



BASKETBALL: Teams bounce back and forth. **P2**

Ice fishing, the hole story

BY JAMIE LUND
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People have bundled up to trudge across frozen lakes in search of fish for centuries. Over the years the pastime has evolved from a necessity to eat in the winter months to a hobby or a way to keep busy in the long, cold days of winter. The simple days of bringing a pole and line to entice the fish has gone by the wayside for many anglers. Now most purchase expensive items to make it easier and more comfortable. Tiny houses of different sizes, colors and shapes dot many lakes around Minnesota during the winter months. Some are ramshackle wood structures, while others have all of the comforts of a real home. A few hardy people lounge on chairs or sit on upside down buckets as they intently watch a hole in the ice with a line dangling in it from a short pole. Most are tucked inside their shelters, away from the cold wind.

Karl Pixler, the manager at Petry's Bait in Finlayson said business has been steady for several weeks as ice fishermen stop in for supplies.

He said wax worms are

popular bait as are crappie and fathead minnows. Shiners have been difficult to come by in recent years, Pixler said. The type of bait depends on which fish the fisherman favors.

"You need bigger sucker minnows for Northern Pike," Pixler said. "A ton of people pickle northerns. When it's done right it can be extremely good."

He said the various lakes around the county also provide a variety of fish. Fishermen find an abundance of northerns and crappies at the Pine Lakes outside of Finlayson, while spearing pike is allowed at Grindstone Lake. Grindstone also brings in smelters towards the end of the winter season, Pixler said.

"That's the interesting thing about ice fishing," said Pixler. "Every lake around has a different characteristic."

He is a relative newcomer to ice fishing at 15 years.

Why ice fish?

"What else are you going to do for six months of the year," Pixler joked. He said ice fishing is more of a challenge, but

SEE **FISH**, PAGE 5



JAMIE LUND/ASKOV AMERICAN

Stacy and Madison Wilson get comfortable as Docs ice fishing contest on Sturgeon begins on Saturday, Jan. 15. Although the contest had only been going about 15 minutes, several northerns had been caught by other contestants. This was one of hundreds of ice fishing contests that happens each winter in Minnesota. The DNR has a complete schedule listed on their website.

Vintage Viking wins...again

BY JAMIE LUND
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A burst of excitement followed by an adrenaline rush keeps Gavin Mlaskoch coming back to the race track.

Gavin, 17, took first place in the 21st Vintage World Championship Snowmobile Race in Eagle Lake, Wisc. earlier this month.

"It felt great," Gavin said. "It's fun but it can be a headache because stuff breaks down easily. I love it."

Last year they had issues with the vintage racing sled and he took second place.

The Mlaskoch family races, repairs and collects snowmobiles. The Willow River family has brought the trophy home many times since they began racing the deep purple 1971 Viking 340 in 2013.

His brother, Wesley and uncle Brady also placed first several times with the speedy sled.



SUBMITTED

Gavin Mlaskoch holds his first place trophy after winning a vintage snowmobile race earlier in January.

Gavin began riding at a young age and started racing about four years ago. He also works on a variety of small engines, including snowmobiles and dirt bikes. He said he wins the majority of the races he enters, so was frustrated by the second place in Eagle River last year.

"It's usually reliable but it can be a little more fragile because it is vintage," Gavin said.

Gavin's dad, Brad, said the machine has been in the family for about 10 years.

"It's a lot of time, money and work to keep it going," Brad said. "The win was nice and I guess you could say luck."

Wesley, Brad

SEE **WINNER**, PAGE 5

County chooses least restrictive vaccination policy

T.A. LEBRUN
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Pine County chose last week the least restrictive option of the vaccine mandate, choosing the option to allow employees to provide proof of their vaccination(s) or test every seven days they are in the building and wear a mask.

Businesses and government organizations with over 100 employees were required to adopt a policy by the Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), who was required to adopt the federal OSHA mandate, by January 10. The more restrictive of options was a mandatory vaccination policy that would provide no testing/masking alternative. And by Feb. 9, testing and masking would be required of those who are not vaccinated.

However, last Thursday, the U.S. Supreme Court blocked the Biden administration's federal vaccine mandate stating that the administration had overstepped its authority. If implemented, the mandate would have affected

80 million workers. This ruling does leave the door open for businesses to adopt their own vaccination policy, however.

POLICY DROPPED AT LOCAL LEVEL

Pine County Administrator David Minke said that since OSHA required adoption of the policy, they proceeded to implement it using the flexibility that is built into the standard. "Given the judicial actions, it's also been subject to frequent and sudden changes on implementation," he added.

Following the SCOTUS decision, Minke stated via email, "Pine County has suspended the implementation of the emergency temporary standard." He added that some vaccination records have been submitted and that any data collected under the vaccination policy will be treated as required by law. Medical information on employees is private data, he added, and that those records will be held pending a final legal decision on the ETS."

SEE **POLICY**, PAGE 2



OBITUARIES

Martha M. Pelto

October 26, 1932 - January 9, 2022

Martha Marion Pelto, age 89, went to be with her Lord Jesus on January 9, 2022 at her home on Upper Pine Lake. Martha was born on October 26, 1932 in her parent’s home in Nisula, Mich.. She was the second of eight children born to John and Selma Lindrus.



