



CROOKSTON WATCH

"NORTHWEST MINNESOTA'S REGIONAL NEWSPAPER"



Publication of the Thief River Falls Times



SAT | JANUARY 3 | 2026

324 Main Ave. N., Thief River Falls, MN 56701 • Vol. 2, No. 14

MDH designates RiverView Health as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital

Every second counts when someone is having a stroke. That is why it is vital that RiverView Health is equipped and ready to evaluate, stabilize, and provide emergency treatment to patients with acute stroke symptoms – improving the chances of better outcomes. The Minnesota Department of Health recently redesignated RiverView as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital. This designation is part of the Minnesota Stroke Program, which is committed to reducing the burden of stroke by increasing community awareness, providing

ongoing education for healthcare providers, and continuously improving the statewide system of stroke care. "Being an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital ensures prompt, efficient stroke care aligning with state guidelines and standards when time is critical," said Kayla Jossund, RN, and RiverView's Trauma/Stroke Program coordinator since fall 2024. "This designation provides us with the knowledge, tools, and resources to improve the outcomes and quality of the lives of our patients."

MDH's goal is to ensure hospitals meet stroke-ready criteria so that all Minnesotans live within 30 minutes of a facility prepared to deliver the best possible stroke care. Currently, 94% of Minnesotans fall within that 30-minute window. **Types of stroke** A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in or around the brain bursts. This can result in brain damage, causing long-term disability or even death. The three main types of stroke are:

- Ischemic stroke – caused by a blockage cutting off blood supply to the brain.
 - Hemorrhagic stroke – caused by a blood vessel in the brain leaking or bursting.
 - Transient ischemic attack (TIA) – often called a "mini-stroke," caused by temporary blockage.
- Symptoms vary depending on where in the brain the stroke occurs and how much tissue is affected. **Meeting requirements, more** RiverView meets the MDH designation requirements in several key ways.

An emergency team is available 24/7, including an Emergency Department physician, RN, and staff from both the lab and diagnostic imaging. The team completes required stroke education, and all stroke charts are reviewed for ongoing performance improvement. RiverView's Emergency Department also maintains close communication with local Emergency Medical Services to prepare before a patient arrives, allowing the team to act quickly once the patient is on site. Stroke patients at

RiverView can also receive Tenecteplase, a medication that quickly breaks down blood clots and restores blood flow to the area, helping prevent further injury to the tissue. Not all critical access hospitals are equipped to provide this treatment. If a higher level of care is required, patients are transferred by ground or air ambulance to a comprehensive stroke center. **Emergency, inpatient and outpatient services** RiverView's Emergency Department treats 30 to 40



Fin & Fit Crookston held its Second Annual Holiday Fundraiser Friday, Dec. 19 at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The event featured a bake sale, gift basket/mis-

cellaneous sale and a pasta bar meal. (Photo courtesy of Fin & Fit Facebook page)

City Council adopts levy

Property tax levy increases 8%

by Anna Phalen
Correspondent

The Crookston City Council held a special meeting Monday, Dec. 29. **The council approved the property tax levy for taxes payable in 2026, which includes an 8% increase.** The amount to be levied for the current year, collectible in 2026, will be for general levy (revenue), \$4,819,065, and special levy (tax abatement), \$26,000. As a result, the total tax levy will be \$4,845,065. Following levy approval, the council adopted the City of Crookston's 2026 budget. **Council members adopted a five-year Capital Improvement Plan for 2026 through 2030.** The plan was previously presented and discussed, with public input received during the Truth in Taxation hearing held Monday, Dec. 1. The CIP outlines anticipated capital projects and infra-

structure investments over the five-year period. **The council approved a resolution authorizing an accounting and advisory services agreement with CliftonLarsonAllen LLP.** The agreement outlines professional services to assist the City of Crookston with financial reporting, audit preparation, internal control review, financial reporting support, and other related accounting services as requested by city management. Under the agreement, CLA will perform services in accordance with applicable professional standards, while city management retains responsibility for financial records, internal controls, and regulatory compliance. City staff determined the agreement to be in the best interest of the city. **In other business, the council granted a temporary extension of the liquor license for the Crookston Inn while the sale of the business is pending.**

Legion, its Auxiliary deliver donations to support youth

Crookston American Legion Post 20 and Crookston American Legion Auxiliary Unit 20 thank their members and the community for their donations to support children and youth in the community. Personal hygiene products were delivered to Crookston High

School. Cash donations were delivered to Highland Elementary School for the weekend backpack program and school supplies were delivered to Cathedral and Our Savior's schools. Golden Link allowed the Legion and its Auxiliary to collect the items at its facility.

Grant awarded for experiences for girls in Polk County

The Ann Bancroft Foundation has announced its 2025 fall grant cycle, awarding 165 grants totaling \$147,713 to girls and gender-expansive youth across 26 Minnesota counties. Recipients included 27 elementary schoolers, 44 middle schoolers, and 94 high schoolers. One grant was awarded in Polk County. The grants will support a wide range of learning experiences, leadership programs, sports opportunities, creative arts instruction,

outdoor exploration, and STEM enrichment ensuring that girls across Minnesota have the resources and encouragement to imagine something bigger. "Every grant we award represents a girl stepping into her power," said Ethelind B. Kaba, executive director of the Ann Bancroft Foundation. "Whether they are exploring space, building confidence through sports, conducting research, or



Elaine Metzger, chaplain of the Crookston American Legion Auxiliary, presented collected school supplies to Sandra Trittin and students at Our Savior's Lutheran School. The Legion and its Auxiliary also presented personal hygiene products to Crookston High School, school supplies to

Cathedral School, and cash donations to Highland Elementary School for its weekend backpack program. The Legion and its Auxiliary thank their members and the community for its donations for this project. (Submitted)

Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act signed

On Dec. 11, U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith (D-MN) announced that the bipartisan Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act, which they cosponsored, has been signed into law. It recognizes the 45th anniversary of the extraordinary victory of U.S. Men's Hockey at the 1980 Winter Olympic Games, where they defeated the Soviet Union.

In February 1980, the United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team defeated the Soviet Union 4-3 in the first game of the medal round of the 1980 Winter Olympic men's hockey tournament in Lake Placid, New York. Team USA, which included 12 hockey players born in Minnesota and was coached by University of Minnesota championship-winning hockey coach Herb Brooks,

defied expectations by defeating the four-time Olympic champion Soviet Union team in a game referred to as the "Miracle on Ice."

At a time when the United States was struggling with rampant stagflation, high gas prices, hostages held in Iran, and increased tensions with the Soviets after their invasion of Afghanistan, the Miracle on Ice was a welcome reprieve and a critical moment for American patriotism. Following the stunning victory against the Soviets, the Americans beat Finland 4-2 to secure the gold.

The law awards three Congressional Gold Medals to members of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team, one of which will be displayed at the United States Hockey Hall of Fame in Eveleth.

Grant awarded in Polk County

(Continued from Page 1) creating music, we are honored to support their journeys." Grants were awarded to youth from elementary school through high school,

with representation from urban, suburban and rural communities statewide. A total of 29.7% of the grants were awarded in Greater Minnesota.

Council to meet

The Crookston City Council will meet Monday, Jan. 5 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the council chambers.

The Ways and Means Committee will meet immediately following the council meeting at the same location.

To watch either meeting live, visit the city's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/CityofCrookstonChannel.

All notices may also be found online at www.crookston.mn.us.

MDH designates RiverView Health as a Stroke Ready Hospital

(Continued from Page 1) stroke patients each year, according to Jossund. About 60% of these patients experience ischemic strokes, and a similar percentage require transfer to a comprehensive stroke center for advanced care.

For patients who can be treated at RiverView – either in the ED, on the Inpatient Unit, or through Outpatient Services – care extends beyond nursing and physician support. RiverView provides physical, occupational, and speech

therapy, and RiverView Home Care is available for additional support in the home.

