

BRAINERD DISPATCH

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FRIENDLY COMPETITION



Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch

Gary Niemi concentrates on the ball while playing doubles with his friends on Thursday on the Gregory Park courts in Brainerd. Niemi is a member of a group of senior players who have played together for about 15 years, according to Larry Kellerman.

Stâre Academy set to open in Baxter this fall

Informational session scheduled Sunday

By Theresa Bourke
Brainerd Dispatch

BAXTER — Stâre Academy is the newest school in the Brainerd lakes area and plans to open its doors this fall. With a name meaning “stand firm” in Latin (and pronounced STAR-eh), the goal of the pre-kindergarten through eighth grade school is to provide students with three foundational components and six distinctive core characteristics. The three components are character formation, exemplary academics and grace to grow. The

six distinctive features board members believe make the school unique are: God-centered, classical and experiential, world engagement, high accountability, staff stewardship and affordability for all. “I think the fabric of why this school is different is, we’re really focused, not on making kids smart. We’re really focused on building kids’ character,” Stâre Academy Board President Brad Pieper said during an interview Thursday, April 21. “We call it ‘planting oaks of righteousness.’” Board Vice President Tiffanie Knapp said the idea came to her after her oldest child went off to college and she began really thinking about education.

ACADEMY: Page 9

There are many ways to make a difference this years Earth Day

By Renee Richardson
Brainerd Dispatch

It’s Earth Day and there are multiple ways to make a difference locally, to benefit the planet, and to share this day with the next generation. It started in 1970 as a way to make a difference for the environment and raise awareness about pollution. A CBS News broadcast had famed newsman Walter Cronkite talking about the first Earth Day. The clip is available on the earthday.org website. The day galvanized peo-

ple to take action, join forces and led to additional changes. “By the end of 1970, the first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of other first of their kind environmental laws, including the National Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the Clean Air Act,” the organization reported. “Two years later Congress passed the Clean Water

EARTH DAY: Page 8

Hunting land access dispute drags on

Board agrees to lower damage deposit with cartway petition

By Chelsey Perkins
Brainerd Dispatch

BRAINERD — More than three years have passed since John Middleton began the petition process to set a permanent route to his landlocked hunting land, and the clock is still running. Crow Wing County commissioners expressed frustration over how long it’s taking to reach a conclusion during a special meeting Tuesday, April 19, with a contested hearing on the cartway petition as the only agenda item. The nearest public road does not allow access to the property and a dispute among neighbors means using the private road crossing others’ properties is no longer an option. “I don’t understand why we’re treating this person that has petitioned us this way,” said Commissioner Paul Koering, who attended the meeting virtually from Florida. “And you know, I’m going to be home tomorrow, and I’ll tell you what, I’m gonna be pretty damn fiery if we



Chelsey Perkins / Brainerd Dispatch

John Middleton, one of the owners of a 63-acre property on Nelson Lake in northeastern Crow Wing County, speaks to county commissioners during a special meeting Tuesday. Middleton petitioned for cartway access to the parcel, which currently is not accessible by public roadway. don’t get this taken care of pretty soon.” The County Board — acting as the township board for the Second Assessment District on this issue — did accomplish two things: it set dates in May to

achieve the next steps and voted to reduce an estimated damages deposit expected of the petitioner to allow the process to move forward. **HUNTING:** Page 9



Contributed

Zanna Gray, right, and her fiancé Tyler Addison pose for a picture. Gray has been sober for the past 3 years and shares her story of addiction in hopes of helping others.

Second chances: ‘Everything happens for a reason’

By Theresa Bourke
Brainerd Dispatch

BRAINERD — April 22 is a special day for Zanna Gray. It’s Earth Day. It’s the birthday of her fiancé’s late grandma, which will be shared with the baby boy Gray will have via cesarean section this year. And it marks three years of her sobriety. “That’s definitely a sign that everything happens for a reason,” the Brainerd woman said Monday, April 18. “... I don’t really know how to explain it fully, but I just feel like the past somehow has an impact on the future.” The past Gray spoke of is a difficult one. Born to teenage parents and

the oldest of four kids, Gray’s childhood wasn’t necessarily easy. “They did the best they could obviously, but being so young, there’s a lot of struggle that comes with that,” she said. “We were definitely raised at the poverty line, and there was some addiction on the sidelines, but as kids we didn’t really notice.” At age 13, Gray tried marijuana and alcohol for the first time. She didn’t use again for another two years, but middle school proved to be challenging. It was a time when Gray started to “follow the crowd,” not having her own **CHANCES:** Page 8

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Softball
Warriors open season with 10-run win
11 ▶



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How to celebrate Earth Day with eco-conscious gardening



April 22, 2022, marks the 52nd anniversary of Earth Day, a day intended to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's natural environment. Organizers started Earth Day in response to a massive oil spill in waters near Santa Barbara, Calif., in 1969.

There are ...

68,000
Wind turbines across the country

2,400
Hydroelectric power generating stations

64
Geothermal power plants

191
Biomass electric power generation plants

10,000
Solar electric power generation companies

3,000
Electric distribution companies

Source: U.S. Census Bureau statistics, bisworld.com, eest.org
Graphic: Staff, TNS

By Miri Talabac
Baltimore Sun

Q: I want to be more mindful about how my landscaping choices impact the environment so I can reduce negative consequences. Do you have suggestions for low-impact and eco-conscious gardening practices?

A: Certainly, and with Earth Day here, now's a great time to focus on the impact of our landscapes. Fortunately, there's many ways we can adjust our gardening practices to minimize our carbon footprint and protect local habitats.

► Keep the soil covered with plants or mulch. Not only does this reduce erosion (which moves nutrients and pollutants to our waterways), but it also supports soil health. Living plant roots support beneficial microbes, which in turn aid in plant growth and convey protection from some diseases. Bare soil is also a great nursery for weedy and invasive species.

► Expect some pests and diseases, and tolerate minor plant damage. Focus instead on issues that can cause more serious damage, and intervene early to prevent an outbreak by monitoring plants regularly. If you need to resort to pesticides, select organic or low-risk products, and be mindful of pollinator exposure. You don't need to eliminate a pest (and you likely can't long-term), just suppress its population enough for the plant to recover.

► Test your soil before

fertilizing. Applying unnecessary elements is wasteful, polluting and risks harming soil life. Mature landscape plants rarely need supplemental nutrients. The two main exceptions are lawns and crops (vegetables and fruits), since we demand a lot of each in terms of productivity. Soil tests will show you which exact nutrients are low enough where fertilization will benefit the plants.

► Compost plant debris, old potting mix and food scraps. By keeping soil and debris on-site, you reduce transportation energy use and the chances of introducing invasive pests (like jumping worm or stiltgrass seeds) to new areas. Organic matter improves soil health and returns nutrients to the soil to further reduce the need for fertilizer.

► Convert unneeded lawn to other plantings, ideally with primarily locally-native species. No other groundcover tolerates the level of foot traffic or pet use that turf does, but for less intense uses you could create a pathway through a planting bed if you need to routinely access certain areas.

► Remove invasive species, which you inherited with a new house or planted before you realized they were a menace to natural areas. Replace them with locally native species when possible so you increase benefits to pollinators and other wildlife.

► When you can, use a diverse array of plants to support beneficial

insects. Think of it as a tempting buffet for pollinators and the natural enemies of insect pests.

► Conserve water and reduce runoff by irrigating only when plants need it and target watering to those most sensitive to drought. Feel the soil several inches below the surface and only water once it's becoming dry to the touch at that depth. Wet leaves can promote infection so try to only wet the soil when irrigating or water early enough in the day so leaves dry by nightfall. Lastly, use an organic mulch (wood chips, bark, pine needles, or live groundcovers) to slow evaporation so more of that moisture stays in the soil.

Q: I'd love to feed the caterpillars of the butterflies that visit my flowers. I learned that most use different plants than they visit for nectar. Do you have suggestions for native host plants?

A: Each species of butterfly uses one or more fairly specific host plants, though a few can accept a wide array of unrelated host species. If there's a particular butterfly species you'd like to attract, you can learn what their preferred hosts are.

Many host plants of butterflies in our area are trees and take up a lot of garden space, but if you have the room, black cherry, willow, hackberry, American elm, pawpaw, Eastern redcedar and sassafras are great options. As is often the case with our native trees, these species also provide resources for plenty of other insects, songbirds and other wildlife, so you get plenty of bang for your buck (and yard space).

There are several native perennial and shrub host plants that you can fit in smaller garden spaces. Most prefer full sun, but some will thrive in dappled shade. Perennials include milkweeds, asters, senna, golden alexanders, violets, toothworts, turtlehead, hairy beardtongue, hibiscus, and pussytoes. Shrubs include spicebush, blueberry, viburnum, New Jersey tea, meadowsweet spirea and dogwood (redosier, silky, gray, and pagoda). These cover most of the commonly-seen butterflies and the plant species that are easier to source.

False nettle, a fairly nondescript native perennial that grows along damp woodland edges, is worth keeping if growing wild on your property; it feeds the caterpillars of three butterfly species. (Finding some to buy can be challenging, though.) Among vines, pipevine and maypops (purple passionflower) are hosts, but also sometimes hard to source.

Butterflies can often use non-native relatives of their native host plants, but it's preferable to plant the natives when possible, in case they spread from seed and so they can provide resources for bees and other animals.

University of Maryland Extension's Home and Garden Information Center offers free gardening and pest information at extension.umd.edu/hgic. Click "Ask Extension" to send questions and photos.

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COMING SUNDAY
Poultry problem



Avian flu can easily spread from bird to bird and flock to flock, causing headaches for local poultry farmers worried about the contagious disease. Find out what precautions Brainerd lakes area farmers are taking to safeguard their business and protect consumers in Sunday's story by Frank Lee. Avian flu can easily spread from bird to bird and flock to flock, causing headaches for local poultry farmers worried about the contagious disease. Find out what precautions Brainerd lakes area farmers are taking to safeguard their business and protect consumers in Sunday's story by Frank Lee.

WEATHER OUTLOOK



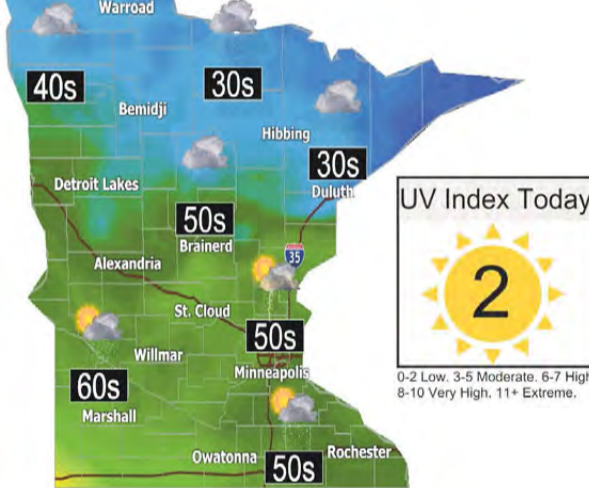
Jared Piepenburg Jesse Ritka Chief Meteorologist John Wheeler Lydia Blume Robert Poynter

StormTRACKER
BRAINERD FORECAST

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
51/47 Showers	70/43 Thunderstorms	44/27 Showers	35/23 Cloudy
Wind: SE 16 mph	Wind: SE 19 mph	Wind: SW 18 mph	Wind: NW 15 mph

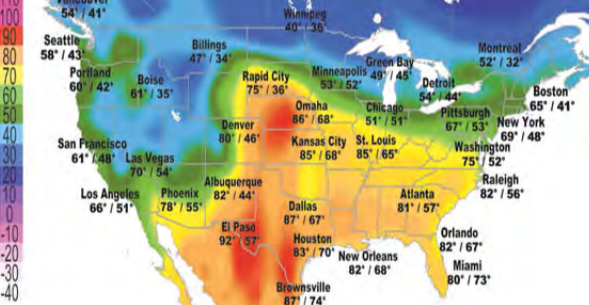
Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
42/26 Mostly Sunny	47/34 Mostly Cloudy	54/34 Cloudy	51/36 Mostly Cloudy
Wind: N 8 mph	Wind: SE 15 mph	Wind: S 11 mph	Wind: E 11 mph

*Average wind speed for each day



UV Index Today
2
0-2 Low, 3-5 Moderate, 6-7 High, 8-10 Very High, 11+ Extreme.

Regional Weather	Today	Hi	Lo	Tomorrow	Hi	Lo
Bemidji, MN	45	41	63	40	60	58
Duluth, MN	38	34	43	42	53	52
Eau Claire, WI	53	50	75	53	53	52
Fargo, ND	52	47	70	40	73	66
International Falls, MN	39	36	49	43	54	50



StormTRACKER Forecast
Breezy with rain showers today. Rain continues tomorrow with highs near 70 degrees.

Almanac Through 6 pm Thursday


Temperature	High	Low
Thursday	48	36
Normal	57	33
Record	83 in 1980	16 in 1978

Precipitation Thursday: 0 In Inches

Sunrise: 6:17 a.m. Sunset: 8:13 p.m.
Moonrise: 2:37 p.m. Moonset: 10:44 a.m.

Constantly updated forecasts online
www.brainerddispatch.com

Earth Day!



Celebrate Earth Day
Weather drawing by Nora O'Reilly from Mrs. Kostechka's and Mrs. Meyer's second grade class at St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School.
Attention teachers: Don't forget to submit your students' weather drawings to the Brainerd Dispatch, P.O. Box 974, Brainerd, MN 56401

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9-digit routing number: _____

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Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Hortman 'optimistic' about negotiations on payroll tax

By Dana Ferguson
Brainerd Dispatch

ST. PAUL — Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman says that Capitol negotiations are set to restart next week on payments to front-line workers and a plan to refund higher payroll taxes for employers.

The Brooklyn Park Democrat told reporters on Thursday, April 21, that leaders in the divided Statehouse could reach a deal ahead of an April 30 tax filing deadline for Minnesota businesses despite months of disagreements about the two issues.

"We're having very good conversations with Senate Republicans at this point and I'm optimistic that we'll be able to do something before April 30," Hortman said.

Legislative leaders and the governor met privately on several occasions before the Legislature's recess earlier this month. But they weren't able to strike a deal that would send out checks to front-line workers who remained on the job during the pandemic and repay the state's unemployment insurance trust fund, blocking a payroll tax hike that is triggered when the fund runs dry.

In the meantime, business owners in the state have seen their payroll taxes climb by double-digits. And front-line workers have voiced frustration and fatigue after lawmakers took up bonus payments for them but never agreed on who should receive them.

Gov. Tim Walz on Wednesday blasted legislative leaders

for failing to reach a deal that could satisfy both the Democratic-Farmer-Labor-led House and Republican-controlled Senate more than two months into the legislative session. The first-term governor urged lawmakers to renew conversations and said he'd lay out a potential path forward during his State of the State address on Sunday, April 24.

Hortman said Democrats in the House were the last to post an offer before negotiations stalled. And they maintained that the state could spend less than the \$2.7 billion that Republicans, Walz administration officials and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce proposed to repay the federal government and fill the state jobless fund.

She said Democrats supported a \$1.8 billion plan for that issue that would repay the feds, partially fill the unemployment fund and rewrite state law to prevent higher payroll tax rates from taking effect. House leaders have also urged the pairing of that plan with a \$1 billion bill to offer \$1,500 checks to roughly 667,000 front-line workers.

"We understand, of course, the importance of the unemployment insurance issue," House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler, DFL-Golden Valley, said, "but we've had workers waiting for a year plus for any kind of recognition from federal money for the extraordinary effort they put on on our behalf and there's no reason we can only do UI and he can't do anything else."

On March 28, after the last talk on the two subjects, Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller, R-Winona, said the offer was a step in the wrong direction and asked that lawmakers take up the unemployment insurance issue on its own. He said proposed tax cuts put forward by Senate Republicans would do more to help front-line workers in the long-term than one-time payments.

Lawmakers have until May 23 to finish their business in the regular legislative session. Walz on Wednesday said he would not call a special session if legislators failed to get their work done before the deadline.

Follow Dana Ferguson on Twitter @bydanaferguson, call 651-290-0707 or email dferguson@forumcomm.com.

Housing advocates want \$330M to revive COVID rent aid

By Alex Derosier
Brainerd Dispatch

ST. PAUL — Housing advocates are asking Gov. Tim Walz and the Minnesota Legislature to invest \$330 million in emergency rental assistance and to continue protecting renters with pending rental assistance applications from eviction.

The Alliance, a coalition of social justice groups, and local officials gathered at the Minnesota Capitol Thursday, April 21, to make their appeal and to deliver a statement to Walz's office asking for an extension of pandemic renter protections.

