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Ely Echo Editorial

Bakk continues to blast Walz

Minnesota state Senator Tom Bakk has made one thing clear, he's not too happy with Governor Tim Walz.

That unhappiness may or may not have contributed to Bakk leaving the DFL but it does reflect outstate Minnesota's disdain for how the governor has handled the pandemic.

Speaking to the Star-Tribune, Bakk said, "It was a colossal mistake to shut the entire state down" last spring, when the virus was not yet much in evidence in greater Minnesota, Bakk said. "Leaving the big-box stores open while Main Street was closed? It was like he panicked."

We agree with Bakk on this and would like Rep. Rob Ecklund to pay attention as well. Walz has alienated small business owners and caused economic damage that may lead some to close their doors forever. All the while leaving Walmart, Target and Menard's to continue serving customers.

The restaurant and bar industry has been singled out by Walz yet the numbers don't back up the continued closures. The governor's most recent offer to allow these businesses to seat customers outside in December and January would be laughable if it wasn't such a serious blunder.

When the new Legislature is seated in January (hopefully in St. Paul instead of by Zoom), we believe outstate reps like Ecklund and Dave Lislegard will have an opportunity to let Walz know small business owners can't take any more shutdowns. Ecklund needs to join Lisle-

gard and vote to end the governor's nine month reign by executive order.

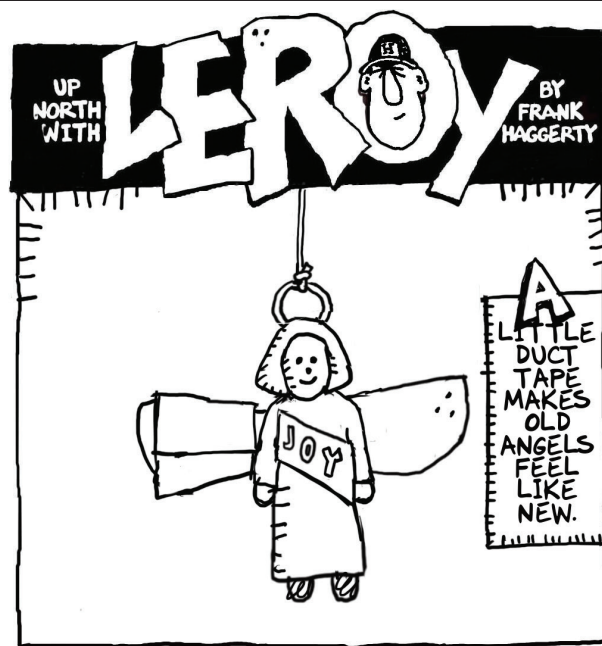
Bakk is also right on getting kids back in school. Walz offered an olive branch for elementary students but he didn't mention that it comes laden with more draconian if not ridiculous rules and restrictions.

We strongly believe our elementary students especially need to be back in the classroom. Ely's Covid numbers have been dropping and last week were already at a level where in-person learning can be instituted for grades K-5.

There is also strong evidence, including a parent survey, that parents want to have their children in the classroom.

On Dec. 14, Bakk spoke in the Senate Chambers saying, "Governor I have six grandchildren in grades K through five. None of them are in school today, none of them are going to be in school next week, they're not going to be in school the rest of the year, I don't know when they're going to be in school. But I do know the University of Minnesota has done a lot of research on the amount of brain development that happens in those very early years of life. And our young learners are being hurt greatly by what is going on. We have to figure out Governor how to get those young kids back in school."

Bakk is right. We need school districts to do everything possible to get kids in the classroom. And we need businesses to be allowed to be open. Those are our Christmas wishes.

**Letters to the Editor****...what's best for Ely rules the day here**

Letter to the Editor:
Just was reading the consolidation of Ely's two grocery stores. What a great move for the community.

Ely has been blessed to not only have two options but also to have two families who support the community in the manner in which these two families have/will.

Typically when mergers

like this happen in a small town there may be a concern about misusing the opportunity to monopolize business. Not any concern.