The average stroke patient at RiverView is 75 years old, Jossund said. Although strokes are more common among older adults, nearly one-quarter occur in people younger than 65.

Common comorbidities among RiverView stroke patients include Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and tobacco use.

Prevention

According to 2024 guidelines from the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association, up to 80% of strokes may be preventable through healthy lifestyle choices and risk factor management.

- The AHA recommends:
- Healthy eating
 - Physical activity
 - Quitting tobacco
 - Adequate sleep
 - Maintaining a healthy weight
 - Controlling cholesterol
 - Managing blood sugar
 - Managing blood pressure

Research suggests that following these guidelines could help prevent an estimated 10,000 strokes per year in Minnesota.

The first step in prevention is visiting with your primary care provider to discuss your risks. If you do not have a provider, all RiverView Family Medicine and Internal Medicine providers are taking new patients. Call 218-281-9595 to schedule an appointment.

UMN Crookston course recognized for earning QMFD standard

Recognition is step forward in university's strategic plan

The University of Minnesota Crookston is announcing that COMM 3710: Event Planning and Management is being recognized for achieving the Quality Matters Foundational Design standard through the Quality Matters review process. This recognition underscores the university's commitment to delivering exceptional, high-quality education that is thoughtfully designed to support student learning and success, and is a timely step forward touching several focus areas of the University of Minnesota's Elevate Extraordinary 2030 strategic plan.

Quality Matters is the leading national standard for quality assurance in online course design, using a comprehensive, research-

based rubric to evaluate clarity, structure, accessibility, and alignment within a course. Dr. Jeff Lindgren, associate director of the Center for Educational Innovation, highlighted the rigorous and supportive nature of the University of Minnesota's in-house process he is overseeing.

"Quality Matters (QM) is the leading national standard for quality assurance and continuous improvement in online course design, and is grounded in decades of research. A team of three university faculty or staff reviewers provides research-based feedback that is collegial, constructive, specific, and actionable, all of which is aligned with the comprehensive QM Rubric. The QM Rubric covers key elements of course design such as assessment, instructional materials, learning activities, course technology and accessibility."

Crookston's COMM 3710 is the first course across the 5 University of Minnesota

campuses to be approved through this internal review process. COMM 3710 is a hands-on, applied course in which students learn and practice event planning industry skills. Students use project management techniques to plan, market, implement, and evaluate small and large-scale events. Throughout the semester, student teams design and execute both in-person and virtual events, gaining practical experience while strengthening project management, communication, and collaborative problem-solving skills.

As part of UMN Crookston's strong portfolio of online and on-campus programs, COMM 3710 contributes significantly to preparing students for roles that require coordination, communication, and the ability to manage complex projects. Dr. Eddie Loo, director of online programs, emphasized the importance of this recognition as the university continues to

strengthen quality across its online courses.

Loo said, "Our online program quality-assurance includes pre-delivery course reviews by peer faculty and staff based on an abridged version of the Quality Matters Rubric. However, this is the first time that one of our courses was reviewed by a team of Certified QM reviewers from the University of Minnesota, in a full review involving eight QM General Standards and 44 Specific Review Standards."

Loo also noted the course's strength in accessibility, adding, "The COMM 3710 received a UDOIT Digital Accessibility Scorecard of 99%."

The University of Minnesota Crookston continues to align its courses with national quality benchmarks to ensure students receive an education that is rigorous, relevant, and intentionally designed for long-term success.

Crookston Area Ministries

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH
23928 265th St SW - Crookston
(East of Highland School)
Church: 281-5629
Preston Hoiseth, Pastor
Web: www.biblebaptistcrookston.org
Email: biblebaptist@midco.net
Sundays: 7:45 a.m. & 10:05 a.m., Heavenly Sunlight radio program on KROX, 10 a.m. Bible Classes for all ages including adults, 11 a.m. Morning Worship, 6 p.m. Evening Worship
Wednesdays: 7 p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Service

BYGLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
40976 235th Street SW - Fisher, MN
www.fisherbyglad.org
Pastor Gretchen Enoch
Phone: 218-893-4243
Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.

CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - CROOKSTON & ST. PETER'S - GENTILLY
702 Summit Avenue - Crookston
218-281-1735, Parish,
218-281-1835, School & RE Offices
The Most Reverend Bishop Cozzens
The Very Reverend
Msgr. David Baumgartner
Saturdays: 5 p.m. Mass at Cathedral, 10:30 a.m. Mass at Gentilly
Daily Mass: 7:45 a.m. Tuesday-Friday (Monday Communion Service 7:45 a.m.)
Please visit our website:
www.crookstoncathedral.com
for more information.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
321 5th Avenue South - Crookston
218-281-5402
Pastor David Johnson
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
2814 Cherry Street - Grand Forks, ND
Bishop Derek Pruitt
435-979-4491
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship

CLIMAX LUTHERAN CHURCH SAND HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH
P.O. Box 49 - Climax, MN 56523
Pastor Matt Williams
218-857-2215 • 218-857-3362
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Worship

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN
100 Jefferson Ave SW - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
Check out website for further information
www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

ENCOUNTER CHURCH
209 North Main - Crookston
Pastor Mathew McWaters - 218-281-4017
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. Children's Church (ages 4-12)
Find us on Facebook

FAABERG LUTHERAN AT RINDAL, MN
4391 340th Ave - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morto
Sundays: 8:15 a.m. Worship Service
Check out website for further information
www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, MENTOR
105 Harrison Ave N - Mentor
Pastor Rev. Michael Sletto
218-637-8263
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD
33276 339th Ave. SW - Eldred, MN
c/o Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Crookston, MN - 218-281-1239
Pastor: Steven Bohler
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Service

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
510 North Broadway - Crookston
218-281-4853
crookstonfirstpres.org
Rev Michael Ozaki, pastor
Sundays: 10:45 a.m. Worship (live-streaming at crookstonfirstpres.org or on our Facebook page) Communion 1st Sunday
Thursdays: 1 p.m. - Book study

FISHER LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
209 2nd Street S - Fisher, MN
www.fisherbyglad.org
Pastor Gretchen Enoch
218-891-4632
Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.

FREEDOM CHURCH
Pastor Joel Schwartz
218-275-2350
101 W 2nd St Crookston
hellofreedomchurch.com
Sundays: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship

GOSEN CHURCH, INDEPENDENT
Gary Johnson, Pastor
<http://www.gosen-church.com>
Facebook: Gosen Church
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service (also on Facebook and gosen-church.com)

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Pastor Noah Thompson
Pastor John Merseth
1221 Barrette St #2605 - Crookston
Phone: 218-281-4342
Sundays: 1:30 p.m. Worship

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, ERSKINE (NALC)
Church Office: 218-687-4035
332 Vance Avenue - Erskine, MN 56535
Rev. Pamela Thorson, Pastor
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship
Worship also on GVTel TV, Facebook and Youtube

HARVEST CHURCH
520 Fisher Avenue - Crookston
218-281-2264
Pastor Dave Finsaas
www.harvestchurchcrookston.com
Sundays: Worship Service online or in-person at 10:30 a.m. *Livestream can be found on our Facebook and YouTube channel.*
Facebook: Harvest Church Crookston
YouTube: Harvest Church Crookston, MN
Instagram: @harvestchurchcrookston

HOPE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
11330 435th St SW - Fertile - 218-945-3677
www.hope4fertile.org
email: hope4fertile.worship@gmail.com
Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship

KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
1727 Widman Lane - Crookston
For information call: 218-281-6252
Sundays: 10 a.m. Public Talk, Watchtower Study
Thursdays: 7 p.m. Christian Life, Ministry Meeting

