

# Fortune Bay mandates COVID-19 vaccines

By Laura Butterbrodt  
Duluth News Tribune

Fortune Bay Resort Casino, Bois Forte tribal government and Bois Forte business development employees will be required to receive a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine by Nov. 1. The tribal council approved the mandate at the end of September in response to concerns about rising cases of the delta variant.

A Wednesday news release from Fortune Bay Resort Casino in Tower said 25 to

30 employees have told their managers or directors that they will not be getting the vaccine. Requests for medical and religious exemptions will be considered, and six exemption requests have been filed as of Wednesday.

Elizabeth Deegan, Fortune Bay interim general manager, said the casino has already been struggling with staff shortages, and will assess staff numbers next week to see if hours will need to be changed. Director of Human Resources Beth Adams said

employees will have until Monday, Oct. 18 to submit letters of resignation.

"The numbers of those who said they will not get vaccinated have dropped, but any loss of staff will be tough to deal with," Deegan said in the release.

Bois Forte Tribal chair Cathy Chavers said at the council meeting that Native Americans face a higher risk of hospitalization and/or death as a result of COVID-19 infection compared to non-Natives, and the man-

date is an attempt to protect the communities of Nett Lake and Lake Vermilion.

"We know that there are employees out there that will not vaccinate and that is their choice as an individual," Chavers said. "But we're doing this to help keep our community safe."

The Bois Forte Mobile Vaccine Unit will be on-site at Fortune Bay for employees to get vaccinated on Oct. 21 and 27. Casino, tribal government and business development employees who refuse a

vaccine and are not approved for an exemption can either resign or their employment will be terminated on grounds of misconduct for failing to follow company policy. Adams said a resignation is preferred.

"Vaccine mandates have been imposed at several larger companies and as one of the largest employees on the Iron Range, we are not excluded from having to make hard decisions like this," Adams said.

## Woman guilty of tampering with search

### Third defendant convicted in connection with 2019 West Duluth homicide

By Tom Olsen  
Duluth News Tribune

A second woman has pleaded guilty to her role in obstructing the investigation into the September 2019 shooting death of Timothy Nelson in West Duluth.

Amber Rose Louise Forrest, 31, entered an Alford plea to a felony count of aiding an offender at a hearing Monday in State District Court. Forrest, according to court documents, was in a relationship with one of the alleged perpetrators and tampered with the scene of a search warrant by removing several items of potential evidence.

In an Alford plea, the defendant is able to maintain his or her claim of innocence while acknowledging that there exists sufficient evidence for the prosecution to obtain a conviction from a judge or jury.

Forrest is the third of four defendants charged in the case to be convicted. With the plea, she avoids a jury trial that had been set for early November.

Judge Leslie Beiers ordered an investigation into Forrest's background ahead of sentencing Nov. 12. She remains free on supervised release.

Authorities said Forrest removed two BB guns and a backpack from the home she shared with her boyfriend, James Michael Peterson — using a ladder to climb into a second-story window while investigators worked to obtain the proper paperwork to seize the items.

Peterson and another man, Christopher Floyd Boder, were later charged with Nelson's killing. According to court documents and trial testimony, Nelson was

gunned down during a Sept. 22 confrontation that came shortly after he attempted to rob

Boder while armed with a BB or flare gun. Police on Sept. 24 executed several search warrants at the house, 224 N. 62nd Ave. W., which was listed as the residence for both Peterson and Boder. Peterson and Forrest were present and were removed from the home when officers arrived at approximately noon that day, according to a criminal complaint filed in Forrest's case.

Taken outside and interviewed by an officer,

Forrest was "unable to provide a consistent or clear chronology of her events" around the time of Nelson's death, stating that she "knew nothing about the shooting and denied even being in the area at the time it took place."

Inside the house, investigators found and photographed the two BB guns, but did not immediately seize them because they were not identified as items of interest in the original warrant. Police left the house and obtained a second warrant.

When they returned, according to documents, both BB guns and a backpack were missing. Meanwhile, officers found a second-floor window partially opened and noted that a ladder was placed up against a second-story window.

The next day, investigators made contact with Forrest. She allegedly turned over the backpack and admitted to having climbed into the window right after speaking with the investigator, but denied taking the BB guns.

According to documents, Forrest then consented to a search of her cellphone, which revealed text messages from the early morning hours of Sept. 25 in which she indicated she had two BB guns for sale. An ex-boyfriend later turned in a BB gun — described as a "realistic-looking semi-automatic silver handgun with a black pistol grip" — that he said he received from Forrest on Sept. 25.

Defense attorney Brian Malvick sought dismissal

of Forrest's case, saying she was never advised that she could not re-enter the house while it was being searched and that she had no reason to believe the weapons were relevant to the homicide investigation.

