

# BRAINERD DISPATCH

SERVING THE BRAINERD LAKES AREA AND CROW WING COUNTY, MINN.

## GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Photos by Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch  
Bob Voels, American Legion (left), and Bill Woolie, Military Order of the Purple Heart, toss a wreath into the Mississippi River from the Laurel Street Bridge, Monday, May 31, 2021, to honor all those veterans lost at sea. After the ceremony on the bridge, everyone walks to the All Veterans Memorial to continue the service near the Crow wing County Historic Courthouse.

Those who gave all honored at bridge, monument as public marks Memorial Day in downtown Brainerd

By Frank Lee  
Staff Writer

Even at the Memorial Day ceremonies in downtown Brainerd with the crowd's patriotism on full display, retired Brainerd Fire Chief Kevin Stunek stood out.

The Army veteran wore a short-sleeve shirt resembling the American flag to the Monday, May 31, event and was overcome by emotion talking about those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

"I wanted to support the veterans because I'm also a veteran," said Stunek, who spent six years in the Army in the early 1970s.

The 68-year-old Brainerd resident said he personally knew those in the military who died serving their country.

"Veterans Day, Memorial Day and Labor Day are very special to me," Stunek said, choking up. "It gets me emotional. ... I want people to support all the military branches and honor the fallen."

### Gone but not forgotten

Under a cloudless sunny sky with temperatures in the 60s, a



Sterling Michael Molby, Cub Scout from Pack 36, recites the Pledge of Allegiance Monday, May 31, at the Memorial Day Ceremony at the All Veterans Memorial. The ceremonies began at the Laurel Street Bridge, where a wreath was placed in the Mississippi River to honor all who were lost at sea.

### VIDEO

For video, see [brainerddispatch.com](http://brainerddispatch.com)

"Here we are back again gathered where we traditionally start out our ceremony here at the Laurel Street Bridge," said Bill Satre, the master of ceremonies.

Brainerd patrol cars blocked motor vehicle access on either end of the bridge near the

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sizable crowd turned up for the wreath toss into the Mississippi River from the Laurel Street Bridge.

## Back to catch and release

### Period to keep Mille Lacs Lake walleye ends

By Kirsti Marohn  
MPR News

MILLE LACS LAKE — Walleye fishing on Mille Lacs Lake will return to catch-and-release only starting Tuesday.

For the past several years, anglers haven't been able to keep walleye they catch on Mille Lacs during the summer.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has imposed stricter fishing regulations in an effort to boost the lake's walleye population.

This spring, anglers have been able to keep one walleye of a certain

size. But that's ending for the summer, to avoid the state exceeding its share of the lake's walleye harvest.

Tom Heinrich, Mille Lacs area fisheries supervisor for the DNR, says a light harvest last winter made it possible to allow anglers to keep some walleye this spring.

"We were able to offer some harvest in May. But in order to stay within our allocation, then we have to go to catch and release fishing for the majority of the summer now," he said.

Walleye fishing will be off limits entirely for the first two weeks in July.

## Rental aid boost means millions for struggling Minnesota home renters

By Barry Amundson  
Forum News Service

An expansion of rental assistance for those who have struggled during the pandemic is underway in Minnesota.

The program is called RentHelpMN is working with renters who owe back rent and utilities.

"We're focusing on people behind in rent now," said Emma Schmit, who heads up housing efforts for the Lakes & Prairie Community Action Partnership that serves Clay and Wilkin counties.

She said the program would soon also provide aid to those who need help with current rent and utilities.

Schmit said her agency isn't providing the rental aid but can help people navigate the state program and help with eligibility questions, applications or upload-

ing documents.

The Minnesota program kicked off on April 20 after a gap in aid. Schmit said the original program last year saw aid "go fast" with about \$1 million in aid provided to 899 renters in Clay and Wilkin counties from August through Dec. 31.

"We're expecting a wave of applications for the new aid, too," she said.

Minnesota is expected to have about \$600 million or more in federal aid through the two federal COVID programs after the state used \$100 million in federal emergency aid to help renters last year.

Minnesota Housing Finance Director Jennifer Ho said her agency has 140 staff processing applications. She said all participating state, local government and tribal

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## MnDOT plan looks at walking safety

### Study asks what can be done in next 20 years

By Paul Walsh  
Star Tribune (TNS)

Minnesota transportation officials have plotted out a detailed road map that they hope will encourage people across the state to choose walking from place to place more often than driving.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Statewide Pedestrian System Plan, two years in the making at a cost of roughly \$600,000, provides policy and investment guidance to government decision-makers for what can be done over the next 20 years to improve where people walk across and along state roads and highways.

"This plan provides an important framework and will help ensure we are meeting the needs and interests of peo-

ple today and into the future," Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher said in a statement accompanying last week's release of the 136-page report that included citizen input from across the state.