The RentHelpMN program was created by the state to help renters at risk of losing their homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to reimburse property owners for missed rent payments. The program,

which provided tens of millions in assistance, ran out of funding and suddenly ended on Jan. 28 with just three days notice. Since Minnesota's aid program ended, the number of eviction filings in Minnesota has spiked by 67%, according to housing advocates.

Fadumo Mohamed is a housing advocate with the nonprofit ACER, a group that works with African immigrants in the northwest Twin Cities suburbs. She told reporters during a Thursday news conference that the sudden end to the program pulled the rug from beneath the feet of low-income Minnesota renters.

"We worked frantically to help renters rushing through the unexpected deadline, but the process was too confusing for many to complete the necessary steps and paperwork in time," Mohamed said. "The

consequences of ending that critical support will have a broad and lasting impact. Those impacts will be primarily felt by low-income communities of color."

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, housing organizers mobilized in response to the threat of mass evictions, and the federal government responded with eviction moratoriums and by spending billions of dollars on rental assistance. Owen Duckworth, a housing organizer with The Alliance, said that, despite imperfections, the programs helped thousands of Minnesotans and should remain in place as pandemic recovery continues.

The federal eviction moratorium ended in August 2021. While Minnesota's rental assistance program ended in January, renters with pending assistance applications are still

eligible for protection until June 1, according to HOME Line, a Twin Cities-based group that provides free legal assistance to renters.

House Democrats earlier this session introduced a proposal to provide the Minnesota rent assistance program with \$330 million and rein-

state eviction protections for renters awaiting a response on applications. There is no companion bill in the Republican-controlled Senate, and the \$330 million Democrats approved in committee earlier this session is not currently part of a larger House omnibus housing spending bill.

While the omnibus housing bill in the Minnesota House of Representatives does not call for \$330 million in rental aid, it currently has a provision that would protect renters with pending rent help applications from eviction, said Mike Dahl, policy director for HOME Line.

Before the start of the 2022 legislative session, Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan proposed hundreds of millions in housing assistance in their supplemental budget recommendations, including \$10 million each year to provide housing for families with young children, \$95 million over three years for emergency shelter service and \$19 million to the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program.

Follow Alex Derosier on Twitter @xanderosier or email aderosier@forumcomm.com.



Contributed / The Alliance
Housing advocates delivered a letter Thursday to Gov. Tim Walz's office at the Minnesota Capitol requesting more support for the state rental assistance program.

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 <p>E&J VS Brandy 1.75 L \$16.95</p>	 <p>Cutwater RTD 8 pk cans \$13.95</p>	 <p>Brady's Irish Cream 1.75 L \$16.95</p>

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Lagunitas 12 pk cans/glass.....	\$13.95
Schell's Crafts 12 pk cans.....	\$13.95
Boulevard 12 pk cans/glass.....	\$13.95

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Prophecy (all varieties) 750 ml.....	\$8.99
Bartenura Moscato & Roscato 4 pk cans.....	\$10.99

— LIQUOR —

Seagram's Vodka 1.75 L.....	\$12.95
Jim Beam Bourbon 1.75 L.....	\$23.95
Canadian Mist 1.75 L.....	\$11.95
Cubist Freezer Vodka 750 ml.....	\$24.95

April Monthly Feature

<p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; font-weight: bold;">MN BUY LOCAL BEER OF THE MONTH</p> <p>Lift Bridge 12 pk cans \$18.95</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; font-weight: bold;">BEER OF THE MONTH</p> <p>Dogfish Head 12 pk cans \$13.95</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; font-weight: bold;">SCOTCH OF THE MONTH</p> <p>Glenmoragle X 750 ml \$25.95</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; font-weight: bold;">BOURBON OF THE MONTH</p> <p>Woodford Reserve Bourbon 750 ml \$29.95</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small; font-weight: bold;">WINE FEATURE</p> <p>A to Z Wines 750 ml Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Rose \$12.99 Pinot Noir \$15.99</p>
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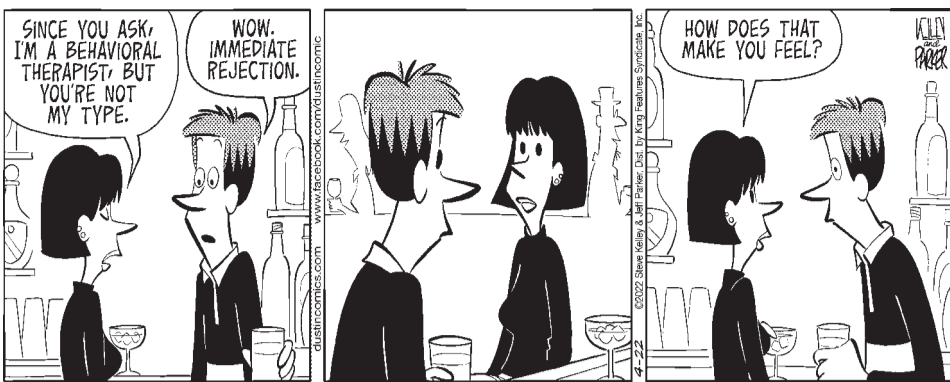
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DUSTIN



By Steve Kelly & Jeff Parker

It's written in the stars

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You may feel pushed, or at least encouraged, to take decisive action, but it would be best to hold off until next week to launch an important project. Focus on enjoying cheerful gatherings and social activities with family.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Past errors and mistakes can be a rich source of learning if you avoid shaming yourself and use the lesson to up-level yourself. Work on setting worthwhile goals for the future and enjoying time with loved ones.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You may be so wrapped up in your ambitions that you spend your spare time thinking up strategies and considering tactics. Be more considerate of your family or a romantic partner who may deserve a special treat.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Keep it light. Everyone has an opinion, but sharing yours could turn a cheerful conversation into a serious discourse. Fun loving friends may prefer to discuss pleasurable subjects and avoid financial discussions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Normally, you make a good mediator when people are at opposite ends of the spectrum. However, today it is a good idea to avoid situations that require you to take sides since some fiction could be mixed in with the facts.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Unplug once in a while and get a life. You don't need to be on call for everyone all of the time. It's OK to not pick up when you have social activities on your schedule or want to escape for an interesting outing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take the time to reflect on what you can do to improve your current situation. Every grain of wisdom that you gather can help you remain optimistic. Serve up special treats if you have a chance to entertain friends.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Make a point without making an enemy. Your romantic partner will probably forgive any missteps at this time. Set aside some time for your own interests and try not to be at everyone's beck and call.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Avoid costly mistakes. Abstain from making new investments and steer clear of the mall or big internet sales. You may spend too much and receive too little in return. Let a partner or loved one do all the bargaining.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Remain on your own turf to avoid conflicts. This is not a good time to trespass on someone's territory or probe too deeply into someone's motives. Put your business ideas on the back burner and relax with loved ones.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Listen and you will hear sensible suggestions that ring with the sound of truth. Don't start a major project or go on a first date because you may run into unforeseen difficulties. Enjoy spending time with familiar people.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take a day off from reality. You may feel more attractive or popular. A key relationship could vibrate with greater harmony than usual, but don't spoil it by bringing up expenses or unpleasant memories.

CROSSWORD

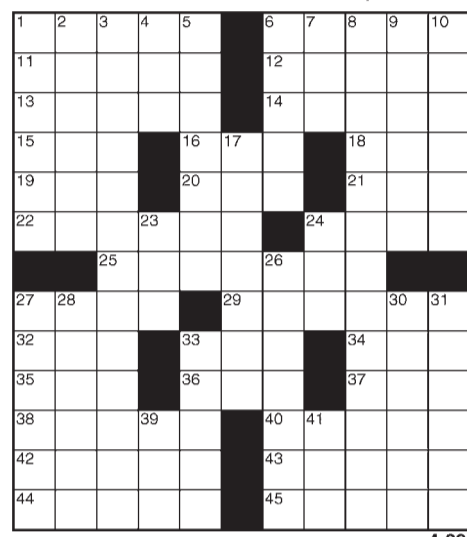
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
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 - 42 Hackneyed
 - 43 Caught some z's
 - 44 Right now
 - 45 Flies high
- DOWN**
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 - 2 Misbehave
 - 3 Paul Thomas Anderson film
 - 4 Ready to go
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 - 6 Showed nervousness
 - 7 Alien craft
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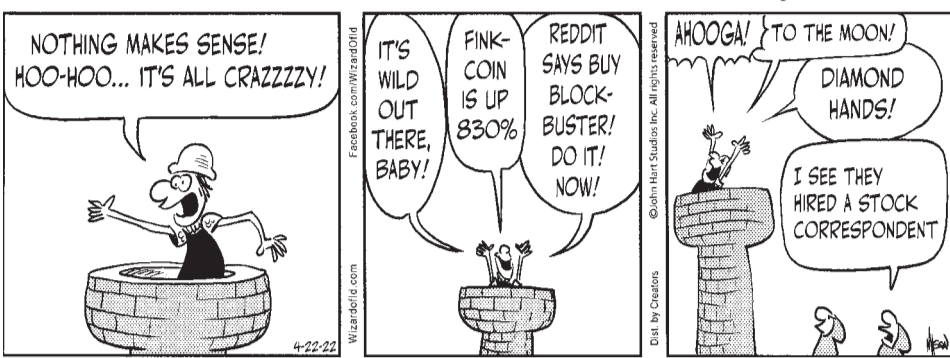
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Yesterday's answer

- 27 Chinese hard-liner
- 28 Familiar with
- 30 More unctuous
- 31 Ignores the limit
- 33 Like colanders
- 39 Copying
- 41 Chaotic spot

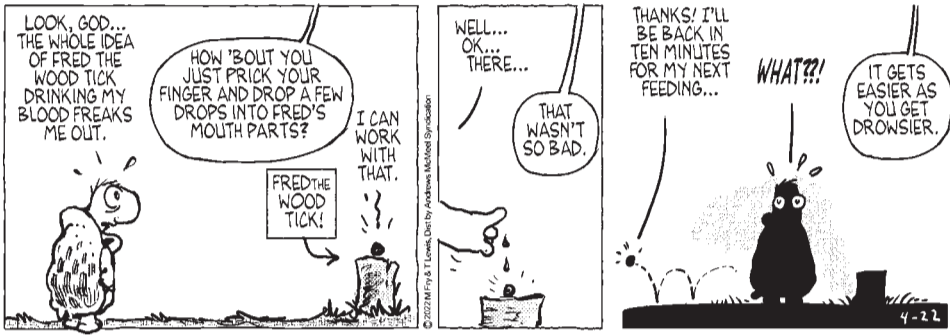


WIZARD OF ID



By Brant Parker

OVER THE HEDGE



By Michael Fry & T Lewis

DILBERT



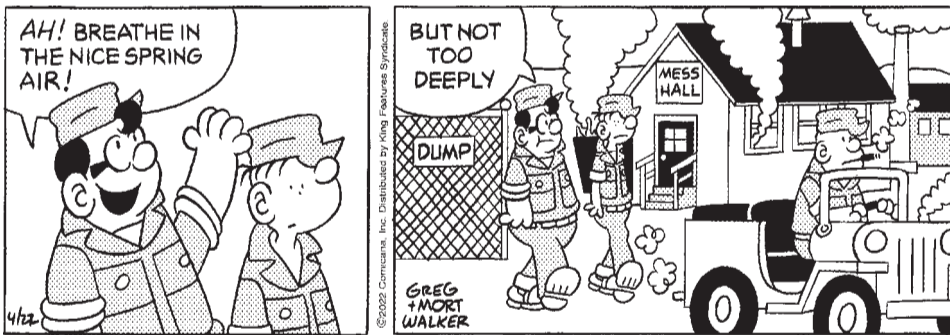
By Scott Adams

BLONDIE



By Dean Young & John Marshall

BEETLE BAILEY



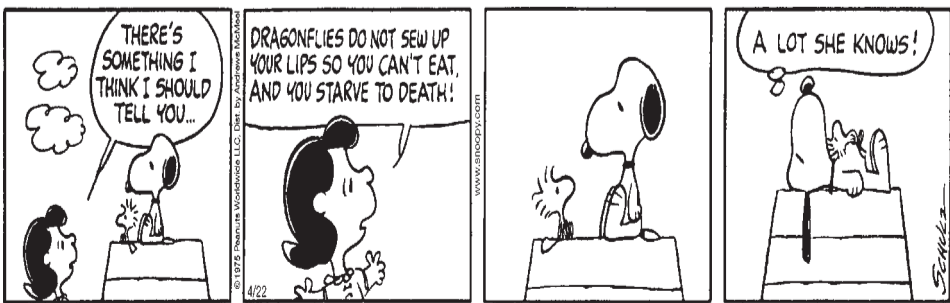
by Mort, Greg & Brian Walker

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



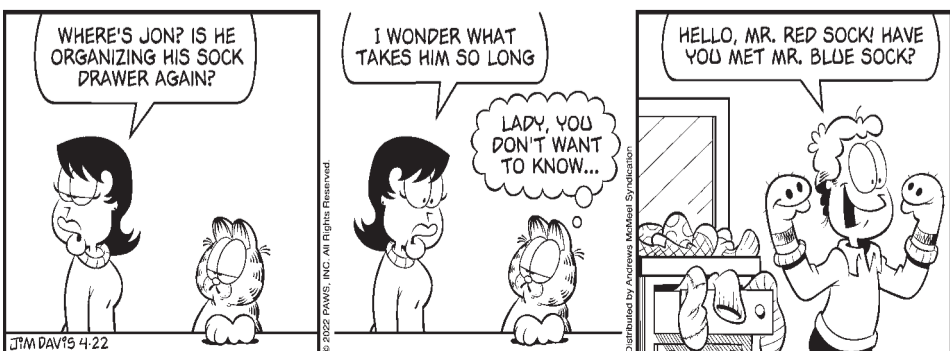
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PEANUTS



By Charles Schulz

GARFIELD



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Contract Bridge

Test your play

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Five Clubs, and North leads a trump. You win with the seven. South following suit. How would you play the hand?

West: ♠A 5, ♥4, ♦A J 10 2, ♣A Q J 9 8 7

East: ♠Q J 6 3, ♥K 3, ♦9 4, ♣K 10 6 5 2

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump. North leads the four of hearts, and South plays the king. How would you play the hand?

West: ♠9 8, ♥A Q, ♦K Q J 10, ♣Q 10 8 5 2

East: ♠A K J 3, ♥8 3, ♦A 9 6, ♣J 9 7 4

3. It might seem that the best line of play is to lead a heart at trick two. If North has the ace, you make the contract whether he takes it or not. Even if South has the ace, you still have a spade finesse to fall back on.

But while it is true that the early heart play makes you a 3-1 favorite to make the contract, you can further increase the odds in your favor to about 4-1 — while retaining your other chances — by first crossing to dummy with a trump at trick two and returning the four of diamonds, planning to finesse if South follows low.

This play sews up the contract whenever South has both the king and queen of diamonds, which will occur one-fourth of the time. In that case, the best he can do is to play the queen, which you take with the ace. You then return a low diamond to the nine. South wins with the king but is helpless. If he returns a spade, you go up with the ace and discard dummy's two hearts on the J-10 of diamonds; if he returns a heart instead, dummy's king becomes a trick, and you don't lose a spade.

2. It would be a mistake to try to establish clubs, since this would surely lead to losing two clubs and at least three hearts. The play that gives you your best chance to get home safely is to lead the eight of spades at trick two, planning to play low from dummy if North follows low. If South wins the eight with the queen, you have nine tricks; if he wins the eight with the 10, you later finesse the jack, hopping North has the queen.

The recommended approach is sure to succeed if North has either missing spade honor or both. It gives you a 3-1 chance to make the contract, whereas finessing the jack on the first round offers only an even chance.

Tomorrow: All you have to do is pray.
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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

2			7	9					
	7	4		6	5	9			
9	1					4			
		2	5	9			1		
	5			4				9	
	9			1	7	8			
		1						5	7
	9	8	5		1	4			
		7	2						9

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

6	1	8	9	2	5	4	7	3	
3	5	4	8	7	1	6	9	2	
2	7	9	3	4	6	8	5	1	
4	3	6	1	5	8	9	2	7	
8	9	5	7	6	2	3	1	4	
7	2	1	4	3	9	5	8	6	
9	4	2	5	1	3	7	6	8	
1	8	7	6	9	4	2	3	5	
5	6	3	2	8	7	1	4	9	

HOW TO PLAY: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

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Next drawing: Saturday
Lotto America: 1-3-25-29-30
Next drawing: Wednesday

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Moorhead man in Ukraine focuses on getting supplies to cut-off Donbas region

By Tammy Swift
The Forum

LVIV, Ukraine — Mark J. Lindquist is living in the middle of a war zone.

