



# CROOKSTON WATCH

"NORTHWEST MINNESOTA'S REGIONAL NEWSPAPER"



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## Rasmusson appointed to Court of Appeals



Judge Anne Rasmusson

On Monday, Dec. 22, Gov. Tim Walz announced the appointment of Judge Anne M. Rasmusson to the Min-

nesota Court of Appeals. Rasmusson will fill the vacancy that will occur upon the retirement of the Honorable Randall J. Slieter. Rasmusson currently serves as the assistant chief judge of the Ninth Judicial District and is chambered in Polk County. Slieter's seat is designated for Minnesota's Seventh Congressional District.

"Judge Rasmusson is a remarkable judge who has dedicated her career to administering fair and equitable justice in Greater Minnesota," said Walz. "Having her perspective on the Minnesota Court of Appeals not only enriches and informs the court's work, but

it deepens the bench's understanding of the communities it serves throughout the state."

David Lillehaug, retired Minnesota Supreme Court justice, said, "The governor made a wise choice in elevating Judge Anne Rasmusson of Crookston to the Court of Appeals. She'll bring to the Judicial Center a Greater Minnesota sensibility, having litigated and decided business and family disputes in the ag-based economy of the northwest. Those who appear before her will notice her strong work ethic, keen eye for fairness, and easy laugh."

Justice Anne McKeig of

the Minnesota Supreme Court said, "Judge Anne Rasmusson's elevation from the Minnesota District Court to the Minnesota Court of Appeals is a testament to her common sense, exceptional people skills, and deep understanding of the values rooted in our state's rural communities. Her journey reflects a dedication to justice that resonates with all Minnesotans. Congratulations to the governor on a great choice."

Through Rasmusson's work, she established and served on the White Earth/Mahnomen DWI and Drug Courts, and the DWI

Courts for Polk, Red Lake, and Norman counties. Rasmusson was previously a partner at Rust, Stock, & Rasmusson, P.A. She is chairperson of the Minnesota Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the General Rules of Practice, chair of the Ninth Judicial District Case Flow Committee, and a member of the Children's Justice Initiative Committee. Rasmusson's community involvement includes chairing the RiverView Healthcare Association Board of Directors and the Polk County Developmental Achievement Center. She earned her B.A. from St. Catherine Univer-

sity, M.A. from the University of Minnesota Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Policy, and her J.D. from the University of Minnesota Law School.

During the same announcement, Walz announced the appointment of Lisa Beane to another Minnesota Court of Appeals vacancy that will occur upon the retirement of Judge Louise Dovre Bjorkman, who serves in an at-large capacity. Beane is a senior associate general counsel in the University of Minnesota's Office of the General Counsel.

## Crookston Area Community Fund steps in to support immediate needs this holiday season



The Crookston Area Community Fund recently donated kid-friendly food items to support families experiencing food insecurity during the school holiday break. In addition, the CACF provided winter clothing for students. Pictured are Chris Reynolds, Charles "Corky" Reynolds (CACF), Kris

MacGregor (Crookston Public Schools), Morgan Hibma (CACF), Clara Meyer (Alluma), Tara Miller-Rodriguez (Crookston Public Schools) and Shirley Iverson (CACF) (Submitted)

With local families and residents in need at the top of minds this holiday season, the Crookston Area Community Fund stepped in to donate close to \$10,000 worth of essential items across the community. Through collaboration with Crookston Public Schools, CACF provided winter clothing and necessities for students including winter coats, snow pants, hats, scarves, mittens, boots, socks, and underwear. Shelf-stable and kid-friendly food items were also donated to support families experiencing food insecurity during the school holiday break.

"We have such a generous supportive community that often helps meet the challenges we are facing, and we are very appreciative of the donations for immediate needs from the Crookston Area Community Fund," said therapist and school representative Tara Miller-Rodriguez. "Ongoing needs we continue to seek are socks, underwear, good shoes, simple items like unscented lotion or lip balm for chapped hands and lips during the winter months, and funds for school pictures."

