

FUN AT HOME: Families keep themselves entertained during the COVID-19 shutdown. P6

Skluzacek battles back after emergency brain surgery

BY MIKE GAINOR
EDITOR@PINECITYMN.COM

She had a time bomb in her skull. It had always been there – a little knot of abnormal blood vessels getting closer and closer to rupturing. But Abby Skluzacek had no idea. Neither did her family. You don't think about things like that when you're just 22. It was snowing hard on the morning of Jan. 18 and the inches were piling up. Inside her family home in Pine City, a little after 5 a.m., Abby became suddenly awake. "I had horrible jaw pain on

my right side, and I started seeing triple," she said. "I just thought ... I'll just sleep it off. It's fine. But then, my head started hurting – pain I've never felt before. So, I started screaming for my mom." She thought she would run her head under some cold water so she tried to head to the bathroom. But she never made it out of her bedroom. "I stood up, and my legs instantly gave out," Abby said. "I laid on the floor and started screaming for her more. It was hours for me, but in reality it was just a couple of minutes."

The bleeding in her brain had already affected her speech. Her calls for help were incoherent shrieking. Her mother Robin didn't know what the noise was, but she headed upstairs to her daughter's bedroom. She found her on the floor, wailing and sweating. Abby was telling her to call an ambulance. Robin couldn't make it out, but she knew enough to wake up Abby's dad Loren and they called 911. "She kept grabbing my hand," Loren said. "I was



MIKE GAINOR | THE PIONEER
When told by doctors that she may never play guitar again after her brain surgery, Abby Skluzacek had two words: "Watch me."

SEE SKLUZACEK, PAGE 2



MICHELLE GREIG

Home with the Pioneer

While hanging out with grandma, this young fellow said, "I want to read to Rocky (the horse) and Bailey (the mule)." He enjoyed it, and evidently the animals did too.

COVID-19 cases double in Pine County

BY MIKE GAINOR
EDITOR@PINECITYMN.COM

The number of COVID-19 cases in Pine County more than doubled last week, from five to 12, according to the Minnesota Department of Health. There have been no deaths related to COVID-19 reported yet in Pine County.

SCHOOLS PROVIDING MEALS TO STUDENTS
Pine City School Superintendent Curt Tryggestad said that though the schools are closed, they continue to provide distance

learning – and meals for students. Tryggestad said the Pine City schools food service prepared 4,383 meal packages (containing both breakfast and lunch) that were delivered to students via bus routes or picked up at the elementary school. Food services is preparing an average of 877 meal packages per day. That is an increase of over 70 meal packages per day over last week. Tryggestad also offered thanks to Burnett Dairy Cooperative of Grantsburg for donating over

1,800 pounds of cheese to Pine City students and families. Each meal package distributed on Thursday included a 2 pound package of shredded cheese. "Kudos to Burnett Dairy for their support of our students, families, and community during this time of need," Tryggestad said.

BEER, WINE NOW SOLD WITH FOOD
Though the Stay at Home order has been extended to May 3, bars

SEE COVID, PAGE 3

Pine City ballfields renamed to honor LeRoy Samuelson

BY MIKE GAINOR
EDITOR@PINECITYMN.COM

Pine City's ballfields at Hurley Avenue SE now has a new name: LeRoy Samuelson Memorial Park. LeRoy "Lee" Samuelson established Lee's Pro Shop as an athletic supply store in 1973, and as a business owner and active community member helped grow numerous sports programs in Pine City. Pine City purchased the Hurley

Avenue property in 1991 as dedicated park land. In the mid 1990s the concession stand and ballfields were constructed, then in 2005 a storage shed was installed. The city council passed a resolution approving the name change on April 1. The resolution states, "LeRoy Samuelson had and still has a major influence on the sporting and athletic culture of Pine City; and ... the City of Pine City Park and Recreation Committee and City Council would like to honor

LeRoy Samuelson and his family in remembrance of his passing on April 2, 2019." Pine City Council Member Gina Pettit said that the resolution was originally going to be made in conjunction with a ceremony at the ballfield, but that had to be put off. Staff and the committee hope to have a ceremony at some point after the COVID-19 shutdown, but that is yet to be determined.

Home Is
Where the
Fun Is

VIRTUAL TOURS
AVAILABLE

320-629-7541

Each office is independently owned and operated affiliate Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate

COLDWELL BANKER
RESULTS
885 7th St. SW
Pine City, MN 55063