Lindquist, an entertainer and motivational speaker who lives in Moorhead, felt called to drop everything — including a political campaign — and travel to war-ravaged Ukraine three weeks ago after watching hours of news coverage about Russian attacks on the former Soviet republic.

Nowadays, he describes life in a lodging in Lviv where he and seven other humanitarian workers “are stacked everywhere we could possibly sleep.”

He is in a corner of the world where air raid sirens go off every day, panic-stricken citizens are lined 20 to 30 people deep at ATMs and an Easter Monday missile strike killed seven people.

Lindquist said it initially was difficult to enter such unfamiliar and chaotic territory and try to figure out how to help. However, he has made progress. Through his network of contacts, he was able to connect with a Ukrainian translator who made it possible to communicate with officials who can help him expand his network of contacts and find the

most effective ways to help.

Lindquist also pivoted from his original plan to buy a vehicle with the \$50,000 in donations he raised via GoFundMe and Venmo.

“We decided (to source it (transportation) locally with Ukrainian drivers who need a day’s income (as low as \$10 USD/day), borrow it, get it for free (as we are arranging for tomorrow), or use our network of transporters who are already making those runs and are looking for things to deliver,” he says. “We’re trying to be as careful as we can to not spend donor money on things that we don’t need. ... You change plans and tactics based on what you see on the ground.”

Instead, Lindquist said, the \$50,000 will go toward desperately needed essentials for the Ukrainian people, like diapers, medical supplies and food. “The dollar is so strong over here, I can get three to four times what I could get in Walmart in Fargo over here,” he says.

Lindquist’s recently formed nonprofit, “Ukrainian Children,” is not only sourcing supplies from eastern Poland and western Ukraine but has also become a contact point for American corporations like Target.



Contributed / Mark J. Lindquist

Mark J. Lindquist helps drop off donations of rolling luggage at the largest refugee transit station in Ukraine, a place where at its peak 110,000 refugees passed through every day. When the mothers see the new luggage, Lindquist says they “look as though it is Christmas morning.”

“They had said they wanted to donate but weren’t sending donations to the Ukraine because there was no one here to receive it,” Lindquist said, sounding a bit baffled. “I’m that guy now.”

Even then, Lindquist said the next challenge was getting the supplies to the eastern part of Ukraine, especially the Donbas region, where Ukrainians are cut off with little to no clean water or food.

“Fifty days in, their worry isn’t so much death by missile but death by starvation,” Lindquist said.

The problem, he said, is that travel across the Texas-sized country is extremely difficult, with

motorists encountering one military checkpoint after another.

Enter Harrison Josefowicz, a former police officer from Chicago. Josefowicz set up a volunteer unit called “Task Force Yankee: Ukraine,” consisting of civilians and military veterans with the skills and training to deliver humanitarian aid to parts of Ukraine too volatile for most non-governmental organizations.

Lindquist and Josefowicz met last week and quickly discovered they had a few things in common: They were Midwesterners and veterans of the Afghanistan war who felt compelled to do something for the people of Ukraine.

In fact, both left behind important commitments to do so. Lindquist suspended his congressional campaign; Josefowicz quit his job with the police force.

Lindquist knew Josefowicz, a member of the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne in Afghanistan from 2017–18, was more than qualified to take on the difficult assignment to get supplies into one of Ukraine’s most beleaguered areas.

“His team is the missing link that we needed,” Lindquist said.

“We have the experience, training and operational security knowledge to get people and supplies safely from point A to B, as we have run convoys through Afghanistan during wartime,” Josefowicz said.

Lindquist is still looking to activate “packets of volunteers” in the U.S. He is inviting church groups and other organizations to book a Zoom call with him so he can update them on volunteer efforts and how they can help.

He can be reached through his Facebook page at www.facebook.com/positivityliveshere or by emailing mark@markjindquist.com.

Tammy Swift is a business reporter at The Forum. She can be reached at tswift@forumcomm.com.

LOCAL BRIEFS

Brainerd Parks and Recreation Board to meet April 26

BRAINERD — The Brainerd Parks and Recreation Board will meet 4 p.m. Tuesday, April 26, at Brainerd City Hall Council Chambers, 501 Laurel St., Brainerd.

CLC jazz orchestra to host Spring Fling event Saturday

BRAINERD — The Spring Fling Luncheon, featuring the Central Lakes College jazz orchestra, is set for 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at Dennis Drummond Wine Company in Brainerd.

The jazz orchestra is a 25-piece, semi-professional ensemble, and the event will include live music, a special menu and a cash bar.

Tickets are \$24 and available at e.givesmart.com/events/oYd.

Police confirm murder-suicide in death of 5 people in Duluth

29-year-old man shot 4 family members, a dog, and then himself, police say

By Brady Slater and Laura Butterbrodt
Duluth News Tribune

DULUTH — Police confirmed Thursday that 29-year-old Brandon Taylor Cole-Skogstad shot dead four relatives, a dog and then himself on Wednesday in the East Hillside neighborhood of Duluth.

According to a press release from the Duluth Police Department on Thursday, the victims are Sadie Lucille Barry, 9; Shiway Elizabeth Barry, 12; Riana Lou Barry, 44; and Sean Christopher Barry, 47, all of Duluth. The two children attended Duluth Public Schools.

Cole-Skogstad was the nephew of Sean and Riana Barry. Police believe he was previously living with the family.

“In 32 years, we haven’t seen anything like this, where we’ve had four victims of a homicide,” Duluth Police Chief Mike Tusken said at a news conference Wednesday afternoon.

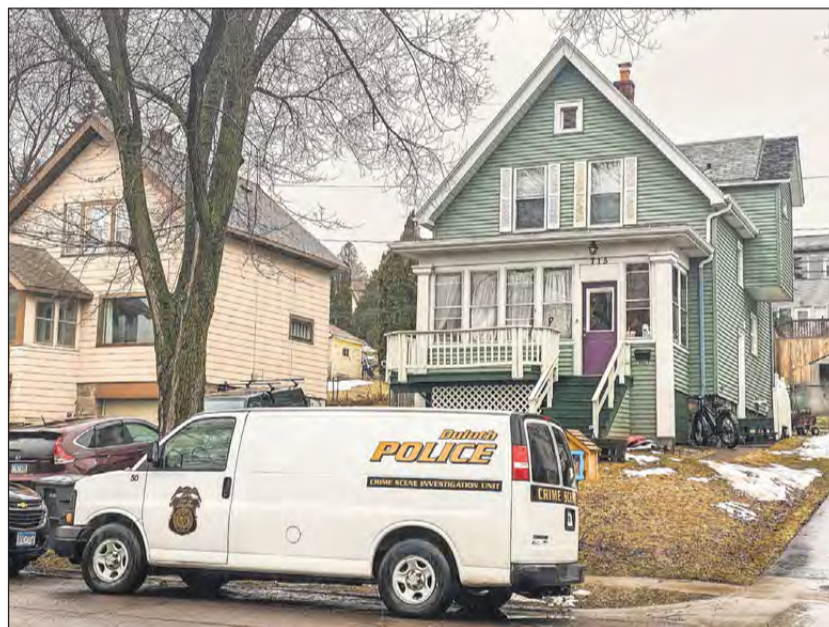
Shortly after noon Wednesday, Duluth police responded to the report of an individual, Cole-Skogstad, experiencing a mental health crisis. The call originated just after 11:18 a.m. in Hermantown as a welfare check.

Cole-Skogstad had posted on Facebook that “I have made the absolutely horrid choice,” before outlining the unspeakable scene confronted by authorities Wednesday.

Hermantown police were dispatched to the 4100 block of Timber Lane Drive to check on Cole-Skogstad, but they were unable to locate or contact him.

Duluth police, who received information that Cole-Skogstad had access to a weapon, approached the house at 715 E. 12th St. in East Hillside at 12:29 p.m. As they knocked on the door, officers heard what they believed to be a gunshot. Police retreated and requested mutual aid from the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office and Superior Police Department.

Shortly after 3 p.m., the Duluth Police Department Tactical Team searched the house after using robots and drones to assess the



Clint Austin / Duluth News Tribune

A Duluth Police Department Crime Scene Investigation Unit vehicle outside a house Wednesday where five deceased people and a deceased dog were found.

home, and located five bodies and the family dog, all dead, the release said.

After a preliminary investigation, police determined that Cole-Skogstad shot the victims while they were sleeping. A 9-millimeter handgun was found close to Cole-Skogstad. Duluth and Hermantown police searched 911 history and did not find any previous calls showing a pattern of behavior regarding Cole-Skogstad.

“I’ve got to tell you, it’s tough on all of us,” Tusken said as he choked up at Thursday’s press conference. “It’s tough on our cops. Our police officers, a lot of them may have families. Any time you go into a situation like this and you see that tragedy, it is terribly heart-wrenching. And you can’t unsee it.”

Duluth City Council President Arik Forsman also spoke Thursday, stating the event has been heart-shattering for the entire community and praised the Duluth Police Department’s available trauma response resources for responding officers.

“Things like this happen far too often in our country, and as leaders at the local, state and federal levels, we just have to pause and reflect when things like this happen to see what else could be done, either in prevention, or as far as gun violence goes, to make our community

safer,” Forsman said.

Tusken said there were no calls to report gunshots throughout the night, and all four Barry family members appeared to have been asleep at their time of death.

“These are really difficult investigations, and sometimes it is very hard to peel back those layers to find out (a motive),” Tusken said. “Right now, it would be entirely speculative for me to say what that motive is.”

A GoFundMe page was started by family and friends of the Barry family to raise funds for funeral services, burial, memorials and family lodging and travel to Duluth.

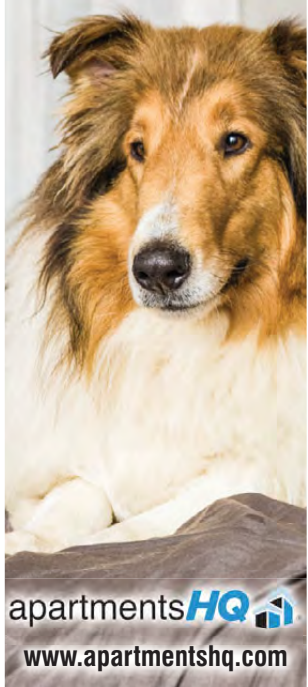
“They were a truly special family who impacted the lives of so many of those around them,” the organizers wrote on the fundraising website, which has a goal to raise \$50,000. “They leave behind their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews and many many friends. Family are not prepared for this horrible tragedy.”

Duluth Public Schools Superintendent John Magas said the two children were former elementary students in the district, and grief resources will be available beginning Monday.

Duluth Mayor Emily Larson, who is out of town for a conference, released the following statement about the incident:

The investigation is ongoing.

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OTHER OPINION

Tolerance at 30,000 feet needed as face masks are no longer required on planes

On Monday, a Florida federal judge, Kathryn Kimball Mizelle, struck down the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention mandate requiring masks while traveling on planes, trains and automobiles, assuming the last of those is an Uber or a cab. She declared the regulation an overreach of government power.

In divided America, the news was greeted with a predictable binary of alarm and glee: many passengers and a White House spokeswoman expressed dismay, but some pilots even announced the change in the middle of their flights Monday, causing delighted customers to de-mask triumphantly at 30,000 feet.

Local media, rushing to airports such as Chicago's O'Hare International to acquire comment, could find someone to say pretty much whatever they wanted them to say. At this point in the COVID-19 pandemic, endless as it feels, the arguments are well known and well worn.

When it comes to masks on airplanes, consider the comment made to The New York Times by JetBlue founder David Neeleman: "If the government can decide they can have the State of the Union address without masks, then we certainly should be able to let people have that choice on an airplane," he said.

No reasonable person, given the existence of superior air-filtration systems on airplanes and the lack of any research pointing to widespread transmission of the virus in flight, can argue with that. If you are for masks on planes, you must be for them at the State of the Union.

There is another reason to drop the mandate, of course: It has caused chaos. And that has required flight crews to police behavior in a way for which they are not trained nor compensated.

Americans who have fought compliance with this mandate have been wrong. They should have quietly followed the law, not made a fuss and delayed flights. But the tinderbox it has created, especially in recent weeks, has also been a threat to public safety. Few flight attendants will miss the need to walk down the aisle, scolding people whose mask has slipped down below their nose, especially since their colleagues at foreign airlines mostly were relieved of that obligation weeks or months ago.

Is there still an argument for masking up as you take your middle seat? Darn right, there is, ideally with a KN95, especially if you are older or have other health issues that make you especially vulnerable to an infection. But the time has come to remove the mandate from this one sliver of life, and we see little point in the Biden administration appealing the decision. It's time for people to do the right thing for themselves and to recognize that others may look at the risks involved and make a different choice.

And be kind to your front-line flight attendant. It's all been terrible for them, for a long time now.

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THIS WAS BRAINERD

APRIL 22
20 years ago (2002)

The Pines golf course at Grand View Lodge hasn't opened yet this season but is already getting great reviews. The May issue of the monthly magazine "Golf Digest" gives it a five-star rating, saying "golf at its absolute best." Over 6,500 courses around the country were rated by 20,000 golfers, and the Pines ranked with the best.

30 years ago (1992)

(Photo) Workers dismantled the Thrifty White Drugstore sign yesterday. The Downtown Brainerd drug store had closed over the weekend. Housed in the historic First National Bank building, the drug store had been operated there since April of 1968.

40 years ago (1982)

The sheriff's department has disposed of a case of dynamite found yesterday by Jim Fredstrom, Baxter police chief, in a junked car on Memorywood Drive. Earl (Skip) Rudquist, sheriff's bomb disposal expert, said some of the dynamite was "very old and unstable."

60 years ago (1962)

Vandals went on a shooting spree in Baxter and other area spots early Sunday morning. The sheriff's office said the total was six large street lights in Baxter, several of the traffic lights at the Hwy 371-210 junction, and several yard lights at the Ralph Davis junkyard south of Brainerd.

80 years ago (1942)

A blazing fire, whipped by high wind, spread rapidly north through timber and brush from the city dump this afternoon. Forest rangers, city firemen, WPA sewer crews and all available men fought desperately against the fire's advance. It was almost under control when high winds pushed it north and east.

100 years ago (1922)

The wrestling match between Curtiss, of Bemidji, and Henry Karhunsari, had to be canceled last night to great disappointment. The match had been well promoted and set for Gardner Hall. Karhunsari expressed problems with his shoulder at the out set and Dr. Thabes found it to be a broken collar bone from his last match.

-Compiled by Terry McCollough-



GUEST OPINIONS

It's time to crack down on the middlemen that inflate the costs of drugs like insulin

By Howard Dean
Chicago Tribune

U.S. Sen. Raphael Warnock just introduced a bill that would cap Americans' out-of-pocket spending on insulin at \$35 a month. The legislation would be a godsend to patients battling diabetes. Many of them currently face hundreds of dollars in monthly out-of-pocket costs — an unaffordable burden for many low- and even middle-income Americans. These patients often skip injections and self-ration their insulin at enormous risk to their health, since untreated diabetes can lead to blindness, limb amputations and even death. Diabetes patients account for a quarter of all U.S. health care spending.

It'd be political malpractice for my fellow Democrats to not pass this much-needed bill — but it'd also be a huge mistake to stop there.

Hundreds of common medicines — not just insulin — are unaffordable for ordinary Americans because middlemen in the drug supply chain inflate patients' out-of-pocket costs. Shining sunlight on these middlemen's practices would help all patients, not just those with diabetes.

Some of the health care industry's most powerful actors exist in the shadows. These pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, work on behalf of

insurance companies and haggle with drugmakers for bulk discounts.

Since PBMs decide which medicines are included on insurance plans, they have immense leverage. In 2020 alone, drug companies gave out \$187 billion in discounts and rebates, largely to PBMs. Those discounts often reduce the net price of various brands of insulin by 70%.

A tremendous win for patients, right? Wrong. PBMs keep a share of those discounts for themselves and pass the rest on to insurers, which use the savings to reduce premiums by a few dollars per month for all enrollees. That delivers only minor benefits to sick patients who rely on prescription medicines.

And because PBMs generally pocket a set percentage of the discounts, they're incentivized to pressure drug companies to raise nominal "list" prices — but then demand bigger rebates. That's why the net, after-discount price of insulin has actually gone down in recent years, even as list prices and patient out-of-pocket costs have climbed. This business model inflates patients' out-of-pocket spending. Imagine a drug company nominally charges \$100 for a particular medicine, but a PBM negotiates the real, discounted price down to \$30.

A patient with a 20% coinsurance obligation would still pay based on the list price, so

he'd fork over \$20 — instead of the \$6 he'd owe if his coinsurance were 20% of the net price! These practices have raised eyebrows at the Federal Trade Commission, where President Joe Biden-appointed Chair Lina Khan is fighting for an investigation into PBMs' immoral and anti-competitive practices. The FTC has even gone as far as asking for the public's input about how PBMs are driving up costs while restricting access.