LITTLE NORWAY LUTHERAN
10802 423rd St SE - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship Service
Check out website for further information
www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

LIVING WATER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH
Nielsville, MN
Monty & Amanda Brown
For information call: 218-946-2675
Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship
Wednesdays: 7 p.m. Evening Service

MAPLE BAY FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor David Jore
Parsonage: 218-574-2222
Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

NEXUS CHURCH
605 3rd Ave NE - Crookston
Lead Pastor, Danny Holwerda, Jr.
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship

OUR LADY OF SORROWS' CHAPEL - Society of St. Pius X
600 E Robert St - U.S. Hwy 2 E - Crookston
218-281-6880, 218-773-8020
Sundays: 2 p.m. Holy Mass

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD
Crookston
Pastor Steven Bohler
Sundays: 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. Services, 9:30 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study

PRAIRIE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
27897 170th Ave. SW - Crookston
218-281-3506 or 218-280-2084
Pastor Pat Baranski
Sundays: 10 a.m. Church Service, 11 a.m. Sunday School - Adult Sunday School

RESURRECTION FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH, AFLC
415 West 6th St - Beltrami
Pastor Joel Kangas
Church email: resurrect@gvtel.com
Church website: www.resurrectionfree.org
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship

RODNES LUTHERAN
35473 180th Ave SE - Erskine
South of Hwy 2 on Cty 210
Office: 218-687-4345
Pastor Joel Smeby
www.facebook.com/RodnesLutheran
Sundays: 7 a.m. Radio Broadcast on KRJB (106.5FM), 10 a.m. Worship (live on Facebook and in person)

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
707 4th Ave. NE - Crookston
Phone: 218-456-2568
Pastor David Jahn
Saturdays: 10 a.m. Sabbath School, 11:30 a.m. Worship

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH - FERTILE
10490 438th St SW
Fertile
218-945-6649
Fr. Larry Delaney
Sundays: 8:30 a.m. Mass

ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH - MENTOR
Fr. Larry Delaney
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Mass

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - EUCLID
Sundays: For the months of January, February, and March, weekend Mass on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Tuesdays: Mass at 8:30 a.m.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN (ELCA)
1214 University Avenue - Crookston
Email: stpauls@midconetwork.com
Website: stpaulscrookstonmn.com
Phone: 218-281-3638
Pastor Curt Peterson
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship
You may worship via Facebook Live: [facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn)

THRIVING LIFE CHURCH
22722 350th St. Erskine, MN 56535
Pastor Jim Binder
218-556-1545
<https://thrivinglifemn.org>
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship

TRINITY LUTHERAN
402 6th St E - Beltrami
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship
Check out website for further information
www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

MAPLE LAKE LUTHERAN
13960 380th St SE - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship Service
Check out website for further information
www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
205 S Broadway - Crookston
Rev. Gregory Isaacson, Senior Pastor
Rev. Michael Ozaki, Associate Pastor
218-281-4276
9 a.m. Broadcast Worship live over Crookston Cable TV Channel #3, KROX Radio 1260AM, KROX 105.7FM and streaming live on Facebook: Trinity Lutheran Church, Crookston, MN.
For additional information and calendar updates, please check out our website at www.trinitycrookston.org

Sundays: 9 a.m. - Worship at Trinity Lutheran Church, 10:45 a.m. - Worship at First Presbyterian Church
Thursdays: 1 p.m. - Book Study at First Presbyterian Church

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, FISHER (LCMS)
Church Office: 218-891-4581
Pastor Doug Thompson
Website: tfcstpaul.org
Email: trinity.st.paulparishes@gmail.com
Sundays: 10 a.m. Bible Study, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. Worship Service - Communion celebrated on the second and last Sunday of the month.

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
701 Eickhof Blvd - Crookston
218-281-3393
www.crookstonmethodist.com - view services here
email: wesleyumcrox@gmail.com
Rev. Ruth Sanders, Pastor
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School (Sept. - May), 10:45 a.m. Worship (Communion 2nd Sunday)

This Church Directory Is Sponsored By The Following Businesses

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Benedictine LIVING COMMUNITY CROOKSTON 516 Walsh Street Crookston, MN 56716 www.benedictinecrookston.org CALL 218-281-3424 TO LEARN MORE</p> | <p>Farmer's Elevator Co. Eldred, MN 281-1364</p> | <p>CROOKSTON FUEL CO. For fast friendly service call Bill today 218-289-1969 Hwy. 75 South, Crookston</p> | <p>Stenshoel-Houske FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICE Monument & Marker SALES 615 S. Minnesota St • PO Box 584 • Crookston, MN 56716 (218) 281-3312 • Fax: (218) 281-3059 • stenhou@midconetwork.com</p> |
| <p>PROULX REFRIGERATION & HEATING INC. Complete Sales & Service • Commercial & Domestic Furnaces AC Heat Pumps Electric, Gas or Oil Boilers TRANE Goodman IBC 524 Marin Avenue • Crookston, MN Phone: 218-281-1370 Fax: 218-281-1376</p> | <p>GROW YOUR BUSINESS</p> | <p>SECURE AN AD SPOT! Contact us about advertising on this page & reach thousands of readers every month. CALL US TODAY (218) 681-4450</p> | <p>GROW YOUR BUSINESS</p> |

State awarded \$193 million for first year of Rural Health Transformation Program

The Minnesota Department of Health will be awarded more than \$193 million for rural health care across our state.

This first year of Rural Health Transformation Program investments from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services includes base funding distributed to approved states as well as significant additional funds recognizing Minnesota's innovative plan to stabilize and strengthen health care delivery in rural communities. In 2026, all 50 states will receive first-year awards from CMS.

The funding will support strategic investments in new technology tools to bring care closer to home for rural residents; improve health outcomes for Minnesotans with or at risk of developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic kidney disease; and expand the rural health care workforce through education and training pathways. Funding will also be used to enhance technology-enabled care delivery, including mobile and community-based services, strengthen provider partnerships, and bolster the financial stability of rural

providers through targeted investments in technology and data infrastructure.

"With rural Minnesota facing unprecedented access and funding challenges, this award comes at a crucial time," said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Dr. Brooke Cunningham. "It is an important investment in our rural communities, and we are excited to begin working with our partners to advance access to high-quality care, improve outcomes and ensure sustainable services in Greater Minnesota for years to come."

Minnesota's approved plan was built on extensive collaboration with rural community stakeholders, hospitals and health systems, safety net clinics, Tribes and local public health agencies.

MDH's application was submitted Nov. 4 and asked for \$1 billion over five years for an average of \$200 million per year. The application reflected input from more than 40 stakeholder meetings and nearly 350 public responses; state officials will continue engaging stakeholders when the implementation process begins

in early 2026.

The Rural Health Transformation Program, established under H.R.1 (Public Law 119-21), provides up to \$50 billion nationwide over five years to support innovative rural health initiatives. States should receive more details from CMS on funding awards in the coming days.

Additional details and insights about Minnesota's specific strategic RHTP initiatives is available on MDH's Rural Health Transformation Program website (www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/rural-trans.html).

Traci Joppur
Publisher
tjoppur@trftimes.com



April Scheinoha
Editor
april@trftimes.com



Scott DCamp
Sports Editor
scott@trftimes.com



Anna Phalen
Correspondent
Ad Sales



Eric Charlson
Sales and Marketing
echarlson@trftimes.com



Cindy Baldwin
Sales and Marketing
sales@trftimes.com



Winter weather tips for the yard

When Old Man Winter calls, homeowners need to keep everyone in the family – including pets – safe. Follow these winter weather tips from the TurfMutt Foundation:

- **Bring pets inside:** Dogs and cats should be kept inside during cold weather months. Wipe their paws and bellies after they've been outside, and check for ice accumulation between paw pads. If you're using a de-icing agent, remove that salt and other agents, too.

