

Vol. 26 • Issue 51 email: hopper@crosbyironton.net PO Box 562, Ironton 56455

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IS OUR GOAL NewsHopper Call Eric at 218-821-1393

# Sertoma Club's Winter Wonderland at Northland Arboretum

www.newshopper.net



218-821-1393 By Appointment Only

The glow of the holidays has officially returned to the Northland Arboretum, where the Brainerd Area Noon Sertoma Club's Winter Wonderland is now open for its 18th year. The beautiful drive-thru Christmas light display, a tradition since 2007, once again transforms the wooded trails into a sparkling maze of festive color, music and motion.

This year's display features more than 80 lighted and animated scenes, offering families a bright escape into holiday cheer. Visitors spend 15 to 30 minutes winding through the glowing pathways, all while tuning their radios to holiday music that accompanies the route.

Winter Wonderland is open 5:30 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights through Dec. 23. Beginning Dec. 24 through Dec. 31, the display welcomes visitors every night through the end of the month.

The entrance is located at the Northland Arboretum Visitors Center, 14250 Conservation Drive in Baxter.

organizers note that the line typically moves quickly and wait times are minimal.

While crowds are common,

Tickets are required per vehicle and can be purchased in for \$20 at the gate or \$15 with advance purchase (available at Brainerd/Baxter Cash Wise Liquor or online at tinyurl.com/3xj7ww8f)

Beyond the twinkling lights and holiday atmosphere, Winter Wonderland serves a greater purpose. Each year, the Sertoma Club donates \$5,000 to four community partners: the Northland Arboretum, Timber Bay, the Camp Confidence Learning Center and the Lakes Area Restorative Justice Project. Additional funds support the club's general fund, which is distributed to nonprofit organizations throughout the year.

For many in the Brainerd lakes area, Winter Wonderland marks the unofficial start of the holiday season—an annual celebration of light, community and the spirit of giving.

# Recycle old Christmas lights and extension cords

The Crow Wing County Land Ser vices Department, in collaboration with Sunrise Sertoma of

Brainerd and

Crow Wing Recycling, has launched a holiday recycling drive for old Christmas lights and extension cords. The materials collected will be sent to Crow Wing Recycling, where the valuable copper and other metals will be recovered and reused. Proceeds from this eco-friendly effort will be donated to local charities, providing a dou-

"We are excited to team up with Sunrise Sertoma and Crow Wing Recy-

ble dose of holiday

cling to make a positive impact on both the environment and the community," said Tom Strack, the County's Environmental Services Supervisor. "By recycling these materials, we not only reduce waste but also support those in need."

The "Bites for Lights" program makes it easy for residents to drop off their old decorations and extension cords at convenient locations across the county. Local businesses are stepping up by providing collection containers for donations. Participating businesses include:

Aitkin: Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative, 36559 US-169 Baxter: Northland Arboretum, 14250 Conservation Drive; Frandsen Bank, 7429 Excelsior Road; MMFCU,

3283 Isle Drive

Brainerd: Crow Wing County Landfill, 15732 State Highway 210; Habitat Re-Store, 415th Ave NE; Ace Hardware, 214 West Washington Street; MMFCU, 200 South Sixth Street

Breezy Point: Ace Hardware, 8170 Co Rd 11

Crosby: Crosby-Ironton Courier, 12 East Main Street; Ace Hardware, 225 West

Crosslake: Ace Hardware, 35593 Pioneer Drive; Holiday Station Store, Route 66 and County Road 3

Main Street

Emily: Ace Hardware, 69959 State Highway 6

Little Falls: Ace Hardware, 1101 2nd Ave NE

Nisswa: Ace Hardware, 25673 Main Street

**Continued on Page 4** 

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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



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Wishing you a joyful Christmas season,

The Staff of the NewsHopper

# Long Lake CC prepares for 2026

The woods around Long Lake Conservation Center (LLCC) are alive with the sounds of laughter, learning, and a love of nature. As the 2025–26 school year gets underway, the center has already hosted a bustling season filled with discovery and adventure.

So far, 14 schools have visited Long Lake, bringing 1,043 students for immersive, hands-on environmental learning. Another seven schools and 500 students are scheduled before year's end, keeping the trails well-traveled and the classrooms buzzing

Altogether, LLCC educators have delivered more than 550 hours of environmental education this fall alone. That learning has been supported by \$86,311 in financial aid from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, administered by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), and \$9,560 in scholarships from the Long Lake Conservation Foundation. Since September 1, the center has also hosted seven non-school groups, proving that Long Lake isn't just for students—it's for everyone who loves the outdoors.

