



# INSIDE: WRESTLERS QUALIFY FOR STATE

# Aitkin Independent Age



The location of Phase 2 of the Northwest Street and Utility Improvements project to take place in Aitkin during the summer of 2019 is shown.

## Street improvement Phase 2 moves toward start date

BY LYNN MIZNER  
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At the second regular Aitkin City Council meeting on Feb. 19, Mayor Gary Tibbitts reminded council members that the Annual Aitkin Commerce and Outdoor Show is on March 9-10. A new ex-

hibit this year will be the zoo mobile from the Minnesota Zoo. They will have a two-hour presentation with live animals and presentations about the zoo. City council members have been considering names suggested by the public for the former Tib-

betts farm property that was acquired by the city as an addition to the city park system. Tibbetts Trails and Park was the name city council members preferred. A special meeting of the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners for the 2019 Board of Equalization is May

1 at 9 a.m. at City Hall. The council can make recommendations in response to concerns raised by residents who come in with questions or complaints about their property tax statements. Every five years the town

See **Phase 2** page A9

## Chappy's comprehensive home care license revoked

BY BRIELLE BREDSTEN  
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The comprehensive home care license for Chappy's Golden Shores in Hill City was revoked by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) on Feb. 20 because of noncompliance with applicable laws or rules. The order follows the temporary 90-day suspension of the facility's home care license, which was issued on Dec. 6, 2018, after investigators determined violations had occurred which posed imminent risk of harm to the health and safety of the persons in the provider's care. According to the MDH, Chappy's violated eight laws and 10 different clients were maltreated. These laws state a person who receives home care services has the right to: receive services according to a suitable and up-to-date plan; be served by people who are properly trained and competent to perform their duties; and be free from physical and ver-

bal abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, and all forms of maltreatment covered under the Vulnerable Adults Act. All home care providers were not in compliance with requirements for reporting maltreatment of vulnerable adults. The facility failed to meet comprehensive assessment and monitoring requirements, as well as timing and internal requirements for reporting maltreatment of vulnerable adults. "Because Chappy's Golden Shores is already under immediate temporary suspension order, there must not be any home care clients residing at or receiving care from Chappy's," according to the MDH Notice of Revocation. A person involved in the management, operation or control of a home care provider that operates without an appropriate license is guilty of a misdemeanor. However, the order in-

See **Chappy's** page A8

## Aitkin's Tree City Committee success rooted in resident participation

BY LYNN MIZNER  
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Aitkin's first Tree City Community Meeting was held on Feb. 20. Attendance was affected by weather and poor driving conditions, but some Aitkin City Council members and a few city residents attended. The meeting was led by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Community Forester Troy Holcomb who presented the following information:

- The value of trees to a community;
- Steps Aitkin has taken to start the process of becoming a Tree City USA city;
- A proposal that the city "lead by example" - educating residents about why

certain trees are desirable to plant in the city.

- Two grants have been obtained by the city of Aitkin to help in the process. One will help with the costs of education such as community meetings. Another will help with costs of planting trees as part of a planned Arbor Day event.

"We have most of what we need to move forward in place," said Holcomb. "Now we need the people of Aitkin to become involved."

The city has established a Tree Board made up of city representatives, but to be complete the board still needs representatives from the community.

There was discussion at

See **Tree City** page A9



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Aitkin County Land Commissioner Rich Courtemanche accepts the Minnesota Chapter of The Wildlife Society's Conservation Award from North Central Section of TWS past president, Jodie Provost, on behalf of the Land Department. Shown are Bob Kangas, Kathy Buhlman, Brad Krause, Tom Parkin, Dan Gordon, Rich Courtemanche and Jodie Provost.

## Land Department recognized

BY LYNN MIZNER  
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Minnesota chapters of The Wildlife Society (TWS) and the Society of American Foresters (SAF) gathered for a joint annual meeting last

week in Duluth. Aitkin County Land Department (ACLD) staff attended the meeting. The ACLD was honored with the Minnesota Chapter TWS Conservation Award. This award is given to an orga-

nization or institution that has shown an outstanding commitment to Minnesota's natural resources. Aitkin Department of Natural Resources Assistant Wildlife Manager Jodie Provost presented the award and made

some comments about the many accomplishments of ACLD with regard to both sustainable forest management and wildlife habitat conservation. Provost is also

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