



COMMON REDPOLL

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER: CITY OF ELY, ISD 696, CITY OF WINTON, MORSE AND FALL LAKE TOWNSHIPS

Photos above by Snotty Moose Photography

Jensen takes aim at Walz

Republicans front-runner speaks before nearly 100 at Ely event

by Tom Coombe

The Republican front-runner for governor pulled no punches during a visit to Ely on Monday night.

Scott Jensen praised former President Donald Trump, blasted Gov. Tim Walz and addressed everything from abortion to environmental issues before roughly 100 people at the Ely Senior Center.

"It is in politics where a culture war is taking place," said Jensen, the main speaker at a gathering hosted by the Minnesota Conservative



REPUBLICAN gubernatorial candidate Scott Jensen talks with Mike Forsman of Ely at the Senior Center on Monday night. Photo by Nick Wognum.

Jensen, a physician and former state senator, has gained national attention for his opposition to Walz's response to the Covid-19

pandemic, and he dominated a statewide straw poll at Republican caucuses earlier this year. He's one of several contenders vying to be the Republican to opposed Walz

in November. Several times, Jensen took on Walz and his response to the pandemic.

(Continued on Page 2)

Promoting the shoulder season

Groups seek more advertising, promoting non-summer activities

by Tom Coombe

It's often difficult to find an open bed - or an empty restaurant table - on summer weekends in Ely.

Those periods could expand to the fall, winter and spring, if an effort discussed Tuesday is successful.

City council members voted unanimously to join several other groups in endorsing a push to pour more lodging tax dollars into advertising the community's "shoulder seasons."

"Our lodging places are pretty booked up in the summer," said Ely resident Mike Banovetz. "Maybe take some of that money and put it into the shoulder seasons and entice people to come up here for the sort of activities that benefit the community."

Banovetz, who joined local business owner Kris Winkelman in appealing to the council, said the region should do more to support and promote snowmobiling, ATV riding, mountain bike trail riding and other activities that take place outside of the summer.

According to Winkelman, the group will "go to the tourism board and ask them to spend more money on advertising" non-summer activities.

They were set to meet with Ely Tourism Bureau director Cindy Smyka and have lined up the support of not only the city, but the Ely-Igloo Snowmobile Club, Prospectors ATV Club, Your Boat Club and the Ely Chamber of Commerce.

Ely council members were resoundingly supportive during brief discussion this week.

"I think it's a great idea," said council member Paul Kess.

Kess is part of an area joint powers board that oversees funding generated by the area's three percent lodging tax. Those monies are distributed to the Tourism Bureau, which in turn promotes the region through an assortment of advertising mechanisms and mediums.

Council member Al Forsman touted an influx of ATV riders last year and noted that ATV season leads right into the winter and snowmobiling.

He said he was supportive of efforts to bring those visitors to the region.

"We do want to fill beds and restaurants during that time," said Forsman. "I fully support it. That's what we're here to support."

Ely's "second Congressman" passes

Brad Ashford served in U.S. House, had summer home on Burntside

by Tom Coombe

Brad Ashford represented Omaha, Neb., in the U.S. House of Representatives, but that didn't stop him from being dubbed "Ely's Second Congressman."

Ashford, a longtime property owner on Burntside Lake and part-time Ely area summer resident, passed away Monday age 72.

His death, announced by family members Monday in Omaha, came only a few months after he was diagnosed with brain cancer.

And while Nebraska was his home, Ashford maintained a presence in Ely, where his family has owned property on Burntside for nearly a century.

During his two years in the U.S. House, he bonded with former U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan (D), who represented

Ely and Minnesota's Eighth District at the time.

Nolan spent time with Ashford on Burntside, including an overnight stay.

Wednesday, Nolan remembered Ashford fondly.

"We developed a good friendship and he was just a wonderfully nice man," said Nolan.

Ashford was a Democrat during his tenure in Congress although he switched party affiliations more than once during a long tenure in politics.

He and Nolan talked frequently about issues related to northeastern Minnesota, and Ashford visited with Ely Echo representatives several times to hone up on local topics.

"He looked out for the

(Continued on Page 2)



CRUISING BURNTSIDE was Brad Ashford in this submitted photo from the family.

Nonprofits get Covid funds

by Tom Coombe

Just over \$122,000 in federal Covid relief funds will be shared by four Ely area non-profit organizations, following action this week by the Ely City Council.

Ely Community Resource stands to receive the biggest chunk, an award of \$56,000, while council members unanimously agreed to approve funding for the Ely Area Food Shelf (\$38,900), Ely Area Senior Citizens (\$21,359) and Happy Days Preschool (\$6,000).

That amounts to about one-third of a \$360,000 award to the city of Ely via the American Rescue Plan Act, and the nonprofit awards followed robust discussion by the city's budget committee.

City officials also agreed to set aside one-third for local infrastructure projects and the remaining third to build the city's broadband network.

Council member Paul Kess, who was part of the committee discussions, said the group identified nonprofits and "thought it was appropriate for nonprofits that provide direct service."

The city sought applications for the funding and granted the requests as submitted by the four groups.

"It was a good discussion, a fair discussion," said mayor Roger Skraba.

Skraba said the impact of each group and how it "touches" the community helped him decide to support the proposal.

Nonprofit groups were invited to apply to the city and were asked to identify money losses or additional expenditures as a result of the pandemic.

"There was additional pressure put on the food shelf and how they're trying to provide additional

(Continued on Page 2)

Sales tax waiver would aid school

by Tom Coombe

The Ely School District would get nearly \$400,000 in relief for its school construction project if lawmakers approve a measure discussed earlier this week.

Tuesday, the State Senate Tax Committee held over a proposal that would exempt several Iron Range school districts - including Ely - from sales tax charges for its current \$20 million-plus renovation initiative.

Ely's school project was originally tabbed at \$20 million but cost mushroomed significantly last year, largely as a result of inflation and supply chain issues blamed on the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Pandemic-related supply chain issues caused the project to unexpectedly increase by \$4 million for us," said elementary principal Anne Oelke, who testified in support of the legislation during Tuesday's committee session at St. Paul.

State Sen. Tom Bakk (I-Cook) spoke strongly



SF 4031 Anne Oelke Principal, Ely Public Schools

in support of the proposal, which he is advancing along with fellow Iron Range legislator State Sen. David Tomassoni (I-Chishom).

"Unlike a city or a county that can levy some more money to pay for some cost overruns, schools have passed a referendum," said Bakk. "They just can't go back to the taxpayers to get

additional money to make up the funding shortfalls in their project. They're in a difficult spot when you look at what's happening with inflation and construction right now."

The shortfall has forced school officials back to the drawing board, both to adjust the project and explore options for additional fund-

ing.

Oelke said approval of the legislation, which also covers projects at Rock Ridge (Virginia/Eveleth), Hibbing, Nashwauk-Keewatin and several other districts, would "help us reinvest much needed dollars back into the project and help fill a funding hole."