Integrity and what's best for Ely rules the day here.

Best wishes to the Richards family and to the entire Zup clan. Well done!!

Mike Mavetz
St. Cloud

...I canoed the river in 1959

Hi Ken,
I was delighted to see your article on the Albany and am looking forward to future episodes in the Echo.

I and three companions canoed the river in 1959 starting at Sioux Lookout and ending at Ft. Albany. It will be interesting to read

how things have changed since then.

I put together a video with narrative on a disc describing our journey. Perhaps we could chat in the future about your trip in the future. Thank you for resurrecting some old memories.

Ron Haakensen

...They did their constitutional job

Letter to the Editor:
Heroes and patriots, and those that betray their oaths and country.

Even as President Trump desperately tries to overthrow the election results, we find heroes and patriots. Also, we see exposed those that put themselves ahead of country.

Attorney General of Texas, Ken Paxton, who has been indicted for numerous illegal activities, attempted to file a baseless suit with the US Supreme Court to disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of votes and to reject the election outcome. Mr. Trump expected the Court to support his goal of a peaceful coup d'etat by invalidating the election results and empowering him to remain in office.

The heroes in this were the Supreme Court justices. Seven of nine judges would not even allow the suit to be filed with the Court, and all nine judges indicated they rejected the case on numerous points. They did their constitutional job, they are heroes and patriots in they protected the most fundamental base of democracy, the Constitutional right of citizens to vote to select their leaders.

Other heroes have been the poll workers, the Secretaries of States and election officials in every state that despite the conspiracy theories, conducted a fair election and have stood by their results, even as they may be Republicans or Democrats. This even as Trump's desperate campaign to discredit and toss out the election result continues unabated.

On the other hand, there are those that seek personal gain. Mr. Stauber took an oath "I, John Stauber

do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; ... So help me God." He supported the baseless suit and applied his name to the suit filed by AG Paxton to disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of votes and to reject an election outcome. That is in no way 'defending the constitution', no matter how you try to spin it. Also claiming with no evidence that SOS Simmons has done some illegal act for which he provided no evidence is an attempt to weaken Minnesotan's faith in our election system.

Mr. Stauber was complicated in attempting to disenfranchise not only people in MI, GA, WI, and PA, but also Minnesota. By rejecting the outcome of the election, he would disenfranchise the entire nation. This is not fun and games, this is not merely trying to show he is "Trump enough" nor a means to incite Trump supporters to contribute more to his campaign. When it came time to choose personal gain or protecting the Constitution, he chose personal gain. This is serious, this is our democracy at risk.

It is important to note that others betrayed their oath in addition to Mr. Stauber. Representatives Hagadorn, Emmer, and representative elect Fischbach also signed on supporting the Paxton filing attempt.

They owe all Minnesotans an apology. All betrayed their constituents and country. All should immediately resign.

Keith Steva
Cook, MN

**Hook and Bullet Club**

by Nick Wognum

When we're out hunting at Camp Cholesterol, we don't have warm stands unless it's warm outside to start with. We dress in layers while trying not to overdress for the walk in.

When muzzleloader season comes around, normally it's a lot colder and there's more snow on the ground. That wasn't the case this year.

Rifle season ends the Sunday before Thanksgiving and muzzleloader starts the next Saturday. Both seasons are 16 days long but there is a big difference in the woods. During rifle season the deer are in rut and bucks are on the move at all hours of the day.

During muzzleloader season the rut is over and many bucks simply become nocturnal. They sleep during the day and feed after the sun goes down. Throw in cold temps and muzzleloader hunters have to be patient to get a buck.

The season ended last Sunday and we never saw a buck during our time in the woods. My son Evan and I hunted together and took advantage of an offer from Tom Wetzel.

He said his stands weren't being used and we were welcome to use them. This is like going from camping in a tent to staying at a hotel.

Tom Wetzel's stands are first class. Heaters help but they work the best in an insulated stand. Plexiglass windows work but you need to be able to quietly open them.

