

# Busy week for Line 3 ahead of scheduled pause

## Activists arrested in protest near Swatara as Enbridge nears pause

While the Enbridge Line 3 Replacement Project hit its scheduled spring pause last week, activists vowed to continue fighting against the pipeline replacement.

Tuesday was scheduled to be the first day of a court hearing challenging the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approval of the Line 3 project in the state court of appeals.

A decision is expected in June, or maybe sooner.

In the meantime, Enbridge announced March 11 it was nearing the 50% completion phase of the pipeline replacement project. However, a scheduled spring two-month stop due to seasonal environmental restrictions goes into effect April 1.

Construction will continue at the eight Line 3 pump station facilities, but activists continued to make their voices heard in a number of protests last week.

Actress Jane Fonda visited Park Rapids March 15 to offer support for those fighting the pipeline. Fonda posted to Instagram following the event, pointing out the dangers of transporting the tar sands oil across both indigenous lands and the Mississippi headwaters area.

She alleged that the activists, also called water protectors, are being harassed by the local police as well as strip-searched.

"This is part of a very dangerous and anti-democratic national trend where law enforcement, commissioned with state authority to arrest and use force, are being deployed with those extraordinary powers against the civilian population in service to private interests," Fonda said in her Instagram post.

Meanwhile, protestors locked themselves to each other the morning of March 18 in Swatara, blocking work at one of the pump stations.

Aitkin County Sheriff Dan Guida confirmed that eight were arrested. A number of activists were released from the Aitkin County Jail Friday afternoon.

A press release from the public relations firm representing the Stop Line 3 coalition, issued that day, said that the water protectors would fight their charges in court.

It said dozens were pledging to take their legal cases to trial over charges received while protesting the construction of Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline. The release said that more than 200 people have already been arrested in Anishinaabe treaty territory across northern Minnesota and those people are taking a "Defendant Pledge of Solidarity."

"The pledge demands that the prosecution drop all charges against defendants, cease to hold arrestees overnight in jail during a pandemic, and release arrestees on their own recognizance without bail conditions," the release stated. "Defendants are prepared to seek trials in Aitkin, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard and Itasca counties."

The replacement project has drawn considerable attention in the area, with a section of the work going through northern Aitkin County. While opponents have raised concerns about the environment, supporters - and Enbridge - continue to reassure the public that all requirements and conditions have been met for the work to proceed safely.



BY LYNN MIZNER  
lynn.mizner@apgecm.com

LYNN MIZNER AND SUBMITTED PHOTOS

# Sap and tradition **FLOW**

Gathering nature's bounty in a tradition that spans millenia



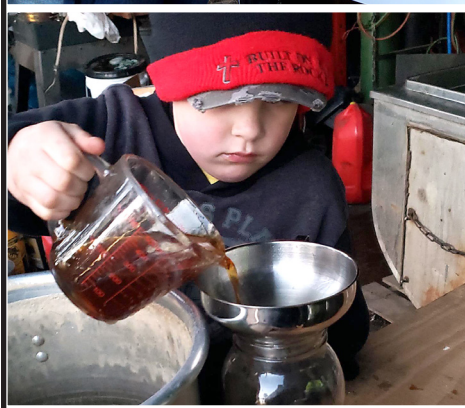
Students and teachers (top) at Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy, near McGregor, are working together to boil sap they collected. The students are learning to make syrup and sugar from the sap using traditional methods as they learn about the cultural origins of this important food.

Bob Nicko (top left) of Kimberly near Aitkin recalls his mother making maple syrup on the farm where he lived as a child, and now lives with his wife Pat; son Lon and family live across the road. Grandson Henry (left) has a special affinity for making syrup.

Anishinaabeg Akiing (lower left) focuses its activities on restoring a regionally integrated restorative and regenerative economy.

Shanai Matteson and her children (upper right) are photographed engaging in an Akiing sugaring camp.

Jon Thompson and son Coulter (lower right), wife Ariel and daughters Aubrey and Freya (not shown) love to help grandparents Jim and Audra Chamberlin of Island Lake Farm tap their trees.



# City council addresses attempts to erode local control

## Minnesota legislature continues to propose legislation that would appear to undermine local units of government

BY LYNN MIZNER  
lynn.mizner@apgecm.com

For the third time this month, Aitkin City Council members resolved to express their dissatisfaction with legislation being floated at the state level.

