



CROOKSTON WATCH

"NORTHWEST MINNESOTA'S REGIONAL NEWSPAPER"



Publication of the
Thief River Falls Times

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324 Main Ave. N., Thief River Falls, MN 56701 • Vol. 2, No. 50

Clearwater-Polk Electric Co-op receives grant

The Minnesota Department of Commerce has announced \$5.3 million in grant awards to improve the resilience of Minnesota's electric grid against severe weather events, malicious physical attacks and cyber threats. The State Grid Resilience Grant Program is fully state-funded and administered by Commerce. It is part of a suite of 2023 legislative session initiatives to enhance the reliability, safety, and modernization of Minnesota's energy infrastructure.

Many funded projects focus on undergrounding power lines in areas prone to storm damage, replacing aging infrastructure, increasing power capacity for development and improving local grid operations. One grantee, Clearwater-Polk Electric Co-op, for example, was able to move immediately from storm recovery into a permanent undergrounding project after the Commerce Department expedited its contract, avoiding the need for temporary power poles to restore

power. The grants, established through 2023 Chapter 60, Article 12, Section 72 of state legislation, provide up to \$250,000 per project to municipal and cooperative electric utilities to strengthen their local distribution systems, increase capacity and reduce power outages.

In total, 28 applicants were selected to receive funding, including 13 municipal utilities, 13 electric cooperatives, the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association

and Minnesota Rural Electric Association. As of this release, all 28 awardees have projects moving forward across Minnesota.

"This program demonstrates how state-led investments can make a real difference for communities," said Commerce Commissioner Grace Arnold. "By upgrading local power systems - often by undergrounding lines in areas vulnerable to storms - we're helping ensure Minnesotans have reliable, resilient electricity for years to come."

Employee injured after fire at Christian Brothers Ford

An employee suffered burns following a fire Thursday, Dec. 4 at Christian Brothers Ford in Crookston.

Richard Barnes was taken to RiverView Hospital, according to Crookston Fire Chief Shane Heldstab. Barnes was later transferred to the Hennepin Healthcare Burn Center in Minneapolis.

On Dec. 4 at 12:40 p.m., the fire department was dispatched to the scene for a report of a fire in the oil change bay. Firefighters were able to

suppress the fire and prevent it from spreading throughout the building. Heldstab said the damage was substantial.

Firefighters remained on the scene for about five-and-a-half hours. Crookston Area Ambulance, the Crookston Police Department, Polk County Sheriff's Office and Minnesota State Patrol provided assistance.

Heldstab said the department has narrowed down the cause of the fire, which remains under investigation.

Holiday Train to stop in Plummer, TRF

The CPKC Holiday Train will stop in Plummer and Thief River Falls on Tuesday, Dec. 16. The CPKC Holiday Train is touring Canada and the United States now through Dec. 21, raising money, food and awareness to support food banks across our network. Professional musicians - this year's musicians at the northwest Minnesota stops are LANCO and Tiera Kennedy - play free concerts from the brightly decorated train's stage. CPKC donates to the local food bank at each stop and encourages all attendees to make a monetary or heart-healthy food donation.

Plummer stop

The Holiday Train is expected to arrive at the Central Avenue railway crossing in Plummer at about 6 p.m. Tuesday. However, the event kicks off at 4 p.m. with Tri-Rivers Museum serving food and providing tours. The menu includes BBQ sandwiches, homemade soup, popcorn, hot cocoa and coffee. Santa will arrive at the museum at 4:45 p.m. Fifteen minutes later, Eric Mickelson will perform music at the museum.

D & K Bar will serve hot cocoa, cider and goodies. The Plummer American Legion will serve cinnamon rolls and hot cocoa from 6 to 8 p.m.

Tri-Rivers Museum will accept Inter-County Community Council Food Shelf

donations. Volunteers will also be walking around collecting donations.

Thief River Falls stop

The Holiday Train is expected to arrive outside of the Thief River Falls City Hall at about 7:30 p.m. Tuesday. Thief River Falls Area Food Shelf volunteers, who will be wearing vests, will be providing kids' glow toys for a fee.

Rivers & Rails Brewing Company will be open from 4:30 to 9 p.m. Tuesday. People can sit on the business' deck for some brews, fire and treats as the train rolls by. Rivers & Rails will donate \$1 from every drink sold to the Thief River Falls Area Food Shelf. Freshly-made s'mores will be available for sale, and grab some pizza.

About the musicians

The Holiday Train will feature LANCO and Tiera Kennedy during its stops in northwest Minnesota.