Martha graduated from Baraga High School at the age of 16 in 1949. She began work as a billing clerk at the Upper Peninsula Power Company until she married Mervin Pelto in 1953 in Nisula, Mich. She then transitioned to being a bookkeeper/secretary

which she did through-out her life in various places. Martha had an essential part in Mervin’s ministry. She was involved in various church ministries for 44 years. After retiring from the ministry they moved to their present home on Upper Pine Lake. She was then employed by CIP in Sandstone, Minn. until age 75. Martha and Mervin had four daughters: Cheryl (Bob) Kipp of New Hope, Minn., Gail (Gary) Zikan of Sandstone, Minn., Joanne (Marty) Quinlin of Milan, IL., and Kay (Wayne) Pelto-Lund of McGregor, Minn. Martha is preceded in death by her daughter, Cheryl Kipp, her son in law, Wayne Lund, her parents John and Selma Lindrus, sisters Vivian (Don)Grentz, Ruth (Chuck)Normand, and Evelyn (Bob) Turpeinen, and brothers Norman (Virginia)Lindrus and Leslie (Ruth) Lindrus.

She is survived by her husband, three daughters, five grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister, Jeanne (Ron) Pelto and brother, Rodney (Carol) Lindrus, and many nieces and nephews.

POLICY: Lax restrictions

FROM PAGE 1

The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals is considering challenges to the mandates, but President Biden conceded in a statement on Jan. 13 that it is now up to the states and individual employers to implement a vaccination policy. “The Court has ruled that my administration cannot use the authority granted to it by Congress to require this measure, but that does not stop me from using my voice as President to advocate for employers to do the right thing to protect Americans’ health and economy,” stated President Biden in a press

release on the White House website. “I call on business leaders to immediately join those who have already stepped up – including one third of Fortune 100 companies – and institute vaccination requirements to protect their workers, customers, and communities.” The U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5-4 vote, also determined that a vaccination mandate for healthcare workers in facilities which provide Medicare and Medicaid services, is lawful and “a straightforward and predicable example of the ‘health and safety’ regulations that Congress has authorized [CMS] to impose.”

Games delayed due to COVID

BY MARY ELLEN DEWEY
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The Moose Lake-Willow River boys’ basketball team last played a game on January 7 because of COVID-19 protocol. The team was required to quarantine eight of their players on the varsity squad. This week they were host to Eveleth-Gilbert 7AA (5-5) on Tuesday, Jan. 18. On Friday, Jan. 21, Esko will be in Moose Lake. As of this writing, the Esko Eskomos are 7AA (10-2). Their two losses were to Hibbing and Perham.

On Tuesday, Jan. 25, the Rebels have a road trip north to Grand Rapids. Grand Rapids is in 7AAA (3-7). The Rebels’ games that were postponed were the games with the East Central Eagles and the Rush City Tigers. MLWR will travel to East Central on January 31 and to Rush City on February 3. Silver Bay canceled the January 14 game with the Rebels. That game has been replaced with a second game with Cloquet at Moose Lake on February 21. Game times are 5:45/7:15 p.m.

Eagles boys are third in conference

COACH DARREN FOGT

The first game of the week for the Eagles was at Mora on Thursday, Jan. 13. The East Central Eagles came out and had a couple of turnovers early that let Mora get out to a 10-2 lead. Then they settled in and battled back. At the end of the night the Mustangs just had too many horses in the stable and they wore the boys down. The Eagles lost 66-30.

The Eagles were led by Kyle McDonald with 14 points, Jacob Dixon with 5, Hunter Colton with 6, and Nathan Zielinski with 3. Also featured in this game was senior Damien Bogg’s first varsity points, he scored a late bucket for two points.

Next up was the much anticipated Friday night match-up against the Hinckley-Finlayson Jaguars on January 14. The Eagles knew it was going to be a battle and it certainly was. They jumped out to an early lead due, in a large part, to the hot shooting of Kyle McDonald. He went 5 for 5 from 3-point land in the first half. The defense that the Eagles played was much improved over recent games, holding the Jaguars to 27 percent shooting on the night.

The Eagles held a 12-point lead at halftime and they built on that lead in the second half getting it up to as much as 16. Hinckley-Finlayson came roaring back though and got it down to three points. Some timely shooting by Hunter Colton and great defense and free throws from Warren Carlson helped to hold the lead. The Eagles won 64-53 at home.

The leading scorers from the Hinckley-Finlayson game were: Hunter Colton with 21, Kyle McDonald 19, Nathan Zielinski



MIKE DRAHOSHIASKOV AMERICAN

East Central player holds tight to retain possession of the ball during a tough game against neighboring Hinckley-Finlayson.

13, Warren Carlson with 5, Jacob Dixon 3, Ben Carlin 2, and Charlie Higgins 1. Nathan Zielinski was the beast on the boards, pulling down 12 huge rebounds on the night. The Eagles shot 45 percent overall which played a huge part in the outcome.

The win catapulted the Eagles into the top three in the conference with a huge game against the Pine City Dragons that was

played on Tuesday, Jan. 18. On Thursday, Jan. 20, the Eagles 5A (4-8) will host Ogilvie 5A (7-4) and Wrenshall 7A (5-4) on Monday, January 24. The Eagles have a road trip to Rush City 6AA (6-2) on Tuesday, Jan. 25.

Rebels win one, lose one

BY PEGGY GRANQUIST

The Moose Lake/Willow River Lady Rebels played two more games this past week against Eveleth Gilbert and Mesabi East splitting the pair going 1-1 for the week.