This is a winning issue for Democrats as 8 in 10 Americans say they pay too much at the pharmacy counter, according to the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. Americans gave Democrats the White House and majorities in both houses of Congress — it's time to deliver. Sen. Warnock and his Democratic colleagues deserve praise for tackling the insulin affordability crisis. Patients die every year because they can't afford to fill their prescriptions. But lawmakers shouldn't overlook the middlemen responsible for the high out-of-pocket costs of hundreds of drugs, not just insulin.

It's time we crack down on companies that see no problem with lining their pockets while patients are dying.

Howard Dean is the former chair of the Democratic National Committee and former governor of Vermont.

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Guest Opinion: A million American lives lost to the pandemic deserve to be remembered

By Lynn Schmidt
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

In just a few short weeks, the United States is likely to reach an unfathomable milestone in terms of numbers: 1 million lives lost to the coronavirus pandemic.

The first death in the United States took place on Feb. 6, 2020. At current rates, we will have lost 1 million Americans in the 114 weeks, or 26 months, since the pandemic first hit our shores. In 2020 the U.S. population was 331 million. That means 1 in every 331 Americans is no longer with us.

As of March, more than 200,000 U.S. children have lost a parent, grandparent or caregiver to the pandemic, according to the COVID Collaborative website. The virus is now the third leading cause of death in the U.S., after only heart disease and cancer. These numbers are dizzying and truly difficult to comprehend. This level of loss is almost unfathomable.

So how can we as Americans comprehend the devastating loss of 1 million of our fellow citizens? We can start by telling 1 million individual stories.

We have the immense work to

do of remembering and mourning all those individuals. That work can begin with storytelling. Here are a couple of ways that people are sharing the stories of their loved ones who fell victim to the coronavirus pandemic.

A sea of white flags, with each flag representing one person who has died from the virus in the United States, were planted in the National Mall. Many of the flags featured handwritten names and dedications to lost loved ones. The memorial, titled "In America: Remember," was the work of Maryland artist Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg.

"We are recapturing the human dignity of each one of these people who have been compressed and ... reduced to numbers," Firstenberg said, during the opening ceremony in September. Photos of the memorial, including images of individual flags, can still be viewed online at inamericaflags.org. The website includes a Lost Loved Ones interactive map. Unfortunately, time has passed to submit flag dedications for the National Mall exhibit, but friends and family

members are still encouraged to complete a form with a photo and a dedication to be placed on the interactive map, which is continuously updated.

Another option is to follow @FacesOfCovid on Twitter, where people share stories of those lost to the coronavirus. "They were more than a statistic," the Twitter site states. Each day, there are several new tweets with stories and photos.

We can also start by talking to one another. Ask each other whether they know someone who died. Listen to their story.

Social scientists who study grief say that memorials are crucial elements to the grieving process. Memorials serve as a way to tell one's story, benefiting not only the victims' families but also the surrounding community so people can understand the human toll of a mass tragedy like this pandemic. These stories can force us to face this tragedy in a way numbers alone cannot do.

Let us remember the individuals and not just the number.

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Write us a letter or send us an email

The Brainerd Dispatch welcomes letters on recent articles and current issues. Letters should include the writer's full name, city and a phone number (for verification only). Letters are limited to 300 words. Only one letter per person per week.

Letters airing a personal complaint with a private enterprise will not be considered. Letters containing personal attacks will not be considered. Letters endorsing candidates will be limited to 150 words. Send letters to Reader Opinion, Brainerd Dispatch, P.O. Box 974 Brainerd, Minn., 56401 or email them to readeropinion@brainerddispatch.com.

Friendship derailed over pandemic-era preferences

DEAR ABBY: A dear friend of many years is currently not speaking to me. She recently moved from California to Denver and had invited me to visit. We agreed on the dates, and I took time off work and booked the flights. Less than two weeks before my arrival, she abruptly canceled the visit, expressing no regrets or concern for whether I would be able to get a refund from the airline.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
Dear Abby

that she wanted to “postpone for a few months,” when we might be able to enjoy more activities. When I expressed hurt feelings at being disinvited, she became angry and ceased communication. Is this friendship over? How should I proceed? — RISK-AVERSE IN THE WEST

DEAR RISK-AVERSE: I am not sure why your friend became angry and canceled your visit, unless she had planned activities that would take place in restaurants, theaters, etc. I am also puzzled that she should end a friendship of many years over it. Because this is recent, give her a little more time to cool off. Then extend an olive

branch and see if she has put this unfortunate episode in perspective.

DEAR ABBY: I have a former colleague whose company I enjoyed while I was working with him. He thought highly of my work ethic, and we worked well together. Because of this, he has asked me to be a professional reference for him sporadically over the years, which I always happily agreed to. The problem is we haven’t worked together in six years.

Because it has been so long, I no longer feel as though I’m a good reference for him. I also worry that recruiters will wonder why I was chosen after all this time. He reaches out to me only for reference requests, so it’s not as though I’m damaging

a long-term friendship, but I still care about him and his feelings. How can I politely decline his future requests? — RELUCTANT REFERENCE

DEAR RELUCTANT: In recent years, the amount of information that can be shared about former employees and colleagues is quite restricted. I believe it’s limited to the dates you worked together. However, because you no longer wish to be a reference, you will have to bite the bullet and be honest about your feelings and the reason why.

DEAR ABBY: The wife of a married couple my wife and I are friends with revealed a few years ago that before she met her husband, she had an affair that produced a child she immediately placed

for adoption. This was 40 years ago. It surprised us all, including her husband.

I believe she should have told her husband before they married. My wife says because it was before she met him, it was none of his business. Well, now it is his business because, through DNA ancestry sites, this “child” is now in his life, which has become an embarrassment for him. What do you think? — HIS BUSINESS IN THE EAST

DEAR HIS BUSINESS: I think you should mind your own beeswax and stay resolutely OUT of his family business!

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069

How amateur sleuths solved the mystery of 100-year-old toilet cover

By Richard Chin
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

MINNEAPOLIS — Nearly a century ago, a plumber installed a toilet in a bungalow in south Minneapolis.

When the job was done, the workman took a pencil and signed his work on the inside of the toilet tank lid in a flowing cursive hand: “Otto Johnson plumber May 6, 1924.”

And why not? A good craftsman is proud of his work, and indoor plumbing was still kind of a big deal back then.

It may have been the first indoor toilet to have been installed in the 1910 house in the Ericsson neighborhood near Lake Hiawatha, said the current homeowner, Alan Peters. Peters believed the original residents may have been using an outhouse before then.

Peters and his wife, Penny Marsala, bought the house in 1987, and he discovered Otto Johnson’s signature when he had to take off the toilet tank lid to do a minor repair on the flapper valve.

“I was amazed to witness the pride in craftsmanship that Otto demonstrated. I felt privileged to have benefited from his work, done well and with care, so many years before,” Peters said.

Respect and admiration

Over the years, Peters said, he would sometimes show the signed toilet to other workmen who came to the house.

“They all marveled at his inscription, smiled and understood,” Peters said. “Some took pictures of Otto’s message to share with others.”

In December, Peters retired as the founder of Can Do Canines, a New Hope nonprofit started in 1989 to provide service dogs for people with disabilities. He and his wife decided to move to Pennsylvania to be closer to children and grandchildren.

Before they put their Minneapolis home on the market this spring, real estate agents advised them to replace the old-fashioned toilet with the tank that hung on the wall.

“I felt kind of guilty for taking it down before the 100th anniversary,” Peters said of the plumbing fixture that had performed faithfully for so long. And he couldn’t bring himself to throw away the proof that plumber Otto Johnson was a craftsman who stood by his work.

“I could not in good conscience take this evidence of pride to throw out in the trash,” Peters said.



Above: Nearly a century ago, a plumber installed a toilet in a bungalow in South Minneapolis. When the job was done, he took a pencil and signed his work on the inside of the tank lid “Otto Johnson, plumber, May 6, 1924.” The homeowner used Nextdoor social media app to find descendants of Otto Johnson who might want to have the lid. **Left:** Homeowner Alan Peters turned over the signed toilet tank lid to plumber Otto Johnson’s descendant, granddaughter Lynda Bornhoeft.

Photos by Glen Stubbe / Minneapolis Star Tribune / TNS

Amateur sleuths solve the mystery

He asked for help on the Nextdoor.com neighborhood social media site: Did anyone know of descendants of the plumber Otto Johnson who might be interested in “something that might be of value” that he discovered in the toilet?

Within hours, the internet started doing its thing. Armchair researchers started reporting their findings from old city directories, grave and ancestry websites, historical society records and collections of old building permits in an extensive thread of comments on the Nextdoor site.

“They built on each other,” Peters said.

After all, people are fascinated by quirky discoveries hiding in old homes. There’s even a Facebook group called “Things Found in Walls — And Other Hidden Findings” about the weird stuff — shoes, old newspapers, toys, bottles of booze, even money — that people find hiding inside walls, crawlspaces, basements, attics and garages.

The Facebook group

was started in June 2019 by Amanda Gore and Laura Kemp of Everett, Wash. During the pandemic, membership ballooned to more than half a million people worldwide as lots of people remodeled their homes.

Homeowners would find stuff from the past, some even deciding to hide time capsule artifacts of their own for future discoverers.

“There’s an element of mystery and history that combine when people find something in their house or yard,” Kemp said.

Peters said the amateur sleuths looking for his plumber ran into a few dead ends, possibly because in the early 20th century, there were quite a few people named Otto and Johnson living in the Twin Cities, and even more than one plumber named Otto Johnson.

Minneapolis resident Anna Reding helped with the research by looking at old Minneapolis city directories available online from the Hennepin County Library system.

St. Paul resident Jim Willenbring contributed

information he found by looking at census records, the Ancestry.com website and an old Star Tribune obituary.

“I got intrigued,” Willenbring said. “You just get this really warm feeling knowing the impact your ancestors

have had in this world.”

“Nextdoor can sometimes be an antagonistic and divisive place. It was nice to see it can be happy and helpful for once,” Reding said.

It turned out that the plumber who worked on Peters’ house was

actually named Gustaf Otto Johnson, who was born in Sweden in 1872, immigrated to the U.S. in 1890 and married Nellis O. Ekblad in 1915.

According to a 1915 journal of plumbing, heating and ventilation called “Domestic Engineering,” G. Otto Johnson, “a well-known plumber of Minneapolis” and his new bride honeymooned on a trip to Milwaukee, Muskegon, Grand Rapids and Chicago.

Returning to its rightful owners

Otto and Nellis had four daughters, and thanks to the online researchers, Peters was able to get in contact with Johnson’s granddaughter.

Lynda Bornhoeft, of Big Lake, Minn., said her grandfather died in 1946, before she was born. But she was “blown away” to get a call from Peters saying he had a toilet that her grandfather had signed nearly 100 years ago.

“I was kind of surprised,” she said.

Peters wanted to make sure the piece went with Johnson’s family before the house was listed. The two arranged to meet at the home and Peters presented the toilet tank lid to Bornhoeft in late February. Johnson’s granddaughter said she might hang the family heirloom in her laundry room.

But one thing is for sure: Bornhoeft is grateful to have it as a keepsake. And she’s just as grateful that a collective of online sleuths got involved to make it happen.

“It’s something of my grandpa,” she said.

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BRAINERD DISPATCH

Comics & Games ARE BACK!

We heard your feedback and are excited to bring these features back. From sudoku to crosswords and comics, you can laugh and play today!

brainerddispatch.news/fun

MN now up to 50 sites infected with avian flu

By Susan Lunneborg
West Central Tribune

WILLMAR, Minn. — The daily update on the status of avian flu in Minnesota now shows 50 sites of infection and nearly 2.3 million birds impacted.

According to the state Board of Animal Health web page, H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza was confirmed Wednesday, April 20, at two commercial meat turkey sites in Todd County — the first confirmed sites in that county, each holding 30,000 birds.

A third new site listed Thursday was in Stearns County, a flock of 63,746 commercial meat turkeys, bringing that county to six total sites.

Based on West Central Tribune archives, the fourth new flock listed Thursday appears to be the seventh site identified in Kandiyohi County, a commercial meat turkey flock of more than 38,000. The eighth site had been listed one day earlier on the web page devoted to avian flu response in the state at bah.state.mn.us/hpai.

Michael Crusan, communications director for the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, did not have information immediately available to confirm that, but told the West Central Tribune that the

board is receiving updated information many times a day, while the web page is updated just once a day. He said it is entirely possible that results for the seventh site arrived later in the day than results for the site designated as eighth, and thus ended up being reported on different days.

The Todd County sites listed Thursday on the board's web page are designated as "Todd 02" and "Todd 03," but the county has just those two confirmed sites.

Crusan said that the site that would have been "Todd 01" never received a confirmed diagnosis. Birds at that site were depopulated as it was a high-risk site linked to another infected premises, but that location will not be part of the board's public list as there was never a positive confirmation.

The flock inventory affected by avian flu in Minnesota now stands at 2,282,594, the vast majority in commercial meat turkey operations.

The board's web page is updated by noon each weekday with the information that is known about infection sites. Data from previous days also may be updated by quality control staff if more accurate information is gathered later.



Source / Adobe Stock

The inventory of flocks in Minnesota diagnosed with H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza is now at nearly 2.3 million, according to the Minnesota Board of Animal Health. Fifty infection sites have been confirmed as of Thursday.

CHANCES

From Page 1

individual style, and when she started struggling with mental health issues.

Increased hormones, paired with parents who fought a lot and complex emotions led to self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

By the time she was 15, Gray started smoking a lot of marijuana and drinking only on occasion, but always to the point of drunkenness.

Just before high school graduation, at the age of 17 with seemingly no direction in life, she discovered methamphetamine.

Fentanyl and other drugs came a little later.

"That whole summer I basically partied. I used every drug imaginable except for heroin," she said.

While she doesn't feel she got addicted to anything during that summer — except perhaps for marijuana — her struggles were not over.

Soon after, she discovered she was pregnant with her daughter. She kept using pot but put away the hard drugs during pregnancy.

The same series of events happened later with her oldest son.

When her younger son came along a few years later, Gray was completely drug- and alcohol-free until six months postpartum.

"I started smoking pot again and then started using pills," she said. "And the pills that I was using, every single time I would use — it wasn't an all-the-time thing — but every time I did it, it would make me basically delusional, like very delusional thoughts, basically drug-induced psychosis."

In and out of the emergency room, psychiatric wards and ultimately the Grace Unit, Gray eventually lost custody of her children. Knowing she needed to get them back made getting clean easy. But staying sober was another story.

"When I got them back, I was very happy about it, but I was also under a lot of pressure because I was a single mom at the time, and all of a sudden I had all the kids back, but my support was kind of gone," she said. "And 10 days after my 29th birthday, I decided to use meth again."

While Gray's first experience with methamphetamine at age 17 wasn't enough to get her addicted, the second time more than a decade later was.

Although she made sure her kids were fed and clothed, Gray lost 30 pounds from the drug

use and described herself as an absent mother. She tried to get clean a few times but always turned back to her old ways, again using a lot of marijuana and taking the pills that made her feel crazy.

Her children were again removed.

"A couple weeks of not having the kids, I did try to get them back at first but then kind of let the shame and the guilt get to me and thought, basically, 'How did I let this happen again? I don't deserve my kids. I don't deserve to be a mom,'" she said. "Not only did I lose them once, I lost them twice."

On top of that, Gray was in an abusive relationship then. Physical, emotional and psychological abuse threw her down a spiraling path of drug use and led to a suicide attempt.

That experience served as a wakeup call, so she checked herself into treatment but soon learned she wasn't going to get her kids back because she hadn't complied with the courts for the previous three months. Her parental rights were involuntarily terminated.

Feeling like there was no point to continue with treatment if her kids weren't coming home, Gray spiraled into addiction once again and landed herself in jail for the fifth time.

After that last stint, she entered drug court, which was the start of her new life.

Drug tests several times a week and unannounced home visits from law enforcement officers were a godsend.

While in drug court, Gray added as many positive things to her life as possible, exploring her spirituality and attending meetings. And with about six months of the program left, she met her now-fiance, who is also in recovery.

Relationships with two people battling addiction isn't always easy or advised, but Gray and fiance Tyler Addison made it work.

"We've kind of helped each other grow and learn a lot," she said. "We've been together for over a year now, and there's been a lot of change within both of us."

Couples counseling, regular chiropractic visits, healthy eating and regular exercise help the couple focus on their mental and physical health and continue to stay clean.

Now three years sober — and nearly two for Addison — Gray works as the part-time office manager at Lakes Area Restorative Justice Project in Brainerd, is expanding her family with a new baby and hopes to soon have a house of her own.