And if you think this fall has been busy, just wait until you see what's in store for 2026. The new year promises to be one of the most creative and community-driven yet, filled with stories, art, and

music inspired by nature by professional artists and

### **Upcoming events at Long Lake Conservation Center**

 Legends & Lore Storytelling Series — January 4–6,

Kick off the new year with a little magic! The Legends & Lore Storytelling Series is a free event featuring some of the greatest storytellers in the land. Masters of myth, folklore, and modern tales will share their stories and creative process in engaging, interactive ways. Good stories will be enjoyed by all and everyone who attends will live happily ever after.

• Nature Art Village -Spring 2026 (Date TBA)

Creativity blooms at Nature Art Village, an event that connects local and regional artists with the community. Visitors can watch artists at work, purchase one-of-akind pieces inspired by the natural world, and even try their own hand at creating art using elements found in nature. Whether you're an artist or an admirer, it's a perfect day to celebrate the beauty of the outdoors through art. • NEW ADDITION IN

— July 12–18, 2026 The week leading up to Long Lake's annual concert is getting even more exciting! Camp Nature Rocks is a new family music and art camp debuting in 2026. Campers of all ages will create original art and music guided

2026! Camp Nature Rocks

musicians, all while enjoying the natural beauty of Long Lake. It's the perfect blend of creativity, community, and conservation.

• Fifth Annual Nature Rocks Concert for Conservation — Saturday, July 18,

Cap off the summer with the Nature Rocks Concert for Conservation! Now in its fifth year, this beloved event promises to be the biggest and best yet. The lineup will be announced in early December, but here's a hint: the opening act's singer performed at the very first Nature Rocks, and the headlining band takes its name from a mythical bird. Any guesses?

For those who want to help ensure every student can experience Long Lake's programs, donations to the Long Lake Conservation Foundation's scholarship fund can be made online at www. longlakecc.org/donate.

Long Lake Conservation Center is located at 28952 438th Lane, Palisade, MN 56469. For more information, call 218-768-4653, email info@longlakecc.org, or visit www.longlakecc.org.

With another record-breaking school year underway and an exciting slate of 2026 events on the horizon, Long Lake continues to prove that when nature, creativity, and community come together, something truly special happens.

# COMMUNITY EV

#### December

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

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. If you like to cut out fabric squares, match colors, pin quilts, hand tie, or sew on a machine while praying for the recipient your help is greatly needed. You can also support this great group with financial donations to cover postage and supplies. Located on the third floor Conference Room at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

29th - 31st - Sparkle and Shine in the New Year at Ruttger Bay Lake holiday fun for the whole family. The Sign up for Sparkle Craft Lounge and Journal Creations, space is limited, so guests are encouraged to call 218-678-2885 to reserve their spot. Family trivia, puzzle contest, Bingo, Glow Swim, pudgie pies plue indoor and outdoor fun.

29th - Cribbage players wanted, 1 - 2:30 p.m. at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

1st - Prayer Quilting Group, 8 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Full size quilts are made for individuals with medical issues. If you like to cut out fabric squares, match colors, pin quilts, hand tie, or sew on a machine while praying for the recipient your help is greatly needed. You can also support this great group with financial donations to cover postage and supplies. Located on the third floor Conference Room at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

2nd North Country Icebreaker at Breezy Point Resort with ice fishing, pike spearing, winter camping. seminars, a Wild Game Cookoff Competition.

5th - Prayer Quilting Group, 8 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Full size quilts are made for individuals with medical issues. If you like to cut out fabric squares, match colors, pin quilts, hand tie, or sew on a machine while praying for the recipient your help is greatly needed. You can also support this great group with financial donations to cover postage and supplies. Located on the third floor Conference Room at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

5th - Cribbage players wanted, 1 -2:30 p.m. at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

8th - Prayer Quilting Group, 8 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Full size quilts are made for individuals with medical issues. If you like to cut out fabric squares, match colors, pin quilts, hand tie, or sew on a machine while praying for the recipient your help is greatly needed. You can also support this great group with financial donations to cover postage and supplies. Located on the third floor Conference Room at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

12th - Prayer Quilting Group, 8 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Full size guilts are made for individuals with medical issues. If you like to cut out fabric squares, match colors, pin quilts, hand tie, or sew on a machine while praying for the recipient your help is greatly needed. You can also support this great group with financial donations to cover postage and supplies. Located on the third floor Conference Room at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

12th - Cribbage players wanted, 1 -2:30 p.m. at The Brainerd Center, 803 Kingwood St., Brainerd.