Tuesday, Jan. 11, the Rebels hosted Eveleth/Gilbert. The Rebels won the tip against EG but was unable to convert. The Golden Bears had a difficult time initially as well, but did put up the first two points of the game. MLWR followed with their first two points as well. Natalie Mikrot gave the Rebels the lead with a steal and a layup and then Sarah Christy and Maci Kukuk added three points each to further the Rebel lead to 10-2. Ava North and Alivia Mallory contributed two each before Mikrot made another three to make the score 17-8 at the six minute mark. Sarah Christy completed a short jumper to increase the lead 19-8, but EG made two consecutive 3-pointers to cut the lead to five. Alivia Mallory and Maci Kukuk added an additional 5 points combined to give the Rebels a 24-17 lead but the Golden Bears popped in another 3 to chisel the MLWR lead down to four points. Mikrot added and additional six points and A. Mallory hit a free-throw to give the Rebels a 31-20 halftime lead.

MLWR started out the second half scoring with 13-0 run before Eveleth/Gilbert added a bucket giving the Rebels a 43-22 lead. Both teams had a shooting frenzy as the score quickly escalated to 52-36 before there was a ‘cool down’. Ava North broke that cold spell for the Rebels with a 3-point shot but EG answered with a three of their own. MLWR won the game 62-43. The JV also won their game.

Thursday, Jan. 13, the Rebels took on the Mesabi East Giants. The game lead switched many different times early in the first half. The Rebels jumped out to a 10-8 lead early in the stanza after the Giants scored first and had the lead. MLWR maintained the lead despite a free-throw made by ME. Alivia Mallory made a short jumper off the pass for two

but the Giants sank a three to tie the score at 12. Mesabi East took the lead with another 3 pointer however, Natalie Mikrot hit a short jumper to pull the Rebels within 1 and Maci Kukuk hit a pair of free throws to put MLWR back up by one (16-15). The Giants eventually took as much as a six point lead, but the Rebels stayed within striking distance whittling the Giants lead to 2 (28-26). Mesabi East took a 34-32 lead into the locker room.

The Giants started out the second half with the ball and first bucket but Natalie Mikrot answered with a 3-point shot. The Giants led 36-35 until Maci Kukuk completed an old fashioned 3-point play to put the Rebels back on top by 2 (38-36). The Rebels maintained the lead until the Giants went on a 4-0 run taking the lead 42-38. Mikrot then hit a three to once again trim the Giant lead to one, only to be answered by the Giants (44-41). The game stayed in a seesaw battle with the Rebels taking the lead off a Mikrot three pointer but the Giants answered to tie the game at 46. The Rebels once again pulled ahead off of a combined five points from Lilly Petty and Sarah Christy giving the Rebels a 51-50 edge at the six minute mark of the stanza. Mesabi East tied the score at 51 but Lilly Petty sank a pair of free throws to get the lead back to 53-51. Mesabi East then tied and eventually took the lead at 57-53 but Sarah Christy made a nice drive for two putting the Rebels within two points. Mesabi East answered to make the score 59-55 but Natalie Mikrot hit two free throws to get the Rebels to within two. The Giants went ahead 66-59 before a Mikrot 3 point shot pulled the Rebels back to within four but that is the closest MLWR would get as Mesabi East pulled out the win 70-62. The Lady Rebel JV lost a close game 31-29.

Next up for the Lady Rebels is Pequot Lakes on January 18 and Esko January 20. Both games are away.

COMMUNITY

Quick thinking great-grandma saved lives, precious possessions

My new year’s resolution thus far has been a real success. I mention it because I am in shock that I finally picked an improvement for my life that is not only easy to do, but also an effective improvement. And what is it? Well, I am avoiding candy. New Year’s being the end of the holidays is the perfect time to drop candy from a daily indulgence. My brother has been very successful in avoiding sugar, and I tried it a couple times last year, but dropping sugar in general had me failing before I even got started. So far, dropping candy is going well. Wish me luck.

King and Prince have a new trimmer. I think they are very happy with her. I’m not sure if she is as happy with them, but I’m hoping their gentle nature

and admiration will win her over. I know I am happy with her.

As promised, my continuation of the Mecl farm/Log cabin story. As stated before, my brother, Dennis Mecl, and I spent our early years visiting every week with Great-grandma, Mary Theresa Mecl. During those visits she talked about many things. Most of it was about family and very little was about the fire. What we do know is that they had a little warning a big fire was approaching, but it was only by a few minutes. None of us remember how she learned the news. It could have been other family members stopping by, or the radio. Either way, Mary told the girls to quickly gather a few “important things” from the house and then run to the road.

The Mecl men happened to be gone that day, so that meant there was no transportation available to leave the farm. It is my believe the women had hoped to avoid the fire by catching a ride at the road, but by the time they ran down the

long driveway, there were no rides coming, only fire. Mary’s quick solution was to get the girls and herself into the culvert under the end of the driveway, so they crawled into the culvert, still clinging to their few “important” belongings.

Finding a place to hide in a fire is not an easy task. I remember being told that there were people who jumped in their wells thinking that was going to protect them from burning and it did. The problem with that idea was the oxygen was sucked out of the well by the fire and those folks did not survive. Culverts under roads happen to give ample protection and get oxygen from two sides. The girls and Mary were getting oxygen the entire time as they hid from the wildfire. My hat is off to great-grandma, and to steal a quote: she chose wisely.

What did they select as worthy of saving you might wonder. I personally cannot recall stories about what the girls grabbed but we do know Mary Mecl thought to save one of her husband’s prized possessions.

