

Ely Echo Editorial

Logging industry needs help

The three legged economic stool of taconite, tourism and timber is about to have one leg kicked out. The logging industry is dying fast.

We have a story this week about a bill being proposed to help the logging industry. Minnesota Sen. Tina Smith is co-sponsoring a bill to help our country's logging industry survive the coronavirus pandemic.

During the most recent bailout, loggers were left by the wayside. Under the CARES Act, Congress provided \$300 million to the nation's fishing industry and \$16 billion for dairy and livestock producers as well as fruit and vegetable growers. Loggers and truckers got zero.

Our local logging industry is seeing layoffs and we fear some companies may have to get out of the business altogether.

In addition to the economy residing in the outhouse, the Verso paper mill in Duluth recently shut down.

Ely logger Mike Nielson told the Duluth News-Tribune that Verso made up one-third of his business and he's left with two years' worth

of wood meant for the company.

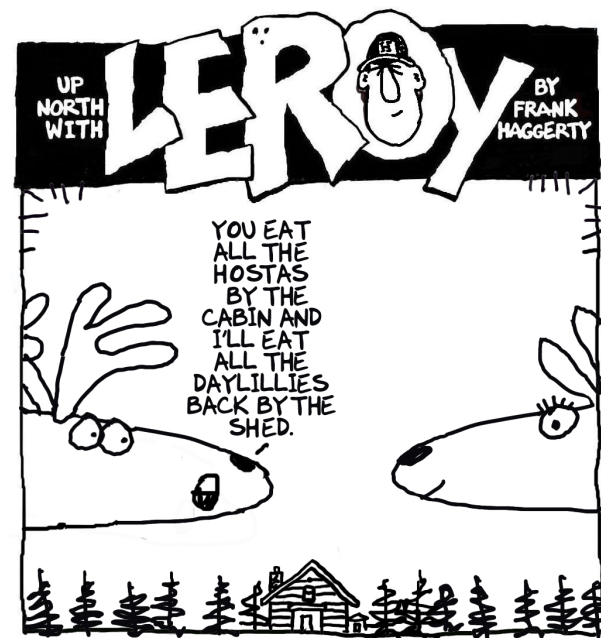
Nielson said not only did he bring logs to the Duluth mill, he dropped off hardwoods at Verso's railyard in Parkland, Wisconsin, where it was then brought to Verso's mill in Wisconsin Rapids.

"We have byproducts that no longer have a direct home," Nielson said. "So that's another big, big kick in the butt."

Logging trucks can be seen parked in the Ely area. Instead of hauling wood they are collecting dust. Trees that should be harvested are rotting where they stand. The chance for forest fires is on the rise.

Smith's bill would establish a new program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide direct payments to timber harvesting and hauling businesses that can demonstrate they have experienced significant economic hardship compared to the previous year.

Our local logging and trucking operations provide jobs, fuel our economy and work to manage our forests. Let's get them some help.



Letters

...to apply for our absentee ballot

Editor:
Our democracy is stronger when more people vote - the higher the voter turnout the better. In the beginning, only white males were allowed to vote. Since then women and people of color have been allowed to participate in our democracy. This is progress. However, just because someone has the right to vote does not mean she or he has an opportunity to vote. Roadblocks that discourage voter turnout

weaken our democracy. The coronavirus may become one of those roadblocks in the coming election, if we do not plan ahead. Fortunately, Steve Simon, Minnesota Secretary of State, has made voting by mail accessible for all Minnesota voters. www.sos.state.mn.us Now it is up to all of us to apply for our absentee ballot, become informed about the issues, and vote!

Caroline Owens
Ely, MN

...rich subsidized YMCA's would pitch in

Editor:
Again I believe the donors and members of these anti-mining groups need to be educated so they can see how Ely and surrounding towns and businesses are benefited from mining resource funds.

Just look what the IRRR funds will contribute to the Ely school project that will be voted on in August let alone the trails parks infrastructure business retro work on and on.

