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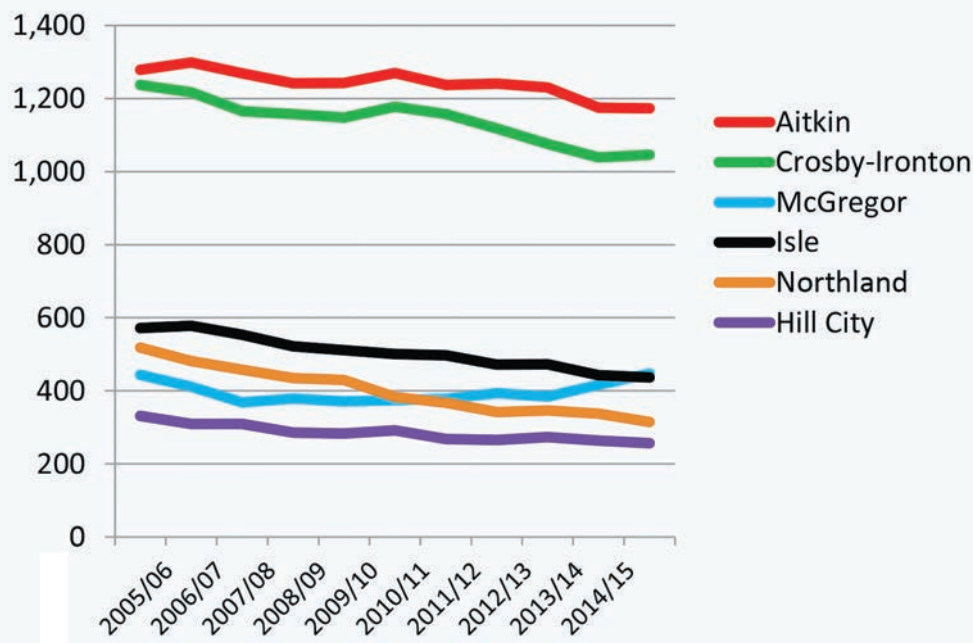
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Setting the course for Aitkin Schools

Should Aitkin Schools add on, build new, or stay the same?

K-12 Enrollment for Adjoining Districts, 2005/06 - 2015/16 (excluding Brainerd)



Last year, the district had a net loss of students almost entirely due to increased losses to various charter schools. Aitkin students have attended a number of charter schools over the past, including Minnesota Online High School, Bluesky, Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy, Emily, Minnesota Transitions and Cyber Village. The number attending any of these schools has ranged from one to six. In 2014/15, the number of students attending Minnesota Transitions rose from 2 in the prior year to 26.

By ANN SCHWARTZ
Older school buildings that need work, combined with a state proposal to add pre-kindergarten school days

for 3-5-year-olds spurred the Aitkin School District to take a serious look at its long-range planning to determine its future facility needs.

"We're looking down the road to what our facility needs will be over the next 20-50 years," said Superintendent Bernie Novak in an

interview.

To that end, a task force of about 30 community members (see sidebar page 2) has held two meetings and will hold two more (on February 3 and February 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Aitkin High School Media Center). While these are not public meetings to take public input, they are open meetings, clarified Novak. Anyone who comes will be expected to listen and not contribute as the school board itself is also just listening at this time.

"Do we continue to upgrade and repair our buildings or go in a different direction?" mused Novak.

The board recently put a lot of money into a new boiler for the high school, thinking it was staying put. But even if the final vote is to "do nothing" there is still about \$4 million in roofing, ventilation and other needed repairs to buildings that must be undertaken.

The final outcome could include adding on to Ripplside Elementary or the Aitkin High School, or both, or building a new building

which could be configured as a grade 5-12 building or some other configuration. Right now, all ideas are being considered.

Novak said that one of the major forces that got them thinking about facility upgrades was Gov. Mark Dayton's proposal to add all-day prekindergarten classes for 3-5 year olds. Although it didn't pass the last legislative session it is just a matter of time until it passes, said Novak. If it does, they'll need to add on to Ripplside Elementary or make changes elsewhere.

"Nowadays, with two parents in the household working, we find that children are not 100 percent ready for kindergarten," said Novak.

Another, much-needed space at Ripplside is an expansive pick-up and drop-off area for students that is separate from the bus boarding and debarking area. If Ripplside is reconfigured, it is likely that Woock Field -- north of the Ripplside school building and now the high school baseball field -- will