LANCO burst onto the scene nearly a decade ago, topping the Billboard Top Country Albums chart with its debut album, Hallelujah Nights. The album features the 2X Platinum hit Greatest Love Story and the Platinum-certified single Born to Love You. The band has earned multiple award nominations, including the Country Music Association, American Music Awards and iHeart Radio Music

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Santa and Mrs. Claus were on hand to visit with kids Saturday, Dec. 6 at Santa Land. The event also included crafts and activities as well as a time to make some treats. Santa Land

was held at the Sargeant Student Center on the campus of the University of Minnesota Crookston. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

54th Annual Crookston Christmas Bird Count to be held

The National Audubon Society invites birdwatchers to participate in the longest-running community science survey, the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. On Saturday, Dec. 20, birders and nature enthusiasts in Crookston will take part in this tradition, many rising before dawn to participate. This is the 126th annual count hosted by Audubon.

This year is the 54th year volunteers have counted

birds in the Crookston area. About 15 to 20 volunteers participate annually.

You only need an interest in wild birds to participate. No equipment is needed, although bring a pair of binoculars or a bird book if you have them. Typically, novice birders are paired with more experienced counters. Participants will count birds in assigned locations within a 15-mile diameter circle that includes the city of Crook-

ston.

This event can serve as a great learning experience for beginning birders. Participants can count from a vehicle or on foot, depending on their comfort and the weather conditions that day. Volunteers survey the rural areas in the morning and focus on the city of Crookston in the afternoon. Volunteers can assist for the full day, only in the morning, or only in the afternoon. Bird

feeders also are an important part of the count. People who live in the count circle also can participate by reporting bird sightings at their home feeders. In addition to bird sightings during the count day, the volunteers also record all bird species seen for three days before and three days after the count day.

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Crookston Council to meet

The Crookston City Council will meet Monday, Dec. 15 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the council chambers.

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

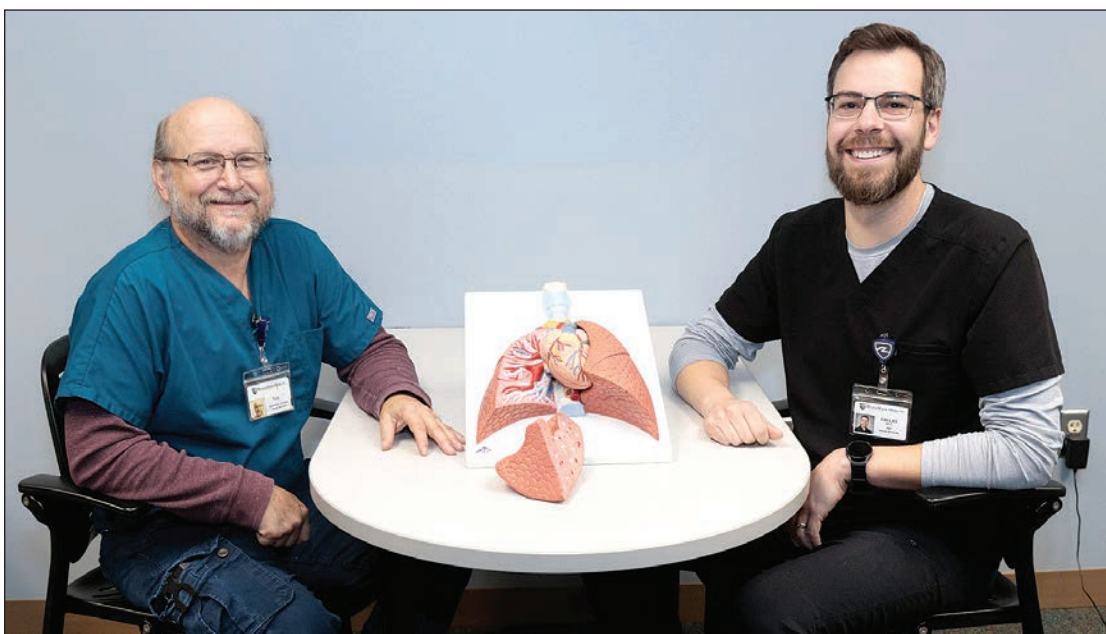
To watch the council and Ways and Means meetings live, visit the city's YouTube

channel at www.youtube.com/c/CityofCrookstonChannel.

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

There may be a quorum of City Council members present at the above-mentioned meetings.

RiverView's COPD Education Program helps patients stay healthy, ease symptoms



Tony Sorum (left), RRCPP, and Dallas Aune, RRT, AE-C, help patients manage pulmonary diseases through RiverView's COPD Education Services. (Submitted)

It's now the fall and winter respiratory disease season, when influenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), and COVID-19 are at their peak. While no one wants a bout of any of those illnesses, the season is especially dangerous for individuals who already have breathing issues due to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. People with COPD are at a higher risk of flare-ups, hospitalizations, and mortality this time of the year.

RiverView Health's Respiratory Therapy Team now offers COPD Education, a program that teaches patients ways to stay healthy and ease symptoms during flare-ups throughout every season.

"COPD Education is an intervention that provides

ongoing monitoring, education, and assessment to patients with various pulmonary diagnoses, including COPD, emphysema, asthma, and chronic bronchitis," said Dallas Aune, RRT, AE-C. "The service is a complement to our Asthma Education program."