I would certainly hope that the anti-mining families appreciate how these funds come about and the hard work of miners provide for the area.

Geef if anti-mining non profits and rich subsidized YMCA's would pitch in Ely would have enough money for a new school without raising tax dollars.

To all the donors and members of these anti-mining non profits and rich YMCA's ask them whether they benefit the Superior National Forest Area, the small northland towns or do they just benefit your rich organizations.

Ask them when they push themselves into the northland will they be paying taxes in that area and helping the communities, no they

don't. Ask them how much they pay themselves and what do they own. Ask them are they political, because they are not supposed to be according to the bylaws of non-profits. Ask them how your donations - membership are really spent. Ask why board members sit on more than 1 non-profit, is it because these CEO - board members like taking your money.

If your donations and memberships could have been spent wisely over the last 20 years it could have great impact on new technology for mining in the 21st century. All the new electronics and green energy will come from precious metal mining and will create great new jobs throughout the U.S. and finally put a tax base into the small towns for your efforts have not!

Remember we buy our precious metals from China and Russia. Let's create new jobs for the northland and keep the U.S. and our citizens safe and secure right here at home.

Take those blinders off and start collaborating with your communities, it will benefit all concerns.

Tom Cooper
Ely, MN

Write a letter to the editor and sign your name, phone #. Send it to: Ely Echo, 15 East Chapman St., Ely MN 55731 or email to: thepub@elyecho.com. The Echo reserves the right to edit.



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BOUNDARY WATERS CARE CENTER IS CLOSED TO ALL VISITORS AT THIS TIME.

The health of our residents and staff is of the utmost importance to us and we would like to reduce the spread of any illnesses in our community. Please reach out to Adam Masloski, Executive Director, at 365-8045 or Sharlene Detzel, Director of Nursing, at 365-8730 if you have any questions.



...life is so much easier if facing reality is impossible

Letter to the Editor

In response to people who don't want to wear a mask and help reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus, who want schools to open in the fall, and like to congregate closely in public places:

Think of the numerous things we do as part of this society. Wearing clothes in public, driving with a driver's license and car insurance, carry a fishing and hunting license, registering your car, other vehicles, and boats, having child car seats, 'hands free' in-car phoning, well, as you know, the list is

long. We all tire of these requirements but you do them to reap the privileges and safety they provide. Why then would you not want to reduce the spread of an epidemic that could kill you, your relatives and friends?

It is simply mind boggling that mask wearing threatens personal liberties. This is a public health issue not one of civic rights! Perhaps you don't watch TV, read the papers, look at your phone? Have you seen the US map related to this deadly disease? One TV expert has said that until

someone near and dear to the naysayers dies, they will resist conforming and will continue to spread the illness. Something is definitely amiss. Even the President, our chief role model, has changed his tune about the spreading virus and wearing masks; it is now patriotic according to him and is going to get worse before better—although his motive seems less humanitarian than due to a desire for votes in the upcoming election.

If you don't believe there is a virus, if you want to get and spread the virus, if

you want your relatives to die from it, then congregate closely in public places, don't wear protective masks, pretend times haven't changed, that this is a normal summer in Ely; (continue to deny global warming; pretend the mine will not harm the environment here.) Life is so much easier if facing reality is impossible. You will however learn a lesson. That same TV expert said, the "virus will be the teacher."

Those millions of sick and dead did, you can too.

Cecilia Rolando
Ely, MN

...happened before, about 25 years ago a donor offered...one million dollars

Letter to the editor

Things I don't understand about Ely's August 11th 10 million dollar bond referendum.

I don't understand why a 20 million dollar addition to the Memorial and Washington building is necessary. My first year teaching in Ely 1968-69, 121 students graduated, my last year teaching in Ely 1997-98, 83 students graduated, and this years 2019-20 senior class, 45 students graduated. It looks to me like yearly student enrollment is nearing rock bottom.