(Continued on Page 2)

Views from the North Country



Politicians rolled into Ely this past week and gave speeches at the Senior Center. Linda Maki was setting out chairs which in our eyes made her the chairperson for the event...

Jensen takes aim at Walz, Republicans front-runner speaks before nearly 100 at Ely event

(Continued from Page 1)

“Your private property isn’t something that can be shut down by the government,” said Jensen. “A governor can’t come along and tell you your business isn’t essential, that you can’t go to church but you can go to the biggest candy store in Minnesota.”

Jensen charged that “at the base level, more than anything this is a crisis in leadership. Three days before second lockdown you weren’t going to be allowed to get a haircut, but a backroom deal changed that.”

According to Jensen, he went from winning a state physician award “to being the most investigated physician in the state,” after bucking pandemic policies and refusing to classify the death of a cancer patient as caused by Covid-19.

Jensen singled out “bizarre and foolish Covid policies” including those that separated dying patients from family members at care facilities and hospitals.

Tuesday morning, Jensen met with representatives of Twin Metals Minnesota and toured the company’s Ely facilities. While he did not

directly address the Twin Metals project during the public event, he voiced general support for the mining industry and making use of the region’s natural resources.

“It isn’t up to the urban dwellers to tell you how to reforest the land after you logged it,” he said. “Natural resources are a crop and you know how to make them last.”

Jensen harkened back to a time when he moonlighted and did weekend physician work at Aurora’s White Hospital during the early-2000s.

“I remember talking to many miners,” said Jensen. “You know what they wanted? They weren’t looking for a six-figure income. They were looking for a job to pay the bills, and maybe allow them to watch a Vikings game.”

Jensen was sharply critical of President Joe Biden and his administration and voiced respect for his predecessor.

“The guy was a leader,” Jensen said of Trump. “He might have done a better job with his Twitter account but when it comes to the Supreme Court, we got three rock solids.”

Jensen disputed claims that America is a racist country and said urban communities have suffered from a breakdown of families.

“You don’t bolster the family by asking five and six-year-olds what gender they want to be,” said Jensen.

Jensen said he shared much in common with the audience, identifying a series of talking points on poster boards including opposition to abortion.

“I delivered 500 babies and I fought tooth and nail to make sure every one of them had a chance for a normal life,” said Jensen. “If you think abortion is an acceptable form of birth control you’re full of BS.”

Jensen asked the audience to imagine what life in Minnesota would be like without a state income tax.

“Why can 10 states in the nation do it and we can’t?” he asked.

Jensen quoted the late President Ronald Reagan in promoting “peace through strength” and defending gun rights.

He charged that Minnesotans have been let down by their government.

“You want to be appreciated for the contribution you



Chad Walsh. Photo by Micah Larson.

make to the economy,” said Jensen. “You want government to be more than just a fickle partner when it’s convenient. You want to be able to have success which means to use the natural resources your land has been imbued with.”

Two other candidates for office spoke Monday, including Chad Walsh, who is seeking to become St. Louis County Sheriff.

The Hermantown native mirrored several of Jensen’s talking points, particularly over Covid policies

“Where was our sheriff when our governor said you have no right to go to church, you have no right to peacefully assemble, and Chad Walsh, you have to shut your gun store down,” said Walsh.



Secretary of State candidate Kim Crockett

“Where was our sheriff?” Walsh contends there has “been a huge breakdown between law enforcement and the citizens... You can not meet people from the inside of a squad car. You can not meet people from the inside of an office.”

According to Walsh, there is no more important position in the county than that of sheriff.

“The sheriff answers directly to the citizens,” he said. “We the people need to know that whoever is in that position will stand up

for us and our constitutional rights.”

Kim Crockett, a Republican hopeful for Secretary of State, also spoke to the group and highlighted the importance of the position, particularly when it comes to overseeing election procedures.

“The Democrats are smart,” said Crockett. “They focus on elections. We focus on the rah-rah of campaigns.”

Ely’s “second Congressman” passes; Ashford served in U.S. House, had summer home on Burntside

(Continued from Page 1)

area too,” said Nolan. “Whenever there was anything affecting northeastern Minnesota he’d say ‘what do you think, Rick?’”

Nolan said Ashford’s link with both major parties “reflected in kind of the balance he brought to the job, something people wish to

see more of quite frankly... Today you almost have to have a party label but it doesn’t mean you can’t be independent minded. When everybody does that, it all comes together for the betterment of everyone.”

Ashford grew up in Omaha and was a graduate of Creighton Law School and owned a clothing business

in his home town.

He had two stints in the Omaha legislature, nearly a decade apart, and narrowly won a seat in Congress in 2014.

That’s where he served aside Nolan, and he maintained his connection to Ely, visiting during the summer and joining journalists from 10 nations in a 2015 public

forum hosted by the Ely Echo.

Ashford lost a re-election bid in 2016 by less than 4,000 votes and suffered another narrow loss in a Democratic primary two years later.

The man who defeated Ashford and now holds his Congressional seat, U.S. Rep. Don Bacon called him “a pillar of Omaha” earlier

this week.

Ashford remained involved in politics after his defeat and his wife Ann lost her own Congressional bid in 2020.

In February, Ashford announced that he had been diagnosed with brain cancer and well wishes poured in from around the country, including from former Pres-

ident Barack Obama.

Nolan said he had been in occasional contact with Ashford, and called him “a dear friend and an exceptional Congressman.”

Ashford is survived by his wife and three children. Funeral services were set for this weekend in Omaha.

State sales tax waiver would provide \$400,000 in aid to Ely school district

(Continued from Page 1)

The sales tax exemption is one of several measures being pursued by the Ely district as it looks to complete a project initiated by approval of a \$10 million referendum in August, 2020.

The referendum triggered a \$7 million grant from the Iron Range Resources and

Rehabilitation Board, and the district is also using reserve funds, a federal safety grant and facility funding.

Yet the additional costs have delayed some portions of the project and led to revisions in other areas, and the district is also hoping for additional aid and sources of revenue.

Last month, Oelke spoke

in support of a measure that would extend a school fund created in 2014 putting five cents per ton, from production taxes paid by area mines, into a fund controlled by the IRRRB for school improvement projects.

Oelke told legislators there’s nothing frivolous in the Ely project, which was years in the making and

will result in a new facility that will link the district’s century-old Washington and Memorial facilities.

The new addition creates a single, secure entrance to the campus and will house offices, a new gymnasium, media center, cafeteria and commons space and industrial education and music classrooms.

“We’re talking about technology and energy upgrades to serve our students for years to come,” said Oelke. “Safety upgrades to keep our students safe and modernizing learning spaces.”

Bakk argued that school districts have been put in a difficult spot because of the pandemic and the rise in prices.

“These referendums were passed at the onset of the pandemic and we all know what’s happened with construction costs and supply chain problems,” said Bakk. “As the committee contemplates what to consider, school construction is different. Schools are in a different situation than other local units of government are.”

Ely area nonprofits will receive Covid funds after approval by city council

(Continued from Page 1)

services in a safe manner,” said Langowski.