She stays in contact with her other children — who live with grandparents — as much as possible. While she gets to see the two oldest kids a couple times a month, Gray hasn't seen her younger son in four years. He lives with a different set of grandparents than his older siblings, who he sees on occasion. But after everything that has happened, Gray's attempts at communication have gone unanswered.

But it's something she's not going to let get her down.

"All I can do is pray about the situation. I know that he's in good hands — loved and cared for and all that, and in some way a cycle is being broken."

"So hopefully someday I'll be able to see him again or something, but at the same time, I have to just kind of put that in God's hands and not worry about it too much. Like, I think about him — I think about all my kids — all the time, but at the same time, I know that they're loved and cared for."

Today, Gray has her new baby, her fiance and his daughter, and herself to focus on. The latter is of utter importance, and something she learned about while in in-patient treatment.

"I'm 30-something years old and still learning that you have to put self-care at the top of your list because if you don't take care of yourself, you're not going to be able to help anybody else fully," she said.

For those looking to begin their own journey toward recovery, Gray said treatment is a good place to start. And Brainerd's recovery community is a good resource as well, with a whole network of people welcoming newcomers and trying to fight the stigma of addiction.

"Just because you're an addict doesn't mean you're a bad person," she said. "Nobody wakes up and decides, 'Hey, I think I'm gonna be an addict today and possibly die of an overdose later in life.'"

That's why Gray shares her story — to show other addicts that people care about them and recovery is possible.

Through her work at Lakes Area Restorative Justice Project, Gray visits middle and high schools in the area to share her story in hopes of finding someone who needs to hear it.

And for those who do need a message of hope to get them through whatever challenges they have — addiction, self-worth or other inner turmoil — she has a simple one: "You're worth it."

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EARTH DAY

From Page 1

Act. ...Today, Earth Day is widely recognized as the largest secular observance in the world, marked by more than a billion people every year as a day of action to change human behavior and create global, national and local policy changes."

There are many ways to be involved on Earth Day from physically cleaning up local parks, to buying local, to supporting causes and reducing waste.

Spend Earth Day giving back to Mother Nature

The Northland Arboretum is partnering with the Brainerd Parks and Recreation Department to clean the Arboretum grounds and area parks. There is a sign-up for those who want to participate and it highlights options to be involved on Earth Day.

The Earth Day cleanup event is 9 a.m. to noon Friday, April 22.

More information and a sign-up is available at bit.ly/3925Ait and as of Thursday night there were still a few slots open, with one at the Arboretum and slots at Buster Dog Park and Kiwanis Park. Central Lakes College students along with other community members stepped up to fill slots at Rotary

Park, Gregory Park and Lum Park. Go online or call 218-829-8770.

Give back by finding out how cities and counties handle landscaping and green space requirements along with tree removal and replacement. Let elected officials know what is important to create a sustainable community that reflects those environmental values and is one that is enticing to live in as well as work and play. It may take a little more work, but multiple goals can be achieved with thoughtful action in planning for development.

Other ways to make a difference and reuse and recycle includes establishing a compost bin to take spoiled or unused fruits and vegetables and turn them into a rich garden resource.

Create awareness

For those with children, the internet abounds with ideas on craft projects to do related to Earth Day.

In the lakes area, it's a bit early for planting season. Don't let that 70-degree forecast for Saturday keep people from thinking of the 36-degree high expected Monday. But planning for a garden, picking out a tree to plant later, or going out and picking up garbage in the yard or around the block, or in the neighborhood, or perhaps a favorite park, are ways to be involved.

Then round out the day with an educational

program that highlights the planet, the night sky, endangered animals and habitat. Disney+ is featuring an Earth Day special with National Geographic following "Free Solo" climber Alex Honnold and others in the Amazon for "Explorer: The Last Tepui."

Traveling and shopping

AAA-Auto Club came up with ways Americans can do their part for Earth Day by participating in activities to protect the planet. Those suggestions include bringing reusable water and toiletry bottles, using electronic travel documents, taking shorter showers, reusing bath towels and keeping heat/air conditioning at moderate temperatures.

"We're proud to partner with Tourism Cares, an organization that shares our commitment to help the travel and tourism industry thrive responsibly over the long term," stated Debbie Haas, vice president of travel for AAA-The Auto Club Group, in a news release. "Research has shown over time and particularly now that enjoying the outdoors is one of the top reasons people travel. Increasingly travelers, especially younger generations, care about sustainability. By understanding the needs and expectations of travelers, our organizations can work together toward a

sustainable future."

The Better Business Bureau encouraged people to buy green at the grocery store to celebrate Earth Day.

"In theory, eating 'green' should be an easy way to consume a healthy diet while protecting the planet," the BBB reported in a news release. The BBB notes it's part of being an educated consumer and knowing what comes along with labels of organic and other "green marketing terms."

"Third-party organizations, like Forest Stewardship Council, TransFair USA, and Rainforest Alliance, certify that specific types of products are grown or produced in an eco-friendly manner. For example, for meat and milk from cows who have been 100 percent free-range grass grazers their whole life, you should look for products with the American Grassfed seal. Real Simple covers top eco-friendly labels and what they certify," the BBB stated.

Other organizations like the World Wildlife Fund can assist with information and a way to help. Using reusable grocery bags is also a way to cut down on plastic bags. Buying from local producers is recommended. BBB noted GreenAmerican.org recommends meal planning and proper food storage as ways to cut down on food waste.

Meal planning services,

which provide the appropriate and measured ingredients for meals, may provide a way to eat healthy and without the waste that can come when cooking for a small number or just in food preparation and spoiling.

Gift buying

When thinking of gifts this year, perhaps even for Mother's Day, consider a gift that has a connection to reducing, reusing or recycling. Shopping at stores in the community that repurpose items is one way to support that goal and find unique gifts and there are now a host of options for shops with that kind of impact locally.

There are many organizations that provide items tied to making a change for the better for the environment and wildlife. Perhaps a donation in a loved one's name will benefit that special someone who really does have everything they need. Organizations like 4Ocean, which reports pulling 22,485,184 million pounds of trash from oceans, rivers and coastlines, started selling bracelets using some of the plastic pulled from the ocean and using the proceeds to help fund the effort to pull a pound of trash for every item.

Now, 4Ocean also sells necklaces, T-shirts, hoodies, reusable water bottles, biodegradable sponges, reusable shopping bags, steel beverage cups, face masks, phone

cases, beach chairs and cleanup kits of tongs and mesh bags. The business also started a Clean Ocean Club membership sending out a new limited edition bracelet that raises awareness about an animal or ecosystem affected by plastic pollution and then doubling a donation to an ocean-friendly organization with a proven track record — and this year for Earth Day that includes planting trees in Guatemala.

A host of organizations from Target to media companies are offering Earth Day sales and specials. A quick Google search will find numerous news stories on deals for the day. A number of companies are making changes to reduce or eliminate plastic packaging. Best Buy added a sustainable living section with everything from items for indoor gardening and kitchen composting to smart appliances, a bidet to reduce toilet paper consumption, as well as solar power kits and electric tools and equipment.

There are more ways now than perhaps ever before since Earth Day was established to make a positive impact for the planet on this day and every day.

Renee Richardson, managing editor, may be reached at 218-855-5852 or renee.richardson@brainerddispatch.com. Follow on Twitter at www.twitter.com/DispatchBizBuzz.

ACADEMY

From Page 1

for low-income, inner city kids from minority families. The board members saw high test scores at the school, and Hope Academy expanded to several other cities across the country.

“What it taught me at the time was that there’s an opportunity to serve our children better if given the right framework,” Pieper said.

The various schools’ success made Pieper wonder if a similar model could be sustainable in a more rural community like Brainerd, without as much racial diversity as bigger cities.

Knapp and Pieper joined forces in 2021 and before they knew it had a whole school board for Stâre Academy.

Drawing inspiration from figures like Martin Luther King Jr. and C.S. Lewis, who spoke of the importance of character and values in education, Knapp and Pieper hope Stâre Academy will teach students how to think — not what to think — and how to use their unique gifts to impact the world.

“Kids really maybe leave school not really understanding what their giftings and their talents and skill are and the direction that they should be going, and specifically how God’s created them to be,” Knapp said.

“That’s really important for kids, so that’s kind of the impetus in my world, at least.”

The school’s classical and experiential curriculum means students will learn to think critically and apply that knowledge to real life through hands-on opportunities. They’ll learn facts and figure out why those facts are important and how they help shape a person’s core beliefs.

Board members, teachers, staff and parents will all sign covenants with the school, with the parents’ covenants not revolving



Theresa Bourke / Brainerd Dispatch
Amy Bogart, left, Tiffanie Knapp and Brad Pieper talk on Thursday about Stâre Academy, a new school to open this fall. All 3 parents serve as board members.



Contributed
The gymnasium at Heritage Church in Baxter will be available for students at the new Stâre Academy, set to open this fall.

around fundamental beliefs but around involvement in the school and their child’s education.

“We feel like there’s three legs of this stool,” Pieper said. “There’s the teachers that I think are obvious. They’re kind of the most important part of a school. There’s, of course, God, which is at the center of what we’re doing, and we would feel is at the center of

everything. And then there’s the parents that we think play a critical role in education, and there’s going to be a covenant for them to be involved.”

While the school will be set up to accept students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, the goal is to allow middle school students to continue their education at Stâre Academy through high

school, with the first graduating class being the class of 2027.

Affordable tuition

While an exemplary private education doesn’t typically come at a low cost, Stâre Academy will be different. With the majority of funding for private schools usually coming from tuition and the rest coming from donors, Pieper said Stâre Acad-

emy will be the exact opposite. About 20% of school expenses will come from tuition fees, and the school will operate on a fair share tuition model, meaning the price for families will depend on their income. The lower the income, the lower the cost.

The rest of the money will come from benevolent giving.

“We have members of our community that want to come alongside families and give them this opportunity,” Pieper said.

While board members are still working on the school’s nonprofit status, Pieper said there have been intentions of giving from community members who want to help.

The school has a 120-day road to open plan, consisting of three main parts — staffing, curriculum development and fundraising.

More information

Parents who are interested in enrolling their students at Stâre Academy this fall can fill out an admission inquiry form at stareacademy.com, while those interested in staff positions can fill out an employment form. Donation and volunteer inquiries can also be made on the website.

Anyone who wants to learn more about the school is invited to what board members are calling an informational event 3-5 p.m. Sunday, April 24, at Heritage Church. People can get more information, ask questions and meet board members and others who are interested in the school.

“We’re calling it an ‘inspire event,’ and we’re just asking people to bring their questions and their passion to do the remarkable,” Pieper said.

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HUNTING

From Page 1



Chelsey Perkins / Brainerd Dispatch

Crow Wing County Attorney Don Ryan shares information on a cartway petition with County Board members during a special meeting on Tuesday. The County Board, acting as the township board for the Second Assessment District, must eventually grant some kind of access to the petitioner based on state law.

date so that this thing can be done,” said Chairman Doug Houge. “... This thing has been over two years. For God sakes, we can trial a murder case quicker than this. And I just cannot continue to watch this thing get kicked down the road.”

Tuesday’s meeting on the cartway did occur earlier than originally expected after commissioners urged Ryan to encourage the lawyers involved to align their schedules and make it happen. Middleton brought attention to the ongoing matter during the March 8 County Board meeting, imploring commissioners to help move the issue along.

“Basically, we’ve been without access to our property for about seven years now, and I’m not getting any younger,” Middleton said. “I used to enjoy duck hunting and deer hunting out there. And that’s what we have it for.”

Ryan assured commissioners at the March meeting both

the petitioner’s lawyer and the landowners’ lawyer contributed to the delays — not simply one side or the other. And he warned commissioners if they pushed forward with a decision without allowing each side to make their case, they would likely set themselves up for a successful appeal by whomever was dissatisfied.

Middleton and the others who own the Nelson Preserve property prefer a route they said they historically used to visit their land. Their chosen route also allows them to access the larger, southern portion of the property split by a wetland. The property owner most affected by the petition — Keith Unger, who owns a cabin on the adjacent land — prefers a route to the north, which would not utilize his personal driveway. At least one other route is in play and commissioners referenced other proposals they’ve seen.

Commissioners are expect-

ed to decide on the route at their May 10 meeting and establish damages at the May 24 meeting.

Neighbors clash

Middleton estimated he and his partners have owned the Nelson Preserve property for about 35 years, before which he hunted on the rural land since high school with permission and later under a lease with the previous owners.

He told commissioners Tuesday at the time of purchase, they believed it included an easement across what, at the time, was one other person’s property. They cannot prove this, however, as Middleton said he was told the documents were lost in a fire. The property next door was later sold and subdivided into several smaller parcels in the early 2000s, then sold again to individual owners.

Since that time, the existing road was upgraded and named Marsh Pit Road by a combined financial effort of most of the property owners who used it. The cost, according to those opposing Middleton’s efforts, was \$250,000, and the Nelson Preserve owners did not contribute. The cost of the road improvements is another item that has not been verified, as no documentation thus far presented backs up this claim.

According to the attorney representing Unger, his client offered good access to Middleton and the others and they refused the offer. Middleton, meanwhile, said Tuesday he did not view the offer as acceptable, given it involved giving some of their property to Unger.

“We have 63 and a half acres out there right on the lake, and we can’t access it, so that’s the problem,” Middleton said in an interview after Tuesday’s meeting. “So it’s something we’ve been

struggling with and it’s just been something that we’ve worked on over time. And finally, I came to the county as our last resort and tried to work it out.”

Unger, who was not present during the meeting, said by phone Tuesday he never wanted to end up in a long-standing dispute with his neighbors and he gets along with everyone else on the road. He bought the land on Nelson Lake and eventually built a cabin there with tranquility and privacy in mind, and he wanted to retain that by offering Nelson Preserve access farther away from his dwelling.

“They want to go in literally my backyard,” Unger said. “And I’m like, ‘No, I don’t want you here, I want you as far away as possible, and I’ll give you an easement.’ They said, ‘No, we do not want that.’ ... And these guys just plain want to get all this for nothing. This is the problem that I’m having.”

Unger said his concerns also stem from the possibility his neighbors have bigger plans, including potential development, for the land next door — further carving into his privacy should their desired route be granted.

“That’s one reason why I bought the very farthest one. ... I was the first one to buy a lot in this development,” Unger said. “And it’s just to get away. If I want people, I’ll go to Minneapolis, you know.”

Unger said he understands state law requires access be granted eventually to the Nelson Preserve owners.

“I’m the first to admit there’s always two sides of the story,” he said. “But this is mine.”

Chelsey Perkins, community editor, may be reached at 218-855-5874 or chelsey.perkins@brainerddispatch.com. Follow on Twitter at twitter.com/DispatchChelsey.

TICKETS/EVENTS



Agate, Gem, & Mineral Show
Sat. May 7, 9-5; Sun May 8, 10-4;
Crow Wing Co Fairgrounds,
Brainerd MN; 60+ in & outdoor
vendors; jewelry, crystals, home
decor, family activities,
cabs/slabs, rock cutting, geode
cracking, displays, Rock Wizard,
concessions, ATM. \$2/adult;
\$1/child. Mothers free Sunday.
www.cuyunorockclub.org

HELP WANTED GENERAL

Cleaning of 2 cabins on Upper Gull Lake, every other week. References required. \$30/hr. Call 612-670-2255.

HELP WANTED OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATION



Office Clerk - Utility Billing City of Staples

Pay range \$17.17-\$25.71/hr. This is a union position with a great benefit package.

This position is the first point of contact for all visitors to City Hall so exceptional customer service skills are required. In addition to front counter payments and telephone response, duties include processing utility meter readings and utility bills, inputting receipts, data tracking, account reconciliation and providing timely reports.

Minimum Requirements:
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SOFTBALL



Kelly Humphrey / Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd's Maren Ceynowa slides into home against Rocori on Thursday at Brainerd.

WARRIORS OPEN SEASON WITH 10-RUN WIN

By Jeremy Millsop
Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd

Meghan Smith could only stand back and watch.

In Smith's final at-bat, she watched as a pitch snuck by Rocori Spartans backup catcher Elli Koeniguer. A heady Kasia Kroll, who led off the fifth inning by reaching on an error, darted toward home from third base. The senior speedster slid under the tag to secure the Brainerd Warriors' 11-1 Central Lakes Conference victory Thursday, April 21, at Adamson Field.

Smith joined the rest of her teammates in celebrating Kroll's craftiness as Brainerd opened the season with the win.

"One thing we do is we take a lead like we're going to steal," Smith said. "That's how we win games. I just saw the runners taking advantage of it and seeing what needed

WARRIORS 11, ROCORI 1

► **Key:** Brainerd played error-free defense, Olivia Tautges struck out seven and Brainerd knocked out 11 hits.

