

# BRainerd DISPATCH

SERVING THE BRAINERD LAKE AREA OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA SINCE 1881



## SNOW FUN

Kelly Humphrey / Brainerd Dispatch

Elsie Anderson jumps off a pile of snow on Sunday during the Lumberjack Jaunt at the Northland Arboretum.

## 2022 Minn. legislative session kicks off

### Lemon bars, looser COVID precautions mark first day

By Dana Ferguson and Alex Derosier  
Brainerd Dispatch

ST. PAUL — Cheers and chants echoed through the rotunda.

Minnesotans unfurled banners and held up bright signs.

For the first time in nearly two years, typical goings-on at the state Capitol in St. Paul picked up as the Legislature started the 2022 legislative session on Monday, Jan. 31.

The pandemic and its impacts hung over law-

makers and visitors at the Capitol as they split over face mask use in the House of Representatives and debated extending worker compensation payments to those who got sick with COVID-19 on the job.

But many of the typical novelties were back on for the first time since 2020, as the building had loosened restrictions for lawmakers and visitors in attendance.

LEGISLATIVE: Page 8

## With no state action expected, DFL will move forward with ineligible voters in caucuses

By Alex Derosier  
Brainerd Dispatch

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party will still move ahead with allowing ineligible voters to take part in its precinct caucuses Tuesday night, Feb. 1, after the state's top election official said he did not have the authority to stop the party from doing so.

At a Monday, Jan. 31, news conference, DFL Chairman Ken Martin told reporters that a January appeals court decision gives his party a safe harbor to allow felons, noncitizens and others to pick delegates and introduce party policies at the local level.

“Whether Secretary (of State Steve) Simon, the state or anyone else

CAUCUSES: Page 8

## Brainerd man wins America's Ice Fishing Tournament

BRAINERD — David Groshong of Brainerd won the top prize in the inaugural Brainerd Jaycees' virtual America's Ice Fishing Tournament.

Groshong's northern pike scored 46.62 points, which landed him on the 210th spot on the leaderboard of the Jan. 22 fishing contest and made him the big prize winner. He won a cash prize of \$25,000.

“I was very excited about it,” said David Groshong in a news release. “It's the first time I've ever won anything big. ...My fishing partner is only 14 years old. I need to have a little cash to make some more things happen.”

In 2021 the Brainerd Jaycees Ice Fishing Extravaganza shifted their on-ice tournament to a virtual event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the success of the 2021 tournament, the Jaycees decided to organize a completely separate, new virtual annual ice fishing tournament. America's Ice Fishing Tournament drew 845 contestants from across ice belt states, including Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Idaho, Illi-



Contributed

David Groshong of Brainerd was the big prize winner during the virtual America's Ice Fishing Tournament held Jan. 22. Groshong's northern pike earned him a prize of \$25,000.

nois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington

and Wisconsin.

The contest took place 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Throughout the day 1,371 fish were registered through the FishDonkey app (210 crappies, 384 northern pike, 386 perch, 255 sunfish, 136 walleye).

The Jaycees also planned hourly giveaways on their Facebook page to create a day-of atmosphere which was very well received by contestants.

Contestants were eligible to win one of 500 prizes, including a new Ford F-150 truck or \$25,000 cash. The 500 prizes were scattered throughout the top 2,000 places based on point-awarded fish values.

The points system developed by the Jaycees proved a success, with all of the eligible species being represented throughout the leaderboard. Gary Wiese from Idaho caught the biggest point-valued fish — a 14.75-inch perch, worth 99.48 points on the Jaycees system, beating out a 28-inch walleye worth 92.50 points.

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## New career, technical education area is on display at high school



Theresa Bourke / Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd High School student Zoey Smith showcases bowls made by woodworking students while leading a tour group through the school's new career and technical education area on Monday.

By Theresa Bourke  
Brainerd Dispatch

BRAINERD — During a time when workforce shortages are plaguing many industries, Brainerd High School students are learning skills that could position them to make an impact.

The school's new career and technical education wing — a result of the 2018 referendum — was on display during an open house Monday, Jan. 31, showing community members how their

tax dollars are playing a part to economically bolster the region.

“This referendum was the greatest gift that our community could have ever given our school,” Superintendent Laine Larson said to the group assembled Monday night. “And so it is essential that we appreciate it, and that we're thankful for it, and that we treat it as respectfully and as great as we can by providing the highest quality education for our future.”

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