Through COPD Education, patients learn ways to manage problems that come with the seasons, such as the following brought on by winter conditions:

- Respiratory infections: Cold and flu viruses are more prevalent and can trigger severe flare-ups, to which people with COPD are more vulnerable.

- Cold, dry air: Breathing cold air can irritate the lungs, cause bronchospasms (airway constriction), and lead to increased coughing,

wheezing, and shortness of breath. It can also dry out the airways, which makes mucus thicker and harder to clear.

- Indoor air quality: Spending more time indoors with poor ventilation increases exposure to respiratory viruses. Smoke from fireplaces and wood-burning stoves is another indoor irritant.

- Body stress: The body uses more energy to stay warm in cold weather, which puts extra strain on the heart and lungs.

Aune, who is also the coordinator for RiverView's Respiratory Therapy program, and Tony Sorum, RRCPP, offer one-on-one inpatient and outpatient services in Crookston to support

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Kids had an opportunity to make snowflakes Saturday, Dec. 6 at Santa Land, which also featured other crafts and activities, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and making

treats. The event was held at the Sargeant Student Center on the campus of the University of Minnesota Crookston. (Photo by Isaac Telle)



Coloring was among the activities offered Saturday, Dec. 6 at Santa Land. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

COPD Education Program/Continued

(Continued from Page 1) patients who are:

- Newly diagnosed with asthma, COPD, emphysema, and other pulmonary diseases
 - Managing recent medication changes
 - Experiencing a flare-up of respiratory symptoms and need additional support and services, but do not meet pulmonary rehab criteria.
- “The program helps patients by combining medical management, behavior change, and self-care training to improve their quality of life, slow the COPD dis-

ease progression, and reduce hospitalizations,” said Aune. “This is done by having an improved understanding of the disease, better medication management, breathing and energy conservation techniques, exacerbation management, and smoking cessation support.”

RiverView launched COPD Education Services in May 2024 and, according to Aune, the program has been well received. Patients begin the program with an outpatient consultation, with follow-up appointments determined by their needs.

While educating patients at every encounter, no matter the setting, is second nature to Aune and Sorum, Aune said he has found that patients benefit significantly from the in-depth look at COPD in the controlled environment of an appointment entirely focused on the disease.

If you are interested in COPD Education, talk to your primary care provider about a referral. For more information on the program, call Rehab Services at 218-281-9463.

Christmas Bird Count/Continued

(Continued from Page 1)

All volunteers will receive a map of the count circle, a count form with the birds typically seen, and additional resources. If you are interested in participating or have questions about the count, contact John Loegering, volunteer count compiler, at jloegeri@umn.edu or 218-280-8014.

Volunteers will gather at McDonald's at 7 a.m. for breakfast and conversation. At 7:30 a.m., organizers will

assign volunteers to their count areas. All birders of any ability are welcome to join. Counting begins at sunrise, around 8 a.m. Counters gather at noon at Subway in Crookston to exchange notes and organize the afternoon count.

If you cannot make it on Saturday, nearby counts are in Grand Forks the preceding Sunday and near Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge the preceding Thursday.

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is a free community science project organized by the National Audubon Society. Counts are open to birders of all skill levels and Audubon's free Bird Guide app makes it even easier to learn more. For more information and to find a count near you visit www.christmasbirdcount.org.

Library to hold events for kids

The Crookston Public Library will host a hands-on learning activity for youth Monday, Dec. 15 at 6 p.m., offering youth ages 5 to 13 a chance to learn about circuits, as well as an opportunity for parents and caregivers to explore the many educational resources the library offers.

The library will also host a special Christmas Pajama Storytime, inviting youth to wear their pajamas, listen to stories and participate in a winter craft. It is scheduled in two sessions on Friday, Dec. 26, one from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the second from 2 to 3:30 p.m. The program is geared to youth 6 years old and under, but all are welcome to join the fun.

For more information, visit larl.org/events.

Holiday Train to stop/Continued

(Continued from Page 1) Awards, and took home New Duo/Group of the Year at the Academy of Country Music Awards.

LANCO's upcoming headline tour, the “We're Gonna Make It Tour,” launches in Minneapolis in February 2025. Alongside headlining their own shows, LANCO has shared the stage with country superstars like Miranda Lambert, Luke Combs, Dierks Bentley and Kane Brown.

Tiera Kennedy is emerging as one of the most exciting voices in the format, injecting country music with a breath of vitality. The Ala-

bama native's unique sound stems from equal parts nature and nurture. She credits her celestial singing voice to God, while crediting her country music songwriting artistry to what organically flows from her pen.

A singer-songwriter, musician, radio host, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Tiera's talents have already garnered acclaimed recognition as a collaborator on Beyoncé's groundbreaking Grammy-winning album Cowboy Carter, having been featured in a music video with legend Dolly Parton and as a mentee of pop-country star Shania Twain who

encouraged her to be herself.