In those last few moments in her farm house she grabbed his fiddle and wrapped it in a tattered old baby blanket. To this day, that blanket still surrounds the fiddle that James A. Mecl treasured and it remains a symbol of survival and strength to us.

My family lost absolutely everything in that fire, as did so many others. As my brother and I got older, we would be sent to cut rhubarb which through the years resumed growing at the front of the hole where the burnt down farm house stood. One day we wandered toward the side of the field where the old house used to be, and we found what appeared to be a barn floor. Once back with our fresh picked rhubarb, we asked if there was a barn out there that burned down. That’s when we were told they indeed had a barn and it too was lost in the fire. The gravity of that realization made me ask if there were animals. As strange as this may sound, it was then that this youngster grasped the reality those women faced when they

got out of the culvert.

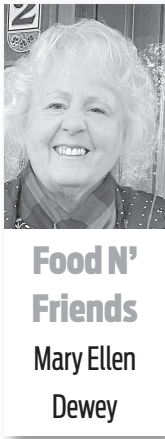
The Cloquet-Moose Lake fire of 1918 is said to be the worst natural disaster in Minnesota history. There were over 450 dead from that monster fire which covered roughly fifteen hundred square miles. In it’s path many towns and villages burned down to nothing and it only took 15 hours from beginning to end. For those lucky enough to survive, well, they found themselves with no home and no livelihood. One of those homeless families was the James A. Mecl family. One of those towns completely leveled was Ellson. Another chapter next week. This is just small pieces of our family’s story, for more information visit the “Moose Lake Depot & Fires of 1918 Museum” on Folz Boulevard in Moose Lake.

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Finlayson
News
Maxine Meyer

January 23 is National Pie Day



Food N'
Friends
Mary Ellen
Dewey

IF YOU have a favorite recipe you would like to share, send it to Mary Ellen at recipe@pinecountycourier.com. ENJOY!!

MAPLE-CREAM APPLE PIE

- 4 c. thinly sliced peeled tart apple
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 c. butter, cubed
- 1 baked pastry shell (9-inches)
- Filling:
- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- 1-1/2 c. cold milk
- 1 pkg. (3.4 oz.) instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 tsp. maple extract
- Topping:
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 3 Tbsp. quick-cooking oats
- 3 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted

In a large bowl, toss apples, sugar and cinnamon. In large skillet, cook apple mixture in butter for 10-12 minutes or until tender; cool. Spoon into pastry shell; set aside. In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. In another bowl, whisk milk and pudding mix for 2 minutes. Let stand for 2 minutes or until soft-set. Gradually beat into cream cheese. Stir in extract. Spoon over apple layer. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until set. In a small bowl, combine topping ingredients. Spread onto an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until crisp and golden brown, stirring three or four times. Cool. Just before serving, sprinkle topping over pie. Serves 6-8.

MARSHMALLOW RASPBERRY PIE

- Crust:
- 1-1/2 graham cracker crumbs (about 20 squares)
- 3 Tbsp. sugar
- 1/3 c. butter, melted
- Filling:
- 24 large marshmallows
- 1/3 c. milk
- 2/3 c. heavy whipping cream, whipped
- Few drops, red food coloring, optional
- 2 c. fresh raspberries, divided

Combine crush ingredients. Press into 9-inch pie plate: chill. Meanwhile, heat marshmallows and milk in a saucepan over low until smooth. Cool. Fold in cream and food coloring if desired. Spoon half into the crust. Top with half the raspberries. Repeat layers. Chill until firm, about 3 hours. Serves 8.

SUDOKU

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Level: intermediate

FRENCH SILK PIE

- 1 refrigerated pie crust
- 2/3 c. sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperatures
- 2 oz. unsweetened chocolate, melted
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/3 c. butter, softened
- 2/3 c. heavy whipping cream
- 2 tsp. confectioners’ sugar
- Whipped cream (optional)
- Chocolate curls (optional)

Roll out pie crust into an 8-inch circle. Transfer to a 7-inch pie plate; flute edge. Line shell with a double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Bake at 450 degrees for 4 minutes. Remove foil; bake until crust is golden brown, about 2 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack. In a small saucepan, combine sugar and eggs until well blended. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture reaches 160 degrees and coats the back of a metal spoon. Remove from the heat. Stir in chocolate and vanilla until smooth. Cool to lukewarm (90 degrees), stirring occasionally. In a small bowl, cream butter until light and fluffy, 5-7 minutes. Add cooled chocolate mixture; beat on high speed until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. In another large bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners’ sugar, beat until stiff peaks form. Fold into chocolate mixture. Pour into crust. Chill for at least 6 hours before serving. Garnish with whipped cream and chocolate curls. Garnish with whipped cream and chocolate curls, if desired. Serves 6.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

My Rights

To the Editor:

I was taught in school that for every right that we have as Americans, we have a responsibility. However, currently, “My Rights” is a drumbeat that continues without a single “My Responsibility” attached. This is especially noticed in the pandemic .

If I believe it is my right to choose not to be vaccinated, (which we know will help protect me from illness, help protect people I love from illness and death, help curb the pandemic, help keep people out of the hospital and ICU so that hospital are available for the treatment of other emergencies and surgeries, so that our medical people do not have to be so exhausted every day, and so that schools will be able to open for good.) then, what is my responsibility to my family and community? Or have we decided it is everyone for himself? .

Dorothy Jamison
Sandstone, Minn.

