to Joni Mitchell to Mississippi John Hurt.

Her debut album, “Even the Sparrow,” reveals Hunt’s penchant for storytelling and intriguing arrangement, and is “the musical equivalent of a book you can’t put down, one you’ll want to visit again and again.” — No Depression

While reminiscent of modern traditionalists such as Gillian Welch, “Even the Sparrow” reveals an ineffable quality that hovers beyond the constraints of genre, à la Anais Mitchell and Patty Griffin.

“If you’re someone who thinks that all banjo focused music sounds the same, well, you haven’t heard Kelly Hunt, then,” says Tom Haugen of Take Effect. “Not only is her voice unpredictable, it often changes in tone and is susceptible to gorgeous manipulation, and her depression era second-hand banjo emits a sound not quite like any other stringed instrument, making ‘Even The Sparrow’ a brilliant, mesmerizing experience.”

Grassroots Concerts, a non-profit, volunteer-run organization begun in 1988, charges \$15 at the door for adults and \$5 for children under 12 with listening attention.

The rest of the fall schedule:

- Friday, Nov. 21 – Weary Ramblers.
- Friday, Dec. 5 – Jack Klatt.

For information call 312-720-2849 or go to www.grassrootsconcerts.org.

Pine Lake Chapel Pancake Breakfast

The griddles will be sizzling and the coffee brewing as Pine Lake Chapel welcomes the community to its annual Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, Nov. 8, from 8 a.m. to noon.

Guests can enjoy a hearty breakfast featuring fluffy pancakes, savory sausages, and scrambled eggs, all served with a smile. The meal is

offered for a freewill offering, with proceeds supporting the chapel’s community outreach and local projects.

While you’re there, don’t miss the Bake Sale and the popular “Cute Kid Quilts” — handmade treasures available for just \$25 each. They make perfect gifts or cozy keepsakes as the winter chill sets in.

Pine Lake Chapel is located at 43472 240th Street, Aitkin, just six miles north of Garrison or 13 miles south of Aitkin — a short, scenic drive for a delicious breakfast and good company.

Come for the pancakes, stay for the fellowship — and leave with something warm for both your heart and your home.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- November**
- 1st - Annual Garage Sale at Ruttger’s Bay Lake Resort 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.**
- 1st - Coats for Kids, 9 a.m.-noon, at the Emily Food Shelf located at 20948 County Road 1. Coats, snowpants, hats and mittens will be distributed to families through the efforts of the Crosslake/Emily Knights of Columbus.
- 1st - Christmas Shopping Extravaganza & Craft Show at the Crooked Lake Town Hall and Fire Hall in Outing, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., 6300 Woods Bay Drive in Outing.
- 1st - Hallett Library Jigsaw Puzzle Competition, 1 p.m. at the Jessie F. Hallett Memorial Library in Crosby.
- 2nd - Great River Strings “Blood Curdling Strings” Concert, 2 p.m. at Ripple Center in Aitkin. A free will donation at the door is appreciated.
- 7th - Kelly Hunt will perform at the Grassroots Concerts, 7 p.m. at the Journey Church, 5459 Lakers Lane (next to the school in Nisswa.) Hunt is the daughter of an opera singer and a saxophonist. She was raised in Memphis, TN, amidst a motley melange of musical influences. Seating is first-come, first-served. Grassroots welcomes your nonperishable food, cash or check donation to a local food shelf. For information call 312-720-2849 or go to www.grassrootsconcerts.org.
- 8th - Hunter’s Breakfast and Bake Sale, 6 a.m.-1p.m., Waukenabo Community Center.
- 8th - Pine Lake Chapel Pancake Breakfast, 8 a.m. - noon, with sausages & scrambled eggs. Free will offering. Cute Kid Quilts \$25 and Bake Sale. Located at 43472 - 240th Street, Aitkin. Six miles north of Garrison or 13 miles south of Aitkin.**
- 8th - Spirit of Christmas Bazaar, 8:30 a.m.-1p.m., Immanuel Lutheran Church, 600 -4th St. SW, Crosby
- 8th - Bethel Lutheran Church Quilt, Bake And Craft Sale in Palisade, 8:30 a.m.-1p.m.
- 8th - St. Emily’s CCW Annual Hunters’ Dinner, 5-7 p.m., at St. Emily’s Catholic Church in Emily. The menu includes a roast beef dinner with home-made pies for dessert. Adults: \$17, Children 5-11: \$9, Children under 5: Free. Hunters’ mass to follow at 7:30 p.m.
- 12th - Salem Lutheran Church Community Thanksgiving Meal, noon-2 p.m. All are welcome! Reserve your seat by calling 218-381-2100. Located at 21276 Archibald Road in Deerwood.
- 14th - “Come as you are” is the theme of the St. John’s Lutheran Church Fall Luncheon, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Serving Beef stew, variety of salads, desserts, beverage and also a craft and bake sale. Everyone welcome.
- 15th - Hunting for the Holidays 11th Annual Craft and Vendor Show from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Deerwood American Legion hosted by the Walter Scott Erickson Post #557 Auxiliary. A sloppy Joe lunch is available.
- 21st - Iowa folk duo, Weary Ramblers, will perform at the Grassroots Concerts, 7 p.m. at the Journey Church, 5459 Lakers Lane (next to the school in Nisswa.) Chad Elliott and Kathryn Fox showcase multi-instrumental performances with tight harmonies and great storytelling. Seating is first-come, first-served. Grassroots welcomes your nonperishable food, cash or check donation to a local food shelf. For information call 312-720-2849 or go to www.grassrootsconcerts.org.
- 21st & 22nd - Holiday Market at the Emily Wesleyan Church in Emily. Call Janet Salut at 218-821-3395.
- 28th - World Famous Fish House Parade in Aitkin, 3 p.m.