Skraba said the funding reaches groups that help an assortment of citizens, from the youth to the elderly and those who may be economically disadvantaged.

He endorsed the allocation for Ely Community Resource, contending “the more money you put into

ECR the less money you have to spend patrolling kids.”

Langowski said other groups may reach out for future rounds of Covid funding allocations through 2024, and the city had to beat a deadline to distribute the current round.

“If other groups felt they have the same impact on the community and think they should be included, send

a letter,” said Langowski. “We did reach out as far as we could and had a couple groups send letters supporting other requests but not requesting money for themselves.”

Kess added that “the things we do to support all of these organizations has a great effect.”

Also Tuesday, council members signed off on a pair

of applications for significant federal funding awards.

The city is seeking as much as \$2.4 million for a new ambulance garage that would double as an emergency services building.

The project has been addressed for several months by the area’s ambulance joint powers board, and cost estimates have reached \$4 million, including \$3.2 mil-

lion for the ambulance garage as well as an additional \$800,000 to store city emergency equipment.

Local units of government are also seeking state funding for the project.

The city is also asking for \$2 million from the federal government for city water supply improvements.

In other business, the council:

- Approved a new five-year contract with airport operator Jim Preblich, with no significant revisions.

- Approved temporary liquor licenses for the Ely-Winton Rod and Gun Club for June 4 and Oct. 15 at the Miners Dry.

- Approved a \$10,000 residential rehabilitation loan for Alayna Geisler.

- Authorized obstruction permits and rentals for both the Blueberry/Art and Harvest Moon festivals.

- Allowed the Ely Chamber of Commerce to use the old kitchen building at Semers Park for storage.

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ELY FOURTH GRADERS studied biographies and historical characters this year as part of the Wax Museum project. As part of the project, students selected significant characters in history. Students then read biographies, then completed timelines and portraits of their characters. The project concluded with students giving a speech as their character and sharing why we should remember them in history. Pictured are Nancy Preblich's class: Front row: Jovie Kiesler, Nicole Freking, Scarlett Vieau, Elsie Mattila, Ora Koehler, Boden Devine, Max Ice Back Row: Sailor Marsella, Violet Franciskovich, Alex Brandriet, Nels Majerus, Axel Weisinger, Leo Martin Suter, Hokan Lunn, Sally Dunn.

Calendar parking continues in Ely

by Tom Coombe

With winter maintaining a tenuous hold in Ely, the city's calendar parking rules remain in effect.

City officials reiterated that Tuesday, and indicated the annual regulation may not end any time soon.

Under city ordinance, the calendar parking rule is in place each year until May 31, although council members have generally lifted it well prior to that date.

That may not be the case this year, however, given a series of April snowstorms.

"Hopefully it will be done before May 31, but it probably won't be," said mayor Roger Skraba.

In place during the winter

season to aid in snow removal and plowing, the calendar parking law requires motorists to park their vehicles on opposite sides of the street on alternating nights.

The law kicks in on Nov. 1 and continues through winter.

Responding in part to social media posts, council member Al Forsman addressed the calendar parking rules at the end of Tuesday's regular meeting and clarified the current restrictions.

"It goes through May 31 unless we change it," said Forsman. "I've seen (discussion of) lots of different dates."

City officials added that spring snowfall isn't the only

factor in determining when to ease the restrictions.

The city also generally waits until street sweeping has occurred. That, also, has been hindered by the weather.

"You can't sweep when it's frozen," said Harold Langowski, the city's clerk-treasurer and operations director. "As soon as it melts we'll be out there in full force getting it done."

But that may be awhile yet, given the weather.

"I foresee this being a late lift (of the parking rule)," said police chief Chad Houde. "In the meantime please be patient and park on the right side of the street"

On mornings of an "odd"

date (1st, 3rd, 5th, etc.), vehicles should be parked on the side of the street with odd-numbered addresses. Those that park on the west side, with odd-numbered avenues.

Vehicles should switch to the side with even-numbered addresses on even dates, either the south side of streets or east side of avenues.

By city statute, calendar parking actually begins at 6 p.m., but police generally don't begin enforcing the law until midnight. Those who violate the law are subject to a \$20 civil fine.



CHECKING OUT the core storage at Twin Metals Minnesota in Ely was Republican governor candidate Scott Jensen. Dean DeBeltz pulled out a box of cores to show him the company's extensive drilling program. Photo by Nick Wognum.

Public hearing set on proposed redistricting boundaries for several St. Louis County commissioner districts

The results of the 2020 census show the population of St. Louis County increased by five people in the last 10 years. Yet there was enough of a movement of population within the county to require minor shifts in boundaries for several of the county's seven commissioner districts.

The most notable redistricting change being proposed would move Brevator Township from the 5th district to the 7th District. This boundary change would not only help equalize the pop-

ulations between districts, it also unites the Fond Du Lac Reservation's contiguous land into one commissioner district.

Additionally, two areas in Duluth would shift commissioner districts to keep boundaries consistent with changes in legislative districts and City of Duluth precinct lines. These include: the neighborhoods from 11th Avenue West to Mesabi Avenue and between 3rd and 9th Street would switch from the 1st District to the 3rd District. Also, three blocks in

the central hillside - from 6th to 7th Avenue East between 3rd and 6th Street would shift from the 2nd to the 1st Commissioner District.

It is the responsibility of the County Auditor, Nancy Nilsen, to recommend any redistricting changes. The County Board will be holding a public hearing on these proposed changes on Tuesday, April 26, at its Board meeting, which begins at 9:30 a.m. at Hoyt Lakes City Hall. People also may submit comments prior to the meeting by emailing

the County Board Clerk at chapmanp@stlouiscountymn.gov or mailing: Clerk of County Board, 100 North 5th Avenue West, Room 214, Duluth, MN, 55802.

Information including maps showing the redistricting proposal can be found online at stlouiscountymn.gov/redistricting. The County Board is expected to finalize the redistricting maps following the public hearing on April 26.

AUDITIONS
Sunday, April 24, 5:30-7:00 PM
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Grand Ely Lodge

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Forsman re-elected to Lake Country Power board

A community of cooperative members gathered at Lake Country Power's service center in Cohasset for the annual membership meeting on Wednesday evening, April 20. More than 300 members and guests heard about the lingering effects of the COVID pandemic on material costs, supply chain issues, historic inflation and the impacts all of it has on providing safe and reliable electric service.

Co-op officials also noted there was no choice but to implement the first rate increase in six years after thorough analysis.

"Material costs and supply chain issues are creating very real problems for us," said Lake Country Power General Manager Mark Bakk. "The cost for materials we use for the distribution system has skyrocketed more than 30 percent from pre-pandemic levels. What you feel at the gas pump, is what we also feel, which is mostly diesel fuel in our case."

Bakk shared that the supply chain for materials is delayed by months, or even years and that vendors are sometimes unable to quote a price for necessary materials upon request.