Tiera's independently released debut album, “Rooted,” displays her extraordinary talents, country roots and lived experiences, and the journey to stay connected to herself, her loved ones, her story and her ancestors.

About the CPKC Holiday Train

Since its inaugural journey in 1999, the CPKC Holiday Train has raised more than \$26 million and collected approximately 5.4 million pounds of food for community food banks in Canada and the U.S.

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 Sonlight 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.fisherbyglan.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.fisherbyglan.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 Merseith
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
10480 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 October, November and December, weekend Mass on Saturdays at 5 p.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: tclstpaul.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)

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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.

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THIEF RIVER FALLS Times
OFFICE HOURS

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

Friday
 8 am - 3 pm

DEATH NOTICES

Lynette Boyer, 57

Crookston - Lynette Marie (Sutton) Boyer passed away on November 30, 2025. A celebration of life gathering will be held for friends and family on December 13 after bingo at the Eagles Club in Crookston at 2 pm.

David "Dude" Prestegord, 68

David "Dude" Prestegord, 68, of Twin Valley, passed away on December 2, 2025. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at Zion Lutheran Church in Twin Valley.

Jody W. Gudvangen, 54

Jody W. Gudvangen, 54, Fertile, passed away on November 30, 2025. Funeral service was held on Thursday, December 11, 2025, at Concordia Lutheran Church, Fertile.

James Duckstad, 77

James (Jimmy) Bruce Duckstad, 77, of Fertile, passed away on Monday, December 1, 2025. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 10:30 a.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Fertile. Visitation will take place one hour prior to the service, with interment to follow at St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery in Fertile.

Cindy Roering, 67

Cindy Roering, 67, of Twin Valley, passed away on December 3, 2025. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 10 a.m., with a visitation starting one hour before, at Aspelund Lutheran Church in Flom. Inurnment will be in Immanuel Lutheran Cemetery, rural Twin Valley.

CLASSIFIED ADS

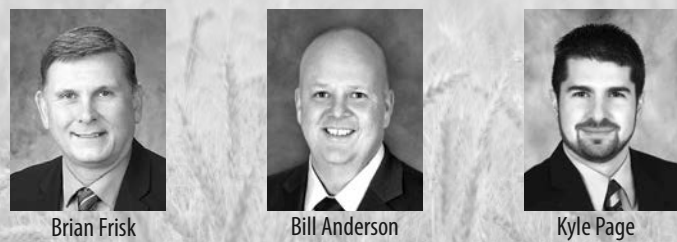
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Commission meeting canceled

The Dec. 16 Planning Commission meeting has been canceled due to lack of agenda items. The next meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 20.

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Rural Reflections ...

A time to learn, heal, hibernate and share

by Grant Nelson



A few nights back, Lisa and I sat for a few hours of television before bedtime. As we reclined together, I pulled on a few extra blankets and then said, "I will see you in the spring." That is really my attitude towards winter; it is the season of recovery and solace.

Most of my outdoor activity is condensed into the three seasons before winter. I think most people follow this same protocol. Some play in the sun, others plant and mow; it depends upon individual choice and priority. Winter closes down much of the outdoor activity as it freezes the ground and sends much of the outdoors into dormancy. I do not go dormant; however, I do go into a sort of recovery mode.

Winter is my time to learn; I like to learn more about the outdoors, cattle, the world and myself. I typically participate in a few online learning courses and like to take on some indoor projects, often in my shop.

Winter is also a time to heal and prepare as summer is busy and may add wear and tear to a body. I like to ask my doctor or physical therapist how to prevent injuries that occur from repetitive motions like planting or

weeding trees. There is also more time to focus on working out, so I try to add in functional exercises to gain strength where I have noticed weakness during the busier seasons.

Winter is the most delicious time to hide out. It's like being awake while others perceive you to be in deep hibernation. We stream some great shows in the evening and enjoy watching our nephews wrestle or play basketball on the streaming services provided by Lincoln High School on Garden Valley or the Take-down Club's YouTube channel.

Another favorite activity is feeding the local outdoor animals. I feel like we have a pretty solid bird feeding program that allows us to actively participate in Project Feederwatch. I look forward to this weekly survey as it forces us to pay attention to our outdoor neigh-

bors and get to know them better. We also give the deer a small daily amount of corn. There has been a single doe who has called our little woods home for the last few years. Her fawns stay with her through the winter each year. She also had two gentleman callers a few weeks ago, so we fed them, too.

Winter is not as comfy for all; there are people and animals for whom winter offers anything but solace or recovery. We can all share a little of our own comfort and pool these resources for those who have so little. There are Salvation Army bells to ring, gift trees to support and humane societies that need your money today. Make kindness not a one-time thing but a new habit that you will strengthen with regular use. If winter exists to refresh us, perhaps we can give some of this energy to others. Merry Christmas.