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Clearing up marijuana legal myths

A couple of summers ago, I was visiting Anchorage, Alaska. Because of the time difference and it was still light out around 11:30 p.m., I was



Reese
Frederickson
Pine County
Attorney

having a hard time sleeping, so I decided to go for a walk downtown.

This wasn't the first time walking around Anchorage near midnight for me. About 15 years before, I spent

part of a summer working in Alaska when I was in the Air Force. I recalled that it was a rowdy town, with many of the bars loud and at capacity that time of night.

Fifteen years later I was surprised to see that the local bars were quiet and not as full as I had remembered from my military days. After walking for a while, I finally spotted a location that was noisy and packed with people. There was a bouncer outside the door and many people were loitering in front, and people were lined up on the sidewalk to get in. As I got closer, I was shocked to

find out that it was not a bar; rather, it was a marijuana dispensary. I later learned that Alaska had legalized marijuana in 2014.

The experience made me think about how the conversation around marijuana has changed over the years. As a child of the 80s, I remember being bombarded by Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" campaign in school, and lawmakers who pushed tough stances on drugs. Decades later, many of those same lawmakers have pushed for decriminalization of drug crimes and legalization of marijuana, often claiming that prisons and jails are bursting at the seams with marijuana offenders while eyeing potential marijuana sales tax revenue.

My purpose for writing this is not to wade into the legalization debate – I have nothing new to add to it, and my job is to enforce the law, not write it. I thought it would be more helpful to clear up some marijuana legal myths, at least from the Pine County side of it.

Myth 1: Marijuana makes up a large percentage of criminal drug convictions.

This is untrue. In the last three years, my office has prosecuted 500 felony methamphetamine cases, 150 felonies involving other drugs (mainly heroin and other opiates), and

14 felony marijuana cases. Those 14 cases were the results of five large marijuana grow operations, not personal possession cases.

To understand why there are so few felony marijuana cases and why none of the 14 individuals ended up in prison, it's helpful to understand marijuana law in Minnesota. Marijuana possession at any amount 42.5 grams or less (deemed a "small amount" under law) is a petty misdemeanor. A petty misdemeanor is not a crime under Minnesota law because a violator cannot go to jail for a petty misdemeanor or be placed on probation; rather, the consequence is a fine, much like a speeding ticket. The 2022 payable fine for marijuana possession is \$50 (the state's surcharges bring it up to \$135). A payable fine means that if you pay the fine, you'll never see the inside of a courtroom.

It's an odd quirk of Minnesota law that if you possess anything over 42.5 grams of marijuana (deemed a "large amount"), it goes from a petty misdemeanor straight to a felony. If you're caught with a large amount (42.5 grams is a lot of marijuana – imagine a large sandwich bag stuffed full and bursting at the seams with pot), you'll likely be charged with a felony possession, but

you'll likely not end up with a drug conviction. A first-time felony marijuana drug possession case is "diverted" under Minnesota law. Diversion is a process where a person is placed in a program or a probation-like status for a period of time, and as long as the conditions of the program are met, the case is dismissed when the time expires. A typical condition is that the violator attends treatment or obtains a chemical dependency assessment. It's rare for a violator to serve jail time in a diversion case.

Myth 2: Minnesota prisons and jails are clogged with marijuana offenders.

This is untrue too. According to the Minnesota Department of Corrections, drug offenses accounted for 1,443 inmates, which was 17 percent of the prison population in 2020. Of those inmates, 39 were there because of a marijuana offense (by contrast 1,012 inmates were there for methamphetamine offenses). Those 39 inmates accounted for only 0.46 percent of the total inmate population. Under Minnesota sentencing laws, a person would end up in prison on a marijuana charge only after numerous prior felony convictions or multiple failures at probation (also with prior convictions).

At the local level, if you fol-

low the Pine County jail roster, you'll notice inmates booked under the charge: "Drugs – 5th Degree – Possess Schedule 1, 2, 3, 4 – Not Small Amount Marijuana." That does not mean the person is there because of a marijuana charge – it's simply the statutory name for a drug felony. The typical inmate booked under that charge is there because of possession of methamphetamine or heroin, not marijuana.

Myth 3: People are in prison longer for marijuana possession than for sex offenses.

I've seen this comment on Facebook a few times – it's untrue. The minimum prison sentence for a 1st degree sex crime with no other criminal history is 144 months. The maximum prison sentence in a 5th degree marijuana possession case is 25 months (keep in mind that 25 months would not come into play until the person has had a felony criminal history longer than my arm).

This is not meant to be a treatise on marijuana laws. I understand that federal law and laws in other states may be quite different. My only purpose is to look at statistics from the Pine County level. And to reminisce about Alaska.

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FISH: Ice fishing popular pastime for many Minnesotans during the winter months

FROM PAGE 1

he enjoys the quiet time on the lake as opposed to the busy summer.

There are 5,400 fishable lakes in Minnesota and 162 species of fish, according to the Department of Natural Resources. Of those fish, walleye are the favorite of fishermen, followed by northern pike and muskie.

The reasons people fish are as varied as the types of fish. Some enjoy the quiet solitude of sitting alone in nature. Others like to fish year round and eat their catch, while many others say they just want to get out of the house during the long, dreary, cold months.

“We do it to get through the winter,” said Pangia Thao as she helps set up the family’s shelter on Grindstone Lake. They visit from the Twin Cities specifically to fish for smelt.

Ice fishing contests are another way anglers beat the winter blues.

Stacy Wilson and her daughter, Madison, participated in a contest at Sturgeon Lake Saturday, Jan. 15. It was sponsored by Doc’s Sports Bar and Grill.