Approximately 65% of students in the Crookston School District qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, highlighting the significant challenges many families face – especially when unexpected costs arise such as vehicle repairs or medical bills. The need for winter gear, school supplies, and holiday costs can also boost concern. Crookston Public Schools, with the support of community and regional partners, plans to explore opportunities in 2026 to develop a sustainable, ongoing food program for families in need in the district.

Community members interested in supporting children at Crookston Schools directly are encouraged to contact Tara Miller-Rodriguez at [taramiller@isd593.org](mailto:taramiller@isd593.org).

CACF also supported public housing residents at Oak Court Apartments this holiday season, providing bedding needs such as comforters and sheet sets. Many Oak Court residents arrive with minimal to no

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## Crookston City Council to hold special meeting Monday

The Crookston City Council will hold a special meeting Monday, Dec. 29 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the council chambers.

To watch the meeting live, visit the city's YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/c/CityofCrookstonChannel](http://www.youtube.com/c/CityofCrookstonChannel).

All notices may also be found online at [www.crookston.mn.us](http://www.crookston.mn.us).

## Library to host "Book Blizzard" Reading Challenge

As the temperatures drop, Lake Agassiz Regional Library invites local bookworms to turn the chilly season into a reading marathon with their annual Book Blizzard winter reading challenge for adults.

Designed to help readers tackle their "To Be Read" lists, the program encourages participants to explore new genres or revisit old favorites while earning chances to win a Book Blizzard mug.

How the Challenge works: Starting Friday, Jan. 2, participants are invited to follow these simple steps:

- Pick up a log: Visit any Lake Agassiz Regional Library location to collect an

official Book Blizzard reading log or visit [www.larl.org/bookblizzard](http://www.larl.org/bookblizzard) to download a copy.

- Read four books: For every four books completed, participants bring their log back to the library to enter a drawing for a mug and to pick up a sticker. Multiple entries are encouraged!

- Enter to win: Each completed log counts as an entry into the grand prize drawing for a limited-edition Book Blizzard mug.

"Winter is the perfect time to get lost in a great story," said Hillary Stevens, marketing director at the Lake Agassiz Regional Library. "We wanted to create a fun, low-pressure way for

our community to stay engaged with reading and maybe finally cross off those titles that they have been planning on tackling all year."

The library encourages friendly competition by allowing multiple entries per person – the more you read, the higher your chances of winning. To help readers find their next great read, Lake Agassiz Regional Library has curated several collections on the library website, featuring staff picks, trending thrillers and cozy winter mysteries. The program will be offered through Saturday, Feb. 28.

## "The Empowered Caregiver" program to be held Jan. 6

The Alzheimer's Association will offer a free presentation, "The Empowered Caregiver: Communicating Effectively." The presentation will be held Tuesday,

Jan. 6 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Golden Link Senior Center, 324 N. Main, Crookston. This presentation is free and open to the public; registration is pre-

ferred but not required. To register, call 1-800-272-3900 or visit [www.communityresourcefinder.org](http://www.communityresourcefinder.org).



George French played the Estes Reed Organ at a Christmas concert Thursday, Dec. 4 at the Hafslo Church on the Polk County Museum grounds in Crookston. (Submitted)

## Christmas concert held at Hafslo Church

The Polk County Historical Society held its 14th annual concert Thursday, Dec. 4 at Hafslo Church on the grounds of the Polk County Museum in Crookston.

The concert began with a singalong of carols. George French played the Estes Reed Organ, which was originally located in Christ Episcopal Church in Crookston. It was donated by St. Catherine's Guild in 1920 and restored in 1967. Christ

Episcopal Church, which opened in 1879, closed in 1987. After that time, the organ was given to the Polk County Historical Society.

At the concert, French, who is the Music and Theater Department director at the University of Minnesota Crookston, directed the UMC Concert Choir.

A 1913 Edison phonograph was also featured at the concert. PCHS Director John Vraa of Climax played

a cylinder record of "Silent Night" in German.

Hafslo Church, which was built in 1888, was originally located in Kertsonville Township southeast of Crookston. It closed in 1978. In 1983, it was moved to the University of Minnesota Crookston campus. About 20 years later, it was moved to the Polk County Museum grounds.