While external factors are beyond what the co-op can control, there is some good news. Bakk said Lake Country Power achieved its best-ever score for the average number of minutes of outage time each member experienced over a 12-month period. The co-op also scored well in the average amount of time it takes for line crews to restore an outage.

Lake Country Power's internal tree and construction crews are helping the co-op save money that used to be paid to contractors. In 2021, the cooperative's tree crews saved LCP nearly \$250,000 while the construction crews pushed the one-year savings for their projects age-related line replacements and outage restoration assistance to over \$1 million.

Bakk expressed his gratitude to members for ranking Lake Country Power with its highest-ever member satisfaction American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score of 77 in 2021. He said, "Thanks for your support, and rest assured that I will always lead this cooperative with your best interests in mind."

Four employees from the Cohasset line crew were rec-

ognized before the membership for their act of heroism in rescuing a trapped woman from a flipped vehicle in a ditch filled with icy water last fall. Tim Rasmusson, Cody Vredenburg, Matt Bade and Tyler McClellan were honored with the Great River Energy Award of Excellence and the St. Louis County 911 Life Saver Award.

Additional reports were given by LCP Board President Craig Olson, Holding Company President Daniel Kingsley, and Mark Fagan, Great River Energy's vice president and chief corporate and member services officer.

Annual meeting videos can be found on Lake Country Power's website, www.lakecountrypower.coop, or the co-op's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/lakecountrypower, starting the week of April 25.

Director election results were announced to fill three-year terms. District 2 candidate, Michael Forsman of Ely, ran unopposed and received 624 votes.

Members in District 4 and District 8 did not receive a director ballot because no members petitioned to run for the board of directors by the filing deadline on

February 9.

"We did not feel it proper or in the best interest of the cooperative to appoint any members to those two districts," said Craig Olson, board president. "The seven active directors will oversee any cooperative business that may occur in those open districts and then we'll hold a special election next spring to fill the remaining two-year terms for District 4 and District 8."

Immediately following the adjournment of the annual meeting, the board of directors held a re-organizational meeting. Board officers are: Craig Olson from District 7, President; Daniel Kingsley from District 6, Vice President; Mike Forsman from District 2, Secretary; and Jason Long from District 1, Treasurer.

Lake Country Power, www.lakecountrypower.coop, is a Touchstone Energy cooperative serving parts of eight counties in northeastern Minnesota. The rural electric cooperative provides services to more than 43,000 members and has offices located in Cohasset, Kettle River and Mountain Iron.

Ely's Petrich part of 9/11 event, exhibit this week at Duluth Depot

The experiences and stories of an Ely native are part of a three-day exhibit and free public event beginning later this week at Duluth's historic Depot.

The St. Louis County Historical Society, together with the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum will host the 9/11 exhibit entitled: RESOLUTE: MN STORIES OF 9/11 AND THE WAR.

The exhibit will be on display from Apr. 29-May 1, with a special opening event slated for Thursday, Apr. 28, also at the Depot, at 5 p.m.

Father John Petrich who grew up in Ely and was a chaplain in New York City after the attacks of Sept. 11 2001 will be featured in one of two exhibits opening.

Petrich is also serving as an educational speaker.

"His story of service as a chaplain after 9/11, servign first responders and those engaged in recovery at the towers, is remarkable," said JoAnne

Coombe executive director of the historical society.

The Apr. 28 event consists of guest speakers including Petrich as well as a preview of the exhibition refreshments and a cash bar. The event is open to the public.

Minnesotans were in the twin towers, planes, and the Pentagon on 9/11, and on the frontline of the war that followed.

The exhibition invites museum visitors to view a documentary and to visit the exhibit to explore their stories and how much of our experience traces back to that one fateful morning.

"I think the effort to use the 20-year mark to try and pull something together that we as a country have never gone through before, 20 years of an ongoing conflict, is incredibly important so that all those people have a way to connect to that and we have a way to bring loved ones in to it so that it can somehow be their experience as well," said Roger

Reinert a Duluth veteran and former state legislator.

More about the exhibition can be found online at - <https://www.mnmilitarymuseum.org/exhibits/test-gallery/>

The exhibition is part of the historical society's Veterans Memorial Hall. Its mission is to preserve and collect veterans' stories and artifacts and to interpret and educate the public about the rich and diverse history of veterans from northeastern Minnesota. Its website, www.vets-hall.org, features over 12,000 veteran stories.

The Minnesota Military Museum seeks to strengthen public understanding of how armed conflicts and military institutions have shaped our state and national experience. The mission is achieved by documenting, preserving, and explaining military history as it was lived by the people of Minnesota. It also functions as a major repository in Minnesota for historical artifacts

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 - MMVM Executive Director Randal Dietrich
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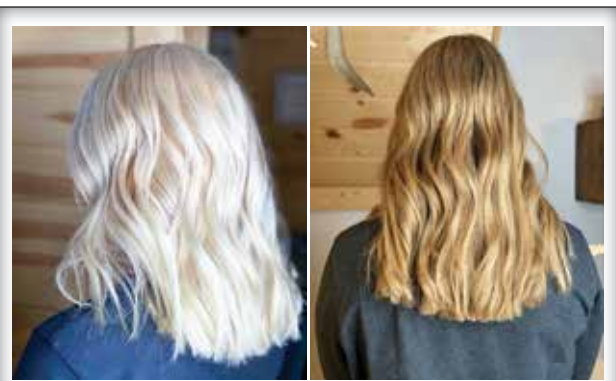
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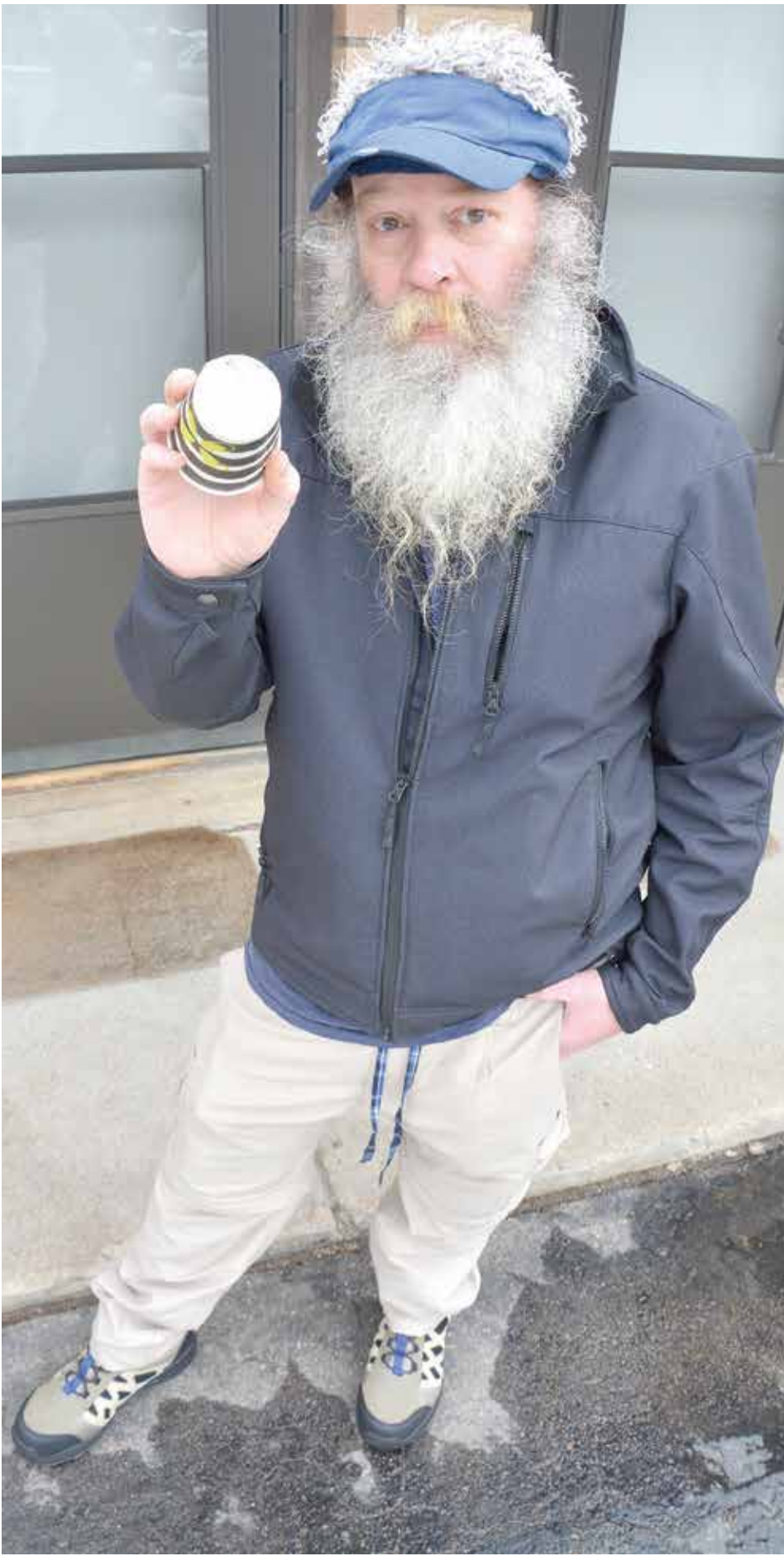