Continued on Page 7

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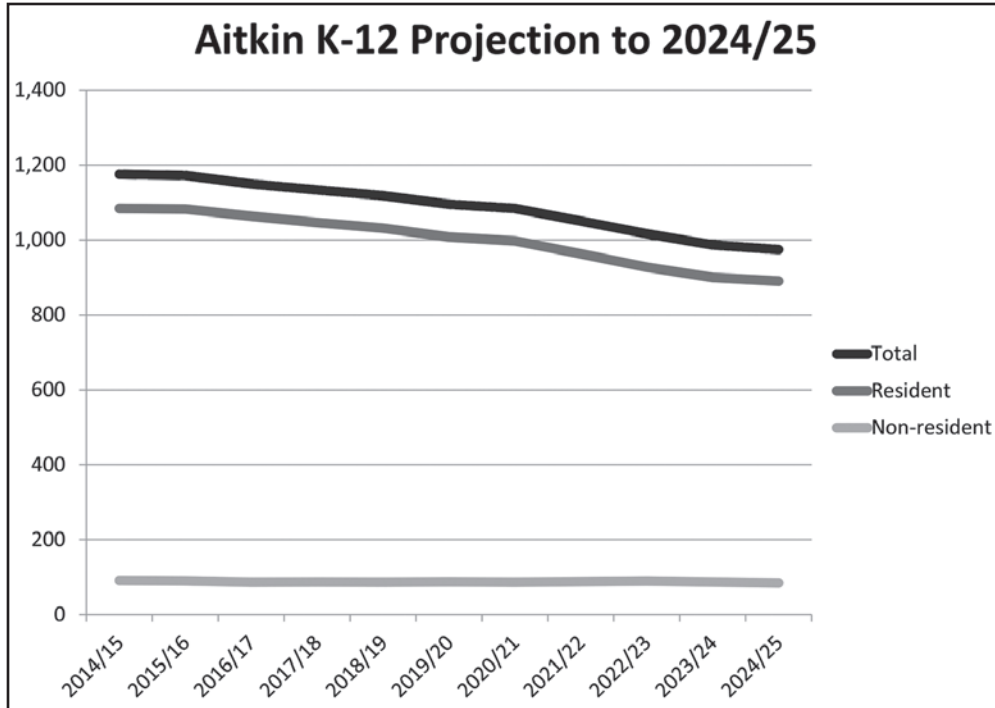
Setting the course for Aitkin Schools | Continued from Page 1

need to be moved. At the high school there is a big need for gym space. The school district continues to rent gym space at Aitkin's Westside Church, Novak

- Aitkin Schools Community Task Force members**
- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Steve Wilson | Erin Melz |
| Scott Melz | Terry Butenhoff |
| Terry Nies | Bob Cummings |
| Lorelie Robinson | Brad Nelson |
| Gary Miller | Ed Esler |
| Peg Lundberg | Dallas Curt Smith |
| Brian Leitinger | Jeff Bare |
| John Carlson | Henry Palm |
| Mike Hagen | Amanda MacDonald |
| Steve Moreland | Ann Espeseth |
| Laurel Fremling | Cathy Christy |
| Scott Miller | Rob Williams |
| Brad Besch | Mark Mehr |
| Chancy Nordick | Roberta Elvecrog |
| Bridget Rono | Mike Ryan |
| Stacy Westerlund | Jim Blakesley |
| Cory Trotter | |

- Community Task Force role**
- Help Share Assessment information within communities
 - Ask questions
 - Bring feedback and Ideas to committee and school board
 - Jointly develop plan options with school board
 - Help board prioritize options and develop final plan
 - Become well informed 'vote yes' members?

- Questions for the Task Force**
- What is our community project?
 - What are our needs?
 - What should we do to address them?
 - How will we fund?
 - How long will we fund?
 - What resources will be used?
 - What timeline will be followed?
 - Engage and communicate



confirmed. One year ago, the community voted against a \$24 million referendum that would have remodeled schools and added an off-site athletic complex. Question 1 requested \$24.2million to fix up the high school and Rippleside Elementary and add an addition to each school. Tax impact would have been \$84 a year on a \$100,000 home; \$211 on a \$200,000 home and \$338 on a \$300,000 home. Tax impact on a \$500,000 commercial industrial property would be \$1,079. The second ballot question, which could only have

passed if the first question passed, asked voters for a \$3.2 million dollar new sports complex. Land would have been purchased and softball and baseball fields, a football field and a track and tennis courts would have been built there, along with a nice building for bathrooms and concessions and adequate parking.

- Facility highest needs gleaned from community listening sessions**
- Additional classroom space at elementary
 - Modernize facilities - 21st century education
 - Update technology
 - Quality of and access to athletic fields
 - Community access to facilities
 - Improve pick-up/drop-off at Rippleside
 - Improve HVAC
 - New High School
 - Gym space
 - Land locked

Due to lake ice Brainerd Ice Fishing Extravaganza postponed February 6

Brainerd Jaycees contest officials and the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office have decided to postpone the charitable ice fishing contest held on Gull Lake until February 6 in the interest of safety. "The warm weather has had an adverse effect on the lake ice; the result being inconsistent ice thickness through-out our lakes. The safety for our volunteers, personnel and those attending the event is the Sheriff's Office main concern.

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank the Brainerd Jaycees for all the dedication and support that has been offered and look forward to a fun and safe event in the very near future," Lieutenant Scott Goddard stated. "With the latest cold snap, we were optimistic the ice would be ready for us, but Mother Nature had another plan," Chairperson Angie Nelson said, "however, it's critical that we make sure the contest site is safe. This announcement will hopefully allow our participants enough time to adjust their plans to join us in three weeks." A postponement date of February 6 is listed on all contest tickets. Contestants stand to win over \$200,000 in prizes this year if they catch one of the 150 fish! In addition, a random prize drawing for additional prizes including an Ice Castle Mille