- **Pick up debris:** Before it snows, remove debris and household items from your family yard. Doormats, hoses, toys and sticks can hide under a layer of snow that could harm your snow thrower, family or pets.

- **Clear a path:** Your snow

thrower is a convenient way to clear your driveway and sidewalks. It also gives your pet a path to their bathroom area.

- **Trim trees carefully:** When using a chainsaw, stand with your weight on both feet, adjust your stance so you are angled away from the blade and hold the chainsaw with both hands.

- **Ventilate portable generators:** If a winter storm knocks out your power, a generator can be a life-saver, if used properly. Place the generator outside and away from windows, doors and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.

- **Watch where you throw:** Keep kids and pets away from the equipment, and never put your hand in

the chute or auger to clear a blockage. Turn the machine off and always use a clean-out tool.

searching for an apartment in CROOKSTON?

Contact Crookston Summerfield Townhomes
---Featuring---
• Heat/Water/Trash Included
• Competitive Rental Rates
• Great North End Location

1 & 2 Bedroom Units Available

218-280-9851
www.gmmco.org

GREATER MINNESOTA MANAGEMENT
Greater Minnesota Management is an Equal Housing Opportunity Provider.

Take Your Ag Operation to the Next Level

American Federal
Banking-Insurance-Investments

304 N Broadway, Crookston
218-281-3305
Toll Free: 877-884-3656
www.americanfederalbank.com

- Gas/Diesel
- ATM
- Propane Exchange
- Car Wash
- Made Fresh Foods/Deli
- Bulk Oil & Fuel Delivery
- Home Heating Oil
- Contracts Offered for Farm Fuel

Keeping You Fueled

Open 24 Hours
7 Days a Week

1020 OLD HWY 75 | CROOKSTON | 218-281-2157

Do you want to continue receiving the Crookston Watch free of charge.

Scan this QR code and let us know.

DEATH NOTICES

Doris Sterger, 71
Crookston - Doris Marie Sterger, 71, of Crookston passed away on Friday December 26, 2025. Visitation was held Friday, January 2, 2026 at 10:30 am at Stenshoel-Houske Funeral Home. The funeral service began at 11:30 a.m. with a reception to follow.

John Geary, 75
Crookston - John Allan Geary passed away November 13, 2025. A memorial service is planned for Saturday, January 3, 2026, to be held in person and over Zoom at 2 p.m. at the Crookston Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, with a reception immediately following at the Golden Link Senior Center in Crookston.

Greg Burgoz IV, 64
Greg Burgoz IV, 64, passed away on Wednesday, December 24, 2025.

LEGAL NOTICES

January 3, 2026
LEGAL NOTICE
As per Minnesota Statute 115A.9302 (1995) the City of Crookston makes the following disclosure to its residential refuse collection customers. The City of Crookston transports approximately 500 tons of Municipal solid waste and 200 cubic yards of demolition debris to the following sites: Polk County Transfer Station Permit #SW-327 and Polk county Landfill Permit #SW-124. Residential customers should be aware of the following:
"You may be responsible for any liability that results from contamination at a facility where your waste has been

deposited. Minnesota believes that its waste management system provides substantially more financial and environmental protection than depositing waste in landfills in other states. Managing your waste in Minnesota may minimize your potential liability."

January 3, 2026
LOWELL TOWNSHIP Election Notice
Filings for Clerk (2 year term) and one Supervisor (3 year term) will be accepted at the Clerk's residence until 5 pm Jan. 16, 2026. Filing fee is \$2. Annual meeting and election to be held March 10, 2026.
Michael Boucher, Clerk

COUNTRY PLACE APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Country Place 55+ property offers spacious 1 & 2 bedroom apartments.

---Featuring---
• On-Site Laundry Facilities
• Parking with Garages (limited availability)
• Heat, Electric, Water, Sewer and Garbage included in rent

800-504-6093
www.gmmco.org
23110 347th St SE
Erskine, MN 56535

Choice Therapy
Physical - Occupational - Chiropractic

GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF PAIN FREE MOVEMENT THIS SEASON!
PICK THE PLACE THAT CHECKS ALL THE BOXES!

Same Day Appointments Available
Up front parking
Locally Owned and Operated

Whole Body Care Specialists
Individualized Treatment Plans
Return to sport, work, and pain free days faster!

Tell your provider you CHOOSE your services at Choice Therapy!
218-470-0132 | www.choicecrookston.com

The Crookston Watch is published weekly every Saturday and distributed to over 4,600 households in Northwest Minnesota and surrounding area. The Crookston Watch is published in conjunction with the Thief River Falls Times, which is published weekly every Wednesday.

The Crookston Watch shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Crookston Watch's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with an advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.

A Publication of:
Thief River Falls Times
324 Main Avenue North
P.O. Box 100
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Telephone: (218) 681-4450
Fax: (218) 681-4455

THIEF RIVER FALLS Times
OFFICE HOURS

The Times office hours are:
Monday - Thursday
8 am - 5 pm
Friday
8 am - 3 pm

POLK COUNTY Minnesota Employment Opportunities:

Assistant County Attorney I - II - Attorney's Office:
\$42.22 - \$57.76/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

Community Service Officer - Sheriff's Office:
\$25.47 - \$32.26/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

Deputy Sheriff Patrol I - II - Sheriff's Office:
\$31.55 - \$42.36/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

Engineering Technician - Highway:
\$26.99 - \$38.06/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

Mechanical Maintenance Technician - Incinerator:
\$25.47 - \$32.26/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

Sort Line Operator I - II - Fosston:
\$19.22 - \$25.56/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

For a full job description, application, and general job openings information, go to www.co.polk.mn.us and click on "Careers" or call 218-281-5408 Polk County Administrator's Office. EOE

POLK COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Social Worker - Social Services
\$32.90 - \$41.67/hr. Position Closes on Friday, January 16, 2025.

Social Worker (CPS) - Social Services
\$33.44 - \$42.36/hr. Position Closes on Friday, January 9, 2025.

For a full job description and to complete an application, go to <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/mnmeritsystem/default.cfm>.

Winter is Here!
SNOWBLOWERS

ARIENS SNOWBLOWERS

**** GREAT SAVINGS ****
\$1,000 Off Pro-Turn Mowers

GRAVELY

Atlas JSV 3400 SD & 6400 SD

HAMMS REPAIR
218-745-4298
Warren, MN • hammsrepair.net

A DIVISION OF DAKOTA COMMERCIAL

DAKOTA home

\$174,900
215 Washington Ave
Crookston, MN

\$305,000
555 1st Ave NE
Crookston, MN

SOLD

\$199,900
310 5th Ave S
Crookston, MN

\$250,000
12239 Lake St SE
Mentor, MN

KS
KYLIE SIMMONS
218.280.2038 | REALTOR®

Rural Reflections ...

Snow stories with the Vega



by Grant Nelson

If you've made it through a few winters in Minnesota, you probably have some snow moving skills. It's an art, although one I would trade for something else if there wasn't such a yearly need for it.

The shovel is the entry level tool in the snow removal arsenal. I keep a shovel in each building at our place and most of them are those ergonomic shovels with the bend in the handle. I need to shovel away from each building before moving in with something heavier. Those heavy brooms also work well for this task.

Everyone used to keep a grain scoop in their pickup in case the vehicle became stuck. Years back, scooping out a stuck vehicle was somewhat recreational; even better was pushing a vehicle out of a ditch. If my friends and I saw a vehicle stuck, we

would swarm and attack the situation like benevolent, deranged Boy Scouts looking for a good leg workout.