MORE INFORMATION AT THEHISTORYPEOPLE.ORG



The 3 o'clock hour, Sunday, April 3, 2022

Interview & photos by Pam Roberts



Todd Marin: "Supporting local businesses and major companies and things like that." (Like shopping?) "Yep. Yep. Different stores. Products." (Did you find anything good?) "Yeah I did. I found some shoes I designed and they made them for me and some clothing. They are comfortable." (You designed those?) "Yeah. When I was younger." (They look brand new. I just got them. I picked them up today. I walked down to Piragis. That's where they had them down there. (How did you have them made?) "I designed them and the people that were interested in making shoes, they went ahead and made them, the different designs. I'm a clothing designer. I've been in Ely for about a year and five and a half months." (What brought you to Ely?) "I was traveling. I have talked to you before. This would be the third time. ... I can't get out and walk around much. I've hurt my lower legs so I sit around doing hand designing supporting companies and stuff with my hand drawing and designing. And I make it to the stores in the area maybe once every few months. Other than that that's pretty much what I have been doing. I'm staying at the Motel Ely but I am looking for a more private place because I can't walk around much. A private place that is more convenient. And do some more designing and maybe do some hands-on building of different things." (What kind of things have you been building?) "The last couple years I have been hand designing on paper and stuff like that. Drawings and stuff like that. Years prior to that I was actually building what I designed. Motorcycles, automobiles, whatever whatever whatever. Clothing... I'm kind of limited physically to what I can do as far as heavy lifting and stuff like that and walking too much." (You sure did a nice job on designing those shoes.) "And they did a very good job also. Sometimes some of the local stores make the products at the stores. They do." (Anything you designed?) "They may use my designs or they may design them themselves. What ever they would be interested in doing. Zup's makes clothing products also." (Did you design something for them?) "Years ago." (T-shirt design?) "More in the coat and pant style. Stuff like that." (Did you design what you have on?) "Yeah." (Those are my favorite kind of pockets. I'd have that kind on all my pants.) "Yeah. They're right there. Very easy to get to." (I'm a pocket person.) "I am too..." (What were you doing out here just now?) "Just relaxing. That's pretty much it. I took a walk and I'm going to sit down and relax and try to take it easy. I have to walk around a little bit to keep control of my legs. If I don't do that I have problems." (Just then I heard "Pam Roberts! It happened to be Mark Haarman at the motel. "I'll talk to you next..." Todd went and got a paper cup that has a design on the bottom of it that he drew.) "That's back when I was designing the shoes and wearing the hat. That was one of my little designs... it's got basically the baseball or softball hat with the shoes." (Is that the original drawing?) "Yes, I just redid it yesterday. I put it back on the cup." (Is it usually on the cup?) "This cup was in the room here. I put the design back on it....That's what I've been doing the past couple resent years on and off." (Designs?) "Yeah. Automobile designs. Motorcycle designs. Helping out other companies. I used to build motorcycles and hand design the different things on the motorcycles and the automobiles that I built." (Like decals?) "Yeah the cute little things you put on them."



Mark Haarman. "Sit down please...It's Sunday and it's not 3 o'clock!" (Yep...It's the 2 o'clock Hour) "Pamela Roberts! We were in love together." (Yes we were.) "That was a play we did years and years ago." (That was the first play I was ever in.) Mark: "Under Don Bronski, who changed our lives in those old days. May he rest in peace.... I just broke my hip and don't wish that upon anyone. So don't slip and fall wherever you are indoors or out because it is the worst pain there is. As worse as I've ever felt and I've broken a bunch of things. I got a hip replacement. I got a new top of the femur. The femoral ball. But hip surgery, that's not fun. The worst part is when they put you on the x-ray table to take x-rays and the pain was as excruciating as I have ever felt. Ever felt. Ever... Can't sleep... Can't sleep in a hospital... So here I am in the Motel Ely with the nicest owners you can only imagine who have only owned this motel for six months. So we're blessed. I'm blessed. I'm the luckiest guy I know actually... I became an actor professionally and I'm planning on a documentary about the history of the Boundary Waters that will come to fruition very soon... (And how has the buckthorn battle gone?) "Here's the thing now, I'm off the hook and my good friend Sharon has been telling me for months you need to train people. You become the boss and show them how to do it.... I have been told by the University of Minnesota Head Forest Ecologist, Dr. Lee Frelich, to keep it out of the Boundary Waters. I've seen too much of the devastation around Lake Minnetonka. The whole Twin Cities; all of Wisconsin; the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. There are monocultures that you wouldn't believe the size of them. We've got plenty of buckthorn around Ely and I personally will kill every one of them at no charge if people want to call me. I put an ad in the Shopper and I did not get one call. You want help with your buckthorn, I'm the guy. I got slowed up a little bit with this hip but it's not going to stop me. You can't stop. People recover from it... I realized today is one year to the day the OH DEER incident happened. And I had surgery. Just crazy...."



