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## Aitkin voters overwhelmingly said no to new school

Voters in the Aitkin School district turned down a \$68.5 million referendum for a new school and remodeling of Rippleside Elementary.

The ballot question, posed to primary election voters on August 9, failed with 1,023 yes votes (25.27 percent) and 3,025 no votes (74.73 percent).

"The community has spoken," said Superintendent Bernie Novak in a telephone interview after the vote, "they do not want a brand new facility, if it is going to cost \$68 million."

He said that the Aitkin School Board will need to determine if they wish to have the Community Task Force reconvene to come up with another plan.

"We can't stay status quo," said Novak. "We have to do something, because our buildings need to be upgraded and remodeled, and

we have to take care of our deferred maintenance."

He said a year and a half ago, the board brought to the community \$24 million remodel for the school district and that was turned down. At that time, the board was told that the community wanted a new building.

When asked, if the shelf life of a school building is 40 years, Novak said, "That varies, I can't say it is 40 years. There are schools out there that are hundreds of years old."

He said, our schools have been maintained, but they need to be remodeled.

"Every 30 to 40 years the school needs to be remodeled," he said, "because education changes. The life expectancy of a building is more than 40 years, but what that building looks like changes over that 40 years."

"I don't believe our fac-

ilities are crumbling," Novak said. "The fact of the matter is education has changed. We need to remodel or build, so that we are meeting today's educational needs."

The land for the new school has been already been purchased for \$750,000. The board approved the purchase of the 221 acres in Aitkin Township before the referendum was defeated. The land is located on Sixth Avenue Southeast about a mile south of Hwy. 47 and the farm was owned by Gary and Mary Lindgren.

"Whether the referendum past or not," Novak said, "the board was planning on buying the land because they were looking long range, 40, 50 years from now."

Novak said the school district had a healthy fund balance available for the purchase of the land and no major budget reductions will

need to be made, because of the land purchase.

He said, "does that make things tighter? Yes, we are going to have to monitor our budget, so that we are not overspending in other areas."

When asked about the wetlands on the property that the school purchased, he said the school board bought all of the land available.

The school board could have purchased "the 70 acres of high ground, but what would the [seller] have done with the low ground?"

Novak said the wetlands on the property are green space and can be used for science labs, soil sampling for ag programs or students can observe wildlife and nature for elementary classes.

Novak feels that the voters will have another referendum for the school in the near future.

"We do need to remodel. We do need to upgrade," he said.

A survey of voter sentiment was done after the previous referendum failed. From that survey it was determined that between \$24 - \$30 million is what the community is willing to support.

"We need to take a look at what we can do with \$30 million," Novak said. "Is it remodel or is it a new building with remodel."

For more information, please call the Aitkin School District office at 218-927-2115 or express your thoughts to the Aitkin School Board members: Dennis Hasskamp 218-927-3571; David Burgstaler 218-670-0315; Peter Welshons 218-927-4335; Kevin Hoge 218-549-3337; John Chute 218-927-3987; Cindi Hills 218-831-6344 and Jeremy Janzen 218-927-7999.



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# Although city to discontinue refuse billing, \$8,059.64 spent on file server

On August 8, there was a required public hearing announced and held at the regular City of Crosby Council meeting. The hearing was about a modification to the Tax Increment Financing Plan for District One and to the Redevelopment Plan for Redevelopment Project One.

According to City Clerk/Treasurer Lisa Sova, "The proposed modifications include an enlargement of the geographic area of the Project. The boundaries of the TIF District are not expected to change. The HRA has determined a need to modify the Redevelopment Plan in order to expand the project area in which tax increments are authorized to be spent by enlarging the Redevelopment Project to be coterminous with the geographic boundaries of the City. The HRA has also determined a need to modify the TIF Plan to reflect an increase in expected tax increment revenues generated over the life of the TIF District. The HRA has also determined a need to modify the TIF Plan

to adjust the authorized tax increment revenues and public costs to authorize 'pooling' of increment to pay for eligible housing project costs related to an affordable housing project in the City."