# Area hosts Senate committee for local infrastructure tours

by Sen. Mark Johnson

The Senate Capital Investment Committee members were recently on the road with stops in East Grand Forks, Halstad and Crookston to learn about each request.

Seeing these projects in person is important as the committee evaluates needs across the state. Whether it's visible cracks in a building, hearing residents' concerns about drinking water, or learning how the state supports agricultural innovation, these investments signal to our communities that St. Paul has not forgotten them.

The tour began at the Halstad Community Center, where members learned about the West Central Re-

gional Water District treatment plan. The facility would serve all of Norman County and parts of Clay and Polk counties. A \$10 million state request would help fund the \$26.6 million needed for the first phase. The WCRWD will address high arsenic and other contaminants in the water supply, replace aging infrastructure and provide safe, reliable water to more than 40,000 residents.

Next, we toured the Minnesota Department of Agriculture potato inspection facility in East Grand Forks. There, they learned the scale of local potato production and important research and innovation being done by the state to address diseases, verify seed certification and USDA inspections,

and limit damage to this pantry staple during processing.

The committee also heard a presentation on the East Grand Forks industrial park development. A \$6.4 million request would upgrade existing street and utilities that have exceeded their useful lifespan and allow further economic growth on the 142-acre site.

The University of Minnesota Crookston campus hosted the third stop on the tour. University officials are seeking \$2 million for structural analysis and repairs for Lysaker Gym, which shows visible cracking on both interior and exterior walls, as well as several roof replacements on other campus buildings.



Polk County Historical Society Director John Vraa played a cylinder record of "Silent Night" in German on a 1913 Edison phonograph. The phonograph was featured at a

Christmas concert Thursday, Dec. 4 at the Hafslö Church on the Polk County Museum grounds in Crookston. (Submitted)

# Area Community Fund/Continued

(Continued from Page 1) household items, making these donations especially impactful. Those wishing to donate directly to support Oak Courts residents may contact Crookston Housing at 218-281-5334 or housing@crookstonheda.com.

CACF works to build lasting resources that can be invested back into the community to support meaningful charitable, educational and public efforts.

Through its endowment, CACF helps fund programs and projects that contribute to the overall well-being of those who live in and visit the Crookston area, including initiatives focused on health and wellness, recreation, the arts, housing assistance, services for seniors, youth opportunities, and other vital community needs. Grants are awarded to local nonprofits and organizations to ensure sup-

port reaches where it is needed most.

As a component fund of the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, CACF offers a trusted way for individuals and businesses to give locally, ensuring their contributions directly benefit the Crookston community now and into the future.

Donations are accepted year-round by mail at CACF, P.O. Box 543, Crookston, MN 56716 or online at <https://secure.qgiv.com/.../Crookston+Area+Community+Fund>.

Through partnerships and the generosity of the community, CACF continues to make a meaningful difference for families and residents throughout the Crookston area - especially during the holiday season.

For further information or questions, contact Shirley Iverson at [crookstonarea-communityfund@gmail.com](mailto:crookstonarea-communityfund@gmail.com).



As part of a collaboration with Crookston Public Schools, the Crookston Area Community Fund provided winter clothing and necessities for students. Pictured are (from

left) Tara Miller-Rodriguez (Crookston Public Schools), Jess Bengtson (CACF) and Shirley Iverson (CACF). (Submitted)

## NOTICE OF TOWNSHIP ELECTION FILINGS

Gentilly Township in Polk County will be accepting filings for the office of Supervisor, a 3-year term and Clerk, a 2-year term. Filings will be accepted at the Clerk's Residence, 25762 185th Avenue SW, Crookston, MN between the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., December 30, 2025 to January 13, 2026. The clerk's office will be open from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on January 13, 2026 to accept filings. For other dates and times, please call ahead - 612-889-6458. There is a \$2.00 filing fee for either office.

