

Ely Echo Editorial

City transition went smoothly

Tuesday night the Ely city council was faced with a unique dilemma. The person elected turned down the mayoral position and the council needed to appoint someone. With one objection, former mayor Chuck Novak was reinstated.

This could have dragged out for some time or become contentious but it didn't. Even council member Heidi Omerza's opposition was prefaced by saying there was "value" in having Novak be the mayor. She added that his loss in the November election "gave us clear direction."

But none of the other five council members agreed with her and Novak was appointed on a 5-1 vote.

Novak will serve at least through April, perhaps into August, or even another two years if he decides to enter - and wins - a special mayoral election authorized earlier in the evening by the council.

One veteran council attendee quipped Novak has had more comebacks than George Foreman. And while he's not revealing his plans, there may be more than one current council member throwing their hat in the ring for the mayor's seat.

By not appointing a council member to the interim mayor position, the city avoids having

to have an election for the seat left behind. But running for the mayor's seat in an election doesn't require giving up a council member's current seat.

We would predict there will be more than two people filing for the mayor's seat which would trigger a primary in April and a general election in August. The state of Minnesota clamped down on when elections can be held, with only certain dates availability to local units of government.

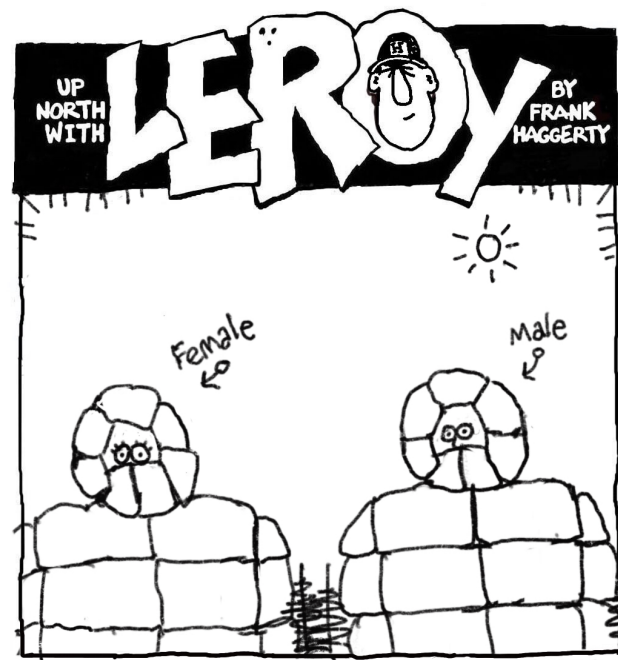
Novak called Tuesday night's actions an orderly transition, something quite different than the goings on in Washington D.C.

We'll take that up here in Ely, Minnesota where who holds the mayor's seat is really more ceremonial in a weak-mayor, strong council form of government.

For those interested, mayoral hopefuls have until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 2 to enter the contest, with a two-day withdrawal period after filings close.

If two or fewer candidates filed, the race will be decided on April 13, if not the top two advance to Aug. 10 with the winner to get the remainder of the two-year term.

For now the council made the right call and we can continue on with life as we know it. All is well up here in Ely, Minnesota.



Letters to the Editor

...for an unrepairable damaged canoe

Hi Echo, I thought a better explain to my fellow Echo readers why I've been advertising for an unrepairable damaged canoe.

Real simple, I needed some "Pointy ends" for the plastic barrel based pontoon boat that I'm building in my basement.

It's just a tiny pontoon only 68" wide and 144" long. I needed something

to do during this pandemic isolation. And yes, it will just pass through the basement French doors.

We have already named her the "WI Minnow" and you will see her on White Iron Lake next summer.

Here are some pictures of Minnow under construction.