Crosby Fire Chief Jay Decent indicated there had been 14 calls with a lot of storm related downed trees on power lines and few calls for alarms due to the heat in the past few weeks. There was also one car accident that was also responded to.

Don Cekalla owner of Croft Pub and Grub in Crosby requested special event permission from the council. The request was to have an outdoor band at the Croft Pub and Grub on Saturday, August 20 from 8 p.m. - 12:30 a.m. The council approved the request.

Clerk/Treasurer Lisa Sova read a request for payment by the city engineer for the 2016 utility improvement project. The request of the council was a payment amount is \$87,573 with a 5% retainer so the net requested payment would

be \$83,194.35 and also directing the city clerk to submit a request to PFA (Public Facilities Authority) for reimbursement. Council approved the request.

Materials prepayment request for the materials for the 2016 utility improvement project was read by Clerk Sova.

Mayor Joanna Lattery recommended they table the prepayment issue until next meeting. The council agreed with the Mayor's recommendation.

The council approved accepting July donations to the Library.

Police Lieutenant Kevin Randolph said the Chief

wanted to publicly thank the community for all of the expression of support for the Police across the nation.

Working Foremen Steve Perpich the lift pump was in. The truck needed to be fixed to install the lift pump and Perpich said it should be in by the weekend. There was a spray wash valve leak in the water treatment plant that might only need to be adjusted to fix it. The DNR will be peeling some bark on some Ash trees in the park looking for Emerald Ash Borers. Councilman Goshey indicated the public was pleased with the City Crews efforts to clean up after all the recent storms.

Attorney Daniel Hawley presented a coal bin update indicating that City Engineer Phil Martin was in contact with Rice Lake Construction should have by the next council meeting an estimated cost to resolve the matter.

Hawley then updated the council on the land conveyance to SLSD (Serpent Lake Sanitary Sewer District).

City Attorney Tom Pearson had some questions about the survey to Mark Hallan WSN (Widseth, Smith and Nolting) engineer representing SLSD and was waiting for a reply.

The council approved the purchase through NJPA of a new computer server for

the City Clerk the price is \$8,059.64. The purchase includes the server, hard drive, and Microsoft Windows server license and was a budgeted item for this year.

Mayor Lattery spoke about the Comprehensive Plan update indicating it needed a little tweeking and there would be a public hearing sometime in September. After the public hearing it will be brought to the council for approval and once approved it will be available including on the city's website.

Lattery then indicated that Councilman Ron Prushek would be replacing Councilman Dusty Paul on the Personnel Committee.

# Sandpiper Pipeline Project 'probably off the table'

Rep. Dale Lueck, R-Aitkin, issued a statement on August 4 regarding news that Enbridge Inc. and Marathon Petroleum Corp. agreed to purchase a \$2 billion stake in the Bakken Pipeline system to ensure transportation of crude oil from North Dakota.

"Unwarranted delays and general bureaucratic bumbling by our state agencies

and the public utilities commission in what should be a straight-forward and timely permitting process has now put at risk hundreds of good-paying jobs for Greater Minnesota," Lueck said. "Not only does this deny quality jobs to our hard working men and women in the skilled trades, but it likely may eliminate a large new

stable property tax revenue source for our school districts, townships and counties here in rural Minnesota."

Lueck said this appears to be Enbridge's work-around to a serious of regulatory delays in Minnesota with permitting the Sandpiper and Line 3 Replacement projects. Those projects have been pushed back to 2019, assuming no

further delays in the permitting process.

Yesterday, "Bloomberg News" reported that Graham White, an Enbridge spokesman, announced Enbridge and Marathon are ending their transportation and joint venture agreements regarding Sandpiper. That likely means the proposed Sandpiper pipeline project is now "off the table."

"This development is a clear indication that we need to reform our permitting and environmental review processes to ensure projects like Sandpiper are dealt with in a fair and timely manner," Lueck said. "Projects like Sandpiper shouldn't be delayed or canceled because of bureaucratic interference. It's unacceptable that a roughly \$2 billion permanent infrastructure investment and a long-term, stable local property-tax base is now likely going somewhere else where skilled jobs and stable local property tax revenue for our schools and local governments are considered desirable."