I recall one of my friends got his car stuck in a snow-drift in Viking. A second friend was going to push him out with a truck, but the bumpers didn't match. My remedy to this was to sit on the front bumper of the truck and place my feet on the back bumper of the car. I acted as sort of an adapter plate between the two vehicles, and we successfully moved the car out of the drift. I don't recommend this method, but boredom and necessity on a cold night in Viking call for extreme measures. There were no injuries at the time; however, it was a rich environment for a bad ending.

We weren't always helping vehicles out of snow drifts. It takes about eight young men to pick up a Chevrolet Vega and carry it into a snow drift. Don't ask me how I know; however, we also helped the owner dig the car out of the drift afterwards — each time.

My dad used an old Farmall M with a Farmhand loader to remove snow. It

was really quite a process as those old tractors did not always start in the cold. Once it got cooking, it did some good work and could stack incredible piles of snow which lent themselves as basic structure for monumental snow forts. That old tractor had a tarp around the engine compartment to conserve the heat thrown by the engine, which prevented carburetor ice. Some of the heat would occasionally escape the tarp and provide the operator with a little comfort also, although any operator comfort was purely an engineering oversight.

Here's the thing, winter is a little hard in Minnesota; however, laughter and having a little fun with winter is much better than just waiting for it to leave. We're done with the holidays now and the next few months can seem a little long and dark. If you're a farmer, go to meetings. If you're crafty, make something cool. If you've got some snow to shovel, think about it as free exercise. If you do get stuck, don't get too creative, just call a tow truck.

Talking winter skin health

by Alex Smith
Media Relations Manager

The winter months bring fun activities for those willing to brave the outdoors, but time outside in the dry and cold air can be harsh on our skin. David Pearson, MD, FAAD, with the University of Minnesota Medical School and M Health Fairview talks about how to keep your skin healthy during the winter.

Q: What unique challenges does our skin face in the winter?

Pearson: Our skin is our interface with the environment. As temperatures and humidity levels drop, one of the first places we experience this is on our skin — particularly in places like Minnesota, where it gets very cold and dry. Unsurprisingly, a number of studies show that skin and fingernail moisture content is much lower during the winter months. When our skin dries out, its barrier function is compromised and we become more susceptible to external allergens, irritants and even infections. The effects of cold can range from being a nuisance to quite dangerous. Frostbite can occur when the skin temperature gets to 28 F — this only takes about 30 minutes when the thermometer reads 0 F. Our skin isn't physiologically equipped for unprotected, prolonged exposure to these temperatures, so be sure to wear warm coats, hats and gloves when you're going outside.

Q: What common skin issues do you see during the winter?

Pearson: We see lots of dry skin, even incidentally, in people who come in for other skin concerns. Winter is often a more difficult time for people with eczema — especially on their hands. Winter itch is a common rash resulting from excessive dryness that resembles a dried-up riverbed, with red, itchy,

cracked skin. This is most common on the legs and usually spares body folds and the face, and we treat it with moisturizers and sometimes prescription topical anti-inflammatory medications. We also see many irritant reactions, such as frequent tissue use during respiratory virus season or rashes from licking your lips. I specialize in autoimmune connective tissue diseases and see a lot of Raynaud's and pernio (chilblains). Raynaud's is the rapid onset of white or blue discoloration of the fingers and/or toes from cold exposure due to constriction of blood vessels. Pernio is the delayed onset of tender pink bumps on the fingers and toes one to two days after cold exposure.

Q: What are your go-to recommendations for those suffering from dry winter skin?

Pearson: Moisturize, moisturize, moisturize! It's pretty intuitive, but it bears repeating. The environment treats our skin differently in the winter, and we may have to change our behaviors to acclimate. I recommend a thick moisturizing cream that you have to scoop out of a jar or squeeze out of a tube over those with a pump handle, which tend to be used for thinner products, but these recommendations vary based on a person's skin type (e.g. oily versus dry). I don't like a lot of additives, perfumes or scents — keep it simple. Ceramides are a good ingredient to look for and may help restore the skin barrier, and hyaluronic acid helps to retain water. I also recommend a gentle soap that doesn't have perfumes or scents, as these can irritate the skin. Some data suggests humidifiers can be helpful in certain circumstances, but probably less so than moisturizers.

Q: Should people still wear sunscreen/SPF in the winter?

Pearson: In short, yes. Getting into a routine with sunscreen improves the con-

sistency of use, so I often recommend working in a combined moisturizer/SPF product every day. The long answer is a little more nuanced. In Minnesota, our UV index — how much ultraviolet light reaches us — is pretty low in the winter. People's skin is usually covered up in the winter, but there's actually a fair amount of reflection of UV light from the snow. Prolonged exposure through outdoor activities (or long drives) can add up. If you're lucky enough to travel south or upwards in elevation, I would definitely recommend applying sunscreen like you would during the summer months.

Q: What are you doing to advance research in the dermatology field?

Pearson: As the director of the Autoimmune Connective Tissue Diseases Specialty Clinic, my interests are focused on lupus, dermatomyositis, scleroderma, morphea and vasculitis, among others. Our group is involved in several industry-sponsored clinical trials aimed at developing new and better therapies for these diseases, which currently have limited treatments and can be devastating to people who suffer from them. I'm particularly interested in the environmental triggers of these skin diseases and how to improve quality of life for people who suffer from them. Like many autoimmune diseases, the conditions I study are characterized by periods of both increased and decreased activity, and we still have a lot to learn about why and when flares will happen.

Dr. David Pearson is an associate professor of dermatology at the University of Minnesota Medical School, a dermatologist with M Health Fairview and the director of the Autoimmune Connective Tissue Diseases Specialty Clinic.

Felony charges filed after packages stolen on Christmas Eve

A Crookston man has been charged in Polk County District Court after he allegedly stole two packages from the porch of a neighbor's property on Christmas Eve.

Anthony Joseph Summers, 51, has been charged with felony mail theft — intentionally removes mail addressed to another without claim or right and felony failure to register as a predatory offender. He was arrested.

According to the complaint, the charges stemmed from a report to the Crookston Police Department at Dec. 24 at about 1:57 p.m. A woman reported that two packages had been stolen off of a porch at 319 E. Robert St. The owner learned that UPS had dropped off two packages at about 12 p.m. Ten minutes later, her surveillance camera notified her of the delivery. Upon reviewing the footage, she allegedly saw a man step onto the porch and grab the two packages. The packages contained a watch and a pair of slippers valued at a total of \$348.06. She didn't recognize the man, but she believed he may be someone who lives at 315 E. Robert St. The complaint indicated that a police officer knew

that the Minnesota Department of Corrections uses that house.

The video footage allegedly showed a man with a dark face mask approaching the house. He was also wearing a dark jacket, dark gloves, gray sweatpants and brown boots. An electronic monitoring device could also be seen on his right ankle. The man grabbed the packages and walked away.

The officer later spoke with a DOC parole agent, who said three men live in the neighboring house. One was Summers, who was the only resident wearing an electronic monitoring device. The parole agent said that the other residents reported that Summers had allegedly stolen from them. He gave the officer permission to enter the house and search for the stolen items.

Officers soon went to the house and spoke with Summers, who allegedly appeared to have no knowledge about the stolen packages. However, he later said the packages were in the garbage. Summers was wearing a pair of gray sweatpants and an electronic monitoring device at the time. The device was on

his right ankle. After Summers' arrest, officers searched his bedroom and allegedly found a box containing the stolen watch. They also located clothing that appeared to be consistent with the clothing worn by the man in the surveillance video.

Afterward, one of the officers reviewed Summers' criminal history and learned that Summers is required to register as a predatory offender. While he had registered his address, Summers allegedly hadn't registered a phone number as required by Minnesota predatory offender registration laws.

