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Rainbow of generosity powers food shelf for 15 years



Tim DeJonghe volunteer unloads boxes for the Garrison Food Shelf. Ann Schwartz photo

By ANN SCHWARTZ
On the quiet northwest shore of Mille Lacs Lake, generosity has found a permanent home. In a town better known for weekend cabin traffic and lake breezes than bustling commerce, Garrison residents have built something extraordinary: a thriving thrift store that keeps a vital food shelf running and the community fed.

The Christian Bible tells us to give food to the hungry and the poor, in Garrison, that message has become a mission.

"We are on track to have our biggest year ever," said Jacobs, manager of Doro-

thy's Rainbow Thrift Store, the bright, bustling shop that anchors the effort. Using a simple but powerful model, money made at the store directly funds the Garrison Area Food Shelf next door.

The store, tucked at 9541 Madison Street, welcomes shoppers and donations Thursdays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The food shelf opens its doors to both donors and families needing assistance on Tuesdays from 1-5 p.m.

Both operations fall under the Garrison Area Caregivers, a nonprofit umbrella that can accept cash and goods to support the mission.

How to donate

Many Twin Cities cabin-goers and visitors swing through Garrison with donations in tow. Because Dorothy's Rainbow has limited space, the store accepts small, clean, usable items like clothing, toys, and household goods. They cannot take full-sized appliances or furniture, which donors are encouraged to bring to the Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity ReStore at 415 8th Avenue NE in Brainerd.

The food shelf, preparing Christmas boxes for local families, is especially in need of paper products, shelf-stable proteins (canned meat, fish, beans, peanut butter), and cash donations to help purchase fresh items like milk.



Your \$25 donation pays for a holiday meal for a local family from the Garrison Food Shelf.

Serving the community for 15 years

Dorothy's Rainbow and the Garrison Area Food Shelf settled into their Madison

Street home nearly 15 years ago. On Dec. 15, 2010, the thrift store officially opened its doors. Next door, the food shelf — long in search of a stable home — finally had one.

The journey to a permanent food shelf began around 2008, when the organization debated whether to rent or buy. Enter Dorothy and Norman Barthel, a well-off couple with no heirs and a desire to give back. It was Norman who urged the purchase of the Madison Street property; the Barthels covered much of the cost before paperwork was finalized in fall 2010.

Dorothy passed away one month before the store's opening.

"She was crazy into rainbows," recalled Walther. "So we decided that was the name for the building."

Even after purchase, the large building posed a challenge: how would the food shelf and Caregivers cover utilities and expenses? That's when Erickson suggested using extra office space for a thrift store.

"Of all things, it was Christmas time," remembered DeJonghe. "So in the middle of Christmas, we were starting

to open a thrift store." An open house introduced it to the community — and the community didn't forget it.

Dorothy's Rainbow has grown into a destination thrift shop, expanding well beyond its original office space. Today, the food shelf occupies the back of the building while the shop hums with volunteers, bargain hunters, and visitors who stop in just to say hello.

"We've given out a lot of food this year," Jacobs said. "And we can always use more."

A lifeline for local families

Each Tuesday, as regular as the lake's waves, Tim DeJonghe unloads a truck full of donations for the food shelf — a scene repeated week after week, year after year.

For families needing help, the food shelf is open on Tuesdays, 1-5 p.m. at 9541 Madison Street.

Emergency food shelf can be accessed by calling 320-692-5399 (leave a message)

The Garrison Area Caregivers, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, continues to ensure that the food shelf and thrift store remain a beacon of service and hope in a small town with an enormous heart.



