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WHAT'S INSIDE

COMMUNITY EVENTS
Page 2

CLASSIFIEDS
Page 3

LEGALS
Page 2

HOLIDAY
TRADITION
REVIVED
Page 4

Fun abounds at Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort holiday events

The holidays are in full swing at Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort, where December is packed with festive, family-friendly celebrations that stretch from Whoville to the North Pole — with a little Seinfeld-style silliness in between. While the twinkling lights of the Christkindlmarkt Christmas Market have dimmed for the season, the resort is just getting started. Guests can dive into themed weekends, cozy winter traditions, and indoor and outdoor adventures that capture the spirit of the season.

The Grinchiest Weekend through Dec. 14

Ruttger's is rolling out the green carpet for a delightfully mischievous celebration during its Grinchiest Weekend — a three-day extravaganza of meet-and-greets, themed crafts, games, and gatherings that would make even the Grinch grin.

Your friends will be green with envy when they hear you spent the weekend rubbing elbows with the Grinch himself. But there's no need to inspire jealousy — bring them along to join in the fun. Guests can cozy up around bonfires, enjoy gooey pudgie pies, make Grinchy crafts,

snap holiday photos, and take part in indoor (or snowy outdoor) snowball toss games and Grinchy Bingo complete with a decadent Hot Cocoa Bar.

Rubyville Bistro keeps bellies full all weekend long, while Whoville scavenger hunts and ballroom games add a playful challenge for families. Indoors, guests can warm up with cornhole, pickleball, pool, Giant Jenga, ladder golf, board games, and puzzles. Outdoors adventurers (weather permitting) can enjoy ice skating, human bowling, ice bocce, snowshoeing, Hok skiing, and scenic hikes.

For an extra festive touch, The Garage and Bay Lake Salon & Spa are offering Cindy Lou Who specials — the perfect way to add a little holiday pampering to your stay.

Festivus Celebration • Saturday, Dec. 20, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Once the Grinch packs up his sleigh, the holiday cheer continues with a quirky, laughter-filled day devoted to Festivus — the offbeat celebration made famous by the television show, *Seinfeld*. On Dec. 20, guests can enjoy a festive mix of shopping, spa visits, scavenger hunts, and

indoor/outdoor winter fun. **Shop 'Til You Drop**

Start the day at The Garage, the resort's must-visit boutique housed in a historic former gas station. Guests will find custom Ruttger's apparel, home décor, toys, gifts, fudge, and unique treasures perfect for holiday giving.



Relax at Bay Lake Salon & Spa

After shopping, unwind with a well-deserved break at Bay Lake Salon & Spa, offering massages, facials, manicures, pedicures, and hair services. Walk-ins are welcome, or call 218-678-4667 to book ahead. **Festivus Festival: 11 a.m.–3 p.m.**

The heart of the day delivers peak Festivus fun. Warm up around the bonfire with a brew, take part in the "Feats of Strength," decorate the Festivus pole, or snap silly photos to commemorate the day. For sleuths of all ages, the all-day Seinfeld Scavenger

Hunt offers a resort-wide adventure inspired by iconic moments from the show.

Indoor and Outdoor Fun

Outdoors, families can enjoy broomball, snowshoeing, Hok skiing, ice bocce, ice skating, and even human bowling. Indoors, the fun continues with pickleball, corn hole, ladder golf, Spikeball, arcade games, and dips in the heated pool. No matter the temperature, the festivities shine bright.

Santa's Stop Over Weekend Dec. 26–28

After his global gift-giving journey, the jolly old elf is making Ruttger's his home-away-from-home for three days of relaxation, treats, and family fun.

Guests are greeted with warm cookies in the fireplace lobby, a comforting start to this post-Christmas retreat. The weekend features an evening pop-up at Santa's Souvenir Shop, where ornaments, gifts, and post-holiday deals await bargain hunters



and keepsake collectors alike.

Saturday night brings one of the resort's beloved traditions — the Seafood Boil dinner — followed by a crackling bonfire and classic Pudgie Pies, the nostalgic treat toasted over open flames.