The complaint indicated that Summers was previously convicted of "numerous theft/burglary related offenses, as well as with failure to register as a predatory offender on or about February 26, 2021, on or about March 7, 2023, and on or about April 30, 2025." The officer also found there were two outstanding warrants for Summers' arrest in North Dakota — one of which was for felony theft and felony burglary. The DOC had also issued a warrant for Summers for allegedly failing to register a phone number. The complaint further indicated that Summers had been previously convicted of failing to register as a predatory offender in July 2021.



Anthony Joseph Summers



Tracey Blazek, Executive Board member of the Crookston American Legion Auxiliary, presented collected school supplies collected to Kari Moe, Crookston High School administrative assistant. (Submitted)



Sharon Lancot, president of the Crookston American Legion Auxiliary, presented collected school supplies to Stephanie Webster, Cathedral School principal. (Submitted)

Help is one text away: Know when to text 911

One moment, the campfire crackles under a clear night sky. The next, thunder roars overhead, dark clouds roll in and you realize you can't get to safety. Fallen trees block your car and your phone has no signal for a call.

Did you know you can text 911? You're facing a dangerous situation: an intruder in your home, or domestic violence where speaking out loud could put you at even greater risk.

Did you know you can text 911? You witness a crime and

need to report it without drawing attention.

Did you know you can text 911?

Text-to-911 is a different way to get help when you can't make a voice call. Texting should only be used when you can't make a voice call.

People who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing or speech impaired may use text-to-911 as a first contact option.

Remember: "Call if you can, text if you can't."

How to text 911
• Enter the number 911 in the "To" field.

• Text message should include your location and type of emergency.

• Send the message.

• Be ready to answer questions and follow instructions.

• Use simple words.

• Do not use abbreviations, emojis, pictures or slang.

• Do not text and drive.

It is a crime to text 911 with a false report. If you accidentally send a text to 911, send another text or place a call to let the dispatcher know that there is no emergency.

Thief River Falls Times and Northern Watch Classified Ads

DEADLINES: The Times — Monday, 10:00 A.M.; Northern Watch — Wednesday, 2:00 P.M.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____
If you wish to have your name, address and telephone number in the ad, please write it on the numbered lines provided.

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|-------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 — \$6.00 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 — \$7.25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 — \$8.50 |

Make Check Payable to The Times, P.O. Box 100, Thief River Falls, MN 56701

Check or Money Order Enclosed
 Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

ATTENTION: Please Indicate Where You'd Like Your Ad To Run

The Times
 Northern Watch
 Both (Times & N Watch)
 Crookston Watch

First 15 Words\$6.00 Per Insertion
Ea. Add'l 10 Words\$1.25 Per Insertion

★ BEST VALUE! ★
PACKAGE DEAL
Advertise 3 Times Get The 4th Time FREE

Pirates shut out Spoilers, fall to Titans in overtime

Crookston senior goaltender Teegyn Johnson made the most of his second start

of the season Friday, Dec. 26 with a 25-save shutout in the Pirates' 4-0 win over

Grafton/Park River at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.



Crookston senior Brady Chandler sprawls to make a huge save during the Pirates' home game against Thief River Falls on Monday, Dec. 21. Chandler made 13 saves on 15 shots in the Pirates' overtime loss to the Tartan Titans on Saturday, Dec. 27. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

Friday's game was the first varsity game of the 2025 Ralph Engelstad Arena Hockey Classic. The Pirates recorded the first tally of the contest with 1:18 remaining in the first period with Garrett Fischer finding the back of the net for his 15th goal of the season. Jay Reese and Dylan Larson recorded assists on the play.

The Pirates didn't wait long to add to their lead. Forty seconds into the second period, Liam Larson scored with an assist by Gavin Aakhus to make it 2-0 Pirates.

The Pirates stayed on the attack and took advantage of a Grafton/Park River tripping penalty with a Greyson Ecker power play goal 3:16 into the second period. Reese recorded his second assist of the game on Ecker's goal and the Pirate lead stood at three goals.

The Pirates were in front by the same 3-0 score when Reese scored his third point and first goal of the evening with 5:27 left to play. Fischer was credited with an assist on Reese's goal as the Pirates skated to win number seven.

Crookston was looking for win number eight when it faced Tartan to open the second day of the Ralph Engelstad Arena Hockey Classic. The Pirates controlled the puck for most of the game, outshooting the Titans 39-14

in regulation. Goals were even, however, with each team burying the puck just once for a 1-1 tie after 51 minutes were in the books.

The Pirates scored first on a Tate Hamre marker with 4:44 remaining in the opening period, with Aakhus and Reese on the assists.

The score remained 1-0 in favor of the Pirates through the second period and first six and a half minutes of the third period. The Titans tied the game with a Benny McLellan goal at the 6:39 mark, with assists by Charley Campbell and Tyler Pavel.

The Pirates had two chances to end the game in overtime, but both shots were defended by Tartan goalie Nathan McGuire. The Titans took full advantage with Devon Shier scoring the game-winner. McLellan and Joshua Markfort assisted on the game-winning goal.

McGuire earned the win for the Titans with a 40-save performance. Brady Chandler took the tough-luck loss for the Pirates after saving 13 of the 15 shots he faced.

Scoring
 Grafton/Park River ... 0 0 0 0
 Crookston ... 1 2 1 4
 First period - Crookston, Garrett Fischer (Jay Reese, Dylan Larson) 15:42.
 Second period - Crookston, Liam Larson (Gavin Aakhus) 0:40; Crookston, Greyson Ecker (power play) (Jay Reese) 3:16.

Third period - Crookston, Jay Reese (Garrett Fischer) 11:33.
 Shots - Grafton/Park River 12-5-8 - 25; Crookston 10-22-8 - 40.
 Power plays - Grafton/Park River 0-for-2; Crookston 1-for-3.
 Penalties - Grafton/Park River 3 (6 minutes); Crookston 2 (4 minutes)
 Goalie saves - Grafton/Park River, Ben Schatz 36; Crookston, Teegyn Johnson 25.

Scoring
 1 2 3 T
 Thief River Falls 0 0 0 0
 East Grand Forks 0 0 0 0
 First period - Crookston, Tate Hamre (Gavin Aakhus, Jay Reese) 12:15.

Second period - No Score
 Third period - Tartan, Benny McLellan (Charley Campbell, Tyler Pavel) 6:39.

Overtime - Devon Shier (Benny McLellan, Joshua Markfort) 1:54.
 Shots - Tartan 8-2-4-1 - 15; Crookston 18-18-3-2 - 41.

Power plays - Tartan 0-for-4; Crookston 0-for-6.
 Penalties - Tartan 6 (12 minutes); Crookston 4 (8 minutes)
 Goalie saves - Tartan, Nathan McGuire 40; Crookston, Brady Chandler 13.

Mariucci Conference
 Conf. overall pts
 Warroad 3-1-0 8-2-0 6
 Moorhead 2-0-0 9-1-0 4
 Roseau 2-1-0 3-6-0 4
 Bemidji 2-2-0 5-3-1 4
 Thief River Falls... 1-3-0 6-6-0 2
 Crookston 0-1-0 7-2-1 0
 East Grand Forks 0-2-0 2-7-1 0

Results
 Monday, Dec. 22 - Thief River Falls 3, Crookston 1; Roseau 4, Bemidji 3; Grand Forks Central 5, East Grand Forks 1.
 Friday, Dec. 26 - Crookston 4, Grafton/Park River 0; Thief River Falls 6, Tartan 4.
 Saturday, Dec. 27 - Tartan 2, Crookston 1; Thief River Falls 5, Grafton/Park River 2.