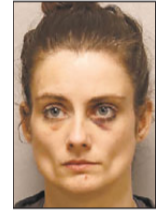
He added that Forrest suffers from a past-traumatic brain injury and chronic drug use, arguing that she was attempting to cooperate with law enforcement.

But Judge Beiers in February 2020 upheld the charge, siding with St. Louis County prosecutor Nate Stumme, who noted that Forrest knew her boyfriend was a suspect in a homicide case, admitted to entering the house while it was still being searched and offered two BB guns for sale hours later.

Boder, 33, was convicted by a jury last fall of aiding and abetting intentional second-degree murder and is currently serving a 25½-year prison sentence. Peterson, 40, is scheduled to stand trial Feb. 14 on the same charge.

Taylor Ann Fredrickson, 29, was sentenced last month to three years of supervised probation and 90 days in the county jail or Female Offender Program after pleading guilty to an aiding charge.

A friend of Boder's, she admitted to attempting to mislead police about his whereabouts on the night of Nelson's murder.



Forrest



Peterson



Boder



Fredrickson

#### STATE BRIEF

### Body recovered from Crow Wing County lake

RIVERTON, Minn. — Authorities recovered the body of a 69-year-old Deerwood, Minnesota, man from a Crow Wing County lake Tuesday, Oct. 12, after a citizen reported an empty boat in the water the night before.

The Crow Wing County Recreational Division and the Crow Wing County Dive Team retrieved the body of William Elliott at about 9:15 a.m.

The Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office reported deputies responded to the Little Rabbit Lake boat access for a welfare check at 6:05 p.m. Monday to investigate the report of an unoccupied boat drifting 75 feet off the shoreline. The caller also reported seeing a pair of socks and shoes sitting on the dock.

With the assistance of the citizen, deputies recovered the unoccupied boat and searched the surrounding area but were unable to locate anyone. They observed at the landing a vehicle with a trailer with the same registered owner as the boat, but were unsuccessful in contacting the owner. Due to darkness, a more extensive search for the missing boater was delayed until the following morning.

Elliott's body was recovered Tuesday morning in about 17 feet of water about 15 feet off the end of the dock at the boat launch. Elliot was transported to the Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office, and the cause of death is pending.

The Crow Wing County Drone Team also assisted the sheriff's office.

— Forum News Service

#### NORTHLAND BRIEF

### St. Luke's to open Moose Lake surgery center

St. Luke's announced Wednesday it is partnering with Gateway Clinic to build a multi-million-dollar surgery center in Moose Lake's former Shopko Building.

The Northern Lakes Surgery Center is expected to open next summer at 4791 County Road 10 in Moose Lake. It will use approximately 9,000 square feet of the 25,000-square-foot building. According to a news release from St. Luke's, the additional space will likely be used by additional tenants in the future.

Some St. Luke's specialty physicians currently partner with Gateway Clinics in Moose Lake, Hinckley and Sandstone. The Northern Lakes Surgery Center will offer outpatient surgical and procedural care and will be designed by DSGW Architects.

—Duluth News Tribune

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#### SHIPPING TRAFFIC



Contributed / Carole Lent

**Duluth entry**  
1 p.m.: John G. Munson (U.S.) arriving to unload limestone.

**Superior entry**  
1:30 a.m.: American Integrity (U.S.) arriving to load iron ore pellets.

5:30 a.m.: CSL Laurentien (Canada) arriving to load iron ore pellets.

**Two Harbors**  
5:30 p.m.: Oak Glen (Canada) arriving to load iron ore pellets.

For updated information 24 hours a day, call the Boatwatcher's Hotline at 218-722-6489 or visit harborlookout.com.

Source: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lake Superior Maritime Visitors Center in Canal Park. Arrival and departure times are not official and can vary widely.

#### BYGONES

##### News Tribune, Oct. 14, 1981

► The Duluth School Board yesterday approved a five-year consolidation plan designed to cope with the expected loss of about 2,000 of the district's 15,080 students by 1986. The district has lost about 700 students from last year's enrollment of 15,770, according to William Juola, planning coordinator.

► The Duluth City Council last night voted to oppose using the former cement plant in Morgan Park as a site for a hazardous waste processing plant. The Minnesota Waste Management Board is considering the 2-square-mile site for such a plant.

##### News Tribune, Oct. 14, 1921

► Police Chief Warren Pugh yesterday announced a campaign against autoists who drive past Duluth hospitals with loud mufflers. He said the hospitals are in designated quiet zones, and violators will be arrested and, if convicted, will be given the maximum sentence.

► Arrangements for Duluth's annual Halloween party, which will be Oct. 29 at Lake Shore Park, were completed yesterday. A parade from the Armory will open the night's festivities, and a platform will be erected in the park for local amateur talent to perform.

Bygones is researched and written by David Ouse, retired reference librarian from the Duluth Public Library. He can be contacted at djouse49@gmail.com.



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