# Crookston Area Ministries

<p><b>BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 23928 265th St SW - Crookston (East of Highland School) Church: 281-5629 Preston Hoiseth, Pastor Web: <a href="http://www.biblebaptistcrookston.org">www.biblebaptistcrookston.org</a> Email: <a href="mailto:biblebaptist@midco.net">biblebaptist@midco.net</a> Sundays: 7:45 a.m. &amp; 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 &amp; Prayer Service</p>	<p><b>CLIMAX LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> <b>SAND HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> P.O. Box 49 - Climax, MN 56523 Pastor Matt Williams 218-857-2215 • 218-857-3362 Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>FISHER LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)</b> 209 2nd Street S - Fisher, MN <a href="http://www.fisherbyglad.org">www.fisherbyglad.org</a> Pastor Gretchen Enoch 218-891-4632 Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.</p>	<p><b>KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES</b> 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</p>	<p><b>RESURRECTION FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH, AFLC</b> 415 West 6th St. - Beltrami Pastor Joel Kangas Church email: <a href="mailto:resurrect@gvtel.com">resurrect@gvtel.com</a> Church website: <a href="http://www.resurrectionfree.org">www.resurrectionfree.org</a> Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>TRINITY LUTHERAN</b> 402 6th St E - Beltrami Pr. Dan Morton Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship Check out website for further information <a href="http://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org">www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org</a></p>
<p><b>BYGLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)</b> 40976 235th Street SW - Fisher, MN <a href="http://www.fisherbyglad.org">www.fisherbyglad.org</a> Pastor Gretchen Enoch Phone: 218-893-4243 Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.</p>	<p><b>CONCORDIA LUTHERAN</b> 100 Jefferson Ave SW - Fertile Pr. Dan Morton Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion Check out website for further information <a href="http://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org">www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org</a></p>	<p><b>FREEDOM CHURCH</b> Pastor Joel Schwartz 218-275-2350 101 W 2nd St Crookston <a href="http://hellofreedomchurch.com">hellofreedomchurch.com</a> Sundays: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>LITTLE NORWAY LUTHERAN</b> 10802 423rd St SE - Fertile Pr. Dan Morton Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship Service Check out website for further information <a href="http://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org">www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org</a></p>	<p><b>RODNES LUTHERAN</b> 35473 180th Ave SE - Erskine South of Hwy 2 on Cty 210 Office: 218-456-4345 Pastor Joel Smeby <a href="http://www.facebook.com/RodnesLutheran">www.facebook.com/RodnesLutheran</a> Sundays: 7 a.m. Radio Broadcast on KRJB (106.5FM), 10 a.m. Worship (live on Facebook and in person)</p>	<p><b>MAPLE LAKE LUTHERAN</b> 13960 380th St SE - Fertile Pr. Dan Morton Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship Service Check out website for further information <a href="http://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org">www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org</a></p>
<p><b>CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - CROOKSTON &amp; ST. PETER'S - GENTILLY</b> 702 Summit Avenue - Crookston 218-281-1735, Parish, 218-281-1835, School &amp; 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: <a href="http://www.crookstoncathedral.com">www.crookstoncathedral.com</a> for more information.</p>	<p><b>ENCOUNTER CHURCH</b> 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</p>	<p><b>GOSEN CHURCH, INDEPENDENT</b> Gary Johnson, Pastor <a href="http://www.gosen-church.com">http://www.gosen-church.com</a> Facebook: Gosen Church Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service (also on Facebook and <a href="http://gosen-church.com">gosen-church.com</a>)</p>	<p><b>LIVING WATER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH</b> Nielsville, MN Monty &amp; 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</p>	<p><b>SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</b> 707 4th Ave. NE - Crookston Phone: 218-456-2568 Pastor David Jahn Saturdays: 10 a.m. Sabbath School, 11:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)</b> 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 <a href="http://www.trinitycrookston.org">www.trinitycrookston.org</a> 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</p>