Having fun, Sheldon Ajax 45 year White Iron cabin owner



Dave's Weather Outlook

by CBS 3 meteorologist Dave Anderson

2021 should start on a slightly cooler note and snow may play hard to get

Back in the 70's, I earned a dollar a week for reading the Echo and Miner to blind World War One veteran Walter Koski who lived in the house where he was born in 1896 next to the Catholic Church. Reading day always coincided with ISD 696 report card day. It was always nerve wracking knowing that once I finished reading the papers, I'd have to take the long walk up Third Avenue East from the Catholic Church to Beacon Hill to face the music.

Now that 2020 is over, it's time to face the music with the temperature report card for the year just passed. Our region's normal annual mean temperature should be 39.7 degrees. Normal climate variability according to at least one meteorology professor I work with is plus or minus 0.8 degree. 2020 was plus 1.6 degrees warmer than normal.

NWS Duluth's website keeps records online for the past five years. 2019 was +0.2. 2018 was +0.4. 2017 was +0.7 and 2016 was +3.0!

For January 2021, long range forecasters are finding evidence that it is going to be cool and dry around here this month. We could run two degrees cooler than normal and snow may stay a few inches below the normal total of eight. The forecast for the newest month of the new year seems to be a simple one: the 7th to 16th should be cool with only light flurries. The 25th to 31st has a shot at some decent snow followed by a cold snap.

The Old Farmer's Almanac thinks the rest of this winter will be cool and dry. Spring 2021 will become warm and dry. Summer will be hotter and drier than normal. Next autumn will be cool and dry.

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: elyecho@aol.com. The Echo reserves the right to edit.

LAST WEEK'S						
Day	Date	High	Low	Precip	Snow	
Mn	12/28	17	7	0.01	0.1	
Tu	12/29	6	-19			
Wd	12/30	20	-11	0.10	2.5	
Th	12/31	19	-3			
Fri	1/1	17	0			
Sa	1/2	23	17			
Su	1/3	27	19			

Observer: Wade Klingsporn, Vermilion
 Community College Readings taken at 7 a.m. for the previous 24 hours.
 2020 Precip: 20.11" Snow on ground: 10"
 2020-21 Snow: 40.5" 2019-20 Snow: 94.7"

Trout Whisperer - I saw the wind



I saw the wind today. It rose from a lake, hurtling two tundra's swans aloft. I was not in the wings of those flying, but I felt it. I watched the deuce arising and rising into the wind, feathered whites silver-shivered in the wind, treetop high and higher still in a wind rippling the lakes surface and this same self-wind, hammering a copper out of birch leaf's hanging, holding, and then when so much wind is now once in a fall day too much, after so many summer storms, the leaf surrenders, it's just time to let go.

And in it, my face to it, I heard it, I saw it. to be seeing it, seeing it in my little tiny wife's face the reflected,

sky tinted waters, as her neck bends tighter in her coat's hood, when the wind, a wind with quite the tempest to tepid desires has her remove the jacket's hood as quickly, pluck it back off, as if she would be a child jumping in leaf piles, and that playful wind, oh I hear it.

Finally, she swept in from the northwest, from breath of the sky to arm of earth, it curled west to east. I heard it fill the sky with gray scudding erupting lumens, ominous, they meant to be heard, and their herald columns made me listen, to see the end of the day, and to see wind.

- The trout whisperer

From the miscellaneous drawer

by Anne Swenson

A new beginning. Not just for me, for all of us. It's a time to reconsider our lives. In old age, I might be beyond change. But what could you do at age 10, reach out to new neighbors, start a safety class for bicyclists? I did. Children don't have to be silent and passive. Encourage them to consider a bigger, bolder future. What can you do at age 20? Get involved with the political scene - run for office or volunteer to be part of a committee. You are not too young or old for getting better acquainted with laws that affects all people. Or maybe your interest is elsewhere - a park or parade, arts or history. Travel is another option and it can be done alone and chosen on the spot.