Lacs Hybrid fish house and an Arctic Cat Prowler, other gift cards, and ice fishing accessories totaling nearly \$40,000 in prizes is held. The Deuces Wild Dueling Pianos Comedy Show hosted by the Jaycees at Grandview Lodge will continue to be held on Friday, January 22. Proceeds from this event will be donated to the Brainerd Warrior Fishing Team in support of our next generation of anglers. Tickets may be purchased online at www.icefishing.org or stop in at Anderson Cleaners in Brainerd. First held in 1991, this event has never been canceled and been postponed only two other times, in 2002 and 2012. The contest was moved to a different lake once in 2006. Proceeds from the world's largest charitable ice fishing tournament has donated over \$3-million to Brainerd-area charities, most notably Confidence Learning Center. The volunteer-run event is organized by the Brainerd Jaycees who have over 140 members contributing more than 75,000 hours and nearly \$200,000 to the community annually. Eager anglers are encouraged to monitor the Extravaganza Facebook page and web site at www.icefishing.org to purchase tickets or get information including up to date reports on ice conditions.

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OBITUARIES

ANTOINETTE BOYLAND



Antoinette "Ann" Boyland, 91, of McGregor, died Friday, January 15, 2016 at the Aitkin Health Services in Aitkin.

Funeral services were held Thursday, January 21, 2016 at the McGregor United Methodist Church with Pastor Joel Seibel officiating. Burial was in the Woodland Cemetery at McGregor.

She was born June 30, 1924 in St. Paul, to Ignatius and Eva (Carpinski) Hytruszka. She grew up and attended schools in St. Paul. She then moved to the Lawler area and lived with her sister and brother-in-law. She married Murl H. Boyland on March 7, 1943 in McGregor and they made their home in the Lawler area where she raised her family. In 1979, she and her husband moved to Pioneer Villa and she lived there until moving into the Northland

Village Assisted Living in McGregor, in 2009. She has resided at the Aitkin Health Services in Aitkin for the past two years. Ann enjoyed crocheting, quilting, reading, gardening doing puzzles, riding bike, going for walks, playing bingo and dice and fishing. Ann loved to make people laugh.

She is survived by children: Anthony "Tony" Boyland of International Falls; Shirley (Jerry) Blokzyl of Cambridge; Carol Maki of Aitkin; Paulie Boyland of McGregor; nine grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Murl in 1992; daughter, Mary Garvey, and grandson, Kerry Mak; one brother and eight sisters.

Arrangements were with the Sorensen-Root-Thompson Funeral Home of Aitkin. Go to www.srtfuneral.com to sign the online guest register.

More Obituaries on Page 4

Kapsner's third painting dedication



A portion of Kapsner's Army painting installed May 2011 at Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery's Committal Hall, near Camp Ripley.

The Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery Memorial Association commissioned artist Charles Gilbert Kapsner to design and paint five large oil paintings to pay tribute to the men and women of the five branches of the United States Military: Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy.

The third of five 8 ft. x 10 ft. oil paintings, honoring the Coast Guard, will be unveiled at 2 p.m., Saturday, February 6 at the Vets Cemetery located seven miles north of Little

Falls on Hwy. 115, adjacent to the Camp Ripley Military Base. The dedication is open to the public, particularly welcoming veterans of the Coast Guard, followed by a 3 p.m. reception at the American Legion, downtown Little Falls. The 2015 Coast Guard painting will be permanently displayed next to the 2011 Army and 2014

Navy paintings in the Committal Hall.

Kapsner will start on the 2016 4th painting honoring the U.S. Marine Corps, followed by the final painting honoring the U.S. Air Force. The full project is a pictorial monument to the men and women of all branches of the military to honor their service.

Project funding comes from private donors who want to see veterans honored.



A portion of Kapsner's Navy painting installed November 2014 at Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery's Committal Hall, near Camp Ripley.

Just a Pinch



Sharing Hometown Recipes, Cooking Tips and Coupons

By Janet Tharpe

Spicy Fried Onion Balls Will Liven-Up Your Next Party

"I wanted to try something different!"

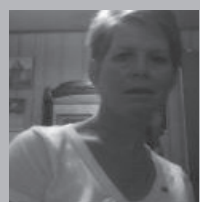


Kathy Sills's Deep Fried Onion Balls with Cajun Ranch Sauce are a wonderfully different appetizer for your next party (maybe for the big game?). With 4 tablespoons of red pepper, they do pack a healthy punch! If you're not a fan of spicy, feel free to adjust the seasonings. These were a unanimous hit with our Kitchen Crew and will be with your friends and family too.

See step-by-step photos of Kathy's recipe plus thousands more from home cooks nationwide at:

www.justapinch.com/onionballs

You'll also find a meal planner, coupons and chances to win! Enjoy and remember, use "just a pinch"...



Kathy Sills
Harrisville, MS
(pop. 23,762)

-Janet

Deep Fried Onion Balls w/Cajun Ranch Sauce

What You Need

- 8 oz. sour cream
- 1 small packet powdered ranch dressing & seasoning mix
- 5 tbsp Cajun seasoning, divided
- 4 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper, divided
- 2 c self-rising flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 egg
- 1 c milk, add more if needed

- 2 bags onion boilers, peeled
- 1 bottle canola oil

Directions

- Pour oil into deep fryer and preheat to 400 degrees.
- In a medium bowl, add the sour cream, ranch packet, 1 tsp of cajun seasoning, and 1/2 tsp of cayenne pepper, mix well.
- Chill.
- In a medium bowl

add the flour, egg and milk. Mix well.