Earlier in March, members voted to create resolutions opposing two bills being read in the Minnesota House. At their March 15 meeting they approved resolutions against HF and HF 1213 and 1277, Resolution 2021-03-15A expresses Aitkin's opposition to House File 1213, which seeks to manipulate municipalities by offering increased state aid if they agree to close their municipal liquor stores. "Munis" as they are known, often provide a large portion of the income in small towns, offsetting the need to levy residents as

much. This is particularly an issue in poorer counties where property taxes are low.

Resolution 2021-03-15B expresses opposition to HF1277, which would prevent political subdivisions from using public money to fund lobbying. This resolution also targets smaller cities and towns that rarely have budgets to fund their own lobbyists, so it reduces those units' ability to get their concerns heard by the legislature. At the March 15 city council meeting, members voted to draft yet another resolution. This time, council member Kathy Galliger drew their attention to Senate File SF915, which would take away local units' ability to do their own zoning and planning.

Galliger expressed frustration with the continued effort to erode local control

and moved that the council draft the third resolution, to be voted on at the next regular council meeting on April 5.

"This is just another assault on the ability of local units of government to manage their own business," Galliger said.

She added that the League of Minnesota Cities has a discussion of the pros and cons of proposed legislation.

"The state just keeps trying to take authority from counties and townships, and now they are going after cities," she said.

### SOUTHGATE DRIVE REDEVELOPMENT

Resolution 2021-03-15D was passed, in which the city council approved requesting and accepting funding from IRRRB for a commercial redevelopment

project at 190 Southgate Dr. in Aitkin.

### PUBLIC HEARING SET FOR BOND ISSUANCE

The city will hold a public hearing on April 19 at 6 p.m., by remote or electronic means, to accept public comment on the 2021 Street Reconstruction Plan for Aitkin and for the proposed issuance of general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000. The funds raised will be used to fund the approved street reconstruction plan.

The public meeting notice states that if a petition requesting a vote on the issuance of bonds is signed by a number of voters equal to 5% or more of the votes cast in the city in the last general election, the city will have to get approval of a majority of the voters in

an election, prior to issuing the bonds. Such a petition would have to be filed with the city within 30 days after the public hearing.

### FOOD TRUCK PERMIT ISSUED

The council approved a permit for Smokey Jake's BBQ food truck to operate

on the south side of the Aitkin County Government center and on 4th St. NW near Hometown Building Supply on specified dates in 2021.

The next regular meeting of the Aitkin City Council is planned for 6 p.m. Monday, April 5, at the Aitkin Public Library.

# Riverwood 'Save the Heartbeat' campaign exceeds goal

Thanks to an outpouring of community support, Riverwood Healthcare Center Foundation's Save the Heartbeat fundraising campaign, launched in February, raised more than \$18,000 to fund a second LUCAS chest compression system for the hospital's Intensive Care Unit.

The first system was purchased for Riverwood's Emergency Department thanks to year-end 2020 contributions for a grand total of \$38,000 raised since Dec. 1, 2020.

All funds stay right here locally to support the purchase of LUCAS CPR equipment and ongoing emergency services needs in

the intensive care unit and emergency department at the Aitkin hospital.

The Foundation's Community Engagement Committee took the lead on the fundraising project to meet this critical community need. Volunteer members

include Dave and Dorothy Casey, Teresa Hasskamp, Jan Hegman, Gary and Kathy Herbranson, David Hommes, Roxy Hoppe, Peg Lundberg and Scott Turner.

"We were all enthusiastic about reaching out to our community to help fund

this life-saving device," said Peg Lundberg, committee chair. "We are thrilled with the incredible donor support, kindness and generosity for this project."

## MIKE REEM

**for Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative Board**  
*Representing District Seven*

- Graduate of Aitkin High School
- Bachelor of Science in Education - Moorhead State and Master of Science in Educational Administration - St. Cloud State
- Credentialed Cooperative Director
- 9 years experience as your MLEC Director
- I understand the needs of MLEC member-owners & will continue to serve the MLEC member/owners.
- I will continue to keep abreast of current trends and conditions.
- I will continue to work for, and openly communicate with, all member/owners of MLEC.

I can be reached at 218-839-5697 or email: reem.mike55@gmail.com  
I appreciate your support...

*Mike Reem*

When experience counts and guidance matters.



Connect with us today.



**Jeffrey A Hakala**, CKA®, RICP®, CLTC®  
Financial Consultant  
jeff.hakala@thrivent.com



**Benjamin D Weerts**, FIC, RICP®, CLTC®  
Financial Consultant  
benjamin.weerts@thrivent.com

8 2nd Street NE, Aitkin, MN 56431 • 218-410-8587  
36116A N8-20



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