Location is also important. Beaten down trails let you know deer travel through.

Wetzel's stands check all the boxes and let me tell you, hunting in short sleeves makes sitting much easier.

There were deer around but we didn't see any bucks. We'd take a break and do a little window shopping from time to time, cruising the back roads with the same result. There were deer around but no bucks.

My friend Todd Larson is an intense hunter who puts in a lot of time scouting. He uses trail cameras to see what's there when we're not there.

By the end of the muzzleloader season he saw something that wasn't there as well. Some of the younger bucks showing up at night were already losing their antlers. So there's

that to contend with as well. Our area was bucks only so you need the deer to still have an antler or two in order to shoot.

I've heard of guys dropping a buck late in the muzzleloader season and have an antler come off as they were dragging the deer back to the truck. That would be a bummer.

For Evan and I we spend some time together doing something we love to do. As we headed home Sunday Evan reflected on the two 16-day seasons.

"At least we got one," he said.

"And we could've had three," I said.

"Well, it would've been nice to get two," said Evan.

He and I both shot at deer we didn't get. Bob Cary used to tell me I wouldn't remember every deer I killed but I wouldn't forget the ones I shot at and didn't get.

Bob was right but Evan was too. We have venison in the freezer to enjoy between now and next deer season. And we have the memories of spending time together and being out in the woods.

**From the miscellaneous drawer**

by Anne Swenson

I was in the office one morning recently, picking up my mail and adding some old photos of Ely's olden days to the Echo's collection. And I became more aware of the Echo team.

They have good leadership in Nick Wognum, now listed as General Manager, but there's no doubt that his crew plays an important part in keeping things running smoothly.

Lisa, the ad designer, helps customers in many ways as she has for over 20 years.

And for some time since we have enlarged our print section and camera output, Cameron has been front and center to answer customers' needs.

He also takes care of getting the Echos after they are printed in Du-

luth, and has had some help recently from Evan Wognum, Nick's youngest on the road.

Tom does a great job of seeming to be everywhere. And the Echo also has the talents of Pam Roberts and all the columnists, and readers who share photos and letters with the Echo. And Brad is back to help with store sales.

All in all, the Echo is in good hands, and I was thinking of my Dad who was in Ely's hospital nursing home. A successful business and corporate advisor, I had turned to him several times since buying the Echo.

The last time he had said that advice was no longer something of which he was capable.

My Ely advisors were Rod Loe, Mike Weinzerl, Bill Mills and a few others. They helped steer the newspaper in the right direction. And that is where the Echo is now - in the right direction. So chances are you won't see me at the Echo and my columns will become less often.

Thanks for all your kind wishes and above all: thanks for subscribing to Ely's only dedicated newspaper. The Chapman Street office is ready to serve you.

Like many Ely businesses, the Echo counts on you. Newspapers are struggling in these awful times. Thank you for subscribing.

**Trout Whisperer - Merry Cherry Christmas, to me.**

He has, in at least one pocket, a hand carved wooden spoon, each one of his own doing. His undoing, is waltzing through her kitchen ladling a dash out of the pot, and from where I sit, who could blame him.

She has glossing away in a warm buttery bubbly bath a concoction of dark chocolate melting, infused, with crushed red and purple cherries, creating a drizzle for cooled cookies. I mean who could blame him, and

then when he finishes his nibbling, he swoops in with a clean metal spoon. I get my taste and then we both got booted from the confectioner's quarters.

Leaving the home's warm interior with my mouth savoring what was, in hopes of what is hopefully to come my way, in the way, of a to-go Christmas cookie cherry cheerful package. We lit into the wood pile.

Firewood chores finished, I figured there was nothing left to

do but be exceptionally polite before I departed, and to thank the hostess, in person in her kitchen, because I didn't want to trouble her coming outside in the cold, to send me on my way, especially if I was supposed to possibly leave empty handed.

So I was doing everything I could to shake her hand, thank her properly, and leave with at least a fistful of that goodness' coating some cookies.

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