- Add 4 tbsp of cajun seasoning to the batter.
- Add 4 tbsp of cayenne.
- Add salt and black pepper. Mix well.
- Take each onion boiler and coat with batter.
- Deep fry 1-2 min.
- Drain on paper towel.
- Enjoy with cajun ranch sauce!

Submitted by: Kathy Sills, Harrisville, MS (pop. 23,762)
www.justapinch.com/onionballs

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Request for female WWII pilots to be buried at Arlington

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar is calling on the U.S. Army to allow female World War II pilots to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). The Army currently does not permit Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) to be interred at ANC. Klobuchar sent a letter, on January 18, to the Secretaries of Defense and Army requesting that the Army allow the brave women who flew missions during World War II to have their ashes laid to rest

at the cemetery. Minnesota is home to one of the last remaining WASPs. Elizabeth Strofus, a 95 year old native of Faribault, taught male cadets how to fly warplanes and ferried B-17 bombers across the country during World War II.

"During World War II more than 1,000 Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) served in the United States military," Klobuchar wrote. "They test-flew repaired military planes and

trained combat pilots. These brave women shouldn't have to fight for the honor and the privilege they earned to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery. It is my hope that the Department of the Army will not make these heroes fight yet another battle, and I respectfully request that the Army allow these women the opportunity to be interred at Arlington Cemetery if they so choose"

The full text of the senator's letter is available below:

Dear Secretary Carter and Acting Secretary Fanning:

I write to request the Army allow the brave women who flew missions during World War II to have their ashes laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

During World War II more than 1,000 Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) served in the United States military. They test-flew repaired military planes and trained combat pilots. Thirty-eight WASPs died in the line of duty. It took the United States 33 years to grant these courageous women status as veterans and another 25 years for the Army to recognize those contributions with eligibility for burial at Arlington Cemetery Unfortunately, in March of 2015 Secretary McHugh reversed the 2002 directive allowing WASPs to have their ashes interred at Arlington.

I understand Arlington National Cemetery has limited space for burial. However, allowing WASPs to be buried at Arlington would not significantly impact the cemetery's capacity because there are very few WASPs still living.

Minnesota is home to one of the last remaining WASPs, Elizabeth Strofus. Ms. Strofus is a 95 year old native of Faribault, Minnesota. After the bombing at Pearl Harbor, Ms. Strofus volunteered to be a gunner pilot but was instead given the job of teaching male cadets how to fly warplanes and ferrying B-17 bombers around the country. Ms. Strofus and the other WASPs served bravely and earned a spot in Arlington.

These brave women shouldn't have to fight for the honor and the privilege they earned to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery. It is my hope that the Department of the Army will not make these heroes fight yet another battle, and I respectfully request that the Army allow these women the opportunity to be interred at Arlington Cemetery if they so choose.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Ongoing Events:

AA - Aitkin - 322 1st Ave. NE 218-927-2651 Sun. Women's Meeting 5:30 pm, Tue. Open Meeting 8 pm, Wed. Women's Meeting 6 pm, Thu. Sober Sailors Open 9 am, Friday Night Grape Vine 6:30 pm.

AA Garrison: Monday Night AA (open) 7:30 PM and Wednesday 7:30 PM at Community Alliance Church, 9475 Jefferson St.

ALANON - 322 1st Ave NE, Aitkin 6:30 pm Thursday evenings.

ALANON Garrison: Wednesday 7:30 PM at Community Alliance Church, 9475 Jefferson St.

Aitkin Friends of the Library meet 4th Tue. each month, 1 pm, Aitkin Public Library.

Aitkin Women of Today meet 2nd Mon. of month, 6:30 pm, Mille Lacs Energy Coop, info call 218-927-4558. Evening care is available and free. All are welcome!

American Legion Aitkin Lee #86 & Unit 86, meets the 2nd Thurs. of each month at 7 p.m. "Ask an Attorney," Aitkin Co. Sheriff's conference room, 2nd Tue. of month at noon.

Bay Lake Area Lions are currently collecting items for their upcoming June 13 auction. If you have non-rummage items, please call 218-678-9090 to arrange a pick-up or drop-off.

Blow-Hards, a lung disease support group, meets the 4th Thu. of each month, Kanabec Hospital in Mora. Contact Carol, 320-225-3646.

Care N Share Community Cafe Community Meal, Wednesdays Located in the fellowship hall in the Wesleyan Church on Highway #6 in Emily. Please call Sharon - 612 669-3295

Caregiver/Memory Loss Support Group, meets first Wed., 1-2 pm, Aicota Rehab Center, Aitkin & 3rd Tue., 3-4 pm, DAC, McGregor. 218-927-1383

Circles of Support meets every Tue., 6-8 pm If you are living paycheck to paycheck and are ready for a change, Circles may be right for you, call Brandi, 800-997-5723.

Clear Lake Grange meets second Tue. each month, 6 pm potluck, 7 pm meeting. Meet in member's homes. Info call Vern 320-684-2244 or Roxy 218-927-4558.

Community "Clothes Closet" open Tue. 9 to noon; and 1st & 3rd Thu. 5-8 pm, 37560 Ox Lake Landing, Crosslake.