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COMMUNITY EVENTS

- December**
- 6th - Sensory Friendly Holiday Visit with Santa Claus at Northland Arboretum with adjust lighting, calming music, visual supports, adapted activities with a experienced trained Santa for neurodivergent children and their families. Register by Dec. 1 for your time slot at <https://sites.google.com/isd181.org/santa-at-the-arboretum/home?authuser=0> or contact 218-454-9264 or pbcsensoryfriendlyevents@gmail.com.
- 6th - Aitkin County Historical Society Cookie Walk at 20 Pacific Street SW in Aitkin starting at 9 a.m.
- 6th - Saint Joseph Catholic Church Christmas Market Cookie Walk & Gift Shop, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Also Specialty Coffee, Hot Chocolate Bar and Pastries 9 a.m. - 11 a.m., Hot Soup with Fresh Bread 11 a.m - 2 p.m.
- 6th - Global Fat Bike Day 10 a.m. Red Raven, Crosby. Register at bikereg.com/73379
- 6th - Santa Day 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., The Motley United Methodist Church
- 6th - Palisade Area Christmas Craft Sale 11 a.m. -3 p.m., at 204 Main Street, Palisade.
- 6th - Cuyuna Christmas Snow Many Smiles at Memorial Park, Crosby, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.
- 7th - Abraham Lincoln, The Night Before Gettysburg one-act play, 2:00 p.m., at The Ripple Center, downtown Aitkin. Adult admission \$10; ages 16 and under \$5.
- 8th - Unlimited Learning featuring northern and southern December skies central Minnesota Ojibwe culture at the Forestview Middle School Planetarium, 3:15 - 4:45 p.m. free for members and \$10.00 for non-members.
- 13th- First Lutheran Church Cookie Walk, Bake Sale and Soup Lunch at 424 S 8th St, Brainerd, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Homemade soup, fresh bread, bar and beverage for \$8 . Also pick up all your sweets for the holidays... lefsa, krumkake, cookies, rosettes, jellies, candy and crafts.
- 10th - Central Lakes College's 5th annual Holly Jolly Concert & Tuba Christmas, 7p.m. in the Chalberg Theatre, Brainerd campus. The concert is free, but attendees are invited to donate to the CLC Food Pantry, if able.
- 13th - Deerwood Technologies Scholarship Fund electronics recycling drive, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., at Deerwood Technologies, 21301 Archibald Road (at the corner of Archibald Road/Hwy 6 and Cross Drive) in Deerwood. For more information visit www.deertech.com/recycle or Email events@deertech.com
- 13th - Polar Xpress Holiday Festival, 4 p.m. at Central Lakes College in Staples
- 13th - "Charlie Brown Christmas" Parade of Lights in downtown Pine River, 5 -7 p.m.
- 14th - Elf Bingo at the Center, 1-2:30 p.m. located at 803 Kingwood St, Brainerd. Includes a meat raffle. The cost is \$7 for 16 games, and a light lunch is provided after bingo is over.
- 14th - Visit with Santa and the Grinch, at Northland Arboretum, 2-5 p.m., bring the whole family for some festive fun, a little mischief from the Grinch, and holiday cheer from Santa himself.
- 20th - Annual Kid's Present Raffle at The Woodtick Inn, 24916 Minnesota Avenue, Cuyuna.
- 27th - Whoville in Crosslake Town Square, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Join the gingerbread house scavenger hunt and collect sweet clues to build your very own sugary creation

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

OBITUARY

CHARLENE FLISS



Charlene F. Fliss, 75, of Aitkin died Thursday, November 27, 2025 at Riverwood Health Care Center in Aitkin with family by her side.

A private celebration of Charlene's life will be at a later date. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery, Aitkin.

She was born January 24, 1950 in Canby the daughter of Clifford and Ethelyn (Lorenzen) Fliss. She graduated from Aitkin High School in 1968. She was known as the family historian. She loved corresponding with friends and family and keeping everyone updated on life's milestones. Her hobbies

included reading, doing crossword puzzles, watching TV and knitting items for friends and relatives.

Charlene is survived by her sister Mimi Markguard of California; brothers and sisters-in-law: Doug (Carol) Fliss of Detroit Lakes, Gregory (Renee) Fliss of Aitkin; sisters-in-law: Bernice Fliss and Barb Fliss; many special nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers: Dallas Fliss, Larry Fliss, and Norman Fliss, brother-in-law Iner Markguard and sister-in-law Janet Fliss.

Arrangements are with Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home in Aitkin. To leave a message of condolence go to www.srtfuneral.com.



Holiday lights brighten the night in Garrison. Troy Gabrio photo

Christmas spirit shines in Garrison

By ANN SCHWARTZ

As the chill of winter settles over central Minnesota, the town of Garrison is lighting up with the unmistakable glow of the holiday season. Along Hwy. 169 South, travelers are being welcomed by a festive display of winter scenes and a towering "Merry Christmas" sign, courtesy of the Garrison Commercial Club.

The club's members have been busy installing the colorful lights and decorations that will brighten the way for motorists traveling near the

junction of Hwy. 169 and Hwy. 18. The process is no small feat: sturdy steel poles are pounded into the ground, lights are carefully strung, and every fixture is tested to ensure it's ready to shine. The tall light scenes are attached to wires for stability.

The results are a series of tall, dazzling scenes that will make any traveler smile during the long winter nights.

Garrison, home to the iconic stone concourse and the giant walleye statue, is known for its small-town charm and these holiday dis-

plays only add to its seasonal magic. The Christmas lights are just the beginning.

The holiday festivities continue with the annual Children's Holiday Party on Saturday, December 13, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Garrison VFW. Hosted by the Garrison VFW Auxiliary, the Garrison Bay Lake Lions, and the Garrison Commercial Club, the event promises a fun-filled evening for families. There will be a free hot dog supper, gifts for children, and a chance to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus in person.