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

> Area Births, Open Houses, Engagements, Weddings & Community Events are published FREE!



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For more information call Crow Wing County Land Services at 218-824-1010. Explosive • Reactive • Flammable • Caution • Warning • Danger

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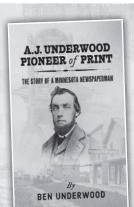


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ANSWERS ACROSS		ANSWERS DOWN	
1. YWCA	43. Rye	1. Yoga	33. CPU
5. Oprah	44. Butte	2. Warf	34. Altar
10. RSVP	45. Sore	3. Char	35. Lotto
14. Oahu	46. Media	4. Audit	36. Speed
15. Cairo	48. Ate	<ol><li>Oceanus</li></ol>	39. Cedar
16. Ohio	49. Monday	6. Pad	42. Red
17. <i>G</i> rad	52. Rams	7. Riga	44. Basin
18. Edgar	53. Rod	8. Arabs	47. Imagery
19. Moos	54. Lot	9. Horrid	50. Ali
20. Africa	56. Raid	10. Romp	51. Yonder
22. Abruptly	58. Detained	11. Shot	55. Terra
24. Tuna	63. Gnawer	12. Viol	57. Dared
26. Sis	67. Avid	13. Posy	58. Damp
27. PTA	68. Drape	21. Cubit	59. Ever
30. Bull	70. Rare	23. Use	60. Tile