Cooks Night Out - 3rd Wed of month, McGregor Comm. Ctr., 5:30 p.m., no restrictions, donations welcome.

Cuyuna Rock Gem & Mineral Club, meet 2nd Sat. each month, 2:30 at Cuyuna Range Community Center, lower level.

Dance every second Tuesday at Moose in Grand Rapids.

Dance at Waukenabo the second and last Wednesday of the month.

Deerwood Lakes Lions meet the 2nd Monday of every month, 5:30pm social, 6:00 pm dinner/meeting, at the Heartwood Senior Living. Call 218-831-5683, if you need more information or would like to join our club.

Evergreen P.A.C. ATV Club meetings 1st Thu. each month, 7 pm, Jackson Hole, Lawler, open to public.

FASD Caregiver Support Group - For caregivers of individuals with a diagnosed or suspected Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Meet with other caregivers (adults only please) for support, understanding, and networking. Meetings are 9 am the second Saturday of each month at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 418 8th Ave. NE, Brainerd. For more information, please contact Sheila York at 218-820-5903 or syork@mofas.org

Friends of Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge meet 3rd Wed. each month, at 1 pm. at the Visitor Center at 36289 State Hwy. 65, McGregor 218-768-2402

Food Shelf: Community Food Shelf at First Lutheran Church open on 2nd and 4th Thurs, 9:30 AM-5 PM, at 107 2nd St SE Aitkin. Must register by 4:45 PM to be served.

Food Shelf: Emergency Food Shelf at St. James Catholic Church, Aitkin. Hours are Tuesday from 12 to 3 pm. To enter the food shelf go to the South side of the building, go to the 4th door and look for signs.

Food Shelf: Garrison Area Community Food Shelf open Tue. & Thu. 1-5 pm, at 9541 Madison Street; Garrison. For emergency Food Shelf, call 320-692-5399 and leave a message.

Gamblers Anonymous meets each Mon., 7 pm,

First Lutheran Church, Aitkin, for info call 218-393-0935.

Garrison Fire Auxiliary meets 2nd Thu. 7:30 pm, Garrison Fire Hall.

Garrison Thrift Store, Thurs.-Fri. 10-4, Sat. 11-4.

Heart to Heart Support Group, 4th Tue. of month, 2 pm, Kanabec Hospital, int. of Hwy. 65 & 23, Mora.

Hope for the Future Support Group for those dealing with emotional issues, every Thu., 1 pm, 210 2nd St. NW, suite A, Aitkin, 927-3748.

Ironton TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meet Tue., 4 weigh-in, 9-9:30 a.m. Meeting 9:30-10:30 a.m.. at Immanuel Lutheran Church Crosby Men & women invited. Call Mabel Semler 218-546-6523 for meeting location information.

Jacobson Seniors meets every Thu., 10-2 pm at Jacobson Comm. Ctr. Potluck at noon. Beverage provided. All are welcome. For more info., 752-1515.

Lymphedema Support Group, 3rd Mon. of month, 6:30 pm, Kanabec Hospital, int. of Hwy. 65 & 23, Mora.

Marsh and Meadows Hunting Retriever Club, Mon. 5:30 pm in Pequot Lakes, for more info call Brett 651-270-5648 or facebook/Marsh and Meadows Hunting Retriever Club

McGrath City Council, first Thu. of the month, 6:30 pm at fire station hall.

McGrath Senior Center meets every Mon. 1-4 pm, cards & games, all are welcome.

McGregor Community Meal served at the Community Center on Highway 65 on the Third Wednesday of each month serving from 5:30 - 6:00 pm.

McGregor TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly) meets Thu., 4 pm weigh in, 4:30 meeting, Minnewawa Sportsman's Club, Goshawk St. (Co. Rd. 6), 218-768-2340 for more info.

MS Support Group, meets the 1st Thu. of the month at 7 pm, 606 NW 5th St, Brainerd, 218-824-5228.

Mystic Masonic Lodge meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7 pm except June, July & August meet only 1st Tuesday at 7 pm over the Eye Care Center in Aitkin.

National Alliance on Mental Illness meet Fri., 2:30 pm, Community Presbyterian Church, 703 Pokegama Ave., room 105, Grand Rapids, Call Terrence at 218-327-1347.

North Central MN Farm & Antique Assn. meet 1st Wed. of month, Blackberry Town Hall. Info: Bruce 218-752-6592.

Order of Eastern Star, Woodland Chapter 122 in Aitkin meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays September through May and 2nd Tuesday in June and 4th Tuesday in August at 7:30 PM above the Eye Care Center in Aitkin; dark July, January & February.

Operation Minnesota Nice meets 3rd Monday each month at 6 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church, Hill City. For info call Tina Harcey at 218-697-8144. www.operationminnesotanice.com.

Praise & Worship Services, 101 S. Maddy St., McGregor, Intercessory prayer Wed 6-7 pm; Praise & Worship Services Sat. 2 pm, Sun 10 am.

Recovery Worship Service, Cascade United Methodist Church, Crosby/Deerwood, 1st Sat., 5 pm. Everyone is welcome.

RSVP Bone Builders Tue. & Thu from 10-11 am First Lutheran Church, Aitkin; 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 at Black

Rock Terrace. Free of charge. Info call 218-927-1383.