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<p><b>2013 CADILLAC XTS</b></p>  <p><b>\$26,982</b> #380323                  HEATED /COOLED LEATHER REMOTE START GORGEOUS CAR</p>	<p><b>2013 CHARGER R/T AWD</b></p>  <p><b>\$19,987</b> #165048                  HEMI V8, LEATHER NAVIGATION AND MOON ROOF</p>	<p><b>2015 MAZDA 6 TOURING</b></p>  <p><b>\$20,987</b> #165056                  LEATHER MOON ROOF AND BOSE ONLY 10,988 MILES</p>	<p><b>2015 CHEVROLET MALIBU LT</b></p>  <p><b>\$15,982</b> #N250395                  SPORT BUCKETS REMOTE START AND BACK UP CAMERA</p>	<p><b>2014 CHRYSLER 300 AWD</b></p>  <p><b>\$20,963</b> #260382                  HEATED LEATHER LOADED WITH EQUIPMENT 1-OWNER</p>
<p><b>2012 NISSAN MURANO AWD</b></p>  <p><b>\$22,984</b> #260402                  SL MODEL WITH HEATED LEATHER AND POWER MOON ROOF</p>	<p><b>2013 BUICK ENCORE</b></p>  <p><b>\$19,990</b> #N360111                  HEATED LEATHER REMOTE START AND BACK-UP CAMERA</p>	<p><b>2013 GRAND CHEROKEE 4X4</b></p>  <p><b>\$26,967</b> #165039                  TRAILHAWK EDITION WITH HEATED LEATHER AND NAVIGATION</p>	<p><b>2014 NISSAN ROGUE S</b></p>  <p><b>\$14,984</b> #N165034                  AUTO A/C PW PL TILT AND CRUISE</p>	<p><b>2011 MINI COOPER COUNTRYMAN</b></p>  <p><b>\$13,967</b> #N165066                  6SPD FULL POWER EQUIPMENT AND ONLY 48,451 MILES</p>
<p><b>2013 SUBARU OUTBACK AWD</b></p>  <p><b>\$19,959</b> #260109                  LIMITED WITH LEATHER AND POWER MOON ROOF</p>	<p><b>2011 CHRYSLER TOWN AND COUNTRY</b></p>  <p><b>\$12,977</b> #250151                  TOURING MODEL WITH STOW N GO QUAD SEATS</p>	<p><b>2011 CADILLAC SRX AWD</b></p>  <p><b>\$22,957</b> #N165038                  HEATED LEATHER PANORAMIC SUNROOF AND REMOTE START</p>	<p><b>2007 FORD EDGE SEL</b></p>  <p><b>\$9,964</b> #255069                  LOADED INCLUDING LEATHER AND PANORAMIC SUNROOF</p>	<p><b>2011 CHRYSLER TOWN AND COUNTRY</b></p>  <p><b>\$10,963</b> #270010                  TOURING MODEL QUAD SEATING AND NAVIGATION</p>
<p><b>2015 TOYOTA RAV4 XLE AWD</b></p>  <p><b>\$22,987</b> #N165045                  FULL POWER EQUIPMENT POWER SUNROOF ALLOYS BACK-UP CAMERA</p>	<p><b>2015 JEEP WRANGLER RUBICON 4X4</b></p>  <p><b>\$39,963</b> #260306                  LEATHER AND NAVIGATION LOADED ONLY 11,770 MILES</p>	<p><b>2015 HONDA PILOT AWD EX-L</b></p>  <p><b>\$33,877</b> #N260199                  LEATHER POWER MOON ROOF AND ONLY 17,049 MILES</p>	<p><b>2014 RAM QUAD CAB 4X4</b></p>  <p><b>\$26,973</b> #260337                  SLT BIGHORN HEMI V8 1-OWNER SUPER SHARP TRUCK!</p>	<p><b>2012 NISSAN FRONTIER CREWCAB 4X4</b></p>  <p><b>\$22,979</b> #N165038                  SL MODEL WITH LEATHER LOADED WITH OPTIONS</p>

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# COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Ongoing Events:**