“What else is there to do in the winter but stare at a frozen hole,” Stacy said with a laugh. Madison said she doesn’t mind ice fishing as long as there is a nice size fish as an occasional reward.

They sat near each other at the end of a plowed row of ice. They had their lines in the water and a depth finder nearby.

The advent of expensive electronic fish locators helps fishermen locate fish under the ice, but it doesn’t guarantee that they will take the bait.

“If the fish don’t bite, move on to another hole,” Pixier advised.

The pop up ice fishing villages are a winter phenomenon wherever the weather is cold enough to make thick ice on area lakes, although there is no such thing as 100 percent safe ice, according to the DNR website.

The strength of the ice is based on several factors, including the depth of the water under the ice, the size of the body of water, water currents and more.

A minimum of four inches is recommended for ice fishing or walking on new, clear ice. For a medium size truck it’s 12-15 inches. White ice is only about half of the strength of new clear ice, according to the website. They recommend checking the ice depth every 150 feet, parking vehicles at least 50 feet apart and moving every two hours to prevent sinking. If water overflows a hole that is next to a vehicle, the ice is sinking and it’s time to find a more solid place to park.

While there has not been any deaths related to falling through the ice in Pine County in the last five years, there have been in neighboring counties including one in Carlton and one in Aitkin.

The DNR website has a complete list of the 2022 ice fishing tournaments in Minnesota.



JAMIE LUNDIAKOV AMERICAN

A group of ice fisherman pull their supplies across Moose Lake to their fish house.



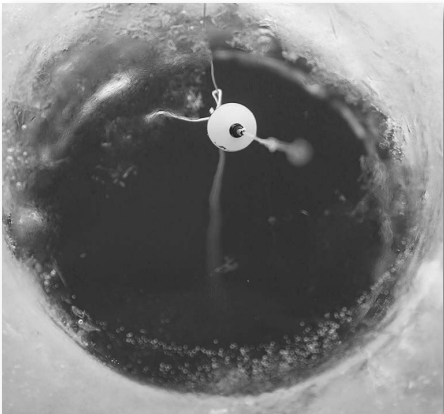
JAMIE LUNDIAKOV AMERICAN

Jacob Thao drills a hole in Grindstone Lake on a beautiful sunny Saturday as his family prepares to ice fish for smelt.



MIKE DRAHOSHIKOV AMERICAN

Finlayson resident, Les Smith enjoys a day of ice fishing inside his fish house.



MIKE DRAHOSHIKOV AMERICAN

Ice holes dot many frozen lakes around Minnesota . There are 5,400 fishable lakes in the state and 162 species of fish.

WINNER: Second time brings home the win

FROM PAGE 1

and Isaiah Leikam are members of Gavin’s pit crew and ensures his sled is running properly and race ready. They transport it with a dolly from the pit to the oval track and cheer him on once the race is underway.

Gavin also plays center with the Moose Lake Rebels hockey team.



SUBMITTED

Gavin Mlaskoch holds the checkered flag after winning first place in the 21st Vintage World Championship Snowmobile Race in Eagle Lake, Wisc. earlier this month.



CARLEE WOLF | SUBMITTED

10U girls take Silver Bay Tournament championship

The MLAHA 10U girls hockey team won the championship in a Silver Bay tournament the weekend of Jan. 8-9. Coaches are Jessica Bird, Jamie Bird and Forest Hall. The athletes pictured (l-r) top row: Mollie Wolf, Avery Hall, Hailey Ikola, and Aubree Belanger. Middle: Abby DeRungs, Harper Danelski, Maddy Borchardt, Paige Nordstrom, Addie and Genereau. Bottom: Carli Porter.

Bride-to-be unaware of fiances prankster past

Dear Tante Ingeborg,
When my cousin Hans was little he was quite the



Ask Tante

prankster. He's the kid that put peanut butter on Edna Andersen's braid in kindergarten. She only had one fat blond one that hung down to her knees. He also put Plastic Wrap on toilet seats, dead fish in the laundry basket, switched the sugar to salt in the church kitchen, and put smoke bombs in the outhouses at the fairgrounds. The list of his pranks is endless.

I thought he would never grow up but next week he's getting married. His bride to be is not familiar with his shenanigans. Should someone warn her?

Signed, Han's Cousin Hel-burga on Highway 123

Dear Cousin H,
Unless Hans changes his ways, his marriage will be over before it begins. Until death do us part might not take very long. I predict that having children will be the answer: if his kids are like him neither parent will want custody.

I was married so long my oldest daughter was the same age as me. But in this day and age no one has that kind of patience.

Try to install a video device in Hans' home then put all the action flicks on YouTube. Pray for the bride and send out a "heads up" when you post the videos on social media. I can hardly wait. Payback is hell.

Remember, Tante Ingeborg cares....but not so much.

BRUNO/KERRICK NEWS

Saturday Al and Sandy Hoiland went to Larry and Lu Hoiland's to visit. Lu and Sandy made four batches of donuts, which filled 22 gallon bags.

On Friday, Jan. 14, Mitch and Liz Clausen hosted a turkey dinner to celebrate David's birthday. Dave, April, Daniel & Katie Clausen and Jesse, Genny, Grady, Dane & Jordy Swenson attended the event.

There is currently a \$2 bag sale at the Bruno Thrift Store. It goes thru Saturday, Jan. 22 on clothes, shoes, purses and jewelry.