At Santa's Workshop, families can dive into hands-on creativity, crafting ornaments, decorating cookies, making small gifts, or creating snow globes and 3D snowflakes. Space is limited, so guests are encouraged to call 218-678-2885 to reserve their spot.

With festive weekends stacked one after another, Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort is truly a holiday destination where every guest — whether Grinch, Festivus fan, or Santa believer — can create lasting memories with your loved ones.



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OBITUARY

FRANK NESHEIM



Frank “Hank” Nesheim, beloved husband, father, and Brainerd resident, passed away on September 29, 2025, at the age of 93. His funeral was October 4, and he is interred at Camp Ripley Veterans cemetery.



Born in 1932 to Sam and Esther Nesheim, Frank grew up in the family bait business, learning the minnow trade at his father’s side. After graduating from Brainerd High School in 1950, he moved to St. Paul, where he worked, learned carpentry, and served his country. When his National Guard unit was mobilized during the Korean War, he served honorably in the U.S. Army as a stateside radio operator. He married Lucy Taray of St. Paul in 1957.

Frank returned to Brainerd in 1959, where he continued working as a carpenter until 1967 when Frank’s father died and Frank and Lucy took over Nesheim Bait and Tackle, and minnow hatchery. The business grew to supply minnows to dozens of bait shops in the Brainerd lakes area and surrounding cities. Far from a little store, their shop became a full-service destination offering rods, reels, ice

augers, depth finders, etc., extensive varieties of tackle, and numerous types of healthy live bait.

With his quiet strength and work ethic, Frank was the steady center of the operation. He opened the shop daily at 5 a.m., tended the ponds, raised minnows, made deliveries and helped customers into the evenings. Whenever he was home, he worked in the shop. He never complained; he simply did what needed to be done. Their children helped in the summers, and they employed staff throughout the years — several of whom stayed for decades. Frank led by example—calm, dependable—and his quiet integrity and sense of humor left a lasting impression on countless fishermen.

In 2025, Nesheim Bait and Tackle was inducted into the Minnesota Fishing Hall of Fame, honoring the 35 years of dedication the Nesheims and staff showed serving Minnesota anglers.

Frank was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Eugene (Sonny) Nesheim, and his sister Lois Garvey. He is survived by his wife, Lucy; his four children, Chris Nesheim-Plonsky (Dave), Julie, Nancy Davis (Bruce), and Eric (Karla); four grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Frank was a devoted fan of the Timberwolves, Twins, Vikings, and Gophers—a loyal Minnesota sports fan to the end.

Visit www.newshopper.net/obituary-submission/ to submit an obituary.

Fun with Elf Bingo at The Center

Looking for a holly jolly way to spend a winter afternoon? Head over to The Center, 803 Kingwood Street in Brainerd, on Sunday, December 14, for a festive round of Elf Bingo

The fun runs from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m., and this isn’t your average bingo game—there’s even a meat raffle to keep things extra exciting. For just \$7, players will enjoy 16 games of bingo, plenty of laughs, and a light lunch served right after the games

wrap up.

While you’re there, don’t forget to stop by The Center’s Gift Shop, open from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., to pick up a few last-minute treasures or stocking stuffers.

And here’s a fun twist—bring a friend who’s never attended one of their bingo events, and both of you will be entered to win a free dozen donuts! It’s a sweet way to share the joy (and maybe a few treats) this holiday season.