**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 Addicts in Recovery Anonymous Meeting** Tuesday evenings, 6:30 pm small conference room at Aitkin Library. No dues, fees or weigh ins. For more information call: 217-248-6434. www.foodaddicts.org

**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.

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

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

**Hearth 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.

**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, 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.operationminnesotanic.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 (Osteoporosis exercise program)** Tue & Thu: 10-11 First Lutheran Church, Aitkin; 11:30-12:30 Blackrock Terrace, Aitkin; 12:45-1:45 Journey North Church, Aitkin; Wed: 10-11 Malmo Evangelical Free Church, Malmo & Fri: 10-11 Bethesda Lutheran Church, Malmo. 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.

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

**TOPS Aitkin (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

**TOPS Ironton (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)** meet Monday, 4 pm weigh-in, 4:30 pm meeting at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Crosby. Call Mabel Semler 218-546-6523 for meeting location information.

**Weight Watchers** meets every Tuesday at 5:45 pm at the Sno-Serpents building in Deerwood at 24197 Mohs St (next to the Deer Stand restaurant). Weigh in begins at 5:15 pm. For more information, call 218-820-9725.

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

**August**  
 12th & 13th - Nisswa Crazy Days  
 13th - Holden Lutheran Church Fundraiser in Isle, 2 pm, live and silent auction, pig and turkey roast, and classic country/gospel music by Alan Godage & Sundown  
 Thank you, 13th - Law Enforcement Officers Appreciation Day, noon-3 p.m., Gull Dam Brewing, 23836 Smiley Rd., Nisswa. Say thank to law enforcement members and their families,

and to raise money for the Minnesota 100 Club, whose mission is to "Protect the Protectors." Food, beverages, games, fellowship for members of law enforcement and their families.

13th - Spaghetti Dinner Benefit for Jeremy Roach 4-10 pm at the Eagles Club #287, in Brainerd. The cost for the spaghetti dinner is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children (4-12), and 3 and under free at the door. There will be live music by Marv Johnson and Friends, raffles, silent auction, 50/50 drawing, cookbook sales, and bake sale. For questions on donating to this fundraiser or for raffle tickets, contact Travis Roach 218-838-8673. Monetary donations can be made on Jeremy Roach's GoFundMe page and at First National Bank under the account "Jeremy Roach benefit"

13th & 14th - This Old Farm Pioneer Days at Paul Bunyan Land 17553 State Highway 18 Brainerd, Call: (218) 764-2524 A great experience for the entire family to see history in motion. There will surely be something for every generation to enjoy. The admission price includes the amusement park at Paul Bunyan Land and This Old Farm Pioneer Days.

14th - Free Ice Cream Social/Music Jam at Light of the Cross Lutheran Church 2-4 pm. Please contact the church office at 320.692.4773 if you are interested in participating. Light of the Cross is located two blocks west of the Family Foods Grocery store in Garrison. This event is open to the public and all are welcome.

18th - FREE Brainerd Ski Loons Water Ski Show at Lum Park, 6:30 pm, watch human ski pyramids, ski jumpers, barefooters, and skiers being pulled 360 degrees around the boat! This event is great fun for the whole family. Concessions will be available. Please bring blankets or lawn chairs for seating.