Remember, if you have any news to share please either email me @ store-bo1@frontier.com or call me at (320) 838-3554.



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Pizza recal over mislabeling

PRESS RELEASE

Mn Department of Agriculture
Kettle River Products, an Askov, Minn., establishment, is recalling approximately 1,464 pounds of chicken alfredo pizza due to misbranding and an undeclared allergen, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced. The product contains wheat, a known allergen, which is not declared on the product label.

The frozen, heat-treated, not fully cooked items were produced on various dates between Dec. 9, 2021 through Jan. 3, 2022. The following products are subject to recall [view label]:

12-inch, 25-oz. plastic-wrapped "KETTLE RIVER Chicken Alfredo Pizza" with lot codes "21343, 21349, 21362 or 22011" stamped on the bottom of the product packaging.

The products subject to recall bear establishment number "P-04203" inside the USDA mark of inspection. These items were shipped to retail and restaurant



Sample of recalled product label.

locations, as well as fundraiser programs in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The problem was discovered when the company determined that it used labels intended for a different product that does not contain wheat and reported the issue to FSIS.

There have been no confirmed reports of adverse reactions due to consumption of these products. Anyone concerned about an injury or illness should contact a health-care provider.

FSIS is concerned that some products may be in consumers' freezers. Consumers who have purchased these products are

urged not to consume them. These products should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase.

FSIS routinely conducts recall effectiveness checks to verify recalling firms notify their customers of the recall and that steps are taken to make certain that the product is no longer available to consumers.

Consumers and members of the media with questions about the recall can contact Lisa Waletzko, Owner, Kettle River Products, at (320) 838-3400 or at kwaletzko@kettleriverpizza.com.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Askov phone service updated

100 YEARS AGO JANUARY 17, 1922

- John W. Thinesen bought 40 acres of land near Askov from H. Simonsen at a consideration of \$1,000.

- Todd Rodenberger and Miss Ruth Budd of the Bruno community were recently married. They will make their home on the Rodenberger farm in Bruno.

- Mr. and Mrs. C. Sebald of Askov returned home after a two week visit at the home of their daughter in Mankato.

75 YEARS AGO JANUARY 16, 1947

- An eight pound girl was born last Thursday to Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Hammer in Moose Lake. She will be known as Carma Ann.

- Mr. and Mrs. Nels Nelson celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary at their home at Bass Lake.

- Allen Ecklund, son of Mr. and Mrs. Almer Ecklund, was badly bitten by a neighbor's dog. The wounds were confined to his arms and required four stitches.

- "The Kid" a three act Junior Class Play will be held at the Askov High School on January

27, adults are 40 cents and students 25 cents.

50 YEARS AGO JANUARY 20, 1972

- A cold snap hits Minnesota. It's the worst in 36 years. The official state low during this three day cold snap in this area was 53 degrees below zero recorded at Moose Lake.

- Jacqueline Lou Ketchum, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Ketchum of Kerrick and James Andrew Ogilvie, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Ogilvie Sr, of Hibbing exchanged vows on January 8 at Holy Family Catholic Church in Moose Lake.

- Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Beck of Finlayson will observe their 25th wedding anniversary at Peace Lutheran Church on January 22.

- Mrs. Ruth Ball went to St. Paul at the Paul Maloney home to meet her latest grandchild. Melissa Ann was born last Sunday to Mr. and Mrs. Maloney.

25 YEARS AGO JANUARY 16, 1997

- Askov Telephone Service will change to new digital switching equipment replacing the analog

system.

- Pine Medical Center employees will vote on becoming unionized.

- The Bruno and Sandstone Elementary choirs sang at the Miller Hill Mall in Duluth on December 19th.

- Anna Wermerskirchen, formerly of the Vossevangen Apartments and Bruno, has entered the Sandstone Nursing Home on December 18. Anna is nearing 100 years old and has been able to take care of herself all that time.

10 YEARS AGO JANUARY 12, 2012

- Askov Farm and Garden gets a new look with the removal of the grain bins and piping.

- Barbara Budd took her mother, Arla Budd, on a mystery tour for her Christmas present. She took Arla to Ankeny, Iowa to visit Asta and Arlen Twedt. They toured their church, went to Grand View University, the Des Moines Art Center and then a grand tour of Des Moines.

- The Purrell family of Norman Township suffered a total loss house fire last week.

EAST CENTRAL SCHOOL LUNCH MENU

Thursday, January 20
Blue line: Chili, corn chips, mixed veggies, Mandarin oranges, and milk
Silver line: Chicken noodle hot dish, bread stick, mixed veggies, Mandarin oranges, and milk

Friday, January 21
Blue line: Cook's Choice
Silver line: Cook's Choice

Monday, January 24
Blue line: Chicken sandwich, fries, broccoli, applesauce, and milk
Silver line: BBQ rib sandwich, scalloped potatoes, broccoli, applesauce, and milk

Tuesday, January 25
Blue line: Burrito, chips and cheese, tropical fruit, mixed veggies, and milk

Silver line: Taco/shell, refried beans. Tropical fruit, mixed veggies, and milk

Wednesday, January 26
Blue line: Corn dog, fries, apple, raw carrots, and milk
Silver line: Sub sandwich, chips, apple, raw carrots, and milk

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICES

BIRCH CREEK TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD MEETING
 Please be advised that the regular board meeting of the Birch Creek Town Board will take place at 7:00 p.m. on January 20, 2022. Meeting will be held at the Birch Creek Town Hall in Denham, MN. All residents are welcome to attend. Marissa Rayburn Clerk, Birch Creek Township
 Published in the Askov American on January 20, 2022