2025-26 Crookston Pirates

SPORTS SPOTLIGHT



Pictured from left to right are members of the Crookston varsity volleyball team: front row - Allysen Wagner, Abigail Bruley, Lana Peterson, Rilynn Aubol; middle - Jayde Uttermark, Head Coach Katie Morgan, Addie Schiller; back row - Brynna

Kopecy, Morgan Boll, Ella Anderson, Keatyn Kliner, Madilyn Abrams and Leia Parkin. (Photo by Tiffany Biermaier)

WIDSETH
 ARCHITECTS ■ ENGINEERS
 SCIENTISTS ■ SURVEYORS
 216 S Main St | PO Box 458 | Crookston
 218.281.6522 | www.widseth.com

QUALITY PLUMBING INC.
 Residential & Commercial Plumbing
 for Remodels, New Construction & Service Calls
OPEN 8 AM-5 PM - MONDAY-FRIDAY
 218-281-1351
 Quality Service | Affordable Prices
 Visit our showroom to see faucets, sinks, toilets, and showers.
 Northstar Softeners | Delta | American Standard | A. O. Smith Water Heaters | Sump Pumps
 535 3rd Ave SW • Crookston, MN 56716
 MN Lic PM019245 • ND Lic 9613

WELL VITA HEALTH
 MYWELLVITA.COM
 Good Luck Area Teams!
 "Your Partner in Wellness"
 1820 Sahlstrom Dr | Crookston | 218.551.2122

Tiffany Biermaier PHOTOGRAPHY
 218.280.4037

Joyful Heart PHOTOGRAPHY
 424 N Broadway Suite A | Crookston
 218-289-1320
 www.joyfulheartphotography.com

BROST CHEVROLET CROOKSTON, MN
Good Luck Area Teams!
 CHEVROLET
 Together let's drive
 SALES | SERVICE & PARTS
 Steve Brusco Sales Mgr. Mike Brusco Sales/Finance. David Brost General Mgr. Eric Brost Business Mgr.
 Before You Buy, Give Brost a Try!
 218-281-1930
 1600 UNIVERSITY AVE | CROOKSTON | www.BrostChevrolet.com

CROOKSTON FUEL CO. GENEX
 LOCALLY OWNED
 We're Proud to Support Area Teams
 For fast, friendly service call Bill today.
 218-289-1969
 Hwy. 75 South | Crookston, MN

SECURE ONE OF THESE AD SPOTS!
 Contact us about advertising on this page
(218) 681-4450
 GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Minnesota Crookston Women's Basketball opens new year with Dragons and Hardrockers

The Minnesota Crookston women's basketball team opens the new year and they are trying to keep up their positive momentum going into break after back-to-back home wins. The Golden Eagles enter the week with a 3-9 (2-5 NSIC) mark. They are currently in a three-way tie for sixth in the NSIC North with Northern State and Jamestown, and one game back from MSU Moorhead and Bemidji State.

The Golden Eagles outscored their foes 82.0-64.0 in the final week of games in 2025. They come in averaging 67.3 points per game and allowing 76.8 to their foes. They are shooting 40.7 percent from the field, 36.2 percent from beyond the arc, and 75.1 percent from the stripe. They are being outrebounded 41.1-32.8 this season, and are averaging 10.8 assists and 13.9 turnovers per tilt.

It's Emma

Emma Miller, the 5-1 senior from Albertville, has made a name for herself in the NSIC, regionally, and nationally. The two-time All-NSIC First Team selection, and All-Region honoree, set the Minnesota Crookston scoring record earlier this season. She is now moving up the charts in the NSIC record books.

Miller currently is fourth all-time in the NSIC with 1,396 points. Miller needs 23 points to break into the top three and surpass Anika Whiting of Concordia-St. Paul. The record stands at 1,615 points in NSIC play, set by Brooke Olson of Minnesota Duluth from 2018-23. Miller comes in averaging 18.8 points, 5.2 rebounds, and 3.9 assists per game. Her assists per game are the highest of her career. Miller is shooting 36.7 percent from the field, 26.0 percent from distance, and 79.7 percent from the stripe. She is the reigning NSIC Player of the Week after securing 33 points against Jamestown, and 20 versus Northern State in a pair of wins.

Watch out for Westby

Anna Westby, a freshman from Eveleth, has been a key player for the Golden Eagles, and has really come into her own in recent games. Westby is a factor both offensively and defensively. She is averaging 15.0 points per game in her last six including tallying 20 points against Minot State, and 21 versus Jamestown.

Westby averaged 5.5 rebounds per game in back-to-back games against Jamestown and Northern State. She also tallied four blocked shots per game against the Jimmies and Wolves. Westby comes into the week notching 11.5 points, 5.5 rebounds, and 2.5 blocked shots per tilt. She is shooting 45.8 percent from the field, and 38.5 percent from distance.

Fire and Rayna

Rayna Klejeski, a six-foot

junior from Barnum has been a key piece for the Golden Eagles in the post as she has made substantial improvement in her third season in the program. Klejeski comes in averaging 10.7 points and 5.6 boards per game in 12 starts in her junior campaign.

Klejeski is shooting 47.8 percent from the field, and an impressive 66.7 percent from deep on just 12 attempts. She is shooting 82.9 percent from the line. Klejeski has six games with double-digit scoring. She is coming off 13 points in a win over Northern State. She has four games with eight rebounds this season.

Jenkins Jottings

Riley Jenkins, a 5-10 wing from Galesburg, Ill., was a All-NSIC Second Team selection last season, and continues to be an important player for the Golden Eagles during the 2025-26 season. Jenkins comes in averaging 10.7 points and 5.6 boards per game. She is hitting at a 31.7 percent clip from distance this season. Jenkins had an important role in wins over Jamestown and Northern State. She averaged 16.0 points in the games, going 12-of-24 for 50.0 percent from the field. Jenkins broke out of a bit of a slump with her performances against the Jimmies and Wolves, as she hadn't scored in double figures for four games going into the Jamestown game. Jenkins has seven double-digit scoring games this season.

Earning her starts

Sophomore guard Halle Winjum, a Crookston native, is a player who gives high effort every time she is on the court and does a lot of the little things. She has started the last three games and has made major impacts in her last four tilts. Winjum is averaging 6.5 points, 3.3 rebounds, and 1.8 assists in her last four games. She had 11 points on 4-of-11 from the field, and 3-of-7 from deep against Minot State. Winjum notched six points and five rebounds in a win over Jamestown.

Watch out for Hope

Redshirt junior guard Hope Dudycha, an Austin native, moved to the bench in the last three games but is still finding an impact. Dudycha came off the bench for nine points on 2-of-4 from the field, and 2-of-3 from deep in the win over Northern State. Her best game this season came with 16 points on 6-of-11 from the field versus Bemidji State. Dudycha will look to make an impact whether she is starting or coming off the bench.

Brynlea off the bench

Brynlea Mahlen grew up around the program with her dad, Nate Mahlen, a former Golden Eagle assistant coach and the current assistant athletic director. Mahlen has played an increasing role in the last five games, averaging 15.8 minutes per game.



Minnesota Crookston junior Hope Dudycha came off the bench to score nine points on 2-of-4 from the field, and 2-of-3 from deep in the Golden Eagles win over Northern State on Dec. 20. (Photo by Stella Flahave)

Mahlen had five points and two rebounds against Minot State December 13, and five points and three boards in a win over Jamestown Dec. 17.

At home

Minnesota Crookston comes in with a 3-3 mark in games at Lysaker Gymnasium this season. The Golden Eagles are coming off back-to-back home wins over Jamestown and Northern State. They also have a home victory over Black Hills State University. They will look to improve their home mark against MSU Moorhead and South Dakota Mines.

Conference play

The Golden Eagles are looking to ride positive conference momentum into the game against the Dragons, after defeating Jamestown and Northern State. MSU Moorhead is also coming off back-to-back wins against the same opponents. The Golden Eagles come in with a 2-5 NSIC mark. They posted a 7-15 conference record in 2024-25.