Second Tuesday Card Party, Deerwood American Legion. Open to public, 1 pm social, card playing 1:30-3:30 pm. Cost \$3 per person. Refreshments. For info call Kathy at 218-546-5486.

Senior Dance at Deerwood Legion, 1-4 pm, 1st and 3rd Fri. each month.

TOPS (take off pounds sensibly) Every Tues at East Entrance, First Lutheran Church, 101 2nd St SE, Aitkin Weigh in at 4:30pm and meeting at 5pm

White Pine Riders ATV Club meet 2nd Sat. each month (Feb. - Oct.) at McGrath Fire Hall, 10 am, open to public.

January

23th - Childbirth Preparation, 8:30 am-4 pm, Heartwood Senior Living, Crosby

23th - Intro to Ancestry Research, 10:30 am at Aitkin County Historical Society. Come learn of the many source of information to discover the history of the cities and individuals of the county at the museum. No charge. RSVP 218-927-3347 or achs3348@embargmail.com or stop in.

26th - Reflux Relief, 6 pm, CRMC Baxter Clinic

28th - Weight Loss Seminar, 6 pm, Heartwood Senior Living, Crosby

28th - Weight Loss Seminar, 6-8 pm, CRMC Baxter Clinic

27th - Memory Loss Support Group, 11:30 am, Heartwood Senior Living, Crosby

February

6th - The Brainerd Jaycees 26th Annual Ice Fishing Extravaganza on Gull Lake's Hole in the Day Bay, north of Brainerd. This year's prize list is valued at nearly \$200,000. If you cannot attend the event, there is also the Extravaganza raffle, with total prizes valued at \$40,000. More information and official updates can be found at www.ice-fishing.org.

6th - Cuyuna Lakes Chamber's Ice Fishing Contest and Scorpion Homecoming is Saturday, noon - 3 pm, Serpent Lake in Crosby.

6th - The third of five 8 ft. x 10 ft. oil paintings, honoring the Coast Guard, will be unveiled at 2 pm. at the Vets Cemetery located seven miles north of Little Falls on Hwy. 115, adjacent to the Camp Ripley Military Base. The dedication is open to the public, particularly welcoming veterans of the Coast Guard, followed by a 3 p.m. reception at the American Legion, downtown Little Falls.

6th - Ironton Bar Stool Races at Morningside Park in Ironton beginning at 3 pm. Admission is \$1 with all admission proceeds being donated to the Sno-Serpents Snowmobile Club. For more information, contact Steve at 651-200-7825 or 546-5997.

6th - Brainerd Public School Foundation BIG EVENT 5pm - 9pm bpsf.org at Cragun's Sports Center Celebrating the Greatest Schools on Earth

11th - Cuyuna Range Chamber Business After Hours 5 - 7 pm hosted by the Hallett House Bed & Breakfast at 22418 State Hwy 6 in Deerwood (one mile east of Crosby). There will be parking in front and back of the house. The back entrance will be available. As a courtesy to the host, advanced registration is recommended at 218-546-8131.

12th - 14th - Nisswa Winter Jubilee A unique 3-day experience - explore magical Ice Sculptures, a mind-teasing medallion hunt, competitive wood splitting, kids mini jubilee, welcome the beautiful Miss Nisswa, Nisswa Fire Department's Ice Fishing Derby

13th - Sons of Norway Tusenvann Lodge #1-659, noon, at the I.R.E.C. Bldg. in Isle, and the program will be about genealogy and tracing your family history. Coffee & lunch will be served. Bring your research questions and a friend or neighbor. If you have questions call Bill 1-320-679-2380 or Candice at 1-320-983-2886.

13th - Hill City Area Lions Club 17th Annual Ice Fishing Contest noon- 3 pm at Hill Lake at the City Beach/Campground in Hill City. The cost is \$10 per ticket. This event is to help support the Hill City Area Lions Club.

13th Cascade United Methodist Church Pie Social, 1-3pm, Highway 6/210, Deerwood. Also whole pies to take home.

13th - Valentine's Dinner and Dance Waukenabo Community Center/ Town Hall. Roast Beef dinner at 5:30 - 7 pm, dance Chmiewski's 7:30-10 pm. Door prizes and grand prize. Donation \$10 adults, \$5 Children 12 and under.

14th - Ice Fishing Derby with the Nisswa Fire Department noon - 2 pm Join the Nisswa Fire Department as they put on the Kid Friendly Ice Fishing Derby on Nisswa Lake.

26th - 28th - Gull Lake Frozen Fore Frozen Flop The World's Largest Golf & Snowmobile Charity Event

March

5th - 2016 Polar Plunge at Breezy Point Resort at Breezy Point Resort 10 am - 2 pm www.plungemn.org

19th - Easter Turkey/Ham Bingm, Nisswa American Legion 6:30-8:30 pm www.nisswaamlegion.com

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Celebrating educational excellence for all children

School Choice Week is January 24-30. This year more than 16,000 events will mark the occasion, highlighting the importance of offering choices in education to our children.

Andrew Campanella with National School Choice week said there are many ways to accommodate students and parents from open enrollment to scholarship programs and tax deductions.

"It is important to remember," he said, "that although more parents are actively choosing education environments for their children than ever before, the variety and diversity of school choices available for children is different in each state."

