

BRAINERD DISPATCH

SERVING THE BRAINERD LAKES AREA AND CENTRAL MINNESOTA SINCE 1881



CATKINS AWAKEN

Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch

Pussy willows emerge on Monday in the west ditch of the Beaver Dam Road in Brainerd. The white catkins will soon form a visual background along wet ditches in central Minnesota.

Missing dogs now safe at home

Good Samaritans return stolen pets found shot

By Tim Speier
Brainerd Dispatch

BREEZY POINT — Good Samaritans returned two dogs, stolen and wounded by shotgun pellets, to their owner in Breezy Point.

A 28-year-old was arrested Thursday, April 7, in Pine River in connection with the theft of the pets. Caleb Michael Swanson faces two felonies: one count of theft-indifferent to owner's rights and one count of theft-to find and appropriate lost property.

Breezy Point Police Chief Brian Sandell said the department received a report at 5:27 p.m. April 5 of two dogs missing from a home in Breezy Point.

Both dogs were recov-

ered days later with what appeared to be pellets from a shotgun blast in their rear hip areas, Sandell said. The suspect did not have a firearm and there were no shell casings in his truck, according to police.

"We seized the truck, did a search and obtained one of the dog's collars and a bunch of hair consistent with the dogs that were picked up," Sandell said.

Sandell said they are still working on the case and will continue to look into the shooting.

"The dogs were recovered through great teamwork with our department, surrounding departments and the community," Sandell said.

DOGS: Page 7

School Board to conduct final superintendent interviews this week

By Theresa Bourke
Brainerd Dispatch

BRAINERD — Community members will get a chance to meet with the top candidates for Brainerd Public Schools superintendent this week.

The three candidates will undergo their final interviews in front of the School Board Tuesday-Thursday, April 12-14, after which board members will decide to whom they will offer the job.

Before interviewing

each day, the candidates will take part in a community session at 4:45 p.m. in the boardroom at the Washington Educational Services Building.

Heidi Hahn will be first up Tuesday, followed by Eric Schneider on Wednesday and Karsten Anderson on Thursday.

Hahn is the assistant superintendent in Brainerd, where she served in various capacities for 26 years. Before taking over as assistant superintendent in 2018, Hahn

INTERVIEWS: Page 7

Avian flu continues to spread

Minnesota reaches 1.37M birds impacted

By Susan Lunneborg
West Central Tribune

WILLMAR, Minn. — An additional seven poultry flocks diagnosed with avian flu were reported Monday, including the fifth commercial turkey flock in Kandiyohi County and the first sites in Renville and Swift counties.

The flock of 145,000 commercial meat turkeys in Swift County is among the largest flocks to date diagnosed with H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza, according to the state Board of Animal Health's daily web update.

Renville County's first reported infection site is 76,381 commercial meat turkeys.

The additional flock in Kandiyohi County is 21,250 commercial turkey breeder hens. The previous four reports in Kandiyohi



Source / Adobe Stock

Seven additional sites in Minnesota infected with H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza were announced Monday, April 11, after being diagnosed in the past several days.

hi County have been from two breeder hen flocks and two meat turkey flocks.

Stearns County now also has five infection sites with an additional flock of commercial meat turkeys numbering 26,293. One report there has been from a backyard producer and the rest

are all meat flocks.

Other new infection sites reported Monday were a flock of 20,438 in Waseca County, 30,000 birds in Otter Tail County, and 38,000 in LeSueur County, all of them commercial meat turkeys.

AVIAN FLU: Page 8

Mariupol teeters as Russia readies for onslaught in eastern Ukraine

By Nabih Bulos, Laura King and Jenny Jarvis
Los Angeles Times

MYKOLAIV, Ukraine — With Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy telling compatriots to brace for a fateful week, Western military officials warned Monday that Russian forces will likely resort to even more brutal tactics against civilians in a looming offensive in the country's south and east.

Nearly seven weeks into the war, Russian forces, whose campaign has been marked by strategic stumbles, appeared poised to achieve a major objective: capturing the port city of Mariupol. A Ukrainian marine brigade that described itself



Sergey Bobok/AFP via Getty Images/TNS

An elderly woman gestures toward a partially destroyed five-story building in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on April 10 amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

as among the last holdouts posted on Facebook that the unit had suffered a "mountain of wounded" and was running out of ammunition.

"For some, death, and for some, captivi-

ty," said the post, which criticized Ukrainian military higher-ups for not providing more weaponry and resources for the fight.

Hours earlier, Zelenskyy said the city, the

scene of one of the war's most sustained and savage Russian offensives, had been "destroyed" and that tens of thousands of its residents were dead.

"Ukrainian soldiers are surrounded and blocked," Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak wrote Monday on Twitter. "From the beginning, we've been asking our partners for a chance — for tanks and jets. The world remains silent and watches genocide online."

Amid the carnage and rising atrocities in Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin held his first face-to-face talks since the Feb. 24

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