Wayne, Andy, Brian, and Ashley Schmaltz along with Loren Larson and Win Carlson work to assemble the festive light display near the Walleye in Garrison. Ann Schwartz photos

READER RIBBETS

Minnesota's economy is lagging

One Minnesota Chamber of Commerce just released its new Business Benchmarks report, and it confirms what many of us have been feeling for a while. Minnesota used to stand out for strong growth and a high standard of living. Now we are slipping behind. From 2019 to 2024 our real per capita GDP grew only 1% while the national rate was nearly twice that. Job growth ranked 39th. Labor force growth ranked 40th. Household income growth ranked 46th. Nearly 48,000 more people left Minnesota than moved here from 2020 to 2024.

The report points directly to high taxes and heavy regulations that make it difficult for small businesses to grow and create good jobs. Minnesota has the second

highest corporate tax rate and the sixth highest personal income tax rate in the country. That hurts local job creators. It also slows down innovation and tech growth. Families are moving because other states offer a better chance at building a future. Our cost of living ranks 19th highest nationwide while nearby states like Iowa and the Dakotas remain far more affordable. Young people and workers are choosing opportunity elsewhere.

Affordability comes up in nearly every conversation I have across the district. People tell me their paychecks do not stretch like they used to. Families are trying to keep up with the rising cost of housing, energy, groceries, and everything in between.

Two years ago Democrats

had full control in Saint Paul and an \$18 billion dollar surplus. They could have used it to deliver real relief to working Minnesotans. Instead they spent every dollar, increased government spending by 40%, and raised taxes by ten billion more. The priorities were clear, and helping regular people with everyday costs was not one of them.

Minnesota still has everything it needs to thrive. What we do not have is a governor who puts affordability first.

I would love to hear from you. Tell me what you are seeing, how your family is doing, and what concerns you most as we head into the next year.

Keri Heintzeman
Minnesota Senate,
District 6



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Sweet traditions and savory soup at Holiday Cookie Walk Bake Sale

The smells of the season are about to fill the air at First Lutheran Church of Brainerd, where the congregation will host its Holiday Cookie Walk Bake Sale and Soup Lunch on

Saturday, December 13, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 424 South 8th Street in Brainerd. This annual holiday favorite is the perfect place to stock up on all your seasonal



sweets and Scandinavian specialties. Shoppers can browse tables filled with lefse, krumkake, rosettes, cookies, candies, jellies, holiday treats, and handmade crafts—all lovingly made by members of the church community. (A

friendly reminder: cash or check only will be accepted.) After filling your goodie boxes, stay and enjoy a homemade soup lunch served from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For just \$8, guests can savor a comforting bowl of soup,

fresh-baked bread, a bar, and a beverages.



Cookies!

The Aitkin County Historical Society will hold its annual Cookie Walk on Saturday, Dec. 6, starting at 9 a.m. at the Depot, 20 Pacific Street SW. The festive fundraiser features tables of homemade holiday treats, and organizers are calling on local bakers to help make the event a success.

A variety of cookies are pre-plated for \$8.00 a doz. Pre-orders can be called in to 218-927-3348 or emailed at achs@aitkincohs.org. Pre-orders must be picked up by 11:00 the day of the sale.

The Cookie Walk offers a sweet way to support ACHS and kick off the holiday season.

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Online bidding available at www.proxibid.com/janzen

Janzen Auctioneers would like to wish you all a **Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!** *Thank you* for all of the support throughout the 2025 year. We want to wish you all a **Blessed & Prosperous 2026!** God Bless, *Janzen Auctioneers*