The week's events will include open houses, school assemblies, parents' nights, chamber of commerce meetings, roundtable policy discussions, awards ceremonies and more. There will also be rallies at 20 state capitol buildings during the celebration.

"The growth in enthusiasm surrounding National School Choice Week," Campanella said, "demonstrates that Americans in communities across the country recognize the importance of ensuring that all children have the opportunity to learn and to pursue their own American dreams."

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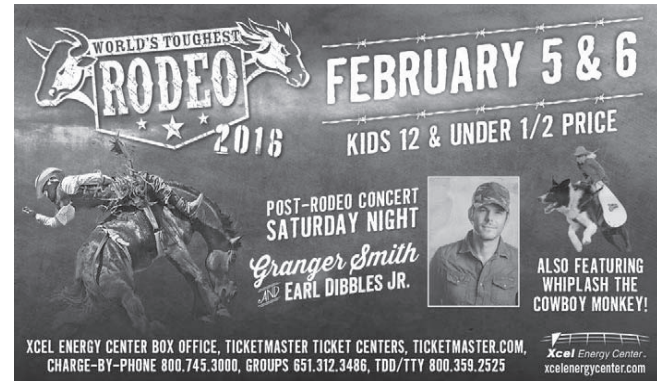
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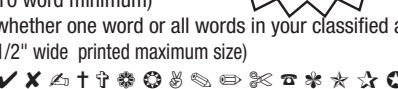
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Minnesota Attorney warns about scams targeting computer owners

By THE OFFICE OF MINNESOTA ATTORNEY GENERAL LORI SWANSON
By some estimates, over 85 percent of Americans have a computer in their home. Many computer users do not

have the technical know-how to fix their computers when they break or jam. Scammers—many from other countries—continue to seek to exploit these two facts. “Tech Support” Scams.

Tech support scammers make unsolicited phone calls in which they pretend to be a technician for a reputable, well-known computer or software company. The caller claims your computer has

been hacked or infected with a virus.

The scam artist may say that your device will crash or that hackers will steal your information if the issue is not immediately resolved. They do this to get you to act quickly, without researching the caller. The scam artist may ask you to open a program on your computer that logs various activities, such as error and warning messages. While these entries may appear alarming at first glance, they are usually harmless notations that occur during the normal operation of your computer.

After convincing you there is a problem, the scammer claims he can repair your device remotely for a fee. Unsuspecting people may then give the scam artist their credit card or bank account information and remote access to the computer. This is where the trouble begins.

The scammer may use the remote access to perform fake “repairs” or install software that is available for free

through other sources. The scammer does this to justify the bogus fee. Other times, scam artists install malware or viruses, which allow them to secretly steal information stored on the computer.

Either way, the end result is this: your device is less secure and the scam artist charges you hundreds or thousands of dollars for services that were unnecessary and useless.

“Ransomware” Scams. If you are on the Internet, you may receive an unexpected pop-up message that freezes access to your computer. The message will ask you to call a telephone number or follow other instructions to un-jam your computer.

If you call, you will be asked to pay the scam artist a fee to unfreeze your computer. In other words, the scammer who jammed your computer asks you to pay him money to unjam it. Paying him money will usually result in requests for even more money.

How to Avoid these Scams.

- If you receive a call from someone who offers technical support, or claims your computer has been hacked or infected with a virus, hang up.

- If you need help with your computer, call the manufacturer or software company at the phone number given to you when you bought the product, or take it to a local computer store.

- Never give an unknown party remote access to your device.

- If your computer does not have security software, install antivirus, antispyware and antimalware software on your computer. Keep this software up to date.

- Make sure your device's firewall and pop-up blocker are turned on. This will help prevent intrusions and unsafe pop-ups. Turn off your computer when not in use.

- Do not download software from unknown sources or “click” open links, attachments, or images in unsolicited emails, text messages, or popup messages.

SFA annual conference celebrates wisdom of local farm community

Presenting farmer networking at its finest, the Sustainable Farming Association's Annual Conference, “Cultivating the Wisdom of the Community,” will be held Feb. 13, 2016, at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minn.



husbandry and community-building.

Join the Upper Midwest's sustainable farming community for a casual, full day of educational sessions, conversation, networking, food, drink and more. The SFA Conference is an inclusive event open to all who are interested in local food, farming, innovation, animal

Sessions will be held on topics like Deep Winter Vegetable Production, Wintering Livestock, Minnesota's Cottage Food Law, Beyond the Farmers Market, New and Unusual Perennial Fruit Crops, Animal Handling, Developing a Forage Chain, Restoration Ag and Keyline

Design, Garlic Growing, and many more. A full schedule is available here.

Also planned are a seed swap; the end-of-day social with local beer, wine and cheese; a film screening from Deb Wallwork; our yearly Leaders Breakfast, and a “Meet Your Farmers” Friday night social and jam session. Cost is \$65; SFA members receive a \$10 discount through Jan. 31.

Children's programming from Budding Farmers is returning for ages 3-12; children 2 and under are welcome but will be the responsibility of their parents.

Novice turkey hunters can register for upcoming mentored hunts

On a spring morning, a novice turkey hunter holding a turkey call tries out a newfound skill of imitating the yelp of a turkey hen. From the field edge, gobbling ensues and a dark shape approaches. With the advice of a mentor in mind, the hunter holds still to avoid alerting the curious bird.