► **Conference:** Brd 1-0, Roc 1-1

► **Overall:** Brd 1-0, Roc 1-1

► **Next:** Brainerd at Forest Lake Tournament Saturday, April 23.

to be done."

It was a Smith double that tied the score 1-1 in the second. Smith lined a shot to right-center field to score Maren Ceynowa. Rocori struggled to handle the ball and Smith scored on the same play to make it 2-1.

The Warriors scored six runs in the second inning and added two more in the third. Smith led off the third with a solo home run to left field.

"I've been working on my hitting a lot in practice so it was just good to get

something out of it," Smith said. "It showed that it pays off to work. It did feel like a home run."

Sophie Mattson added the second run. Mattson was 2-3 with an RBI. She also caught the hard-throwing Olivia Tautges to the one-hitter. The senior struck out eight, walked two and allowed just one hit, a double that scored Rocori's lone run.

Tautges threw just 69 pitches, 44 for strikes.

She was also 2-3 with a double and an RBI. Mya Tautges drove in a run as she was 2-3 with two singles. Kroll finished 3-4 with two runs and an RBI.

"I am happy," Jordan said. "We have an experienced group that has practiced really hard this spring. I know we've been inside a lot, but we've done all of the little things inside the gym. We've worked on the glove work and defense. I'm proud of the defense,

proud of the offense, but we still have things we can do to get better."

Ceynowa reached base after being hit by the pitch to start the fourth inning. Smith then walked. Mattson reached on an error that scored Ceynowa and Smith to make it 10-1 after four innings.

"That's what we like to say Warrior softball is all about," Jordan said. "We can hit the ball over the fence, but small ball and running the bases is who we are. We take pride in running the bases. We talk about leading off and how to take chances to put pressure on the other team. That paid off today. That's how we scored the first few runs today. We created havoc and that's what we want to do."

In the fifth, Kroll reached on an error. She moved to second on an Olivia Tautges single. Emma Tautges was then hit by a pitch to load the bases. After a strikeout, Smith stepped to

the plate and could only watch as the game ended on the last pitch she saw.

"Honestly, I feel that with our team, our energy is just so high that we're not really worried about things," Smith said. "We know we can do this and we can go to state. We just work hard every day and we know we can get there if we just do our stuff."

"I feel like the biggest part of our success today was the fact we've been indoors for three or four weeks. When we do get to go outside it's like 35 degrees. I think we're just super excited to be outside. It's sunny. There is no snow on the ground and we're just happy to be playing."

Rocori 1 1 4
Brainerd 11 10
WP: Olivia Tautges. LP: Shelby Prom. 2B: Brd-Olivia Tautges, Meghan Smith, Roc-Madie Terance. HR: Brd-Smith.

JEREMY MILLSOP may be reached at 855-5856 or jeremy.millsop@brainerddispatch.com. Follow on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jeremymillsop.

TRACK AND FIELD

The Warriors compete in Sartell Quadrangular

SARTELL — Dillon MacLaughlin captured first place in the 100-meter dash after he ran an 11.12 time as the Brainerd Warrior Boys finished second place as a team in the Sartell Quadrangular Tuesday, April 21.

Thomas Ruhl ran a 2:01.98 in the 800 which was good for first place.

Andrew Albright took home first place in the shot-put as he finished with a throw of 53 feet 3.5 inches.



MacLaughlin

Gabe Wagner took first place in the pole vault with a jump of 11 feet for Brainerd.

Brenna Deason took home first place finishes in the 100 and 200 to help lead the Warrior girls to a first-place team finish.

Emily Bastian captured first place in the 400 for the Warriors with a time of 1:03.76.

Madi Miller and Hannah Drietz finished in first and second place respectively in the 3200.

Boys team scores: 1 Alexandria 330.5, 2-Brainerd 314, 3-Sartell 186.5, 4-Bemidji 173
110 hurdles: 1-Jacob Kelly (Bem) 15.32, 3-Andrew Albright (Brd) 15.76, 8-Michael Olson (Brd) 18.61, 13-Kyle Peterson (Brd) 21.82
300 hurdles: 1-Logan Clark (Sartell) 41.85, 4-Olson 45.81, 12-Peterson 57.08
100 dash: 1-Dillon MacLaughlin (Brd) 11.12, 17-Charlie Pikula (Brd) 12.17, 19-Preston Siebolds (Brd) 12.31
200 dash: 1-Christian Dombia (Alex) 23.3, 3-Isaak Malay (Brd) 23.77, 7-Bennett Bernander (Brd) 24.93, 10-Charlie Pikula (Brd) 25.19
400 dash: 1-Isaak McDonald 53.55, 2-Gabe Wagner (Brd) 56.13, 4-Matt Toows (Brd) 56.58, 7-Joe Neumann (Brd) 59.07
800 run: 1-Thomas Ruhl (Brd) 2:01.98, 6-Adam Cady (Brd) 2:14.29, 7-Mitchell Neumann 2:18.13
1600 run: 1-Joel Brault (Alex) 4:35.12,

3-Adam Cady 4:47.56, 4-Braden Capelle (Brd) 4:56.48, 10-Steven Selisker (Brd) 5:13.26

3200 run: 1-Harrison Greathouse (Alex) 10:31.1, 3-Nolan Thiess (Brd) 10:43.39, 4-Bennet Capelle 10:49.86, 5-Ben Stadium (Brd) 11:06.35
4x100 relay: 1-Alexandria 44.91, Brainerd (Gavin Hoelzel, Dillon MacLaughlin, Charlie Pikula, Isaak Malay) 44.92
4x200 relay: 1-Brainerd (Hoelzel, MacLaughlin, Brandon Stark, Malay) 1:33.82
4x400 relay: 1-Brainerd (Thomas Ruhl, Baden Bastian, Gabe Wagner, Stark) 3:47.50
4x800 relay: 1-Bemidji 8:24.24, 2-Brainerd (Bastian, Noah Schaeffer, Ruhl, Stark) 8:29.18
Shot put: 1-Andrew Albright (Brd) 53.35, 2-Dylan Gross (Brd) 53.2, 6-Mitch Wind (Brd) 38.3
Discus: 1-Ethan Hoppe (Alex) 129.5, 4-Andrew Albright 120, 5-Dylan Gross (Brd) 117.7, 9-Wind 102.10
Triple jump: 1-William Heydt (Alex) 44.1, 2-Bennett Bernander (Brd) 38.10, 3-Gabe Borders 36.5, 7-Ty Nelson 35.9.5

High jump: 1-Josh Orjansen (Sart) 5-10, 2-Borders 5-8, T8-Cole Fjeld 5-2, 14-Sean Baumann 5-0

Pole vault: 1-Gabe Wagner 11-0, 2-Gaven Hoelzel (Brd) 10-0
Girls team scores: 1-Brainerd 315, 2-Alexandria 283, 3-Sartell 235, 4-Bemidji 156
100 hurdles: 1- Madysen Schmidt (Bem) 16.74, 2-Violet Goodwin (Brd) 17.37, 4-Mattia Bruggeman (Brd) 18.72, 5-Madi Bertram (Brd) 18.95
300 hurdles: 1- Lauren Berg (Bem) 46.35, 3-Goodwin 52.32, 5-Bruggeman 55.05, 6-Bertram 55.11
100 dash: 1-Brenna Deason (Brd) 12.70, 11-Sophia Laube (Brd) 13.95, 12-Annie Loss (Brd) 13.97
200 dash: 1-Deason 26.99, 3-Kate Stadium (Brd) 28.02, 6-Sophia Laube (Brd) 28.44
400 dash: 1- Emily Bastian (Brd) 1:03.76, 5-Emma Sheflo (Brd) 1:06.77
800 run: 1- Jaelyn Miller (Alex) 2:22.04, 4-Bridget Collins (Brd) 2:31.69, 8-Liliana Schaeffer (Brd) 2:37.44, 12-Nola Dota (Brd) 2:52.19
1600 run: 1- Regan DeWitt (Bem) 5:26.28, 4-Katelyn Kennedy (Brd) 5:44, 6-Annelise Baird 5:53.28, 10-Dota 6:10

3200 run: 1-Madi Miller (Brd) 11:54.68, 2-Hannah Drietz (Brd) 12:03.66, 3-Brooke Wenz (Brd) 12:34.91
4x100 relay: 1- Brainerd 51.52
4x200 relay: 1- Sartell 1:51.48, 2-Brainerd 1:53.34
4x800 relay: 1-Alexandria 9:58.30, 2-Brainerd 10:19.86
Shot put: 1-Rylee Bundermann (Alex) 34-3, 2-Anna Tupy 32-9, 7-Grace Loney (Brd) 29-1, 14-Elianna Riley 24-11
Discus: 1-Amaria Sowada (Alex) 114-7, 4-Elianna Riley (Brd) 94-10.5, 11-Elle Brown (Brd) 73-4, 16-Anna Tupy (Brd) 65-7.5
Long jump: 1-Elle Rengel (Sar) 16-3, 5-Kamryn Peterson (Brd) 14-11, 6-Emma Sheflo 14-8, 9-Alyssa Schommer (Brd) 13-10
Triple jump: 1-Ella Steussy (Alex) 34-2.5, 3-Kamryn Peterson 33-1.5, 6-Molly Hagelle (Brd) 30-8.5, 7-Alyssa Schommer 30-5
High jump: 1-Lily Birks (Brd) 5-0
3-Kate Stadium 4-10, 7-Lauren Castle (Brd) 4-6
Pole vault: 1-Hailey Westrup (Sart) 9-6, 4-Kamryn Peterson (Brd) 8-0
Next: Brainerd hosts Fergus Falls and Bemidji 4 p.m. Tuesday, April 26.

BASEBALL

Warriors get win over Sauk Rapids in extra innings

SOUK RAPIDS — Jonathan Benson totaled two hits, including a home run and two RBIs to lead Brainerd to a 7-5 win over Sauk Rapids in 11 innings in a Central Lakes Conference game Thursday, April 21.

Adam Jensen tallied three hits and Isaac



Jensen

Hanson finished with two as the Warriors knocked out 11 hits overall.

Jack Schafer got the start and pitched four innings, giving up three hits and

four runs and striking out three. Jensen took over in the fifth inning and pitched seven innings to get the win. Jensen allowed three hits and struck out three.

Brainerd 7 11 2
Sauk Rapids 5 6 4
WP: Adam Jensen. LP: Moody.
HR: Jonathan Benson. Conference: Brd 2-0. Overall: Brd 2-0.
Next: Brainerd hosts Willmar 4 p.m. Tuesday, April 26 (2).

Sartell/Sauk Rapids win over Warriors

BRAINERD — Ethan DeRosier scored two goals and tallied two assists for the Brainerd Warriors in their 15-5 loss to Sartell/Sauk Rapids Thursday, April 21.

Jacob Holm scored twice and Tanner Karsnia had two assists in the loss as well.

The Warriors fall to 0-3 and host Rocori 7 p.m. Monday, April 25.

BOYS LACROSSE



Kelly Humphrey / Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd's Harry Seymour, left, and Cole Mackow go after the ball against Sartell/Sauk Rapids Thursday at Brainerd.

SCOREBOARD

BASEBALL

Professional MLB table with columns for team, W, L, Pct, GB. Includes American League and National League results.

Chi. White Sox (Kopech 0-0) at Minnesota (Ober 1-1), 7:10 p.m. Toronto (Stripling 0-0) at Houston (Verlander 1-1), 7:10 p.m. Baltimore (Zimmermann 0-0) at LA Angels (Detmers 0-0), 8:38 p.m. Kansas City (Keller 0-1) at Seattle, 8:40 p.m. Texas at Oakland (Oller 0-1), 8:40 p.m. National League Wednesday's Results Milwaukee 4, Pittsburgh 2 Philadelphia 9, Colorado 6 LA Dodgers 5, Atlanta 1 San Diego 6, Cincinnati 0 St. Louis 2, Miami 0 Arizona 11, Washington 2 San Francisco 5, NY Mets 2 Thursday's Results NY Mets 6, San Francisco 2 Arizona 4, Washington 3 Miami 5, St. Louis 0 Pittsburgh 4, Chi. Cubs 3 Friday's Games Pittsburgh (Quintana 0-1) at Chi. Cubs (Smyly 1-0), 1:20 p.m. St. Louis (Matz 1-1) at Cincinnati (Greene 1-1), 5:40 p.m. San Francisco at Washington (Corbin 0-2), 6:05 p.m. Milwaukee (Peralta 0-1) at Philadelphia (Suares 1-0), 6:05 p.m. Miami (Rogers 0-2) at Atlanta (Wright 1-0), 6:20 p.m. NY Mets (Peterson 0-0) at Arizona (Gallen 0-0), 8:40 p.m. LA Dodgers (Urias 0-1) at San Diego (Martinez 0-1), 8:40 p.m. Interleague Friday's Games Colorado (Senzatela 1-0) at Detroit (Skub-ell 0-1), 6:10 p.m. Thursday's results Minnesota 1, Kansas City 0

Minnesota 1, Kansas City 0 table with columns for player, ab, r, h, bi, KC, ab, r, h, bi. Includes batting and pitching stats.

AREA EVENTS Friday, April 22

BASEBALL Brainerd at Duluth East 4 p.m. Crosby-Ironton at Aitkin 6:30 p.m. Albany at Little Falls 5 p.m. Esko at Pequot Lakes 4:30 p.m. Sebeka at Pillager 4:30 p.m. Pine River-Backus vs. Mille Lacs at Onamia 1 p.m. SOFTBALL Aitkin at Crosby-Ironton 4 p.m. Little Falls vs. Sauk Rapids at Detroit Lakes 2 p.m. Little Falls at Detroit Lakes 6 p.m. Kimball at Pierz 4:30 p.m. Pine River-Backus vs. Mille Lacs at Isle 4:30 p.m. Swanville at Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale 4:30 p.m. BOYS GOLF Crosby-Ironton/Aitkin, Pine River-Backus, Staples-Motley at Shattuck St. Mary's. Invite 9:30 a.m. TRACK AND FIELD Aitkin, Crosby-Ironton at Hinckley-Finlayson Invite 3:45 p.m. Little Falls at Pierz Invite 4 p.m. BOYS TENNIS Princeton at Aitkin 4:15 p.m. GIRLS LACROSSE Grand Rapids at Brainerd 7 p.m.

TV AND RADIO Friday, April 22

AUTO RACING: Formula One: Emilia Romagna Grand Prix qualifying, 9:55 a.m., ESPN2 NASCAR Xfinity Series: Talladega qualifying, 4:30 p.m., FS1 NHRA Drag racing: Houston qualifying, 6 p.m., FS1 BASEBALL: MLB: 1 p.m., MLBN College: Ohio State at Michigan, 3 p.m., BTN MLB: Chicago at Minnesota, 7 p.m., BSN, KKKIN-FM (94.3), KUAL-FM (103.5), WYRQ-FM (92.1), KWAD-AM (920) College: Maryland at Illinois, 8 p.m., BTN BASKETBALL: NBA playoffs: First round game, 7 p.m., ESPN NBA playoffs: Milwaukee at Chicago, 7:30 p.m., ABC NBA playoffs: First round game, 9:30 p.m., ESPN FOOTBALL: USFL: Michigan at New Jersey, 7 p.m., USA GOLF: DP World Tour Golf: ISPS Handa Championship in Spain, 7 a.m., GOLF PGA Tour Champions: ClubCorp Classic, 11 a.m., GOLF PGA Tour: Zurich Classic of New Orleans, 2:30 p.m., GOLF LPGA Tour: DIO Implant LA Open, 5:30 p.m., GOLF

Pagan S. 1 1 0 0 0 1 0 Kansas City Greinke L, 0-1 5 6 1 1 1 1 Speier 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 Clarke 2 1 0 0 0 2 2 Coleman 1 0 0 0 1 2 Umpires—Home, Junior Valentine; First, Doug Eddings; Second, Brian Knight; Third, Roberto Ortiz. T—2:43. A—15,540 (40,052)

Golden State at Denver, 9 p.m. Friday's Games Miami at Atlanta, 6 p.m. Milwaukee at Chicago, 7:30 p.m. Phoenix at New Orleans, 8:30 p.m. Thursday's result Memphis 104, Minnesota 95 Minnesota 21 23 37 — 104 Minnesota 39 12 32 12 — 95 MEMPHIS (104) Morant 5-18 5-10 16, Bane 8-19 3-4 26, D.Brooks 4-14 2-4 11, Anderson 2-3 0-0 4, Jackson Jr 2-6 1-1 6, Clarke 6-9 8-8 20, Tillman 2-2 1-4 5, Ty.Jones 4-6 0-0 11, Z.Williams 2-4 0-0 5, Melton 0-2 0-0 0, Totals 35-83 20-31 104. MINNESOTA (95) A.Edwards 6-13 3-6 19, Russell 9-21 0-0 22, Beverley 5-13 4-5 14, Towns 3-4 2-2 8, Vanderbilt 2-8 6-8 10, Beasley 4-12 1-1 11, Jd.McDaniels 3-7 0-0 8, Reid 1-5 1-1 3, Prince 0-2 0-0 0, Monroe 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 33-85 17-23 95. 3-Point Goals—Memphis 14-37 (Bane 7-15, Ty.Jones 3-3, Morant 1-3, Z.Williams 1-3, Jackson Jr 1-4, D.Brooks 1-3, Clarke 0-1, Melton 0-2), Minnesota 12-35 (Russell 4-8, A.Edwards 4-9, Jd.McDaniels 2-4, Beasley 2-7, Reid 0-1, Towns 0-1, Beverley 0-5). Fouled out: None. Rebounds—Memphis 64 (Morant 10), Minnesota 53 (Vanderbilt 13). Assists—Memphis 22 (Morant 10), Minnesota 21 (Russell 8). Total Fouls—Memphis 20 (Jackson Jr 5), Minnesota 28 (Reid, Towns, Vanderbilt 5). A—19,634.