VEHICLES: 2005 Chevy Avalanche 5.3L V8, 4WD w/131945 miles, 2007 Ford F150 extended cab 5.4L V8, 4WD w/156,592 miles, 2005 Ford Explorer, 4WD w/156,592 miles, 1991 Ford Probe sports car, collectible w/138,551 miles **FISH HOUSES:** 6x11 V nose crank down wheel fish house w/tongue & groove interior, TV, cabinet storage & propane stove, 7x10 Wheel house, crank down style, propane heat, 4 hole, **ATVs:** 2018 Yamaha 700 four wheeler w/plow 325 miles, excellent condition, 2004 Suzuki 700 Twin Peaks four wheeler w/plow 1528 miles, 1986 Honda Goldwing 1200 Motorcycle w/23,973 miles great runner **BOATING & RELATED:** 2014 Sea Doo Jet ski 9 ft. on factory Sea Doo Move trailer, 1995 Weeres Fisherman Deluxe 20 ft. pontoon w/40 HP Evinrude OB motor, Tebben Scissor pontoon trailer like new condition **TRAILER:** Carry On 5x8 Utility trailer w/ramp, 4x8 utility trailer w/sides, 1994 Tandem axle 16 ft enclosed trailer **FIREARMS & AMMUNITION:** Approximately 50 quality firearms and a nice selection of ammunition **GARAGE RELATED:** Millermatic 185 wire feed welder, less than one spool used, like new, Miller plasma cutter new never used, Craftsman 10 inch contractor series table saw 3HP, Craftsman band saw floor model, Benchtop band saw, Rem/Pro large upright tool box on wheels, Central Pneumatic 125 PSI upright air compressor on wheels, Champion duel fuel generator, Large floor model drill press 16 speed, Pro Force air compressor on wheels, Delta combination belt/disc sander, Milwaukee & Ryobi Kohler motor, Yard Machines 20 ton, 5 HP vertical or Horizontal wood splitter, Craftsman trimming mower, Smaller Toro snowblowers, Brute front tine tiller, John Deere 160 riding lawn tractor, Husqvarna walk behind weed trimmer, Power Boss 2600 PSI pressure washer on wheels, Yard Shark chipper shredder on wheels powered by B&S, John Deere front tine tiller **SPORTING GOODS COLLECTIBLES:** Jasper Dodge Detroit grade mallard decoy, Rare green wing teal duck decoy, Captain Harry Jones sleeper hen Canvasback decoy, Michigan style Canvasback duck decoy, Shorebird decoy by Bill Savage, Sure shot duck call, Two M.K. Scheels fish decoys, Marbles, Western & Buck knives plus many other brands of knives, Collectible ammunition of many different calibers and boxes **ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES:** Huge Coke Cola collection of many different items, Large variety of kerosene lamps, 15 brass petal bells on leather strap, Wood cross country skis, Large & small turned wood bowls, & reed basket, Cow bell, Small washboard, Antique brass cigar cutter, Rare Stereoscope on stand w/ cards, Two Native American hand carved flutes by David O'Neal, Pottery/Stoneware, Watt ware rooster pitcher, Western stoneware cattail pitcher, Nickel plated Billings & Spencer wrench, Ohio drawknife 21 inch **ITEMS OF INTEREST:** Three wheel handicap scooter, Nice Variety of lumber of different lengths, some rough sawn, Numerous beer taps of all different brands, Nice selection of baseball, basketball & football trading cards many still in the wrapper, Numerous NASCAR Ertl style cars & matchbox cars **HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS & RELATED,** Large Grandfather Clock, Smaller rectangle kitchen tables & chairs, Free standing pine kitchen island w/drawers, Variety of kitchen bar stools, Large dresser, Upholstered furniture

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Unlimited Learning hosts sky program

Winter skies will take center stage next month as Lakes Area Unlimited Learning invites the community to a special planetarium program at Forestview Middle School on Monday, Dec. 8, from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

Guests will settle in under the dome for an immersive look at the northern and southern December skies, guided by presenter Tim Peabody. Peabody will share insights

not only about the seasonal constellations but also about central Minnesota Ojibwe culture and its deep connections to the night sky. The program also includes a full-dome feature, wrapping up in about an hour.

To make arrival smooth, attendees are encouraged to reach Forestview around 3:15 p.m., before the afternoon school traffic picks up. Park-

ing is available in the front lot, and guests should enter through the main doors. Signs inside the entrance will direct visitors to the second-floor Planetarium, with elevator access available.

The event takes place at Forestview Middle School, 12149 Knollwood Dr., Baxter. Admission is free for Unlimited Learning members and \$10 for non-members.

With its blend of science, culture, and stunning celestial views, this program offers a unique way to welcome the winter season — and a great reason to look up.

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LEGAL NOTICES

(Published in NewsHopper Saturday, Nov. 29, Dec. 6 & 13, 2025)

LIBBY TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

The Libby Township Board will meet at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at the Palisade Community Center. Township supervisor Tom Anderson may attend remotely via phone or Zoom. The purpose of this meeting shall be to discuss and decide matters that may come before the board.

Dated this 20th day of November, 2025
Jane Grimsbo Jewett, clerk
Libby Township
2.91

(Published in NewsHopper Sat., Dec. 6 & 13, 2025)

HAZELTON TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF FILING FOR TOWNSHIP OFFICE

Notice is hereby given to the residents of Hazelton Township that the annual filing for election of officers opens December 30, 2025 and continues through January 13, 2026. The following positions are to be filled at the election on March 10, 2026.

Supervisor – 3 year term
Clerk – 2 year term

If you wish to file for candidacy, please file with the township clerk by appointment; contact at 218-678-3389 or email hazeltonclerk@gmail.com. The Hazelton Township Clerk will be available from 1:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. on the last day, January 13, 2026 for filing as required by law.

Filing fee is \$2.00.

Dated this 1st day of December 2025
KAY OLSON,
Clerk Hazelton Township
4.6

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