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Nathan Weiss D.C., C.ACU

Minnesota residents play by the rules

by Rep. Steve Gander

Minnesotans are a no-nonsense bunch. We wake up early to blow snow before the plow comes by. We show up to work when the thermometer actively discourages it. We wave to strangers, help our neighbors, and take pride in doing things the right way.

And, yes, we pay our taxes. Not because it's convenient, but because we believe in something bigger than ourselves. We believe that Minnesota is a place where, if a neighbor is struggling, they shouldn't be abandoned. Where the vulnerable are protected. Where families can grow strong. We know that small sacrifices today will bring a better tomorrow for our children.

That is also the commitment between government officials and the people who pay their taxes. It's a commitment built on immense trust. And last week, it was revealed that the Walz administration betrayed that trust.

Fraud didn't just happen - it was welcomed

Recent investigations have confirmed what Minnesotans have known for years: Fraud did not simply "slip through the cracks." Fraud flourished in a system where oversight was optional, and accountability was viewed as inconvenient.

Criminal networks didn't stumble onto secret loopholes. They exploited a culture inside state agencies where whistleblowers were ignored, pressured to back off, or told that investigating certain groups might "cause tensions."

We now know that:

- Massive welfare fraud schemes, including bogus daycare and food-aid operations, went unchallenged until federal prosecutors intervened.
- Housing stabilization services - predicted to cost \$2.6 million a year - exploded past \$100 million, driven in part by fraudulent claims.
- Even autism therapy programs were targeted, with millions billed for services that were never delivered.
- And in the most alarming twist, federal authorities are now investigating whether Minnesota taxpayer dollars were diverted to the terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

That is not a minor oversight. That is a catastrophic failure of governance.

A striking reality Minnesotans deserve to understand

Immigration has been a rich part of American history for several centuries. Many have come through normal immigration channels, and many as refugees to escape civil war and genocide in their home countries. The vast majority of Somali refugees who have come to America over the past few decades are productive members of our communities. They are our friends and neighbors. They are important members of our workforce. They attend our schools. They are living the American dream.

That is not the Minnesota we want. That is not the Minnesota we deserve. We want a Minnesota where hard work is rewarded and corruption is optional.

Our culture - the northern Minnesota culture of grit, honesty, faith and personal responsibility - will not be erased. Not on my watch.

Minnesotans deserve leadership that protects their hard-earned dollars, defends their communities, and stands up for the values that made this state strong in the first place. I will continue fighting - loudly - until the fraud is rooted out, oversight is restored, and the American Dream is protected for the next generation.

paying twice

While fraud exploded, the financial health of our state collapsed.

We burned through an \$18 billion surplus and now face a \$6 billion deficit.

Schools are struggling, classrooms are short on staff, and test scores continue to decline.

Property taxes shot up by \$1 billion in a single year.

Families feel the squeeze every time they open their mailboxes.

And through all of this, the governor still calls Minnesota a "well-run state."

I talk to Minnesotans every day - farmers, retirees, nurses, business owners, law enforcement officers. Not one of them would use the term "well-run" to describe our state government. They call it alarming. Unsustainable. Dishonest. A government that is out of touch with the people footing the bill.

This isn't partisan. It's personal.

House Republicans spent years warning that lax oversight would lead to exactly this.

We pushed for audits, transparency, and accountability.

We asked the questions the governor didn't want to answer:

- Where is the money going?
- Who is being paid?
- Who checks if services were actually delivered?
- Who is held accountable when funds vanish?

We proposed guardrails. We offered solutions.

We were told no, time after time.

Only after public outrage, national reporting and federal investigations did the administration finally acknowledge the scale of the problem - and even then, they claimed credit for "stepping in."

Minnesotans know better. Cleaning up a mess they refused to prevent is not leadership. It's damage control.

The choice ahead

Fraud is not a political storyline. It is a betrayal of every Minnesotan who plays by the rules, works hard, and expects the government to do the same.

In 2026, voters will decide whether to continue down this path of negligence or choose leaders committed to transparency and accountability.

You don't owe loyalty to a political party. You owe loyalty to your family's future, your community's safety, and your own ability to trust that when you pay your taxes, they go where they are supposed to go.

We fought for oversight when others ignored the warnings. We demanded accountability when the governor dismissed the fraud as "overblown." We listened to whistleblowers when they were pressured to stay quiet.

Minnesota deserves a government that respects its citizens and protects their tax dollars.

Fraud is not inevitable. It is preventable - with leadership, honesty and courage. I trust Minnesotans to demand exactly that.

Minnesotans are

Warriors beat Pirates 89-71 in boys basketball game

The Warroad Warriors picked up their first win of the season while simultaneously spoiling the 2025-26 home opener for the Crookston Pirates with an 89-71 win Friday, Dec. 5 at Crookston High School.

The Warriors built a 45-40 lead over the first 18 minutes of Friday night's game and pulled away with a 44-31 advantage in the second half.

The Warriors had four players in double figures led by Hudson Adams with 25 points and Brady Fast with 24. Scoring leaders for the Pirates were Reggie Winjum with 24 points, Zach Ali with 15 and Carter Fee with 13.