So grab your lucky dauber,

put on your best elf spirit, and join the community for an afternoon of good cheer, great company, and plenty of prizes.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- December**
- 12th -14th- The Grinchiest Weekend at Ruttger’s Bay Lake Resort. Bring your family and friends to cozy up around bonfires, enjoy gooey pudgie pies, make Grinchy crafts, snap holiday photos, and take part in indoor (or snowy outdoor) snowball toss games and Grinchy Bingo complete with a decadent Hot Cocoa Bar.
- 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.
- 13th & 14th - Polar Xpress Holiday Festival, noon - 4 p.m. at Central Lakes College in Staples. All Aboard for FREE holiday fun with G-Scale model train displays photos with Santa, miniature train rides and more at 1830 Airport Rd., Staples. Sponsored by the Staples Historical Society & Central Lakes College Student Senate.
- 13th - Jesus is the Treasure and the Gift Christmas Program, 3-4:30 p.m. at Garrison Alliance Church, 9475 Jefferson St., Garrison. Lunch from 1 - 3 p.m.
- 13th - “Charlie Brown Christmas” Parade of Lights in downtown Pine River, 5 -7 p.m.
- 13th - Ward Christmas Party, 6-8 p.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,101 Buffalo Hills Lane West, Brainerd
- 14th - Pancake Breakfast Pequot Lakes American Legion, 8-11 a.m., Serving pancakes, eggs, sausage, OJ, and coffee. Located at 4435 Main Street, Pequot Lakes.
- 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.
- 15th - Cribbage players wanted, 1 -2:30 p.m. at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.
- 17th - Santa Story Time at the Brainerd Public Library, 5:30 p.m.
- 20th - Festivus Celebration at Ruttger’s Bay Lake Resort, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Take part in the “Feats of Strength,” decorate the Festivus pole, or snap silly photos to commemorate the day. For sleuths of all ages, the all-day Seinfeld Scavenger Hunt offers a resort-wide adventure inspired by iconic moments from the show.
- 20th - Annual Kid’s Present Raffle at The Woodtick Inn, 24916 Minnesota Avenue, Cuyuna.
- 21st - Free Breakfast with Santa at Brainerd Eagles, 9:30–11:00 a.m., free breakfast with Santa for kids; adults \$5. All are welcome to attend at 124 Front St. in Brainerd.
- 22nd - Cribbage players wanted, 1 - 2:30 p.m. at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.
- 26th – 28th - Santa’s Stop Over Weekend at Ruttger Bay Lake Resort post-Christmas retreat for relaxation, treats, and family fun. Seafood Boil dinner on Saturday night. Deals await bargain hunters and keepsake collectors. Try your hand at Santa’s Workshop. Space is limited, so guests are encouraged to call 218-678-2885 to reserve their spot.
- 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.
- 29th - Prayer Quilting Group, 8 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. This group makes full size quilts that are given to individuals with medical issues for encouragement.

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

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Snowmobiles took over the streets in northern Minnesota town

By ANN SCHWARTZ

Snowmobiles took over 3rd St. NW in Aitkin as part of the Sip N Stroll event for Fishhouse Parade Day.

The Aitkin SnoDrifters and Mille Lacs Trails snowmobile clubs worked together on a historic display of sleds along with bonfires and a warming tent.

“We increased from 17 units last year to 34 this year, though the weather was a little warmer,” noted John Buhlmann, Aitkin. Buhlmann, who works at Graphic Packaging in Crosby, is an active member of the SnoDrifters Snowmobile Club of Aitkin. “To attract more snowmobile owners to join our display, we did lots of advertising,” explained Buhlmann.

The furthest participant traveled from Somerset Wisconsin. Of special note where two Arctic Cat units— one of the earliest snowmachines. The entire display showed everything from Teardrops Ski-Doos from the late 60s and Scorpions made right in Crosby.

“We actually partner with Mille Lacs Trails,” continued Buhlmann. “We take over the street and build up two bonfires. We have the warming tent there and Mille Lacs Trails has clothes for sale. We sell snowmobile club memberships and tickets for our cash raffle.”

Aitkin SnoDrifters all cash raffle continues until February. The top prize is \$3,000 with other prizes of \$1,500

and \$1,000. Get tickets from any Aitkin SnoDrifters member or message the club on Facebook to get tickets.

“As people wandered around and talked about snowmobile memories, they were able to vote on four people’s choice awards,” explained Buhlmann.

Prizes were given for restored and unrestored; first and second place in each category. Prize amounts were \$250 for first place and \$125 for second.

Restored First Place went to Tom Lundberg, Aitkin, for his 1970 Arctic Cat Panther. Second place restored went to Kermit Espeseth for his 1967 Evinrude. Unrestored First Place went to Steve Morgan, Aitkin for his 1980 Polaris Centurian. Unrestored Second Place went to Doug (unknown last name) for his 1960s Bridgestone motorcycle converted to a snowmobile. One of a kind prototype model.