Carolyn Chalmers and Eric Janus: "We thought this would never happen to us being in the Ely Echo O'clock Hour." Carolyn: "We were going to walk around Miners Lake but it's kind of still a lot of snow and a little crunchy and kind of slushy. So we're just walking on the frontage road and deciding whether to turn the corner." Eric: "Now we're going to go up through the town and back up to Vermilion College which is where we parked. We have a cabin on Garden Lake but we live in Minneapolis. We're having a long weekend." Carolyn: "We're relaxing. I'm reading a mystery by Lee Child I got from the Ely Library. I'm going to finish it in one weekend. It's wonderful! It's called "Bad Luck and Hard Times." Lee Child has a whole series. It's #11. It's like Nancy Drew when we were little. It's fabulous." Eric: "I'm reading a book of letters written by a Peace Corp volunteer who was living in Turkey 50 years ago which is when I was in Turkey as a Peace Corp volunteer. So it's very surprisingly engaging just to read some of these letters and journal entries from an experience that was in some ways very similar to what I had." Carolyn: "And the wood stove is on so we're sitting around in the cabin." Eric: "And we'll go back and have a sauna." Carolyn: "We're retired. I was a lawyer for a while and then I was a conflict resolver at the University of Minnesota. Office of Conflict Resolution." Eric: "And Carolyn has a memoir that's being published by the University of Iowa Press about a case that she did in the 1980s. It's called "They Don't Want Her There." It's a story about a sexual and racial harassment case that Carolyn represented. A Chinese American woman at the med school at the University of Iowa. Run out and get it." Carolyn: "You can totally edit that out...It's up to you ..." Eric: "We'll go back and start the sauna."

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Iron Range Pioneers by Michele Lammi Captain Charles Trezona

Charles Trezona



The crowd was wild. Those in it were tough, hard-working underground iron ore miners who had had enough.

Leaders of this group, mostly Austrians and Italians, wanted Trezona gone. They got all the miners of the Chandler and Pioneer mines, through almost any means necessary, to go on strike.

Their grievance was not the low pay, not the long hours worked, it was, in fact, the no good, rotten attitude of their mine captain. They just didn't want him around anymore. In previous days there were meetings; meetings with the mayor and meetings with the mine captains. The miners promised the mayor and Captain Toms there would be no violence.

The Ely city council closed the drinking establishments in town to help them keep their promise and hired armed guards to patrol the city. All that talking and Trezona was still in charge. It really just seemed like no one was listening to them.

Now, they were searching for Trezona. When they found him, they planned to make him go to the court house and in front of the judge sign their resolution to leave town within 24 hours and never return or, by God, he would hang!

In the meantime, the local police were trying to get an escape plan together to get Captain Trezona out of town until things settled down.

For the time being, though, they ordered him to stay in his home. Eventually, a plan was formulated to get Captain Trezona on the noon train that would take him to Duluth. Three passengers on that train were sheriff's deputies sent from Duluth. They would be in charge of getting Trezona out of Ely and safely to Duluth.

The crowd searching for Trezona made its way to the depot where the train was already prepared to leave. At departure time, the train started down the tracks slowly then slowed even more near the section house. Trezona, under heavy protection, was seen and calls from

PERSONAL LIFE

Charles Trezona was born September 8, 1863, in Camborne, Cornwall, England. His father, William, was a miner in England's copper mines. His mother was the former Marie Provis. Charles was the youngest of 10 children.

In 1885, he immigrated to the United States and three years later, he married his first wife, Emelia Pederson. They had six children; William, Edith, Richard, Martha, Charles, and Elcey. Son Charles died in 1901 of acute nephritis (disease of the kidneys). He was three years old. All the other children survived to adulthood.

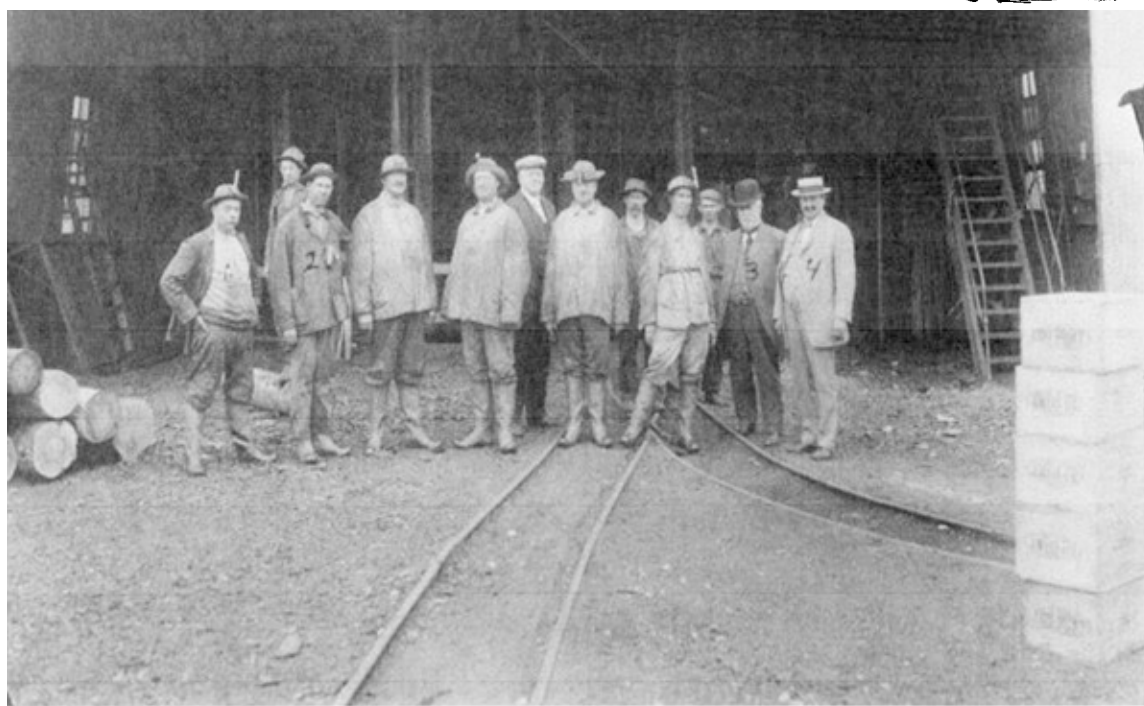
Tragedy again struck the Trezona family in March of 1919. At the end of February, Emelia was taken to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to find help for what had been ailing her for several years. At first, she seemed to be doing well, even attending church, but after several tests over a day, Mrs. Trezona grew weaker by the hour and by the evening of March 3 she was dead.

Captain Trezona and varying members of his family travelled to England on several occasions from 1904 to 1910 and in the late summer of 1920, Charles made a final trip to Cornwall, England, where he married an old girlfriend's sister, Miss Elizabeth Vague. They then visited France and Belgium before returning to Ely.