"Creating safe places for people to walk is essential to improving equity and mobility, addressing climate change, and ultimately providing a better quality of life for everyone," she said.

Among the goals that officials kept in mind as they pulled together the photo- and chart-laden report: promote walking as essential and not just an option; make walking safer and more enjoyable; and create more space for pedestrians.

"Our state's quality of life depends on creating safe places for people to walk," read Kelliher's opening comments in



Photo / Star Tribune

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has put together an exhaustive plan in hopes of encouraging people to walk more and still remain safe when in proximity to traffic.

the report. "Minnesotans walk to work, to visit the doctor and to the grocery store. Others may walk for everyday exercise or spend quality time with family and friends."

MnDOT received feedback from 2,700 people statewide that was taken into account ahead of the report's release. The

agency said it found that three-fourths of respondents "completely support" improvements for walking.

At the top on the public's list of walking-friendly priorities is maintenance. "The consensus among members

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### INSIDE TODAY

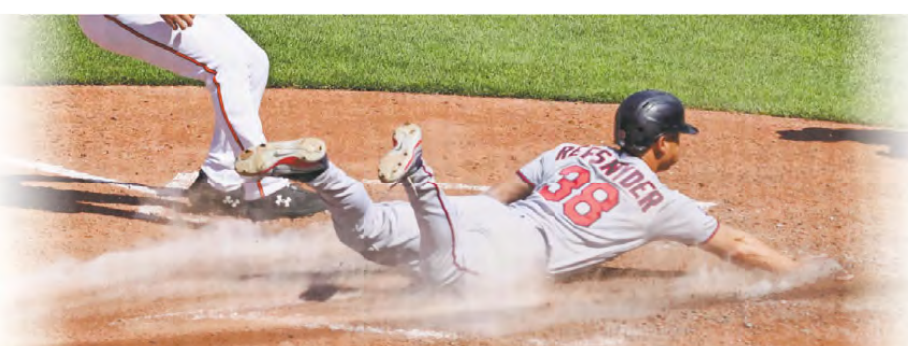
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# Colorado man seriously injured by bear attack inside his home

By David Mullen  
The Gazette (TNS)

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Colorado Parks and Wildlife officials say a man was seriously injured and needed surgery after being attacked by a bear at his home near Steamboat Springs late Sunday. Officials said the man realized the door to his garage — where he stores birdseed and

other attractants — was open around 11 p.m. Sunday. When he entered the garage he was greeted by a sow and two cubs, according to a news release. Despite the man slowly backing away from the garage, the sow attacked him and caused serious injuries, including severe lacerations to the man's head and legs that required surgery.

He was in stable condition Monday, and his injuries are considered non-life threatening, according to the release. After receiving the report of the attack, CPW wildlife officers and park rangers began searching for the bear and cubs. Teams located the sow near the home and euthanized it, CPW officials said. The bear's remains were sent

to CPW's Wildlife Health Lab for a necropsy. Officers and park rangers are still searching for the two cubs, and if found, they will be trapped and relocated to a rehabilitation facility. "This is an unfortunate reminder that we need to stay vigilant and 'bear aware' at all times," said CPW District Wildlife Manager Kyle Bond

in a release. "Easy access to food will always override a bear's natural fear of people, so we humans have to stay on top of keeping all food sources secure." Sunday's attack marked the first in the Steamboat Springs area this year. **#YR Colorado Springs Gazette. Visit at gazette.com. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.**

## HONORED

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Brainerd fire and police stations as a huge American flag hanging at the end of a fire truck ladder wafted near Laurel Street and East River Road. "Lord, we ask you to always remind us of the price that has been paid for the freedom we live in. ... May we always remember and never forget. Amen," said the Rev. Todd Wooden, pastor of the Oak Street Chapel.

The Memorial Day ceremonies in downtown Brainerd were abbreviated but no less solemn or respectful, with Cub Scouts and elected officials such as Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners Chairman Steve Barrows in attendance. "At this time, we will put a wreath into the Mississippi River. And this is being done by our American Legion, and the significance of this is to commemorate those who were lost at sea," Satre told the crowd Monday morning. The shots of the 21-rifle salute that followed reverberated in the air as young and old, civilians and veterans



Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch

Bob Voels, American Legion color guard (left), Chip Borle and Steve Rosenow, both VFW Color Guard, wait to raise the flags Monday, May 31, during the Memorial Day Ceremony at the All Veterans Memorial.

alike, congregated to pay their respects and give thanks while taps was played. "It's a great day out here to give thanks to some incredible people that have come before us," Satre said before the Memorial Day ceremony relocated to the All Veterans Memorial.