Western Conference Central Division GP W L OTSO Pts GF GA Colorado 77 55 16 5 1 116 298 212 Minnesota 77 49 21 3 4 105 289 238 St. Louis 77 46 28 8 3 103 290 222 Nashville 77 44 28 3 2 93 247 227 Dallas 78 43 30 3 2 91 225 236 Winnipeg 78 35 32 7 4 81 237 252 Chicago 77 26 40 9 2 63 208 276 Arizona 77 22 49 2 4 50 189 296 Pacific Division GP W L OTSO Pts GF GA Calgary 78 48 20 8 2 106 279 195 Edmonton 77 45 26 5 1 96 269 237 Los Angeles 78 41 27 6 4 92 224 227 Vegas 78 42 31 4 1 89 250 232 Vancouver 78 38 29 7 4 87 236 223 Anaheim 78 30 34 9 5 74 220 255 San Jose 76 30 34 9 3 72 198 243 Seattle 76 26 44 5 1 58 200 262 Thursday's Games Philadelphia 6, Montreal 3 Florida 5, Detroit 2 Buffalo 5, New Jersey 2 Pittsburgh 4, Boston 0 Carolina 4, Winnipeg 2 NY Rangers 6, NY Islanders 3 Minnesota 6, Vancouver 3 Tampa Bay 8, Toronto 1 Calgary 4, Dallas 2 Chicago at Los Angeles, 9:30 p.m. St. Louis at San Jose, 9:30 p.m. Friday's Games Ottawa at Columbus, 6 p.m. Seattle at Minnesota, 7 p.m. Colorado at Edmonton, 8 p.m. Washington at Arizona, 9:30 p.m.

Thursday's results Minnesota 6, Vancouver 3 Vancouver 0 3 0— 3 Minnesota 0 3 3— 6 First Period— Second Period—1, Minnesota, Fiala 31 (Gaudreau, Boldy) 4:53. 2, Vancouver, Petterson 30 (Garland, Boeser) 5:31. 3, Minnesota, Spurgeon 10 (Duhaim, Middleton) 7:10. 4, Vancouver, Highmore 5 (unassisted) 9:22. 5, Vancouver, Petterson 31 (Garland, Dermott) 16:09. 6, Minnesota, Zuccarello 23 (Kaprizov, Merrill) 18:36. Third Period—7, Minnesota, Fiala 32 (Brodin, Gaudreau) 12:17. 8, Minnesota, Kaprizov 44 (Hartman, Zuccarello) 18:05. 9, Minnesota, Hartman 32 (Kaprizov, Zuccarello) 18:47 (en). Shots on Goal—Vancouver 10-10-4—24. Minnesota 8-9-15—32. Power-play opportunities—Vancouver 0 of 2. Minnesota 0 of 3. Goalsies—Vancouver Demko 33-21-7 (31 shots-26 saves). Minnesota Talbot 31-12-4 (24-21). A—17,894 (18,064). T—2:28.

HOCKEY

Professional NHL Eastern Conference Atlantic Division GP W L OTSO Pts GF GA Florida 77 56 15 2 4 118 325 222 Toronto 78 51 21 5 1 108 301 245 Tampa Bay 77 47 22 3 5 102 261 217 Boston 77 47 25 3 2 99 236 209 Buffalo 79 30 38 8 3 71 224 280 Detroit 78 30 38 8 2 70 220 299 Ottawa 77 29 41 5 2 65 210 251 Montreal 78 20 47 9 2 51 200 303 Metropolitan Division GP W L OTSO Pts GF GA Carolina 78 50 20 6 2 108 260 192 NY Rangers 78 51 21 3 3 108 244 194 Pittsburgh 78 44 23 4 7 99 258 215 Washington 77 43 23 9 2 97 266 229 NY Islanders 77 35 32 4 6 80 213 219 Columbus 77 35 36 4 2 76 247 285 New Jersey 77 27 43 2 5 61 236 285 Philadelphia 78 24 43 7 4 59 204 286

BASKETBALL

Professional NBA Playoffs Thursday's Games Memphis 104, Minnesota 95 Dallas 126, Utah 118

AREA BASEBALL

Pillager knocks off Pequot Lakes in area matchup

PILLAGER — Eli Miller pitched six innings as he gave up three hits, one run, and zero earned runs and struck out nine to pick up the win for the Pillager Huskies as they defeated the Pequot Lakes Patriots 5-1 in a non-conference game Thursday, April 21. Miller also went 2-for-2 with an RBI and two walks for the Huskies while Cowen Cremers added a double. Nic Kotaska started on the mound for the Patriots and was tagged with the loss as he went four innings while giving up two hits and one earned run while striking out nine. Kotaska went 1-3 with a triple for the Patriots while Grant Loge drove in the only run with an RBI single.

Game Two Detroit Lakes 19 16 1 Crosby-Ironton 2 4 0 WP: Jackson. LP: Clayton Lingen. Overall: CI 0-2. Next: Crosby-Ironton at Aitkin 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 22.

Little Falls 12, Milaca 2 LITTLE FALLS — Zach Gwost's three runs and Owen Bode's two hits led Little Falls to a 12-2 first win over Milaca in a Granite Ridge Conference game Thursday, April 21. The Flyers knocked out seven hits and George Moore collected a double and four RBIs. Matt Filippi recorded the win, throwing five innings and giving up just four hits and one earned run while striking out nine.

Pierz splits with Zimmerman PIERZ — Jeremy Bingesser went 3-for-4 with a double and five runs scored across two games as the Pierz Pioneers split with the Zimmerman Thunder, winning Game One 15-5 and losing Game Two 8-7 in Granite Ridge Conference games Thursday, April 21. Andy Winscher started the first for the Pioneers and picked up the win going six innings and giving up five runs while striking out eight. Ben Virnig and Kirby Fischer each finished with three RBIs in Game One.

Max Barclay went 3-4 with a double, a solo-home run, three runs scored and four RBIs in Game Two. Reese Young started on the mound for the Pioneers and went five innings while giving up three runs while striking out eight. Barclay picked up the loss in relief as Zimmerman scored five unearned runs in the bottom of the seventh to grab the Game Two win.

Game One Zimmerman 5 8 4 Pierz 15 6 1 WP: Andy Winscher. LP: Eli Nelson. 2B: Jeremy Bingesser, Ben Virnig. Game Two Zimmerman 8 15 2 Pierz 7 8 2 WP: Matthew Freeberg. LP: Max Barclay. 2B: Barclay, Kirby Fischer. HR: Barclay. Conference: Prz 1-2. Overall: Prz 2-2. Next: Foley at Pierz 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 26.

W-DC 12, OTC 2 WADENA — Isaac Hamann and Brandon Wheeler each tallied two hits as Wadena-Deer Creek defeated Ottertail Central 12-2 in a Park Region Conference game Thursday, April 21. Connor Davis threw four innings to get the win.

Ottertail Central Wadena-Deer Creek WP: LP: 2B: 3B: HR: Conference: WDC 1-0. Overall: WDC 1-1. Next: Wadena-Deer Creek hosts Menahga 4:30 p.m. Friday, April 22.

Aitkin 6, Mesabi East 2 AURORA — The Aitkin Gobblers opened their season with a 6-2 win over Mesabi East Thursday, April 21. Aitkin hosts Crosby-Ironton 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 22.

AREA BOYS TENNIS

Aitkin notches 1st win of the season

CLOQUET — Ben Harris, Soh Stumley and Zander Peterson each won their singles matches and the Aitkin Gobblers outlasted Cloquet 4-3 Thursday, April 21. Harris won his match 6-1, 6-2 and Stumley followed with a 6-1, 6-4 win. Peterson closed it out singles with a 6-4, 6-1 win. The doubles team of Wyatt Crowther and

Noland Nordberg picked up the fourth win for the Gobblers 6-2, 6-2. Aitkin 4, Cloquet 3 Singles No. 1: Ethan Lavan (C) def. Jamison St. Clair 7-6, 4-6, 6-1. No. 2: Ben Harris (A) def. Ethan Doty 6-1, 6-2. No. 3: Josh Stumley (A) def. Jonah Bryant-Nikko 6-1, 6-4. No. 4: Zander Peterson (A) def. Tyler Leppi 6-4, 6-1. Doubles No. 1: Logan Beck-Max Sundquist (C) def. Joey Haasken-Blake Sanford 6-2, 5-7, 10-3. No. 2: Mario Leagan-Joey Bender (C) def. Joey Harmon-Josh Kukowski 6-3, 6-2. No. 3: Wyatt Crowther-Noland Nordberg (A) def. Carson Essler-TJ Sabyan 6-2, 6-2. Overall: Ait 1-4. Next: Aitkin hosts Princeton 4:15 p.m. Friday, April 22.

BOYS TENNIS

Warriors sweep Sartell in conference match

BRAINERD — Matthew Moraghan at No. 2 singles won his match 6-0, 6-1 while Karlton Anderson at No. 3 singles won his match 6-1, 6-0 to help the Brainerd Warriors knock off the Sartell Sabres 7-0 Thursday, April 21. Noah Madsen and Eli McConkey won their match at No. 1 doubles 6-3, 6-1 and Beck Barber won his match at No. 1 singles 6-2, 6-1. Brainerd 7, Sartell 0 Singles No. 1: Beck Barber (Brd) def. Sebastian Lau 6-2, 6-1



Moraghan Anderson No. 2: Matthew Moraghan (Brd) def. Zak Farley 6-0, 6-1. No. 3: Karlton Anderson (Brd) def. Jack Michaud 6-1, 6-0. No. 4: George Campbell (Brd) def. Jaden Otto 7-5, 6-3. Doubles No. 1: Noah Madsen-Eli McConkey (Brd) def. Clayton Fuller-Grant Clark 6-3, 6-1. No. 2: Clark Haglin-Will Aadland (Brd) def. Aidan Woods-Bailey Woods 6-2, 6-4. No. 3: Riley Pike-Jalen Emslander (Brd) def. Riley Hengel-Adam Paulson 6-1, 7-5. Conference: Brd 2-0. Overall: Brd 2-4. Next: Brainerd at Elk River Quad 9 a.m. Saturday, April 23.

AREA SOFTBALL

Crosby-Ironton dispatches Pine River-Backus

CROSBY — Katelyn Landree went 3-for-3 with two RBIs to lead Crosby-Ironton to an 11-7 win over Pine River-Backus in a non-conference game Thursday, April 21. Mya Decent was 2-4 with three RBIs and Josie Schaefer collected two hits. Lilly Young pitched seven innings, striking out seven. Debrén Pokes led the Tigers, finishing 3-for-4.

Landree. Overall: C-I 1-0, PRB 0-1. Next: Aitkin at Crosby-Ironton 4 p.m. Friday, April 22; Pine River-Backus vs. Mille Lacs at Isle 4:30 p.m. Friday, April 22.

Pierz 7, Albany 2 PIERZ — Kiara Olesch, Kendra Melby and Britney Schommer each tallied two hits in a 7-2 win for Pierz over Albany in a Granite Ridge Conference game Thursday, April 21. Olesch stole two bases and scored a run. Melby finished with two runs scored and an RBI while Schommer also accumulated a run.

Frankie Seelen pitched seven innings, striking out three and giving up just three hits and zero unearned runs to get the win. Albany 2 3 5 Pierz 7 10 4 WP: Frankie Seelen. Conference: Prz 2-0. Overall: Prz 3-0. Next: Pierz hosts Kimball 4:30 p.m. Friday, April 22.

Sebeka 9, Pillager 1 PILLAGER — Hannah Christie went 3-for-4 with a double and a RBI for the Pillager Huskies in their 9-1 Park Region Conference loss to Sebeka Thursday, April 21.

Brooklyn Rudrud and Sam Berent each had two hit games in the loss for Pillager. Hunter Woidyla had a double for the Huskies. Briana Blais pitched all seven innings for Pillager and struck out six. Sebeka 9 14 0 Pillager 1 12 0 WP: Kaitlyn Eckman. LP: Briana Blais. 2B: Pii-Hunter Woidyla, Hannah Christie. Conference: Pill 0-1. Overall: Pill 0-1. Next: Wadena-Deer Creek at Pillager 4 p.m. Monday, April 25 (2).

W-DC 4, Menahga 2 MENAHGA — Jada Dykhoff went 1-for-2 with a dou-

ble, two runs scored and two RBIs to help the Wadena-Deer Creek Wolverines to a 4-2 victory over the Menahga Braves in a Park Region Conference game Thursday, April 21. Montana Carsten picked up the win on the mound for WDC, as she pitched all seven innings giving up two runs on six hits while striking out four. Menahga 2 6 2 Wadena-Deer Creek 4 2 1 WP: Montana Carsten. LP: Joie Koll. 2B: Jada Dykhoff, Mercedes Schult. Conference: W-DC 1-0. Overall: W-DC 1-0. Next: Wadena-Deer Creek at Pillager 4 p.m. Monday, April 25 (2).

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AREA BOYS GOLF

Pierz finishes 2nd at his home course

PIERZ — Little Falls' Richie Varriano was medalist with a 37 including one birdie at the Granite Ridge Conference Quad Thursday, April 21, at Pierz Golf Course.

Pierz's Logan Herold fired a 38 to finish second. The Pioneers were second as a team behind Lance Otremba's 40, Tyler Theis's 43 and Ethan Thesing's 48.

Little Falls finished fourth with Nathan Boser shooting a 41, Cullen Moe a 50 and three guys with a 51.

Team scores: 1-Mora 160, 2-Pierz 169, 3-Milaca 173, 4-Little Falls 179
Individual medalist: Richie Varriano (LF) 37
Pierz results: 2-Logan Herold 38, T4-Lance Otremba 40, T11-Tyler Theis 43, T16-Ethan Thesing 48, 18-Alex Banick 49, T23-Connor Gotvald 53,
Little Falls results: 1-Varriano 37, T7-Nathan Boser 41, 19-Cullen Moe 50, T20-Nolan Kray 51, T20-Mason Rausch 51, T20-Hayden Johnson 51
Next: Pierz and Little Falls at Blackberry Ridge 9 a.m. Monday, April 25.

Pequot Lakes finishes 2nd at home meet

CROSSLAKE — Morgan Krieger led Pequot Lakes with an 81 to help the Patriots finish second as a team in the Pequot Lakes Opener Thursday, April 21, at Crosswoods Golf Course in Crosslake.

Krieger finished with two birdies in her 10-over par round which put her in third place and five stroke back of co-medalists Laura Syltie and McKenna Mallow of Detroit Lakes.

Pequot Lakes' Annie Neva carded one birdie and shot an 84 to finish tied for sixth while

Patriot Genevieve Birkeland shot an 85 to be tied for eighth. Staples-Motley finished fifth and was led by Bo Erholtz who fired an 86 with one birdie to be 10th. Mallory Uselman was one stroke behind her teammate Erholtz with an 87.

Brainerd's JV team finished third with Marcella Timmons leading the way with a fourth-place 82. Timmons carded one birdie. Madelyn Holmstrom finished tied for eighth with an 85 for the Warriors and recorded two birdies.