I don't understand why two school buildings, Lincoln and Kennedy have been demolished since I began teaching in Ely in 1968 and one was razed the year before I arrived, Old Main. Now for some reason it is necessary to spend 20 million to replace what the school district destroyed.

I don't understand why it is necessary to build a new gym. The school district just took a perfectly good one down a couple of years ago and now they want to hit up the tax payers for a new one which won't be any better than the one they razed.

I don't understand what has happened to the school and community's swim instruction concern. Swimming and swim skill instruction was a big part of the physical education curriculum while I was teaching; now it is nonexistent. (While taking my boat out of Miners Lake a couple of

weeks I observed a half dozen teenagers jumping off the dock and "swimming" back to shore. Their swim skills were pathetic. If their swimming abilities are a reflection upon much of Ely's youth the community's youth have a big problem.

I don't understand why the architectural plan shows no evidence of the old pool, instead it shows evidence of an expanded cafeteria. Why do the school board, the administration, the teaching staff, and the community feel it is more important to have more room to peel potatoes than teach the youth of Ely lifelong swim skills. Losing this 100 year old pool is not only pathetic it is criminal.

I don't understand why Len Klun's swimmers, Carol Petersen's swimmers, Nancy Smrekar's swimmers, Ely swimmers that are presently swimming in Babbitt, my swimmers, and the parents of all of the swimmers, don't express some displeasure about how a swim program in Ely no longer exists.

I don't understand why the Ely community and the school district can't work together and produce a product that all the citizens of Ely can benefit from. Grand Marais and Virginia-Eveleth appear to be able to do that. As many know Virginia-Eveleth are planning to build a combined community and school district aquatic center high school complex. The aquatic center plans would include two eight lane pools

one with water temperatures conducive to competitive swimming the other with water temperatures conducive to adult and youth swimming, I am not saying this is necessary for Ely, but Ely should have a minimum of a six lane pool. If the Virginia-Eveleth new school and pool proposal becomes a reality that area will have a total of 35 swimming lanes available to them. Ely will have zero after the old pool is filled in for the benefit of better potato peeling, the Virginia-Eveleth area is doing it right.

I don't understand why the majority of school board members are anti swimming, case in mind. Nearly three years ago the Ely Regional Community Complex (ERCC) board came to a school board meeting to offer five million dollars to partner with the school district in building a recreation aquatic complex on school property. As in typical past fashion the answer was no and the ERCC left the room almost as quick as they came in. Apparently the school board decided it would be much better to hit up the taxpayer than accept a five million dollar offer from the ERCC board. It also is an uphill battle from the beginning when the majority of school board members are

anti-swimming. This has happened before, about 25 years ago a donor offered the school district one million dollars to build a new pool on campus. The city was asked to partner with this proposal. That time the city was the negative factor to the pool proposal. They dropped the idea like they were being asked to partner with this proposal. That time the city was the negative factor to the pool proposal. They dropped the idea like they were being asked to partner with this proposal to find a cure for the black plague.

I am not saying basketball, hockey, and football are not important sports. In fact they were among my favorite sports to participate in when I was younger and watch now that I am far beyond being younger. What I am saying is, when a person reaches middle age and older knowing how to throw a football, bounce a basketball, or hit a hockey puck will no longer be a burning need for them. Having swim skills will continue to be a person's need throughout life.

I do understand that if or when this school addition becomes a reality it is a decision the citizens of Ely will have to live with for the next 100 years. 100 more years (of the community's inability to provide its youth with the opportunity to learn proper swim skills is not good.

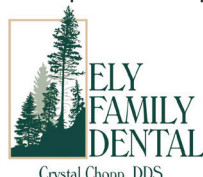
Joe Edlund
Ely, MN

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Hygienist: Duties include cleaning teeth, treating gum disease, taking radiographs and educating patients on proper hygiene. Current license in hygiene is required.
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