Thief River Falls.....1	1	0.0	Perham.....0	1	0.0
Menahga.....1	1	0.0	Hawley.....0	1	0.0
Osakis.....1	1	0.0	Park Rapids Area.....0	1	0.0
Staples-Motley.....1	1	0.0	Crookston.....0	2	0.0
Warroad.....2	4	0.0	Roseau.....0	2	0.0



Crookston senior Carter Fee takes a jumpshot over Warroad defenders Brady Fast and Doot Boucha during the Pirates' home basketball game against the Warriors Friday night. Fee scored 13 points in the Pirates' 89-71 loss. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

Scoring

Warroad.....	45	44	89
Crookston.....	40	31	71

Warroad - Hudson Adams 25, Brady Fast 24, Doot Boucher 18, Luke Billingsley 12, Andrew Mayfield 7, Mason McMillen 3.

Crookston - Reggie Winjum 24, Zach Ali 15, Carter Fee 13, Beau Smith 6, Nolan Johnson 5, Landon Meier 2, Gunnar Groven 2, Peter Wiersma 2, Josh Hesby 2.

Section 8AA

Overall	QRF	
East Grand Forks.....3	0	0.0
DGF.....2	0	0.0
Barnesville.....1	0	0.0
Wadena-Deer Creek...1	0	0.0

Pirates drop dual meet to Thunderbirds

Mahnomen/Waubun won seven of the eight contested matches and 10 of 13 weights overall in a 60-14 win over the Crookston Pirates Thursday night in Waubun.

Winning matches for the Pirates were Mauricio Arriaga with a win by technical fall over Avery Bush at 114 pounds; Jose Contreras by forfeit at 139; and Gavyn Hlucny by 10-5 decision over Gabriel Demere at 152.

Mahnomen/Waubun 60, Crookston 14

107: Keo Keezar, MW, won by forfeit; 114: Mauricio Arriaga, Crookston, tech fall Avery Bush; 121: Owen Hoban, MW, won by forfeit; 127: Eli Pazdernik, MW, fall Gabe Perala 2:49; 133: Brando Miller, MW, fall Kolten Bahrenfus 2:53; 139: Jose Contreras, Crookston, won by forfeit; 145: Henry Geray, MW, won by forfeit; 152: Gavyn Hlucny, Crookston, dec. Gabriel Demere 10-5; 160: Manny Johnson, MW, fall Jose Arriaga 4:49; 172: Cade Walz, MW, fall Jaron Knutson 1:50; 189: Dylan McMullen, MW, fall Miles Cornelle 1:49; 215: Blake McMullen, MW, fall Jack Odegaard 0:44; 285: Kaden Barnes, MW, won by forfeit.

Girls Basketball Pirates pull away from Warriors for first win

Crookston defeated Warroad 65-45 in a Section 8AA girls basketball game Thursday, Dec. 5 at Crookston High School.

The Pirates did most of their damage during the first half, building a 35-16 half-time lead.

Scoring leaders for the Pirates were University of Minnesota Crookston commit Chloe Boll with 23 points, Grace Boll with 14 and Brooklyn Waldal with 12.

The Warriors had a pair of double-digit scorers in Olivia Tessier with 19 points, and Atlee Larson with 16.

Scoring

Warroad.....	16	29	45
Crookston.....	35	30	65

Warroad - Olivia Tessier 19, Atlee Larson 16, Natalie Homme 7, Mayci Keomany 2, Abbi Mayfield 1.

Crookston - Chloe Boll 23, Grace Boll 14, Brooklyn Waldal 12, Madi Bruggeman 6, Halle Nicholas 6, Nora Groven 4.

Section 8AA

Overall	QRF	
Menahga.....3	0	56.4
Frazee.....4	0	53.6
East Grand Forks.....2	0	50.1
Perham.....3	1	42.7
Roseau.....3	0	40.1
Pelican Rapids.....2	1	39.9
Wadena-Deer Creek.....2	0	34.0
Hawley.....2	1	33.1
DGF.....1	1	25.8
Barnesville.....1	3	22.2
Park Rapids Area.....1	2	20.9
Crookston.....1	3	16.5
Thief River Falls.....0	4	4.1
Warroad.....0	6	2.3

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Lucy Smith

Current Sport: Girls Tennis

Position: Doubles

Favorite Subject: Math

Favorite Sports Team: NDSU

Favorite Food: Sushi

Favorite Movie/TV show: New Girl

Career Highlight/favorite memory: Going to state

Other Sports/Activities: Managing basketball and golf.

Hobbies outside of athletics: Reading and movies

Plans After High School: Go to NDSU for sonography.