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**Saturday, August 20th • 9:30 a.m.**  
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**VEHICLES & RELATED:** 2012 Ford Flex, FWD 7 passenger w/ 59,000 miles (immaculate condition), 1988 Ford F700, six cylinder diesel, six speed, air brakes with large air tank, heavy duty steel bed w/ storage boxes (16,831 miles), 1975 Ford F600 w/ PTO & two stage flatbed dump, clean good runner, 2011 Ford Crown Victoria (former police car) 155,000 miles good runner, 1999 Ford Extended cab 4WD w/226,000 miles good work/ hunting truck **SKIDSTEERS:** 2008 262C CAT diesel, rubber tire w/ steel tracks cab w/air & heat 82 HP, 2700lb load capacity hydro transmission 4,100 hrs (great condition) Bobcat 743 w/newer Perkins engine **FARM IMPLEMENTS & RELATED:** Ford 5000 w/bucket loader, Massey Ferguson 285 2WD diesel tractor w/595 allied loader bucket, Farmall C w/saw rig, loader, push blade & tire chains, 1954 Ford Jubilee completely restored, New Holland 851 round baler chain drive, John Deere 24 series square baler, New Holland 479 haybine, Hay tedder, (2) John Deere W-8 power mowers 7 ft. bar **BOATING RELATED:** 1989 24 ft. Sun Tracker Pontoon Party Barge w/50hp Force OB in good condition, 1977 Madsen 18 ft. pontoon w/25 HP Mercury newer carpet excellent runner **ATV & RELATED:** 2006 Arctic Cat 650 ATV w/ 300 miles (like new), 1998 Polaris 400 Explorer 4WD 900 miles (excellent condition), 1993 Polaris 350 4WD w/750 miles (excellent condition) **MOTORCYCLE:** Harley Sportster 1000, 1968 Frame 1974 Engine **LAWN & GARDEN:** Cub Cadet zero turn w/50 in. deck & bagger, Kohler Command 23 HP (low hours), Craftsman GT5000 lawn tractor 48" cut w/ Kohler pro 25 HP V-twin (very clean), Toro Powermax 926 OXE snowblower 1300 series w/electric start (new never used), MTD Pro MP 30, snowblower 30 in. w/electric start, MTD 5/24 snowblower w/electric start, John Deere Chipper/Shredder, Husqvarna 625 walk behind weed trimmer **CONTRACTOR EQUIPMENT:** Ridgid power mitre cut off saw 12 in. on stand, Delta X5 shaper/router, Delta Professional table saw on casters, Ryobi 10 in. surface planer, Delta 10 in. contractor's saw, Porter Cable routers, Delta planer, Delta Midi lathe, Delta 12 in. disc sander, Delta oscillating sander (bench model), Ryobi compound cutoff saw, Large spindle lathe, Mortising machine, Delta band saw, 16 speed floor model drill press, Dewalt compound mitre saw **GARAGE RELATED:** Lincoln LN-25 Electric commercial welder w/leads, Cobramatic aluminum welder w/cobra python push pull gun, Cobramatic aluminum welder w/piranha push pull gun, Tweco fabricator 141 welder 3 in 1 mig, stick & tig welder, Honda GX 160 trash pump **TRAILER RELATED:** 2013 RC tandem axle enclosed trailer 7 x 18 V front (like brand new), Wells Cargo enclosed trailer 7x7x18, Good Ford pickup box 2 wheel trailer, **ITEMS OF INTEREST:** Phillip Goodwin prints & others, Wine making kit, Scuba Diving gear w/tanks and wetsuits & more

**This is a surface listing be sure to check out our websites for full auction line up, this will be an all day Auction selling in two rings most of the day. Thank you in advance, Janzen Auctioneers**

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# OBITUARIES

## WILLIAM THOMAS FLAGG



William Thomas Flagg, 96, of Emily died at his home on Thursday, August 4, 2016. Funeral services will be 11:00 am on Wednesday, August 10, 2016 at St. Emily's Catholic in Emily. Burial will be at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Little Falls. Visitation will be 1 hour prior to the services at the church on Wednesday.

He was born in Charleston, West Virginia on June 5, 1920 to Conrad and Carrie (Gough) Flagg. He was a US Navy veteran serving

during WWII. He was a member of St. Emily's Catholic Church in Emily and the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus. He was retired Chicago Police Officer and owner and operator of Flagg's Resort on Mary Lake in Emily.

He is survived by his wife, Eva; daughter, Patricia Owens, Chicago, IL; step-daughter, Sherrie Cooke, Pequot Lakes; stepsons and spouse: Charles and Kathy Cooke, Fridley, and Michael Cooke, Kyle, TX; two grandchildren, four step-grandchildren and five step-great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were with the Koop Funeral Home in Crosby.

## NORMAN OLSON



Norman Elmo Olson, 77, of Nokay Lake Township died on Wednesday, August 3, 2016 at his home.