Non-conference play

The Golden Eagles conclude non-conference play against South Dakota Mines. They have posted a 1-4 mark in non-conference games in 2025-26, with their lone win coming against South Dakota Mines. They are looking to improve to 3-0 against teams from South Dakota, with wins over Black Hills State and Northern State already this season.

Against MSU Moorhead

The Dragons own the all-time record against the Golden Eagles 39-9. Minnesota Crookston is 2-2 in their last four games against the Dragons. They won the last time at home Dec. 14,

2023 with a 72-67 win at Lysaker Gymnasium. Six of the nine victories over MSU Moorhead have come in the last 10 seasons.

The Minnesota State University Moorhead Dragons come into the weekend with a 6-5 (3-4 NSIC) mark. They are currently one spot ahead of the Golden Eagles in the NSIC North, making it a pivotal game Saturday. They defeated Minnesota Crookston in Moorhead 74-58 November 25. The Dragons look a little different from early in the season, as they have had key injuries to Abby John, who was averaging 11.3 points per game, and Abby Berge who was averaging 11.0 points per tilt. MSU Moorhead is coming off back-to-back wins over Northern State and Jamestown. They enter the week averaging 72.2 points per game, and allowing 65.3 to their foes. They are shooting 40.3 percent from the field, 25.9 percent from beyond the arc, and 69.5 percent from the stripe. MSU Moorhead is outrebounding foes 39.8-34.1. They are notching 11.4 assists per game to 13.3 turnovers per tilt.

Terryn Johnson, a 6-2 post from Kindred, N.D., leads the way for the Dragons. She comes in averaging 13.0 points and 7.0 boards per tilt. Johnson is shooting an impressive 54.2 percent from the field. She had a season-high 24 points against Northern State December 18 on 9-of-11 from the field. In the earlier game with the Golden Eagles, Johnson had 18 points and seven boards on 6-of-12 from the field. She has scored in double figures in eight games in 2025-26.

With the injuries to John

and Berge, Grace Massaquoi has stepped up in recent games. In the wins over Northern State and Jamestown, the 5-10 junior guard tallied 15.0 points per game, and 4.5 rebounds per tilt on 10-of-20 from the field. Massaquoi also had 21 points earlier this season against Minnesota Duluth. She was 10-of-13 from the foul line in the wins over the Wolves and Jimmies.

Ashton Safranski is the straw that stirs the drink for the Dragons. Safranski is averaging 10.2 points, 5.4 rebounds, and 4.9 assists per game for MSU Moorhead. Safranski is shooting 37.5 percent from the field, but hasn't been a substantial deep threat, hitting at just a 21.3 percent clip. The Fargo, N.D. native had a season-high 21 versus UMary December 13. She is coming off 14 points against Jamestown December 20.

Against South Dakota Mines

Minnesota Crookston has only played South Dakota Mines once, recording a 74-55 victory in Rapid City, S.D., over the Hardrockers November 22, 2024. The Golden Eagles will look to continue their fine play against South Dakota Mines Sunday.

The Golden Eagles wrap up their non-conference games this season with a Sunday tilt with South Dakota Mines. The Hardrockers are 4-7 overall, but 3-1 in the RMAC. South Dakota Mines averages 63.1 points per game, while allowing 66.4 to their foes. They are shooting 38.7 percent from the field, and 31.0 percent from deep. They are hitting at a 74.6 percent clip

from the stripe. The Hardrockers are being outrebounded 34.6-29.1 this season. They average 12.4 assists to 14.1 turnovers per game. South Dakota Mines is in their first season coached by former Missouri and Illinois standout Kyley Bachand.

Savea Mansfield, a 5-11 senior forward is the key player for the Hardrockers. Mansfield is averaging 16.5 points, and 4.8 rebounds per game. She is shooting 50.0 percent from the field, and 27.8 percent from distance on 18 shots. Mansfield is an 81.7 percent free throw shooter. She has been consistent, scoring double figures in all 11 games including 30 points against Black Hills State.

Morning Grace Spotted Bear has been a crucial player for the Hardrockers. She comes in tallying 12.1 points and 6.0 boards per game. Spotted Bear is shooting 35.6 percent from the field, and 27.3 percent from distance. She was held to just five points last time out against Nebraska Kearney. She had a season-high 21 points against St. Mary's (Texas) in the season-opening game.

Addison Miranda comes in averaging 10.7 points per game for South Dakota Mines in 11 starts. She is the most potent three-point shooter for the Hardrockers, hitting at a 40.3 percent clip. Miranda will take mostly three pointers as 77-of-98 (78.6 percent) of her shots are from trey. She is also an 84.6 percent free throw shooter. Miranda averaged 11 points per game in their last two games against CSU Pueblo and Nebraska Kearney.

Minnesota Crookston can't overcome hot second half shooting in loss to NSU

Northern State got 31 points off the bench from Marshawn Smith as the Wolves cruised to a 19 point victory on Saturday afternoon in Crookston, 86-67.

Minnesota Crookston falls to 1-12 on the season.

Both teams would struggle to score the basketball early on, but the Golden Eagles would take an early 4-2 lead on a three from Alijah Washington (R-Jr., G, San Jose, Calif.) and one of two at the stripe from Spencer Swenson (Fr., F, Sauk Rapids).

Swenson and Washington would combine to score the first 19 points of the game, as they would trail by three midway through the half at 24-19.

In fact, the first bucket by a Golden Eagle not named Swenson or Washington would come on a Donez Lindsey (Fr., G, Stockton, Calif.) jumper to cut the Wolves lead to 26-23.

Late in the half, Lindsey would score five straight points to cut the lead to two.

NSU would go into the

halftime break up by seven.

It would be a fantastic start to the half for the Golden Eagles, who would make their first two shots of the half and would score on three straight possessions, but they would trail by four early on.

NSU would go on an 11-0 run, forcing a Golden Eagle timeout, trailing by 15.

Minnesota Crookston would try to chip away, but the Wolves would never see their lead get below 10, as they would earn their second straight win.

Minnesota Crookston would see four in double-figures, led by Washington's 19 points, while Lindsey added 13 points. Swenson finished with his first double-double with 12 points and 12 boards. Kazadi Mukoma, Jr. (Jr., F, Grand Island, Neb.) scored 10 second half points to finish with 10.

Minnesota Crookston shot 38 percent from the field.

The Golden Eagles will return home Saturday, Jan. 3 as they welcome MSU Moorhead.

Neighborhood BUSINESSES

BRANDNER
Printing & Office Supplies

Visit us today for all of your printing, mailing and office furniture needs. EST. 1974
We offer a wide range of helpful services and we look forward to assisting you!

BRANDNERPRINTINGCO.COM
218.281.3194

Business Hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM
109 S Broadway | Crookston | BrandnerPrinting@gmail.com

Stenshoel-Houske
FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICE

Monument & Marker SALES

www.stenshoelhouske.com

615 South Minnesota Street • PO Box 584 • Crookston, Minnesota 56716
Phone: 218-281-3372 | Fax: 218-281-3059 | Email: stenshou.stenshou@midconetwork.com

We care, you'll see... **OPTICARE**

FORKS VISION CLINIC
D.D. CROOKSTON VISION ASSOCIATES

218-281-6440
CROOKSTON

218-773-3438
EAST GRAND FORKS

Dr. Steven Gander, Dr. Destin Coles, and Dr. Bruce Storhaug

www.opticarevisionclinic.com

QUALITY PLUMBING INC.
Residential • Service • Commercial

OPEN 8 AM-5 PM - MONDAY-FRIDAY

Visit Our Showroom to see faucets, sinks, toilets, and whirlpool tubs. **218-281-1351**

Quality Service, Affordable Prices

Northstar Softeners | Delta | American Standard | A. O. Smith Water Heaters | Sump Pumps
535 3rd Ave SW • Crookston, MN 56716 • MN Lic PM019245 • ND Lic 9613