The end for Captain Trezona came on June 21, 1931, as he was returning from Duluth after a business meeting and picking up his visiting daughter, Edith, from the train station.

Their car was having brake problems and in Pike Lake they stopped to find out what was wrong. At some point during their stop he dropped dead. Angina pectoris was the cause of death listed on his death certificate. He was 67 years old.

At the time, Captain Trezona was the city mayor and there was an outpouring of condolences from all over the country. The Ely Miner



Pioneer Mine Captain Charles Trezona and crew, Pioneer Mine, Ely, 1900.

Sunday Lake Mine in Wakefield, Michigan.

A year later, he was sent to Section 25, east of Ely, to search for iron ore. He was there but briefly and then sent back to Michigan. During the lean years in mining, 1892-94, Trezona and his family lived in Michigan.

In 1894, the mining industry was making a comeback and everything started coming together for Captain Trezona professionally. He headed to Minnesota and worked at the Franklin Mine in Virginia. In 1896, he became the captain there. That same year, he was promoted to superintendent of the Victoria, Franklin, and Bessemer mines, all in Virginia.

In November of 1898 the Trezona family picked up one final time and moved to the Vermilion Range. The captain was promoted to superintendent of the Pioneer Mine in Ely. In 1902, he became manager of the Chandler Mine and in 1903 he added to his duties the position of general manager of the Sibley Mine. On January 4, 1904, the Ely Miner reported that Trezona was promoted to general superintendent of the Chandler, Pioneer, and Minnesota (Soudan) mines. He held this same position at the time of his death.

CIVICS INVOLVEMENT

It seems to be the general consensus in all writings of this man, that he was a hard man and tough on his miners with "autocratic tendencies" (Somrock, 1976).

He expected service from all, above and beyond the norm. Many did not like Captain Trezona for this attitude, but in researching Charles it seems he was also a very conscientious, feeling man.

He had the ear of management at Oliver and US Steel and with that influence he was able to keep crews at the bare minimum at the Pioneer and Sibley mines during the early years of the depression.

Miners worked three to five days a month while the mines on the Mesabi Range completely shut down (Somrock, pg. 15).

In 1914, shaft # 1 of the Sibley Mine caved in. Trezona, himself, supervised the crews who were rescuing those trapped. He worked 12-hour shifts until they were able to rescue the one man who survived (Brownell, pg. 42). There are dozens of accounts of

"Captain Charley" helping families of miners who were killed or hurt on the job, including putting sons to work so there would be income for the household.

Becoming a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1894 started Trezona on a path to a very busy civic life. He served several terms as city councilor and in 1913 he was elected for the first time to



Captain Trezona 2nd from left at Shaft A, Pioneer Mine, Ely, 1909

the office of City of Ely Mayor. He served one term.

The second time he was elected in 1931. His term was cut short by his sudden death. While in city government, he was able to initiate a change to the city's water supply by bringing water in from Burntside Lake rather than Shagawa Lake.

He also helped bring electricity to the "common people" through the support of a dam eventually built on Fall Lake and found a way to help the fire department purchase inflatable tires for the fire truck (solid rubber tires were normal).

In addition, Trezona served many years on the school board including serving as President and Chairman of the Board of Education.

Captain Trezona was a long-time member of the Republican County Committee. He was a Knight Templar and a Shriner. He held memberships in the Rotary Club (1st officer and charter member), Commercial Club, Vermilion Range Old Settler's Association (president), Masonic Lodge (senior warden, 1st officer on board, charter member), Individual Order of Odd Fellows (worshipful master), Businessman's Association (president), and vice president of the Ely Club (Brownell, 1981).

He was a past patron of the local order of the Eastern Stars and a member of the Methodist Church, where he donated pews and hymnals and sat on the committee to improve the church.

The City of Ely in the 1990s created a four-mile multi-use trail around the old Pioneer pit, now known as Miner's Lake, and named it Trezona Trail in honor of Charles

Trezona, Captain of the Vermilion Range mines.

In 2000, a housing sub-division in Ely was named Trezona Hills.

After the strike of 1904 and the threats on his life, Trezona became a leading and well respected citizen of Ely which is seen in numerous landmarks and projects that bear his name today.

Brownell, L. (1981). Pioneer life in Ely. Virginia, MN: Range Printing Co.; Centennial roaring Stony days. (1958). A Souvenir Booklet.; Dormer, G. G. (1982). Trezona family. Sun City West, AZ. Dormer, George. G.; Ely, since 7888. (1988). Ely, MN. The Ely Echo.; First big strike is called on Iron Range. (1904, April 30). The Labor World. Duluth, MN., p. 5.; Skillings' Mining Review, Vol. X, No. 12, (1921, August 6). p. 15.; Somrock, J. W. (1976). A history of incredible Ely. Ely, MN: Cyko Art Print-Craft.; Threaten to lynch. (1904, April 22). The St. Paul Globe. St. Paul, MN. p. 1.; Van Brunt, W. (1921). Duluth and St. Louis County; Their story and people. Chicago, IL: The American Historical Society. Photo credits: Trezona 1920-passport; Charles 14 years old-GG Dormer family history; Pioneer Shaft A-Mccurdy, Trezona, Childers 1909-Lee Brownell collection, IRHS; Pioneer Shaft A-Toms, Mccurdy, Conan, Trezona 1900-Lee Brownell collection, IRHS. Thank you to Mary Ann Lekatz at Ely-Winton Historical Society for assisting me in accessing their Trezona & Ely Miner records.



At the Ely City Hall is the above photo of Charles Trezona.

the mob for him to hang echoed through the spring air.

Deputies with guns drawn escorted Captain Trezona quickly to the train. The crowd became incensed. The switch was thrown and railroad ties were loaded onto the track. With the train unable to go forward the quick-thinking engineer and conductor put the locomotive in reverse and backwards they headed to Winton.

An hour later, when the train made its way back to Ely, the striking miners searched it but did not find Trezona. Little did they know he and his escorts made their way to Robinson Lake by foot and from there took a hand car to Tower. A day later they were in Duluth.

A delegation of city representatives from Ely met with Oliver Iron Mining Company, but company officials would not fire Trezona. They were supporting him 100 percent.

After a week or so, Captain Trezona went back to Ely and once again took charge of the mines in the area. The strikers, having no support and needing their jobs went back to work. Thankfully, for all involved, there was no hanging.

reported there were over 3,000 people who attended his funeral.

"Work at the mines was suspended for the afternoon and business in the city was at a standstill from two o'clock to four o'clock. The streets were lined with people and the cortege of cars accompanying the remains to the cemetery reached from the city to the cemetery. At least 400 cars were in the line and the front rank of the procession was returning from the cemetery before the rear had time to start."

PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Charles began his life long career in mining at the tender age of 10, accompanying his father to the copper mines of Cornwall, England.