Sip N Strollers were able to relax as they viewed the Vintage Snowmobile Display and other sites before and after the Fish House Parade in Aitkin



Wes and Becky Vork of Carlton brought this unrestored Arctic Cat.

Entrants came from Aitkin and all around the area: Mora,

Somerset, Wisconsin; Scandia, Hugo, Elk River and more.

Since it was Fishhouse Parade Day in Aitkin the Sip n Stroll shared space with the snowmobiles. Block North had a bar open there and people could take their drink and look around town. Down the block, the Methodist Church folks served hot goodies by GuidePoint Pharmacy.

The Sno-Drifters invite you to participate in their upcoming

cash raffle, youth training, ladies’ ride, memorial ride for passed away members and more. Check their Facebook page and web page for events.

To raise money for the club, they host a meat raffle and virtual racing at the Locker Room in downtown Aitkin, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 5 p.m.

The SnoDrifters raise money to pay for grooming equipment, groomer operators, insurance, heat, upkeep of the

clubhouse and more. They are still paying for the \$100,000 used Piston Bulley groomer that they acquired.

The snowmobile display was a great kickoff before the big Fishhouse Parade and a great place for Sip N Strollers to wander afterward. With the way that this show doubled over last year, it seems that Aitkin’s Vintage Snowmobile Display is one of the best in the area.

Holiday tradition revived in downtown Aitkin

By ANN SCHWARTZ

Put yourself back into the holiday season of 1965. Strolling through downtown Aitkin, you hear the piped in music. See the whimsical and lovely decorations, including scenes, characters and cartoons painted on retail and office windows. Other stores sport lights and creative Christmas displays to add a great vibe, like at Toby and Jen’s Christmas Store. Wait – some of this happened in



Grinchy scenes painted on the Shirt's Plus expansive display windows in Aitkin on Minnesota Avenue North.

Ann Schwartz photos

2025, not 1965.

Someone started talking recently about nostalgia about when school students painted downtown windows. That is before my time in Aitkin, but I am from the era in the 1990s in Aitkin when the newspaper had its windows painted with whimsical scenes and characters. Other places hung

lights shaped like objects (wreaths, angels, etc.) on wires (Sandy DeMenge of McGregor sold these Holiday DeLites). Many stores hung the Mississippi Town vintage Christmas banners (one of which can now be seen at Toby’s Christmas Shop). There have also been several phases of décor in the street through-

Self guided tour: If you start at the stoplight in Aitkin, head north and watch for windows on both sides of Minnesota Avenue. Walking is the best way to view the windows. Then return back to the stoplight and head south and find them on the east side of the street at Curio North, All Through the House and Beginigins. Then check out the hair salon Sheer Obsession and the Jaques Art Center west of the stoplight.



The Grinch helps decorate at Lori's Hair Studio.

The Grinchiest Weekend

Dec. 12 - 14

ruttgers.com/events/the-grinchiest-weekend

Friday, Dec. 12

Meet & Greet with the Grinch 5 p.m.

Bonfire & Pudgie Pies 7 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 13

Grinch Crafts 10:30 -11:30 a.m.

Pre-registration required for Grinch Crafts

Snowball Toss-Games 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Grinchy Bingo

with Hot Cocoa Bar 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 14

Holiday Photo Op 9 -10 a.m.

ALL WEEKEND LONG:

- Dine at Rubyville Bistro
- Whoville Scavenger Hunt
- Whoville Games (Ballroom)

INDOOR: scavenger hunt, corn-hole, pickleball, pool, Giant Jenga, ladder golf, cozy fires, board games & puzzles

OUTDOOR: snowshoeing, Hok skiing, hiking (weather permitting)

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Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Cindy Lou Who SPECIALS

at The Garage & Bay Lake Salon & Spa

Winter Hours

Bear Pine Bar & Ruby's

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Thursday-Saturday 7 a.m.- 10 p.m.

Call 218-678-2885 to **BOOK A FUN POOL PARTY** for your kids, friends, or family celebrations.

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Upcoming Events

- Festivus Celebration Dec. 20
- Santa's Stop Over Weekend Dec. 26 – 28
- New Year's Eve Dec. 31

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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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