I did. What about age 30? Get a job you like, plan ahead for your company's and personal future. Be open to new things, new challenges. What can you do at age 40? Use your experience to find where you want to live and move there. Be prepared to listen to neighbors and learn about the past. What can you do at age 50? Enjoy your home, children and grandchildren. You are not old yet, so look around your community and find ways to improve it. Be sensitive to your neighbors. If they're elderly, you may be able to help. Try phone calls to begin with. What can you do at 60? Go out of your way to help someone. Encourage and stimulate a person who has been bullied in life.

Promote tolerance. There are bullies at all ages. Remind them to slow down and take in the whole picture. There is good even in the bad. What can you do at age 70? Your working life is now over and you can accept that. You have a lot to do. The memorabilia that was important to you is shunned by younger folks as trivia. Identify your photos, make plans for the trivia. Re-examine your home for its convenience as you age. Are the stairways steep? Can you get around safely or will you need assistance? So what can you do at age 84? Stay at home. Share your person with friends. Consider options for the future. I say thanks to Tom and Sharon C. along with Will S. for remembering me.

...I'll continue to be an advocate for important projects that fuel jobs

Editor, The year 2020, defined by a deadly and relentless pandemic, has been devastating for people in Minnesota and across the country whose lives, jobs, health, and safety continue to be upended by COVID-19. As we look ahead to 2021, addressing the fallout from the coronavirus — which has already taken more than 350,000 American lives, including 5,300 Minnesotans — continues to be a priority. I'll be a strong partner with local officials and health leaders across the state and as we continue to help the families, communities, and businesses which have been hit hard by the ongoing health and economic crisis. The authorization of two coronavirus vaccines in December gives us hope that the end of the pandemic is in sight. Now the country must not only build trust in the vaccines but also begin the largest, most costly mass vaccination effort in history. To ensure Minnesota is prepared, I'm pressing the nation's top health officials

to provide \$134 million to our state and tribal governments, and local health leaders, to help cover the cost of getting the vaccine quickly and safely rolled out. Earlier this year, I introduced legislation to ensure vaccines are distributed fairly, equitably, and free to everyone regardless of insurance status. I'll continue to press the Trump Administration and the incoming Biden Administration to make that happen. It will take many months to get vaccines to a majority of Americans, so Minnesotans still need to use the tools that protect us from the virus: masking up, social distancing, and getting tested when exposed or sick. One of my greatest frustrations during the pandemic has been the lack of a national testing strategy, so I was pleased Congress responded by including in its year-end budget parts of my bipartisan measure to allow states to form partnerships to secure adequate testing. Testing will continue to be important while the vaccine is rolled out; we can't lose sight of that.

During the challenges of the past year, it was inspiring to see local Minnesota leaders and businesses step up to help their communities and help produce and procure the personal protective equipment and supplies that our health providers so badly needed in the early days of the crisis. In 2021, I'll continue to help communities and businesses build back better in several ways. One is by working with local officials and the new Biden administration to invest in infrastructure. As communities around the state begin to invest in building back, I'll continue to be an advocate for important projects that fuel jobs and economic development. Part of that effort includes my continued push to expand rural broadband to give our businesses, no matter where they are located, the ability to create jobs and to allow health care providers to expand use of telehealth to treat patients for both physical and mental health issues. I'll also fight to expand affordable housing and the

significant economic and social benefits it generates. Virtually every Minnesota community is facing a shortage of quality, affordable housing that hurts families and businesses, and stifles job creation and economic development. We have to address this shortage, because we know that if you don't have safe, stable housing, nothing else in your life can work. As I travel across Minnesota, people often tell me their top concern is the cost of prescription drugs and health care. I've passed measures to bring down the cost of medications, including insulin, and I'll continue this fight as we move into the new year. Minnesota families, businesses and communities have shown resilience during this challenging past year. In 2021, I plan to continue to partner with Minnesotans as we work to bring people together and build back better. Sen. Tina Smith U.S. Senate