71. Meld

72. Error

73. Erie

74. Pres

75. Ratty

76. Deck

Crossword Puzzle on Page 4

25. Alarm

27. Plasm

28. Taboo

29. Adorn

31. Layer

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37. Lad

38. Isaac

40. Plop

41. Abort

32. Decals

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61. Adds

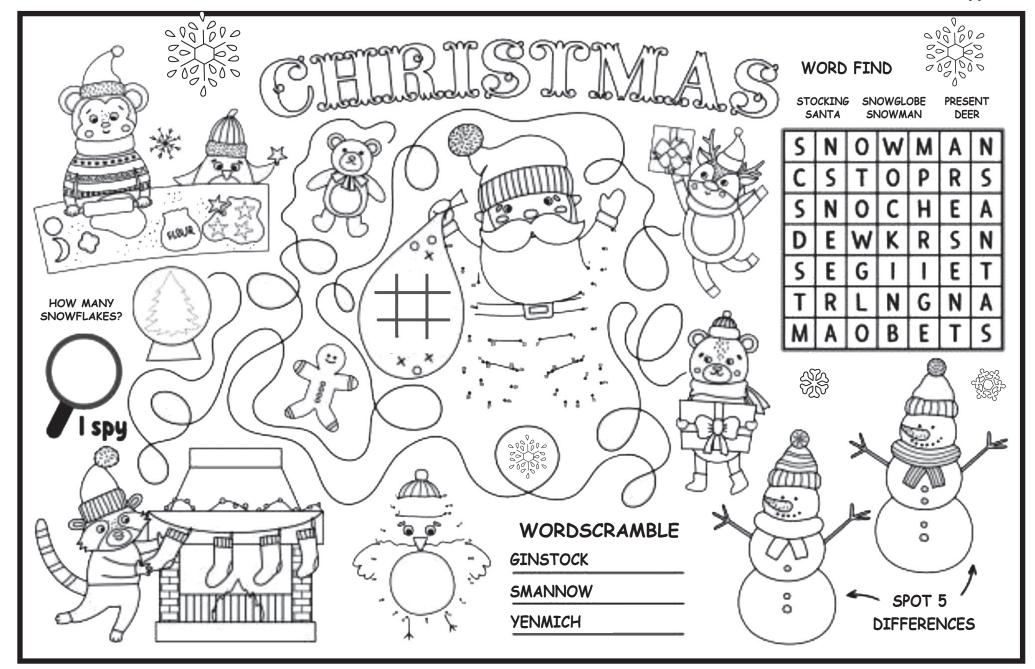
62. Dart

64. Ware

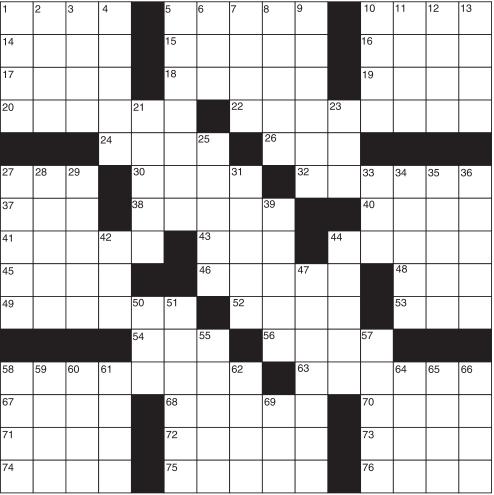
65. Eric

66. Reek

69. Pot



# CROSSWORD



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Urban gym
- 5. TV Star
- 10. Request for an answer
- 14. Island
- 15. The largest city in Africa intervals 16. Tributary of the Missis-
- sippi River
- 17. Angular unit
- 18. \_\_ Allen Poe 19. In a way, expresses
- audibly
- 20. Continent 22. Suddenly
- 24. Albacore, for one
- 26. Female sibling
- 27. Monetary unit of Spain
- 30. A very large and strong man
- 32. Decorations
- 37. A male child 38. Sir \_\_ Newton
- 40. Fall down
- 41. Terminate 43. Food grain
- 44. Montana town
- 45 An open skin infection 46. Disseminates widely
- 48. Fed
- 49. Weekday
- 52. Crashes
- 53. Visual receptor cell sensitive to dim light
- 54. Anything chosen at
- random 56. Foray

- 58. Stayed 63. Rodent
- 67. Keen 68. Place casually
- 70. Recurring only at long
- 71. Coalesce
- 72. Inadvertent incorrectness
- 73. Lake \_\_\_, one of the Great
- 74. G.W. Bush, abbr.
- 75. Shabby (slang) 76. A pack of 52 playing
- cards

### **CLUES DOWN**

- 1. A Hindu theistic philosophy
- 2. Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation
- 3. Marine trout
- 4. A way to learn
- 5. The Titan who was the god of the sea
- 6. Temporary living quar-
- 7. Capital of Latvia
- 8. Riding horses
- 9. Hideous
- 10. An easy victory
- 11. A small drink of liquor
- 12. String instrument
- 13. Usually given as a
- present 21. An ancient unit of

- length
- 23. An established custom
- 25. Warning
- 27. Suffix meaning something formed
- 28. Excluded from use or mention
- 29. Glorify 31. Shape
- 33. Central processing unit
- 34. Lord's table 35. Board game
- 36. The rate at which
- something happens
- 39. Wood
- 42. A tributary of the
- Mississippi River
- 44. Bowl-shaped for holding liquids
- 47. Imagination
- 50. Caliph 51. Distant but within sight
- 55. Earth
- 57. Defied
- 58. Muffle
- 59. At all times 60. A thin flat slab of fired
- clay used for roofing 61. Sums up
- 62. Pointed missile
- 64. One of a similar kind
- 65. \_\_\_ Clapton, musician
- 66. Smell to heaven
- 69. Cooking vessel

Answers can be found on page 3

# Koop Funeral Home

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# Recycle old Christmas lights and extension cords | Continued from Page 1

The program not only helps keep the county's natural beauty intact but also reduces the en-

vironmental impact of discarded electronics, which often end up in landfills. By responsibly recycling the old lights and cords, residents are ensuring that valu-

such as copper, are repurposed, helping to conserve raw materials.

"Everyone has those tangled strings of lights or worn-out extension cords hiding in a drawer or garage," said Strack. "Now, instead of letting them collect

dust, you can easily recycle them and do something good for the community."

The initiative is part of the county's ongoing efforts to promote responsible waste management and sustainability. The Land Services Department is always available to assist residents with other recycling or waste-related questions, whether it's about hazardous materials, composting, or demolition waste.

For more information or to find out about other recycling opportunities, Crow Wing County residents can contact the Land Services Department at 218-824-1010 or email land. services@crowwing.gov. More resources can also be found online at www. crowwing.gov.



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