Ava Martin

Current Sport: Girls Tennis

Position: 1 and 2 doubles, 3 singles

Favorite Subject: Math/English

Favorite Sports Team: UND Men's Hockey

Favorite Food: Chicken Parm

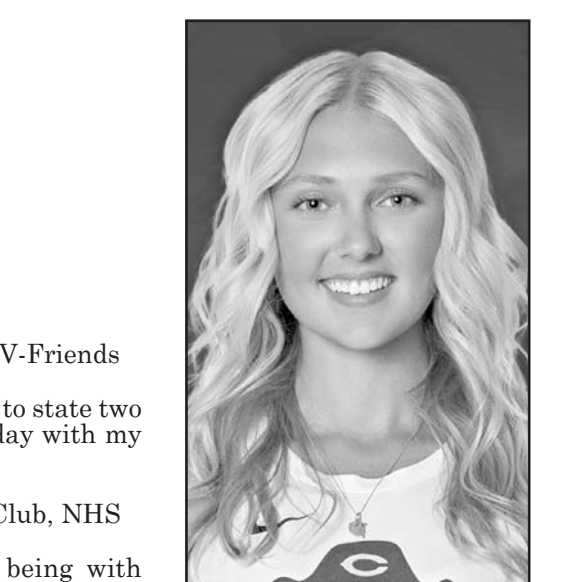
Favorite Movie/TV show: Movie-Miracle, TV-Friends

Career Highlight/favorite memory: Going to state two times, beating Staples, playing tennis every day with my best friends.

Other Sports/Activities: Hockey, golf, Leo Club, NHS

Hobbies outside of athletics: Shopping, being with friends and family, getting fun drinks.

Plans After High School: Attend college to study psychology and play golf.



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Crookston boys remain unbeaten

The Crookston boys hockey team remained unbeaten so far in the 2025-26 season with a 3-3 tie at home Friday night and a 6-4 win at Bagley Monday night.

Garrett Fischer broke a scoreless tie with the first of his two goals Friday night 3:28 into the second period. Greyson Ecker scored just under three minutes later to make it 2-0 Pirates. Jay Reese and Tate Hamre assisted on both first-period goals by the Pirates.

The Royals got on the board with a goal by Kirill Udaltsov a minute and a half into the third period.

The Pirates responded three minutes later with Fischer's second goal of the night to make it 3-1.

The Royals got back into the game with a goal by William Hoiska midway through the third period. The Royals pulled goalie Dylan

Lindstrom in the final minute of the game and the decision paid off, when William Moseley scored with nine seconds remaining.

The Royals outshot the Pirates 5-2 in the overtime frame, but shooting edge over the course of the night favored the Pirates 48-40.

The Pirates were back in action Monday night with a trip to Bagley to face the Bagley/Fosston Flyers.

The Pirates took a 4-1 lead through one period of play and held off a late rally by the Flyers for a 6-4 win.

Scoring goals for the Pirates were Cody Demarais, Ecker (2), Rowan Benoit, Liam Larson and Jay Reese. Recording assists for the Pirates were Dylan Larson, Reese and Fischer (2).

Scoring				
	1	2	3	T
Hopkins.....	0	0	3	0
Crookston.....	0	2	1	0

First period - No Score
 Second period - Crookston, Garrett Fischer (Jay Reese, Tate Hamre) 3:38; Crookston, Greyson Ecker (Jay Reese, Tate Hamre) 6:24.

Third period - Hopkins, Kirill Udaltsov (even strength) (Benjamin Knight) 1:33; Crookston, Garrett Fischer (Greyson Ecker, Jay Reese) 4:23; Hopkins, William Hoiska (Kirill Udaltsov, Garrett Lochner) 8:30; Hopkins, William Moseley (Baylor Paul, William Hoiska) 16:51.
 Shots - Hopkins 11-13-11-5 - 40; Crookston 22-11-13-2 - 48.

Power plays - Hopkins 0-for-5; Crookston 0-for-7.
 Penalties - Hopkins 7 (14 minutes); Crookston 5 (10 minutes).
 Goalie saves - Hopkins, Dylan Lindstrom 45; Crookston, Teegyn Johnson 37.

Scoring				
	1	2	3	T
Crookston.....	4	1	1	6
Bagley/Fosston.....	1	1	2	4

(power play) (Logan Dillich, Wyatt Gerbracht) 9:01; Crookston, Greyson Ecker (Jay Reese, Garrett Fischer) 9:43; Crookston, Rowan Benoit (unassisted) 16:10; Crookston, Greyson Ecker (Garrett Fischer) 16:28.

Second period - Bagley/Fosston#20 Trenton Wiese (even strength) (#12 Isaac Decoteau) 1:14; Crookston, Liam Larson (power play) (Garrett Fischer) 11:10.
 Third period - Crookston, Jay Reese (unassisted) 9:15; Bagley/Fosston, Logan Dillich (Wyatt

Gerbracht, James Palmer) 12:25; Bagley/Fosston, James Palmer (even strength) (Wyatt Gerbracht, Camron Benson) 12:42.