Scenes like this play out each spring across Minnesota during mentored turkey hunts that give youth, adults and families opportunities to learn under the guidance of National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) volunteers. This year, the mentored hunts take place Saturday, April 16, and Sunday, April 17.

“Novice turkey hunters can gain valuable knowledge from time afield with experienced mentors,” said Mike Kurre, mentoring program coordinator with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. “The intent of these hunts is for first-time turkey hunters to

gain the skills necessary to harvest a bird.”

The deadline to apply for the hunts is Monday, Feb. 15, and applications are available at www.mndnr.gov/hunting/turkey.

The hunts for youth, adults and families are open to those who have purchased no more than one turkey license in a previous year and have not harvested a turkey. Hunters must have a valid firearms safety certificate and must be 12 years old on or before April 16. Youth from 12 to 17 must have a parent, guardian or adult authorized by a parent or guardian accompany them for all activities. If there are more applications than available mentors, hunters will be selected in a lottery.

A hunt orientation is required and orientations are scheduled at various times and locations around the state. The cost for the orientation ranges from \$5 to \$10. Hunting licenses are free

for 12 year olds; \$5 for ages 13 through 17; and \$26 for hunters 18 and older.

“The DNR and NWTF have cooperated for 14 years on these mentored hunts, and over that time we've introduced thousands to the sport of turkey hunting,” Kurre said. “We enjoy hearing about one-time novices completing the circle and returning to the program as mentors for others.”

Participation in the hunts is only restricted by the number of volunteers and private lands that are available. Anyone interested in providing turkey hunting land for the mentored youth hunts should contact a NWTF chapter online at www.nwtf.org. Those who allow use of their land for recreational purposes without charge are protected from related legal claims by Minnesota law.

More information about turkey hunting and mentored hunts is available at www.mndnr.gov/hunting/turkey.

Paul Bunyan State Trail to remain open during Highway 371 realignment

The Paul Bunyan State Trail between Nisswa and Jenkins will remain open during the State Highway 371 North realignment project, but trail users should be cautious near construction activity and check trail conditions before traveling.

Construction crews will begin removing brush and trees at the end of January, and work near the Paul Bunyan State Trail is expected to last through the fall of 2016.

No closures of the trail are expected this winter, but snowmobile trail users could encounter crews working near the trail and are asked watch for activity and proceed cautiously.

To allow for highway realignment, a new section of trail will be constructed this summer and will become a permanent reroute. The trail alignment will be changed with minimal disruption to users.

The Paul Bunyan State Trail is 115 miles long and extends from Crow Wing State Park south of Brainerd, to Lake Bemidji State Park north of Bemidji. It is the longest of Minnesota's paved state trails and the longest continuously paved rail-trail in the country.

For construction updates, trail conditions and more information about the Paul Bunyan State Trail, visit: www.mndnr.gov/state_trails/paul_bunyan/index.html.



Women can learn outdoor skills at DNR winter workshop

Women can discover the enjoyment of snowshoeing, cross country skiing, birding, wild ricing, dark-house fishing and hiking at a winter workshop offered by the Becoming an Outdoors Woman program of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

“The winter workshop provides a unique opportunity to try out winter activities in a fun and supportive atmosphere,” said Linda Bylander, BOW coordinator. “Prior experience doesn't matter – it's all about learning how to enjoy the outdoors in winter.”

The workshop is Friday, Feb. 19, through Sunday, Feb. 21, at the Deep Portage Environmental Learning Center near Hackensack for ages 14 and older. Participants choose from a variety of activities to learn about

and experience during the weekend.

Lodging, meals, instruction, equipment and evening entertainment are included in the \$190 workshop fee.

A winter workshop schedule and registration form is available at www.mndnr.gov/bow, or by calling the environmental learning center at 218-682-2325



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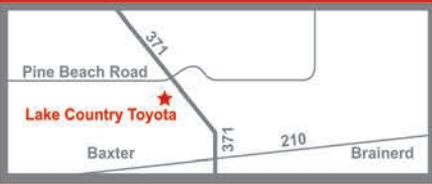


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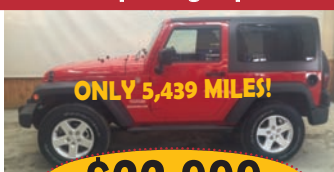
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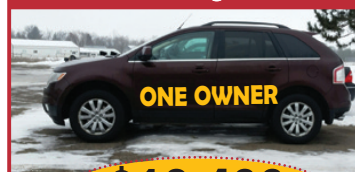
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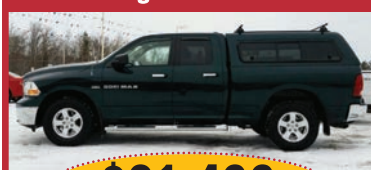
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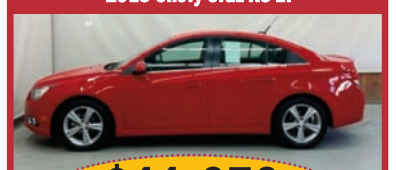
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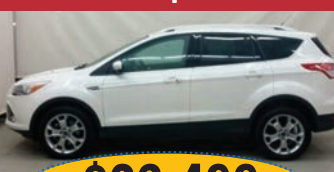
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