



Would a person find two pots of gold?

The rain showers on the evening of May 30 created a beautiful, bright double rainbow as seen east of Bertha.

Ellis surprised...

continued from front

returned to the Bertha-Hewitt School and once again donned their caps and gowns. The school board was on hand with friends, family and community members sitting in the gym to surprise the 17-year-old.

All Ellis knew was that she was meeting Superintendent Eric Koep and Principal Darren Glynn to collect her diploma.

As Ellis was wheeled inside, she was met at the door by Koep. He had her put on a cap and gown. Ellis thought they were going to take some pictures.

The crowd remained silent as she approached the entrance to the gym. As she entered through the doors, Glenn began the ceremony and asked everyone to stand. She was shocked at the sight before her eyes!

Koep introduced her as a high honor student and presented her with her award.

RIPL Instructor and Founder Ben Rudrud, a 1999 Bertha-Hewitt grad, gave a speech, sharing that Ellis was an inspiration. He joked that she allowed her fellow graduates to participate in graduation a second time while being able to finish what they started... together. He thanked her fellow seniors for coming back to make this possible for their classmate.

"Julie, you truly inspired me and every single person here. Your word is inspire," said Rudrud. "You're the toughest graduate here, and I think everyone would agree."

Then the time came to give Ellis her diploma which was presented by School Board Chair Sharon Thiel. There were many cheers as she raised her fist in victory.

Ellis was finally able to give her graduation speech with friend and fellow high honor student Kaylee Baker. They congratulated their fellow classmates on reaching this point, and recalled fond memories of years past, and wished them all well in their next chapter of life. Ellis thanked everyone for their help and support.

Koep shared how hard Ellis had worked for this, having hip surgery just months ago to be able to walk across the stage. He shared how nervous she was that night and afraid to embarrass her friends.

After she fell, and was getting ready to be transported to the hospital, Ellis relayed she was worried they would cut her Rock Revival jeans. Koep informed her that they would get her a new pair if that happened to which she responded, "Koep, I will hold you to that."

Later that night, he received a text message from

Ellis with a picture of the cut up jeans, and also the size she wore, and the boots they had to cut off.

Koep announced that a new pair of Rock Revival jeans were on the way along with two new pairs of boots.

He also explained he was informed of some of Ellis' favorite actors and musicians who were Scott Eastwood, Nickleback and Ashton Kutcher. While he couldn't contact them, he did gather other video shout-outs.

A short video was played with congratulatory shout-outs from Heather Mueller, education commissioner for the state; Joe Mauer of the Twins; Joe Beckman, speaker; Mark J. Lindquist, NFL's National Anthem singer; all wishing her success and voicing their admiration for her dedication and persistence.

Ellis was able to toss her cap in celebration before leading the procession of her classmates out of the gym with much excitement and cheering from the audience.

Ellis' parents and family were elated the school and community came together for their daughter. Mindy had tears of joy through the entire ceremony and was thankful to everyone beyond words.

"It was very exciting," said Ellis. "I felt very honored. I was upset I couldn't actually graduate, and you guys made it happen."

Ellis shared she was very honored her classmates showed up for the surprise ceremony, knowing there were graduation parties happening and it was busy with it being Memorial Day weekend.

"I know if I ever need something I can rely on them [my classmates]," said Ellis. "I knew Kaylee would be there," she smiled.

Her mom said the attention was overwhelming, but it turned out great!

"I think it helped her fix the feeling of failing. She felt like she failed her classmates. I think this helped her close that gap so she didn't feel like that anymore. She was so happy today," said her mom with a smile.

Ellis' doctors are planning surgery to ensure her legs won't give out again by placing pins in them.

Ellis shared she has never had both legs broken at the same time. Her legs are splinted and wrapped in her favorite colors, one leg is blue and the other is orange.

Keeping with her perseverance, she held her graduation party as scheduled on June 5.

She plans on joining the workforce and job shadowing to become a receptionist.

Jumping worms...

continued from front

cause they wiggle intensely when disturbed and sometimes appear to be jumping.

A light-colored ring extends around the body and may be more prominent than in other earthworms.

Native to Asia, jumping worms have been confirmed in limited areas of Minnesota since 2006, mainly in the Twin Cities and western suburbs and in Rochester. It's believed that they were spread throughout North America by people moving potted plants, soil, compost, mulch and fishing bait.

According to the DNR, "Jumping worms cannot be legally introduced into the environment in Minnesota and are also a poor choice for bait because they break into segments when handled."

"The good news is, jumping worms are not well established in Minnesota and there are actions people can take to prevent their spread. We need gardeners and anglers to be vigilant and to contact the DNR when they think they've found jumping worms," Van Riper said.

Other steps that help:

- Don't buy worms advertised as jumping worms, "snake worms," "Alabama jumpers" or "crazy worms" for any purpose.
- Anglers should dispose of any unwanted bait worms in the trash.
- Gardeners should inspect incoming mulch or plants for jumping worms and if swapping plants with friends, wash off the soil and share the plants as bare root plants.
- Recreationists should brush the mud off their boots and equipment.