In June 1885, he left Cornwall for Michigan following all of his older brothers, several of them "famous" miners in their own right, in their quest for a better life. He began working in the copper mines of Calumet and Red Jacket.

Over the next several years he was on the Gogebic and the Mesabi ranges exploring for-iron ore. In 1889, he was the shift boss at the



Ski coach Paula Anderson retires

Longtime mentor helped start and sustain Nordic Wolves' success

Paula Anderson, who has led Ely's Nordic Wolves for nearly 20 years and was instrumental in starting the wildly successful high school skiing program, is retiring.

Anderson notified her skiers, the Nordic skiing community and Ely school officials of her intentions this month and her retirement notice was formally accepted by school board members nearly two weeks ago.

She leaves a coaching position she assumed in 2004 and a program that she helped develop from scratch - leading Ely to statewide preeminence.

"We really are losing a coaching legend when it comes to Nordic skiing," said high school athletic director Tom Coombe. "Year in and year out she sent individuals and entire teams on to state - in a sport that has no enrollment divisions. There's no doubt Ely has one of the best Nordic skiing programs in the state and Paula is a big reason why."

On the heels of another successful season - with Ely qualifying both its girls team along with two boys for state and junior Zoe Devine winning all-state acclaim - Anderson decided soon after that the 2021-22 campaign would be her last.

The decision didn't come easily, Anderson conceded.

"How is it they say that you know when it's time?" Anderson

first head coach, and both he and Anderson were instrumental in convincing the Ely School Board to sanction the program, first as a club activity and a year later as a varsity sport.

"Bo is the one that had come to me and said it's time to go to the school board and start a ski team for girls," said Anderson.

It was an entirely grassroots affair, with no uniforms the first season and athletes emerging from a still fledgling Sunday afternoon youth ski program.

By the following year there were 20 girls and five boys, and boys varsity status was granted within a year after the girls hit the trails.

There was just one, rather significant catch.

While the Ely School District sanctioned Nordic skiing as a varsity sport and Ely teams were eligible for section and state competition, school officials said budget constraints prevented the district from funding the program and ski boosters has to foot the entire bill.

That's continued through the current season, although the district did take on the cost of coaching stipends several years ago.

From the program's inception, skiers have done everything from holding taco dinners and selling peaches to collecting for parking during the Blueberry/Art Festival to cover expenses.



SMILING AT STATE - After a solid day at the 2021 State Nordic Ski Meet: senior Jasper Johnston, assistant coach Tyler Fish, head coach Paula Anderson, junior Gabriel Pointer.

some really talented athletes who set the stage for the program," said Anderson. "I think once you get to state everybody understands what it takes."

The state berths began to pile up for Ely skiers and one of the highlights came in 2010, when both Wolves teams won section titles. The following week, the Ely boys won the state championship and the girls were third.

"We say be realistic and expect the impossible," said Anderson. "After the boys won state, that was such a shock but it totally made sense. Some things have happened you never could have expected but that's the joy."

Under Anderson's watch, Ely's Erin Bianco won an individual state title, numerous others were all-state honorees and there's an assortment of section titles, and top-five state tournament finishes in the books.

"If you follow high school sports, you really appreciate what an accomplishment that is," Coombe said of Ely's success. "Go to the state meet and you see all of these behemoth Twin Cities schools with enrollments 10 times, 15 times, 20 times as high as Ely, yet there is Ely right with them in the standings. You just don't see that in other sports."

Ely's continued presence on skiing's grandest stage followed early success, and continued as Anderson built a program into a machine.

"You have that experience and have that success and you take it a year at a time," she said. "You look at day-to-day goals and really try to coach that and keep them in the present. We have the greatest kids to coach here. I couldn't ask for better kids to work with."

Jerritt Johnston is both the parent of a current and former Timberwolf and active in the ski program, including tenure as an assistant coach.

He said the Wolves' success comes in part from Anderson's ability to "create top-level teams without burning athletes out."

"Many coaches at successful programs ruin the love of the sport the students have initially," said Johnston. "Every year we see Ely graduates back for break skiing at Hidden Valley, or we hear stories about them skiing for their college club teams. It really is a unique thing to be able to balance those

agonizing. That's the positive piece that I love. All the other stuff, especially the time as head coach, the time in front of the computer and the hassles and the organizing. That's what gets old."

Coombe added "It's pretty clear that everything flowed through Paula. She directed quite an op-



ELY MAYOR Roger Skraba presented a key to the city to Paula Anderson, coach of the Ely Nordic high school ski teams in 2010. Anderson was named the Minnesota Nordic coach of the year after the Ely boys won a state title and the girls team finished third in the state. Photo by Tom Coombe.

asked rhetorically last week. "It's not just one thing but a lot of things."

Anderson said "I've successfully aged out of the job," noting the physical demands of the job including being able to weather standing out in the cold for hours on end during the season.

"I used to never notice the cold and that's not true anymore," said Anderson. "We had a pretty cold winter and I think that's part of it."

Anderson also cited the fund-raising demands that go with a program that continues to partially fund itself, and the year-round nature of the position, given an extensive off-season conditioning and training program.

Family obligations also played a role as Anderson gave up a position she succeeded from Bo DeRemee nearly two decades ago.

DeRemee was the program's

Currently the program still needs to raise roughly \$16,000 annually.

"Funding was never in the picture," Anderson said of the program's beginning. "And then the fundraising started and the community just gave us so much support. Patti Steger made ski bags and we got jackets from Wintergreen and various individuals made wax benches for us. Little old ladies in church came up to me and gave me a check. It's been pretty amazing."

Hand-in-hand with community support came the rise of a ski program that quickly became one of the state's best.

As the 2000s progressed, Ely became a powerhouse, qualifying teams and individuals and contending for section titles seemingly every year.

"We were really blessed with



TALKING WITH SKIER Ava Skustad this past season was Paula Anderson, coach of the Ely Nordic high school ski team.

two outcomes.

Johnston described Anderson as an excellent coach and role model who paid attention both to top skiers and those who were honing their skills, and said her "ability to encourage skiers to work hard year-round was amazing. Skiing is a full commitment and her teams showed again and again that skiers who put in the work perform well when it matters."

Ely regularly has 50 or more skiers, competing at boys and girls levels with varsity, junior varsity and junior high teams

Anderson said she'll miss her athletes the most.

"Coaching kids is why I did it," she said. "Helping people achieve their goals. That's why this was such a hard decision. It was really

eration from the varsity down to the junior high. It became and remained a well-oiled machine, a program that any school would envy. I don't know if anyone will fill Paula's shoes, but I think she left a blueprint, a model that hopefully can be sustained."

The position will be posted later this spring as the Ely district looks to fill the coaching void.

"Ely has truly been fortunate to have someone so committed, so knowledgeable and so passionate coaching their student-athletes for over 20 years," said Johnston. "The memories she helped create for skiers, their families, and this town won't soon be forgotten."



A COMMON SITE whether at Hidden Valley in Ely or at ski races across northeast Minnesota was Ely coach Paula Anderson. Photos by Chris Ellerbroek.