No services are being held. Burial was at the Lakewood Cemetery in Crosby.

He was born in Brainerd on April 7, 1939 to Martin and Dorothy (Wright) Olson. He married Kris Hawley on October 19, 1969 in Reno, NV. He served with Minnesota National Guard. He was a retired carpenter, millwright, machinist and sawyer with Hewlett Packard, Honeywell

and on the pipeline in Alaska.

He is survived by his wife, Kris; brothers and sisters-in-law: Gene and Dorothy Olson, Boise, ID; Roald and Kris Olson, Camarillo, CA; sisters: Miriam McCullen, Knoxville, TN and Laurel Atneosen, Deerwood; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in by his parents; three brothers: Wright, Richard, and Arthur Olson; and one sister, Joan Yancer.

Arrangements were with the Koop Funeral Home in Crosby.

## North Star Stampede Rodeo in Effie builds memories and friends



By BILLIE FORSTER

What is it that draws hundreds of families to an event? An event that the elders will not miss and you wouldn't catch the kids missing for anything.

Maybe it's the things that you can't find on the grounds of the Infamous North Star Stampede Rodeo grounds.

You can't find running water for your campers, if you don't bring it, you don't have it.

You won't find cell service and you will be hard pressed to find people who care.

No bathrooms, no showers, and absolutely no reason to complain.

Growing up as a little girl in the Effie area (north of Grand Rapids), I went to this stampede for many years, but that wasn't strange, being a local, everyone did.

Now as an adult and living in the community of Aitkin, I find myself drawn back to the area that I ran barefoot in out of the car on every last weekend of July.

I remember then that as things do when you are younger, that it was so much bigger. Barns of beautiful animals for show. A carnival at times.

Now in my heart the memories that I build with my family here tower the grounds gates and the old announcers stand.

The Pitzen family have been putting on this very rodeo for 61 years and going strong. The family always puts forth their best foot to make everyone that comes feel at home and safe. From visiting as many fire pits as time will allow between show times to tipping their

hat to the crowd weather it is raining or unbelievably hot.

Through the wind and dust you will always stand for the opening ceremony, as we watch our young sons and daughters do their inaugural ride, and you watch your loved ones ride on their hundredth and sometimes thousandth ride.

You won't find a head that isn't bowed when the cowboy prayer is said, like a table of Christ, everyone participates knowing as we pray we all are truly praying that each athlete animal and human are safe and sound when the weekend is over.

You won't find a dry eye when the cowboyless horse rides through the arena in honor of those passing. And when hard luck presses and our athletes fall hard on the

old dusty arena you won't find one person talking as we all sit in hope and prayer as the family of the very rodeo grounds are the first to their side and the last to leave. This might be why on this last hot summer weekend in July where it would have been nice to sit in the air conditioning in our homes or on the boat, you instead could find us at one of the many little pop up cities of all Aitkin area families on these grounds.

From the riders to the fans, that this little town of Aitkin provided we should be proud. Because from Layne Baumann on his inaugural bull ride, to Shannon Forster taking her 3-year-old mare to her first real rodeo, to Reba and Ashley Pierce who ride for the fun of it. We saw Si-

erra Hoss an Aitkin graduate that rides full time in every rodeo she can, to Ms. Morgan Kowitz who rides whenever she can and doubles as a Baja racer.

We saw the father son team of Keith and Marshal Larson.

We saw Rachel Hauser on her clean sweep on Sunday.

In the past, we have seen Kokesh's, Reinhardt's, Thompson's and many more from our quaint little Aitkin area, pack up their spurs and saddle, their horses and ropes and move our home to their home for the weekend that these kids wait all year



to see.

They wait all year to perform for who? For themselves and for the animals that love what they do.

Rodeo life isn't easy for many. Packing hay and water and making sure you look perfect while in the saddle even though the horse you brought doesn't always cooperate, when you know they can and they always do the pattern perfectly but get into the arena and copy the bronc horses instead of the barrel racers, you just smile and say we will get em' next time love.

Because as we always say to each other when we drive to the end of the world to get to this rodeo, "we aren't here for a long time, but we are here for a good time."



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