### All Veterans Memorial

The All Veterans Memorial at South Fourth and Laurel streets includes thought-provoking

phrases etched into its surface such as "Freedom is not free," and "Peace is worth fighting for." "Lord, the freedom we celebrate had a price to pay. And that price is paid by so many millions of Americans," said Wooden, who prayed aloud. "We come today giving honor and recognition to the men and women who have gone before us. ... May we always remember and never forget." The ceremony was made available online via Facebook Live at

the Brainerd Memorial Day Facebook page at facebook.com/brainerdmemorialday and was broadcast on KBLB-93.3 FM and WWWW-95.9 FM radio stations. "Memorial Day is special as it is dedicated to the ones who made the ultimate sacrifice, the ones who didn't make it back home," Satre told the crowd. "Today, we remember and honor all those who died while serving to preserve our way of life." Cub Scout Sterling Michael Molby led the

## MEMORIAL DAY

Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and

became an official federal holiday in 1971. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, hosting family gatherings and participating in parades. Unofficially, it marks the beginning of the summer season. **History.com**

crowd that encircled the memorial between the historic courthouse and the U.S. Post Office in the Pledge of Allegiance. The boy stood before the wreaths at the base of the monument representing different service organizations. "This Memorial Day we come together to appreciate the freedom that we enjoy today as we honor the sacrifices that paid for it as we enjoy living in the 'land of the free' and the 'home of the brave,'" Satre told the attendees. The Brainerd High School band played "America the Beautiful" and the national anthem as people held their hands over their hearts or saluted before another 21-rifle salute and the playing of taps was done at the memorial. "We should live the America that they died for — a country of freedom, equality, opportunity and

unlimited promise — a life filled with hope ... hope that what they gave us will last forever and that freedom and opportunity will find all who seek it," Satre said. **Memorial Day** Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, hosting family gatherings and participating in parades. Unofficially, it marks the beginning of the summer season. **FRANK LEE may be reached at 218-855-5863 or at frank.lee@brainerddispatch.com. Follow him on Twitter at www.twitter.com/DispatchFL.**

## AID

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agencies will be using the same RentHelpMN forms to simplify the application process. In addition, some 28 non-profits and community organizations, called "field partners," are helping renters navigate the system. Ho urged applicants to request "get ready" checklists from the housing agency to determine what documents will be needed to apply for aid. "This is a win-win for both tenants and landlords," said Ho, who urged cooperation on applications as landlords can also register and receive payments for their tenants.

The rent help is aimed at helping prevent an avalanche of evictions when the pandemic ends. The latest federal COVID relief plan also offers aid to homeowners.

### How to apply or get help

Minnesotans can apply at RentHelpMN.org or call 211, a helpline with staff available to answer questions about the program from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday. For help in applying, Schmit said people can call to set up an appointment at her agency at 218-512-1500 or send an email to info@caplp. Eligible renters can get assistance with overdue rent and utilities dating back to March 13, 2020. **The St. Paul Pioneer Press contributed to this report.**

## MNDOT

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of the general public is that sidewalks and paths aren't maintained as well as roads in the winter," the report read. Also winning strong support from Minnesotans, according to MnDOT: improve pedestrian crossings; add more trees, benches and other amenities; separate people walking from bicyclists; widen paths and sidewalks; and create more space between where people walk and vehicle traffic. On the safety front, the respondents told MnDOT that signal-controlled intersections should allow more time for pedestrians to cross and create more space where people wait to cross with what are called "curb extensions" or "pedestrian refuge islands." The survey also found that fewer than a third of respon-

dents said they walk "at least a few times a week." MnDOT's report said the agency wants to see that frequency double to 60%. Other gauges the agency has cited as signs of progress include increasing the number of students who walk to school and encouraging more walking trips of a mile or less. Should the recommendations in total become reality over the 20-year period, the cost would range from \$221million to \$648 million, said Jake Rueter, a pedestrian and bicycle planner for MnDOT. Securing rights of way and other uncertain factors are behind the wide cost range, he said. However, Rueter said, the agency believes the cost to society for traffic-related pedestrian incidents over those same 20 years is projected to be roughly \$4 billion without implementing the measures proposed in the plan. The report's release comes as the number of pedestrian fatal-

ities on Minnesota roads and highways so far this year is heading in a troubling direction. Through Thursday, 17 pedestrians have been killed in traffic incidents in Minnesota, according to the state Department of Public Safety. That compares with 14 at the same time last year. Full-year fatality totals have remained fairly steady of late, ranging from 42 to 50 over the past four years. "This plan helps MnDOT identify opportunities and implement the right strategies on projects to make walking safer and more convenient for all Minnesotans," said Tori Nill, director of the Office of Transit and Active Transportation. "While the plan doesn't tell us exactly what to do in every situation, it does provide the tools we need to make those decisions and make sure pedestrian safety is included on every highway project." **(c)2021 the Star Tribune (Minneapolis) Visit the Star Tribune (Minneapolis) at www.startribune.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.**

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**HELP WANTED - GENERAL**

**HELP WANTED - GENERAL**

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