Shots - Crookston 14-8-9 - 31; Bagley/Fosston 9-9-6 - 24.
 Power plays - Crookston 1-for-4; Bagley/Fosston 1-for-2.
 Penalties - Crookston 2 (4 minutes); Bagley/Fosston 3 (9 minutes).
 Goalie saves - Crookston, B Brady Chandler 20; Bagley/Fosston 25.



Hopkins senior Dylan Caspers loses his stick while making a shot on goal during the Royals boys hockey game against the Crookston Pirates Friday, Dec. 5. Crookston senior goaltender Teegyn Johnson deflected the shot. Johnson finished with 37 saves for the Pirates. Caspers scored a pair of goals in the 3-3 tie between the Royals and Pirates. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

Girls Hockey Pirates get back-to-back road wins

The Crookston girls hockey team picked up a pair of road wins Friday, Dec. 5 and Saturday, Dec. 6.

The Pirates made the trip to the Iron Trail Motors and Event Center in Virginia Friday night to face the Rock Ridge Wolverines. The Wolverines led in most statistical categories, including a 47-18 edge in shots on goal and two-for-five night in power play opportunities.

The Pirates led where it counted most, however, on the scoreboard with 4-2 win.

Adley Vigness supplied both of the Pirates' first-period goals. She broke the scoreless tie with just under 10 minutes remaining in the opening period, with assists credited to Emma LaPlante and Jensen Stinar; and she added to the Pirates' lead four minutes later with an unassisted goal.

The Wolverines broke up the shutout with the first of two power play goals by Mayme Scott with 8:48 remaining in the second period. A little over three minutes later, Scott scored on another power play to tie the game at 2-2.

The score was still 2-2 early in the third period when sophomore Shyuh Burnette scored her first goal of the season to give the Pirates a 3-2 lead.

The Pirates put the game away with an empty net goal by LaPlante with 14 seconds remaining. Vigness and Christina Hershey assisted on the play.

The Pirates were back in action Saturday and shut out the International Falls Broncos 8-0. The Pirates controlled the puck throughout the contest, outshooting the Broncos 70-12.

Aubrey Bartrum and Rilyn Aubol both scored a pair of goals for the Pirates. Also scoring goals for the Pirates

were Kinsley Wangen, Logan Brekken, Jensen Stinar and Burnette. Picking up assists for the Pirates were Burnette (2), Christina Hershey, Wangen, Vigness, LaPlante and Peyton Demarais.

Goaltender Madilyn Abrams had two impressive showings for the Pirates. On Friday night, she shut down the Wolverines with 45 saves. On Saturday, she only faced 12 shots and turned all 12 away to record her first shut out of the season.

Scoring				
	1	2	3	T
Crookston.....	2	0	2	4
Rock Ridge.....	0	2	0	2

First period - Crookston, Adley Vigness (Emma LaPlante, Jensen Stinar) 7:09; Crookston, Adley Vigness (unassisted) 11:19.

Second period - Rock Ridge, Mayme Scott (Mimi Babiracki) 8:12; Rock Ridge#12 Mayme Scott (power play) (#21 Madison Bartovich) 11:20.

Third period - Crookston, Shyuh Burnette (unassisted) 2:40; Crookston, Emma LaPlante (Adley Vigness, Christina Hershey) 16:46.

Shots - Crookston 10-4-4 - 18; Rock Ridge 18-14-15 - 47.

Power plays - Crookston 0-for-1; Rock Ridge 2-for-5.

Penalties - Crookston 5 (10 minutes); Rock Ridge 1 (2 minutes).
 Goalie saves - Crookston, Madilyn Abrams 45; Rock Ridge, Sarah Moe 14.

Scoring				
	1	2	3	T
Crookston.....	1	3	4	8
International Falls.....	0	0	0	0

First period - Crookston, Aubrey Bartrum (Shyuh Burnette) 13:05.

Second period - Crookston, Aubrey Bartrum (Shyuh Burnette) 7:30; Crookston, Rilyn Aubol (unassisted) 8:28; Crookston, Kinsley Wangen (Christina Hershey) 15:18.

Third period - Crookston, Logan Brekken (short handed) (Kinsley Wangen) 3:32; Crookston, Rilyn Aubol (unassisted) 4:19; Crookston, Jensen Stinar (Adley Vigness, Emma LaPlante) 9:45; Crookston, Shyuh Burnette (Peyton Demarais) 10:30.

Shots - Crookston, 18-31-21 - 70; International Falls 5-3-4 - 12.

Power plays - Crookston 2 (4 minutes); International Falls 2 (4 minutes).

Penalties - Crookston 0-for-2; International Falls 0-for-2.

Goalie saves - Crookston, Madilyn Abrams 12; International Falls, Daisy Hager 38, Aunnaka Baron 24.



Crookston senior Greyson Ecker works past Hopkins forward Dylan Caspers during Friday night's game between the Pirates and Royals. Ecker scored two points for the Pirates - a goal in the first period and an assist in the second period - in the 3-3 tie between the teams. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

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