FRONTIER NOTICE
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 1/20/22
 CNS-3545947#
 ASKOV AMERICAN
 Published in the Askov American on January 20, 2022

PROBATE DIVISION
Court File No. 58-PR-21-88
NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE OF WILL AND INFORMAL APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In Re: Estate of Terry D. Johnson, a/k/a Terry Dennis Johnson, Decedent
 Notice is given that an Application for Informal Probate of Will and Informal Appointment of Personal Representative was filed with the Registrar, along with a Will dated April 3, 2009. The Registrar accepted the application and appointed Lois M. Johnson whose address is 10834 Farm to Market Road, Sturgeon Lake, MN 55783, to serve as the personal representative of the decedent's estate. Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Any objection to the appointment of the personal representative must be filed with the Court, and any properly filed objection will be heard by the Court after notice is provided to interested persons of the date of hearing on the objection. Unless objections are filed, and unless the Court orders otherwise, the personal representative has the

full power to administer the estate, including, after thirty (30) days from the issuance of letters testamentary, the power to sell, encumber, lease, or distribute any interest in real estate owned by the decedent. Notice is further given that, subject to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-801, all creditors having claims against the decedent's estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court within four (4) months after the date of this notice or the claims will be barred.
 Dated: January 5, 2022
 BY THE COURT
 Peggy Zdon Registrar
 Amy Willert Court Administrator
 John M. Warp (MN# 114674) John M. Warp, P.A.
 302 Elm Avenue
 P.O. Box 280
 Moose Lake Minnesota 55767
 Telephone: (218) 485-4489
 ATTORNEY FOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
 Published in the Askov American on January 13, 20, 2022

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 Wednesday route- pick up van in Hinckley and drive to Cambridge to pick up papers at 8:30 am. Deliver papers to post offices and stores in Hinckley, Sandstone, and Askov area. Friday route- pick up truck in Moose Lake and drive to Cambridge to pick up papers at 8 am. Deliver paperwork to Pine City PO and make stops along the way at post offices and stores up to Barnum. Will start off as a sub now learning the routes but will do both routes weekly sometime around March. Will be lifting bags and bundles. Need to be able to lift 40 pounds repetitively. If interested, please contact Jeff Andres, Publisher. 651-407-1258 or Jeff@northstarmedia.net

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Hinckley-Finlayson superintendent moving on

JENNIFER YOCUM-STANS
EDITOR@HINCKLEYNEWS.COM

Hinckley-Finlayson Superintendent Rob Prater has made the decision not to renew his contract with the district that expires at the end of June 2022. Prater informed the school board members and staff via a letter last week.

Prater began working at Hinckley-Finlayson Schools in 2006 as the High School Principal, five years later he took over as superintendent.

When asked what he felt his biggest accomplishment has been, Prater said “The collaborative efforts to create new programs like Empower Learning Center our Alternative program, the 9th grade academy, partnering with East Central and Pine City for programs like Vision and Pine County Transition Program.”

He also mentioned partnering with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and the Pine County Schools and staff to create new opportunities for all students. Last year H-F had the highest

graduation rate in Pine County and over the last 10 years they have doubled their Native American graduation rate.

A definite “people person,” Prater said his favorite part of the job is anything where he gets to deal with people. “I get to see all parts of the district, all the schools, all the programs, get to know students, staff and families. The only part of my job I don’t like is filling out state reports that don’t show what we are actually doing to support students,” said Prater.

When he first came to the district, Prater says he was surprised by how much a staff and community did to make sure students get great experiences. “Until coming to this school district I did not understand how much a school staff and community could care about our children and go the extra mile to help those students. Students wanted robotics so teachers started a program. Students wanted more youth sports so parents



and staff volunteered to make bigger programs. Students wanted college classes so the school board found the funding and teachers got more training to make sure students got what they need. We don’t have enough substitutes (hopefully a short term problem) so our parents and school board members volunteer to help.

What will Prater miss most about the Hinckley-Finlayson

School District? “Reading with Mrs. Gelhar’s Kindergarten students. Morning meetings with Mrs. Stiel’s students. Cheering at football, volleyball, basketball, track, baseball, and softball games. Being teased by Mr. Masterson for being a bad basketball referee. Problem solving with the school board on tough issues. Judging the science fair. Helping hand out diplomas. Helping give out college scholarships. The former students who stop by to tell me how well they are doing and the excellent relationships with the leadership team and school board members,” he says. “The only things I won’t miss are 7 a.m. (or 7 p.m.) committee meetings and filling out reports for the State of Minnesota.”

Prater will be missed by many in the district. H-F High School Principal Brian Masterson said “ Mr. Prater has been very supportive of me in my role as High School Principal. He has always been available, from when I began, to bounce

ideas off of, to problem solve, and to offer advice. One thing I think Rob did very well was lead the District through our facilities projects a few years ago. All H-F schools have up to date buildings and this is in large part because of Mr. Prater’s leadership.”

School Board Member Leo Irlbeck said Prater has been an excellent administrator over the years and he hates to see him go. “He’s been very prudent with our spending and looks out for the students. His communication with the board has been excellent and he keeps the board very informed. He has made it more of a team approach to solving issues. It will be a big loss for the district, but an understandable move.”

The Praters will be empty nesters next year and have decided to move closer to family. He has not secured another position as of yet, but they are looking north of here.



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