<p><b>CHURCH OF CHRIST</b> 321 5th Avenue South - Crookston 218-281-5402 Pastor David Johnson Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>FAABERG LUTHERAN AT RINDAL, MN</b> 4391 340th Ave - Fertile Pr. Dan Morto Sundays: 8:15 a.m. Worship Service Check out website for further information <a href="http://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org">www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org</a></p>	<p><b>GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> Evangelical Lutheran Synod Pastor Noah Thompson Pastor John Merseith 1221 Barrette St #2605 - Crookston Phone: 218-281-4342 Sundays: 1:30 p.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>MAPLE BAY FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> Pastor David Jore Parsonage: 218-574-2222 Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship Service</p>	<p><b>ST. JOSEPH CHURCH - FERTILE</b> 10480 438th St SW Fertile 218-945-6649 Fr. Larry Delaney Sundays: 8:30 a.m. Mass</p>	<p><b>WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b> 701 Eickhof Blvd - Crookston 218-281-3393 website: <a href="http://crookstonmethodist.com">crookstonmethodist.com</a> - view services here email: <a href="mailto:wesleyumcrox@gmail.com">wesleyumcrox@gmail.com</a> Rev. Ruth Sanders, Pastor Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School (Sept. - May), 10:45 a.m. Worship (Communion 2nd Sunday)</p>
<p><b>CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS</b> 2814 Cherry Street - Grand Forks, ND Bishop Derek Pruitt 435-979-4491 Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, MENTOR</b> 105 Harrison Ave N - Mentor Pastor Rev. Michael Sletto 218-637-8263 Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, ERSKINE (NALC)</b> 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</p>	<p><b>NEXUS CHURCH</b> 605 3rd Ave NE - Crookston Lead Pastor, Danny Holwerda, Jr. Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH - MENTOR</b> Fr. Larry Delaney Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Mass</p>	<p><b>TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, FISHER (LCMS)</b> Church Office: 218-891-4581 Pastor Doug Thompson Website: <a href="http://tclstpaul.org">tclstpaul.org</a> Email: <a href="mailto:trinity.st.paulparishes@gmail.com">trinity.st.paulparishes@gmail.com</a> 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.</p>
<p><b>FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD</b> 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</p>	<p><b>FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH</b> 510 North Broadway - Crookston 218-281-4853 <a href="http://crookstonfirstpres.org">crookstonfirstpres.org</a> Rev Michael Ozaki, pastor Sundays: 10:45 a.m. Worship (live-streaming at <a href="http://crookstonfirstpres.org">crookstonfirstpres.org</a> or on our Facebook page) Communion 1st Sunday Thursdays: 1 p.m. - Book study</p>	<p><b>GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, ERSKINE (NALC)</b> 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</p>	<p><b>OUR LADY OF SORROWS' CHAPEL - Society of St. Pius X</b> 600 E Robert St - U.S. Hwy 2 E - Crookston 218-281-6880, 218-773-8020 Sundays: 2 p.m. Holy Mass</p>	<p><b>ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - EUCLID</b> Sundays: For the months of October, November and December, weekend Mass on Saturdays at 5 p.m. Tuesdays: Mass at 8:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b> 701 Eickhof Blvd - Crookston 218-281-3393 website: <a href="http://crookstonmethodist.com">crookstonmethodist.com</a> - view services here email: <a href="mailto:wesleyumcrox@gmail.com">wesleyumcrox@gmail.com</a> Rev. Ruth Sanders, Pastor Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School (Sept. - May), 10:45 a.m. Worship (Communion 2nd Sunday)</p>
<p><b>CHURCH OF CHRIST</b> 321 5th Avenue South - Crookston 218-281-5402 Pastor David Johnson Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD</b> 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</p>	<p><b>HOPE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH</b> 11330 435th St SW - Fertile - 218-945-3677 <a href="http://www.hope4fertile.org">www.hope4fertile.org</a> email: <a href="mailto:hope4fertile.worship@gmail.com">hope4fertile.worship@gmail.com</a> Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p><b>OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD</b> Crookston Pastor Steven Bohler Sundays: 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. Services, 9:30 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study</p>	<p><b>ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN (ELCA)</b> 1214 University Avenue - Crookston Email: <a href="mailto:stpauls@midconetwork.com">stpauls@midconetwork.com</a> Website: <a href="http://stpaulscrookstonmn.com">stpaulscrookstonmn.com</a> Phone: 218-281-3638 Pastor Curt Peterson Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship You may worship via Facebook Live: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn">facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn</a></p>	<p><b>THRIVING LIFE CHURCH</b> 22722 350th St. Erskine, MN 56535 Pastor Jim Binder 218-556-1545 <a href="https://thrivinglifemn.org">https://thrivinglifemn.org</a> Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship</p>