To help Minnesotans identify and report jumping worms, the DNR has produced two short videos. One video features Dr. Lee Frelich, director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology, talking about how jumping worms are sometimes found in garden soils and packaged garden mulch products. Another video focuses on why jumping worms should not be purchased or used for fishing bait.

If you think you've found jumping worms, you should take high resolution photos showing the ring around the worm's body in relation to its head and report jumping earthworms using www.eddmaps.org or contact the DNR Information Center at 888-646-6367 or info.dnr@state.mn.us.

The videos and more information about jumping worms and other terrestrial invasive species are available on the DNR website.

Here is some other information from the DNR about this potentially soil and vegetation threatening creature.

Life Cycle

Mature jumping worms reproduce asexually by depositing egg-filled cocoons into its surroundings. At each first freeze adult worms die with eggs protected in cocoons during winter. Throughout spring months worms hatch where they feed and grow to maturity (approximately 60 days).

Distribution

Jumping worms arrived to the United States in the 19th century through imported plants, horticultural, and agricultural materials. *Amyntas* spp. have become widespread in the northeast, southeast, and Midwestern parts of the United States.

Control Efforts

Prevention of *Amyntas* spp. is the best method for reducing their spread. Do not buy or use jumping worms in gardens, vermicomposting or bait.

For more information check out: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/fact/jumpingworm/index.html>, https://arboretum.wisc.edu/content/uploads/2014/06/Public-info-sheet_Amyntas-spp-Frev170502c-1.pdf or <http://cctetompkins.org/resources/jumping-worm-fact-sheet>.

Biology

Jumping worms refers to multiple species, all in the genus *Amyntas*. Jumping worms live and feed in the leaf litter layer on the soil surface and in the top few inches of the soil, but do not create burrows. *Amyntas* are able to survive a variety of conditions including cold winter temperatures.

Means of spread include:

- Moving soil, potted landscape plants, sod, mulch (including bark mulch or woodchips), or compost can move earthworms and their cocoons from one place to another.
- Earthworms, such as red wigglers (*Eisenis fetida*) purchased for composting may be contaminated with jumping worms.
- Earthworms purchased for fishing bait, such as European nightcrawlers (*Lumbricus terrestris*) may be contaminated with jumping worms.

Don't be fooled by these look-alikes

Keys to jumping worm identification include:

- Look for soil with a similar appearance to coffee grounds. As jumping worms eat and excrete waste, the soil gets a unique texture like coffee grounds.
- Jumping worms are very active, move like snakes and secrete yellow mucus when agitated.
- When a jumping worm is disturbed, its tail can break off and continue to flail.
- The ring (clitellum) on adults is closer to the end than on nightcrawlers, milky pink to milky gray in color, encircles the whole body evenly, and is barely raised above the skin.

Setae (tiny hairs the worm uses to move) are evenly spaced around the entirety of each segment, not in pairs or concentrated on the bottom or sides of the body.

Threat to Minnesota

Invasive species populations may cause recreational, economic and ecological damage and can change how residents and visitors use and enjoy Minnesota lands and waters.

Jumping worm impacts

- Jumping worms feast on mulch and strip vital nutrients from topsoil. This kills plants and increases erosion. Homeowners may see garden plants killed and may have difficulty growing plants.
- Jumping worms can cause environmental harm where they are established. Studies have found non-native earthworms dramatically change forest soils by eating the leaf litter layer and impacting soil chemistry, soil organisms and plant communities. Jumping worms have been shown to have similar effects.

When the soil changes, the forest can't support the same plant and animal species it did before earthworms.

There are no known methods for controlling invasive earthworms on a large scale in natural settings. Chemical treatments that would kill earthworms would kill beneficial soil organisms as well.

As we tend to the earth, let us remember that nonnative species can be very detrimental to the planet.

Keep your eyes open for this invasive species and do your part in stopping the spread of it.

Poems of hope and reassurance on The Poetry Walk at Green Island

A new selection of "Poems of Hope and Reassurance" are being featured on The Poetry Walk at Green Island in Wadena. The poets featured in June include Wayne F. Albertson, Donna Isaac, Carol Masters, Randall D. Shelley, David Winkelman and Mark Vinz.

Green Island is a 60-acre parcel of land within the city of Wadena owned by Kent Scheer and Vicki Chepulis whose stewardship of the land includes making a space where people are invited to enjoy the peace and beauty of a carefully cultivated space for experiencing nature.

Like the gardens of Europe, there are places to stroll through the woods, to sit under a tree and read or enjoy a picnic lunch with a friend.

The land also includes a working orchard, gardens of rare herbs, wild deer, and white doves who coo softly

from their dovecote.

Dotted throughout the park-like atmosphere are sculptures created by Kent.

The Poetry Walk compositions are posted alternately on the 12 small information stations along Green Island trails. These alternate with educational texts providing information on the purpose and function of Green Island's new forest.

Each month a different selection of poets will be featured on the Poetry Walk from the project "More Poems of Hope and Reassurance".

This project was created by Lina Belar, a fiscal year 2021 recipient of a Creative Support for Individuals Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board.

Green Island is located at 850 Scheer Drive, Wadena. It is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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