Pine River-Backus was led by Hannah Barchus who shot 93 and Cate Travis who shot a 94.
Team scores: 1-Detroit Lakes 326, 2-Pequot Lakes 337, 3-Brainerd JV 357, 4-Moorhead 366, 5-Staples-Motley 391, 6-Bemidji 394
Individual medalist: Laura Syltie (DL) 76, McKenna Mallow (DL) 76
Staples-Motley results: 10-Bo Erholtz 86, T11-Mallory Uselman 87, T32-Ariunzaya Battur 102, 40-Walker Johnson 116
Pequot Lakes results: 3-Morgan Krieger 81, T6-Annie Neva 84, T8-Genevieve Birkeland 85, T11-Ruby Seidl 87, 25-Kate Stephens 96, T26-Charlee Sullivan 97, 46-Bahti Gibbs 129
Brainerd JV: 4-Marcella Timmons 82, T8-Madelyn Holmstrom 85, T21-Kiley Jendro 93, T26-Karley Dunham 97, T26-Libby Lake 97, 39-Camdyn Marohn 111,
Pine River-Backus: T21-Hannah Barchus 93, T23-Cate Travis 94, 40-Kassidy Bristow 116
Next: Pequot Lakes at Ridges at Sand Creek 8 a.m. Monday, April 25; Staples-Motley at Bemidji Town and Country Club 9:30 a.m. Friday, April 29.

Kevin Fiala helps the Wild pull away from Vancouver

By Drew Cove
Special to the St. Paul Pioneer Press

ST. PAUL — Minnesota and Vancouver fought for the tying goal all night. Minnesota had three leads, the third being the charm as Kevin Fiala continued his torrid pace of late and scored a goal to put Minnesota up 4-3 with 7:43 remaining.

That goal held up as the winner as the Wild

beat the Canucks 6-3 in a must-win game as Minnesota fights to gain home-ice advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

Fiala's game winner was his second of the game and 32nd of the season. He also scored the team's opening goal in the second period, which continued his eight-game point streak.

His first goal of the game sparked an

onslaught of goals that highlighted the second period after a sloppy and scoreless first. Minnesota's top players had begun the game fanning on shots and missing the net, but Fiala was determined to change that in the second.

Vancouver's Elias Pettersson quickly evened the scoring at 1-1, Minnesota captain Jared Spurgeon followed with another goal for Minnesota and Vancouver's

Matthew Highmore had a tying marker again for the Canucks to make it 2-2.

Pettersson gave Vancouver its only lead of the game when he took a Conor Garland rebound and sent it past goaltender Cam Talbot with less than five minutes left in the second to give Vancouver its first lead of the game.

Mats Zuccarello was the beneficiary of a silky play and pass from

Kirill Kaprizov to even the score near the end of the middle frame. Kaprizov was hit hard into the boards just a few minutes earlier and skated to the bench in pain. He looked like that pain had been long forgotten when he was dancing through the neutral zone to set up his longtime linemate in Zuccarello for a shot that left him a lot of time and space to beat Canucks goaltender

Thatcher Demko.

To seal the victory, Minnesota's top line scored again, with one goal from Kaprizov and another less than a minute later from Ryan Hartman at the empty net as Vancouver coach Bruce Boudreau pulled Demko for an extra attacker.

Talbot, starting his second consecutive game, made 21 saves in the victory. The win was also Talbot's 200th of his career.



Minnesota Wild right wing Mats Zuccarello celebrates a second period goal against the Vancouver Canucks on Thursday at Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.



Photos by Matt Krohn / USA Today Sports
Vancouver Canucks defenseman Tyler Myers (57) battles with Minnesota Wild left wing Kevin Fiala (22) battle for the puck during the second period of their game on Thursday at Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

The Wolves cough up 26-point lead and lose to Memphis

Minnesota stunned by Grizzlies in Game 3

By Jace Frederick
St. Paul Pioneer Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Timberwolves spent 2½ quarters Thursday showing the type of team they can be.

Unfortunately for Minnesota, the rest of the game revealed the truth of who it appears to be — one not capable of putting it all together for a long enough period of time.

Despite building two separate leads of 25-plus points — one in each half — Minnesota disappeared in the final frame, falling 104-95 to Memphis. The Grizzlies now lead the best-of-7 series 2-1, with Game 4 set for Saturday night at Target Center.

Look at Memphis' roster. Then look at Minnesota's. The two look fairly even in talent. If you squint, you might even be able to convince yourself the Timberwolves have more.

So why did Memphis win 10 more games than Minnesota? Because of everything it displayed in the fourth frame. On a night when everything was going against them, the Grizzlies fought to the finish and found a way.

On a night when everything was coming up Timberwolves, they wilted the moment things started to go awry. After leading 79-54 with three minutes to play, the Timberwolves were outscored 50-13 over the next 15 minutes.

"You have to give them credit, man. They came out here. They were down big. They stayed in the fight. They kept swinging. They didn't let go of the rope," Patrick

Beverley said. "I felt like once we got the big lead we were kind of on our heels. ... This is a learning lesson."

Minnesota built major advantages in each half by dominating defensively, flying around and making life difficult for Ja Morant and Co. The Timberwolves executed a brilliant game plan to sag off everyone, forcing Memphis — a non-shooting team — to fire away from deep or attack multiple defenders in the paint.

The Grizzlies did neither with success for three quarters. Minnesota, meanwhile, found success moving the ball and generating good looks.

Sure, there was a hiccup over the final five minutes of the second quarter, when the Wolves allowed a once-26 point lead to shrivel to just seven at the break. But Minnesota responded resiliently in the third, delivering another titanic blow to the Grizzlies.

As was the case in Game 1, Minnesota just looked better. It matches up so well with Memphis. The cards are the Timberwolves' favor. Memphis' flaws play directly into the Timberwolves hands. You see that whenever the Wolves simply bother to play good basketball.

But they only do so in stretches, as has been the case all season. Memphis, meanwhile, is relentless. That's why a team that's similarly as youthful as the Wolves won 56 games this season. Because it never stops coming at you. And if you slip up, the Grizzlies will

make you pay.

The fourth quarter was a horror film for Timberwolves fans, who watched the lead dwindle away in front of their very eyes as their team shriveled down to nothing. Memphis went on a 21-0 run between the third and fourth quarters — a span in which Chris Finch used zero timeouts. Though, to be fair, the Timberwolves had plenty of opportunities to save themselves.

Instead, though, Minnesota players essentially stood around and watched one another, hoping someone else would come up with the game-saving answer.

It didn't happen. The Wolves went 3 for 19 in the final frame — the third make was a meaningless Anthony Edwards triple in the closing seconds.

"I'm sure they did tense up. We missed a lot of really good shots. Some of them looked tight," Timberwolves coach Chris Finch said. "But I didn't necessarily feel it. I thought we were still in the game. Everything was there to win. They had all the momentum late, but we didn't make enough plays to tighten the thing back up."

Karl-Anthony Towns made a shot — his only attempt of the quarter as he was again a non-factor due to foul trouble and Memphis' defensive scheme that's rendered him moot. That was a major contrast to Morant, who was bottled up for much of the night, but still found a way to record a triple-double and play a large role in his team's suc-



Brad Rempel / USA Today Sports
Minnesota Timberwolves forward Anthony Edwards (1) dribbles against the Memphis Grizzlies guard Ja Morant (12) in the second quarter during Game 3 of their 2022 NBA playoffs first-round series on Thursday at Target Center in Minneapolis.

cess when it mattered most. D'Angelo Russell was so good for much of the night, but went 0-for-3 down the stretch. Patrick Beverley — the team leader — went 0 for 5 in the fourth quarter and wasn't nearly the same emotional nor defensive factor.

"They forced us to pass the ball. We were passing it. We were moving it," Russell said. "At some point it kind of switched and I think that's what hurt us the most. Our style of play kind of was affected somewhere."

Minnesota forgot who it was.

Memphis beat Minnesota to a pulp. The Grizzlies grabbed 19 rebounds in the fourth quarter to Minnesota's five. To put those five in perspective, Tyus Jones grabbed four boards of his own in the fourth, and he played just six minutes in the frame. Brandon Clarke dominated the game late, tallying 12 points

and four rebounds over the final four minutes.

What can that be chalked up to?

"Mental toughness," Beverley said.

Memphis has that in spades. It remains a question mark for Minnesota. All season, the Grizzlies' confidence and swagger was lauded around the nation, while the Wolves' similar antics were looked down upon. Perhaps because most assumed Memphis could back its up.

As things got difficult Thursday, Minnesota's confidence was no where to be found. Perhaps it was unfounded arrogance all along. The Timberwolves have the rest of this series to prove otherwise.

"Obviously they're disappointed," Finch said of his locker room. "But we've got Game 4 here and we're not going to let this game affect that one, for sure. We'll be fine."



Jay Biggerstaff / USA Today Sports

Minnesota Twins starting pitcher Joe Ryan pitches against the Kansas City Royals during the first inning on Thursday at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Missouri.

Ryan, bullpen shine as Twins blank Royals

By Betsy Helfand
St. Paul Pioneer Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Joe Ryan didn't feel as crisp as he wanted. He didn't have the best slider early on, he said, spending the beginning of the game searching for consistency with the pitch. His fastball wasn't where he wanted it to be to start, either. But watching it, it was hard to see any of that — even for his manager. “Maybe he didn't feel like himself, but he looked like himself in a lot of ways,” manager Rocco Baldelli said. “I still think he threw strikes, and I think he missed some bats. And he did everything you would want to see and I thought it was an outstanding outing.”

Ryan's “outstanding” outing, coupled with strong performances

out of the bullpen and a game-saving outfield assist from Nick Gordon in center helped lead the Minnesota Twins to a 1-0 win over the Royals on Thursday afternoon at Kauffman Stadium, staving off a series sweep.

Ryan threw six scoreless innings and faced little trouble in his start, giving up just a pair of hits and walking one batter, Bobby Witt Jr., whom he promptly picked off first base.

“I think it's a good one just for learning experience to just take note of,” Ryan said. “... Nothing was really that crisp. I think the fast-ball command there was huge, and I just kept trying to find that slider that I had last week and I got it later, so I was excited to see that evolution.”

Whether or not he

felt his best, the results were there for the second straight start and Ryan, in the process, dropped his earned-run average to 1.69. The only serious threat he faced came in the fourth inning when Ryan gave up a triple to left fielder Andrew Benintendi — the prevailing west-erlies, Ryan surmised, helped keep the ball in the park. Benintendi then tried to score on a Salvador Pérez flyout to center.

Nick Gordon had other ideas.

Gordon, in center for Byron Buxton, caught the ball and then threw a strike to catcher Ryan Jeffers, the ball getting to the plate on a hop with more than enough time for Jeffers to lay the tag down on Benintendi. The throw preserved the Twins' slim lead, which they grabbed ahold of

in the second inning on a Miguel Sanó sacrifice fly that plated Gio Urshela.

Gordon, when he let go of the ball, knew it had a chance as he watched the play unfold from his spot in center field. He was, understandably, excited.

Just not as excited as Buxton, who was watching from the dugout.

“I was pumped. I said, ‘He's going to be the new Superman,’” Buxton said. “... Definitely that to me was my highlight of the day.”

The highlight of a day that included a return to the field for the first time since last Friday when he left in the first inning with right knee soreness. Serving as the team's designated hitter, Buxton went 1-for-4 with a single, and he said his knee felt good after the game.

“Obviously I had to shut it a couple of days down to let the knee get un-inflamed a little bit but (I) still feel good, still feel locked in, so that's the biggest thing for me,” Buxton said.

His return is a big boost for a lineup that has been struggling to score runs. While the Twins (5-8) finished with eight hits on the day, they again didn't collect an extra base hit and weren't able to create any separation for their pitchers.

Flame-thrower Jhoan Duran, in just his fifth major league outing, was called upon in the seventh inning to protect the lead. With his electric stuff and general poise, it seems likely that the Twins will be turning to the reliever in similar — and even higher-leverage — situations in the near future.

Duran responded to the new situation on Thursday, striking out a pair of batters in a perfect frame.

“I think he can pitch at any point in the game,” Baldelli said. “But when the moments really count, and you have a lead, and you're trying to hold it, I think he has the, not just the stuff, but I think he has the overall ability to do that.”

Duran, followed by Joe Smith and Emilio Pagán, who picked up the first save of the season for the Twins, all showed their ability to do that on Thursday, helping make a winner of Ryan and the Twins.

“We're not going to hesitate to let him pitch us to some wins,” Baldelli said of Ryan. “And he sure as heck pitched us to this win, to a win today.”

SPORTS BRIEFS

NFL to release full 2022 schedule May 12

The 2022 NFL schedule will be divulged one piece at a time before the full reveal May 12.

The NFL announced Thursday that it will announce Amazon Prime Video's first “Thursday Night Football” game (Week 2) during the first round of the NFL draft on April 28.

The league will then announce all International Series games May 4 and reveal select games during the week of May 9. Its schedule release show on NFL Network will be May 12 at 8 p.m. ET.

The 32 NFL teams already know which teams they will face next season as a result of the league's scheduling formula, but the order of games and which ones will be played in primetime slots on national TV will be solidified during the schedule release show.

Five teams already know they for international games. The Green Bay Packers, New Orleans Saints and Jacksonville Jaguars will participate in games in London. The Arizona Cardinals will play a game in Mexico City, and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers will be designated as the home team in the league's first game in Germany, to be played at Allianz Arena in Munich.

Once again, Bauer has leave extended

Once again, Major League Baseball and the players association agreed to extend the administrative leave of Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Trevor Bauer, this time through April 29, multiple outlets reported Thursday.

His current leave, which was extended on April 13, was set to expire Saturday.

Bauer remains off the Dodgers' 40-man roster as MLB continues to investigate the circumstances surrounding a sexual assault accusation made by a San Diego woman last June.

Bauer, 31, last pitched on June 28, 2021, after which the woman's allegations of an aggressive sexual encounter that resulted in injuries went public. The Pasadena (Calif.) Police Department launched an investigation while MLB placed Bauer on leave, then extended it multiple times throughout the season, including the playoffs.

While the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office declined to prosecute Bauer, MLB could invoke its own discipline.

Bauer made just 17 starts last season and pitched 107 2/3 innings to begin a three-year, \$102 million free-agent deal he signed in February 2021. He was 8-5 with a 2.59 ERA and

received his full \$35.3 million pay in 2021.

The Dodgers have yet to indicate their plans for Bauer if and when he's reinstated by MLB.

Curry launches golf tour for underrepresented kids

NBA superstar Stephen Curry is launching a golf tour for young golfers from underrepresented communities.

The Underrated Golf Tour will use regional events to identify 24 boys and girls and give them a chance to compete in American Junior Golf Association star-certified events. All travel, hotels and meals will be paid for, play will take place on elite courses, and the tour will culminate with the crowning of the Curry Cup champion at TPC Harding Park in San Francisco.

“Everybody knows that I love the game of golf, and I couldn't be more excited to extend that love to the best young players that are across the country,” said the Golden State Warriors star in announcing the tour on Thursday.

He continued: “Less than 2 percent of golfers are people of color so our tour provides a platform for equity, access and opportunity for those who can't get their big break but also want to play head-to-head with the current best players on the AGJA.”

An avid golfer, Curry, 34, has played since childhood, frequently takes part in celebrity tournaments and played in a few events on the Korn Ferry Tour.

In August 2019, he made a financial commitment to be spread over six years to restart the golf program at Howard University, a historically Black college in Washington, D.C.

Woman drops lawsuit against Cowboys owner Jones

A woman who alleges that Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones is her biological father has dropped her lawsuit.

Alexandra Davis, 25, said she now wants to verify her claim through genetic testing, according to court papers filed in Dallas on Wednesday and obtained by the Dallas Morning News.

“Alexandra has just decided that she wants to go ahead and proceed with parentage and DNA testing,” said Jay Gray, one of her attorneys. “She wants to remove any doubts that Jerry's her father.”

In her lawsuit, Davis alleged that Jones paid her mother \$375,000 in 1996 to keep silent about the child's paternity.

Court filings by Jones' attorneys had sought to dismiss the lawsuit, but did not address

the paternity claim.

NHL playing 4 regular-season games in Europe in 2022-23

The NHL is heading to Europe for the 2022-23 season.

The Nashville Predators, San Jose Sharks, Colorado Avalanche and Columbus Blue Jackets will play in the 2022 NHL Global Series, marking the first time the NHL has played outside North America since 2019.

In all, four regular-season and two exhibition games will be played in four cities next season.

The Predators will play an exhibition game against SC Bern of the Swiss National League in Bern, Switzerland, on Oct. 3. The following day, the Sharks will meet Eisbaren Berlin of the Deutsche Eishockey Liga in Berlin.

The Predators and Sharks then will open the 2022-23 season with two games in Prague on Oct. 7 and 8.

The Blue Jackets and Avalanche will travel to Tampere, Finland, for two games on Nov. 4 and 5.

Previously, NHL teams played 32 preseason games and 28 regular-season games in Europe from 2007-11 (NHL Premiere Series) and 2017-19 (NHL Global Series).

—Field Level Media