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**DEATH NOTICES**

**James Kelly, 90**

**Crookston** - James Donald Kelly, age 90, passed away peacefully in the early morning on Wednesday, December 17, 2025.

He was born to loving parents, James and Dorothy (Webskowsky) Kelly, in Thief River Falls, Minnesota on April 15, 1935.

Jim attended grade school in Thief River Falls and graduated from Lincoln High School in the spring of 1953.

After graduation, he proudly served in the U.S. Air Force as a radio repairman from 1953-1957, a period that shaped his character and values. Following his military service, Jim started a career in repairing office machines, perfecting his skills through the years and offering his services at several office supply stores throughout his career.

Jim loved hockey. He enjoyed watching his sons, grandsons, and granddaughters play. Throughout his life, he spent countless hours at the arena. Jim's favorite pastime was watching various sporting events of his

children and grandchildren, always cheering them on with unwavering support and enthusiasm. Jim also enjoyed playing cards with his good friends. He was in many smear tournaments throughout his years.

Jim is survived by his wife, Janice Corine (Johnson) Kelly; sons, Darin (Lynette) Kelly and Brian Kelly; daughter, Tracey (Jeffrey) Sundeen; grandchildren, Jennifer (Tom) Jopp, Terri (Roy) Klipping, Brady Langlois, Casey Kelly, Mallorie Sundeen, Brianna Kelly, Nathan Kelly and Parker Kelly; and great-grandson, Ronan Kelly; and many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his son, Kory Kelly; sisters, Madonna Molstad, Marlene Bachlund, Patricia Huttleston and Kathleen Hume; and his parents and grandparents.

Jim was a member of the Crookston American Legion and Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie #873.

A funeral service honoring Jim's life was held on Tuesday, December 23, 2025, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston. The service was recorded and is available to watch at [www.stenshoel-houske.com/obituaries/james-kelly](http://www.stenshoel-houske.com/obituaries/james-kelly).

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**Frank Kaiser, 58**

Frank A. Kaiser passed away on December 21, 2025. A private family burial will be held in the spring.

He was born to loving parents, James and Dorothy (Webskowsky) Kelly, in Thief River Falls, Minnesota on April 15, 1935.

Jim attended grade school in Thief River Falls and graduated from Lincoln High School in the spring of 1953.

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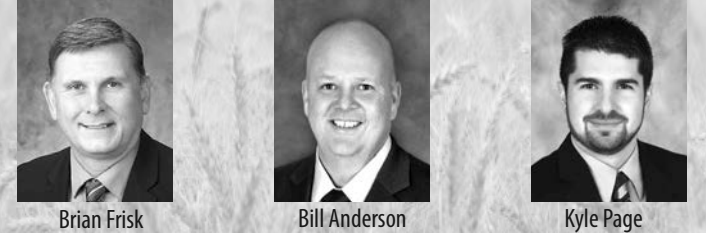
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**Assistant County Attorney I - II – Attorney's Office:**  
\$42.22 – \$57.76/hr. Position Is Open Until Filled.

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

**Deputy Sheriff Patrol I - II – Sheriff's Office:**  
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**Mechanical Maintenance Technician – Incinerator:**  
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**Sort Line Operator I - II – Fosston:**  
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For a full job description, application, and general job openings information, go to [www.co.polk.mn.us](http://www.co.polk.mn.us) and click on "Careers" or call 218-281-5408 Polk County Administrator's Office. EOE

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Rural Reflections ...