Send your community events to hopper@crosbyironton.net or send us a message via www.NewsHopper.net/contact/

Other donations also sought| Continued from Page 1



- Ready-made pie crust
- Whipped cream

Donations can be dropped off Saturday, Nov. 1, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 302 Cross Avenue North, the food shelf building in Crosby.

In addition, The Bridge on 7th is also seeking contributions to support area shelters. Items currently on

their wish list include:

- Chapstick
- Disposable coffee cups
- Ear plugs
- Ramen noodles
- Bathroom cleaner
- Disinfectant spray
- Floor cleaner

Donations for The Bridge on 7th Overnight Shelter may be dropped off every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the shelter located at 1926 South 7th Street, Brainerd. Monetary donations can be sent to Bridges of Hope, PO Box

742, Brainerd, MN 56401.

Volunteer opportunities are also available at the shelter. For more information log on to www.bridgesofhopemn.org/volunteer or call 218-825-7682.

Organizations remind the community that even small contributions make a big difference. Together, these efforts help ensure that everyone in the Lakes area can share in the comfort, care, and gratitude that make this season so meaningful.

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Community invited to Rosenmeier Forum at CLC Chalberg Theater

The next Rosenmeier Forum, titled "The State of Public Safety in Minnesota" will be held at 7p.m. On Monday, Nov. 3 in the Chalberg Theatre, at Central Lakes College's Brainerd campus. The event is free and open to the public. The speakers include: Liz Collin, multi-E Emmy-Award-winning investigative reporter; Bob Kroll, a highly decorated retired police lieutenant, and Booker T. Hodges, Chief of Police of

Bloomington. Each speaker will address the issue of public safety from their perspective, followed by a roundtable discussion and questions from the audience. Steve Wenzel, Executive Director of the Gordon Rosenmeier Center for State and Local Government, said, "Crime and violence in our state today, including political violence, is a serious, compelling issue of concern and interest to all Minnesotans. The Rosenmeier Center is fortunate to present a forum of three excellent speakers, whose extensive backgrounds in law enforcement, public safety and media promises an opportunity for community members to understand the importance and need for order and justice in Minnesota." More about the speakers: Liz Collin is a Minnesota native raised in Worthington and a multi-E Emmy-Award-winning investigative reporter and news anchor. She is the producer of The Fall of Minneapolis and Minnesota v We the People documentary films, and author of They're Lying: The Media, the Left, and The Death of George Floyd. Her work has prompted important state laws. Yet perhaps most of all, Liz has been giving a voice to the truth—and helping others tell their stories—for more than 20 years. Bob Kroll is a highly decorated retired police lieutenant. He spent 32 years on the Minneapolis Police Department serving assignments on patrol, investigations, the SWAT team, and the union board. He also served 21 years in the U.S. Army Reserve as a military police officer. Police Chief Booker Hodges has worked as a school resource officer, patrol deputy, narcotics detective, SWAT operator, patrol overnight watch commander, inspector, undersheriff, acting chief deputy, an assistant public safety commissioner and now chief of police. Prior to joining the Bloomington Police Department in April of 2022, he served with Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Prior Lake Police Department and the Ramsey and Dakota County Sheriff's Office. Chief Hodges earned a doctorate degree in public administration. He serves as an adjunct professor at University of Northwestern in Saint Paul and has previously served as past president of the Northstar Chapter of the National Association of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), as well as an elected National Parliamentarian for NOBLE.

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