# Celebrating Christmas with some Mardi Gras flair

by Grant Nelson



Dear Dave,  
Merry Christmas, Dave. It makes me feel good to think of you, Mary and Barney welcoming family for Christmas in Carrington, N.D. You and I spoke on the phone this week and I asked about Eugene, the shared

neighborhood cat. You shared the news that Eugene is not the neighborhood cat anymore; he is now your cat, indoors at your home. It made me happy and Lisa was thrilled too. I figured it would eventually happen although it was nice to hear about it.

It is winter here, Dave, or at least it was winter. This week has been more like deer season. I like these little weather breaks to really clean up the snow. Most of our snow removal is done with a front "v-plow" and a rear "pull plow" on the pickup. The combination of

the two means I can keep things clean around here and stay warm and listen to music while I do it.

The word among the birds has gotten around, Dave. That word would be food and this morning we had 11 gray or Hungarian partridges sitting not in a pear tree but rather cleaning up the corn left by the deer. I love everything about these little compact balls of explosive down and feathers. Blue jays, chickadees and woodpeckers have rounded out the lineup of feathered neighbors.

Christmas Eve was different but fun this year. Lisa; her mother, Jeanette, and I went to Christmas Eve services then went to look at



This house/barn is made of pretzel rods and graham crackers and a lot of frosting. (Submitted)

the Christmas lights and then to Jeanette's home for pizza. The yearly full Christmas gathering at our place is actually going on right now, probably as you are reading this.

I will always remember this Christmas for many reasons; one of the greatest will be our use of mylar balloons around the house. Once I discovered the Dollar Store, there was no stopping me. It is a place that has the resources to make any place look like Mardi Gras for about \$20. I know the true meaning of Christmas, but I still want to celebrate it! Nothing occupies space with color like mylar candy canes, Dave.

Construction of our pretzel rod/graham cracker/gingerbread house/barn was finished last weekend. A large base for one of these creations seems like a good idea until you see how much material it takes to finish it. It was truly a labor of love though as I got to live out my ideas of what a barn should look like all dripping with frosting that looks like snow. It's like being a low-risk construction engineer with a dash of Christmas

and a whole lot of nostalgia. Now we just have to eat all of those peanut butter and jelly M&Ms and Queen Anne chocolate-covered cherries. I fortunately have saved up some "treat days" in my Noom app, so I should be okay.

You and Mary took in Eugene, the neighborhood stray cat, Dave. I am amazed at how much kindness, effort and resources it requires to care for homeless pets. If the original owners of these pets would take their responsibility seriously, they would find the rewards of pet ownership far outweigh the efforts it requires to enjoy those rewards. If I had one Christmas wish to spend, it would be that people spay and neuter their pets and then give them a long and happy life - just like you guys do. Merry Christmas. Your little bro

## Erickson named RiverView's Employee of the Month

"Sometimes, you just have to give a shout-out to the people who make work better for everyone." That comment - taken straight from an Employee of the Month nomination - perfectly captures why Barb Erickson, certified pharmacy technician at RiverView Pharmacy, has been named RiverView's Employee of the Month for October.



Barb Erickson

Erickson is celebrated for the positive energy she brings each day and the genuine care she shows the patients she serves.

"Working at the pharmacy has been such a meaningful experience, and I'm grateful every day for the opportunity to support our patients and be part of a team that truly cares," she said. "I'm inspired by the dedication, teamwork and compassion from all the departments within

RiverView. Thank you to the pharmacy staff and to coworkers throughout the organization for making RiverView a great place to work."

A Crookston native, Erickson has been part of the RiverView Pharmacy Team for eight years.

Erickson and her husband, Stephen, have two sons, Blake (Madison) and Cody (Amanda); three grandchildren, Adley, Miles, and Owen; and a dog, Jerzi. In her free time, she enjoys camping, baking, and spending time with family, friends, and Jerzi.

Reflecting on the honor, she said, "I'm grateful to be chosen as Employee of the Month. I want to give a huge thank you to my coworkers. I couldn't do what I do without the support and encouragement of my pharmacy team. I'm proud to be part of RiverView and look forward to continuing to grow, learn, and serve alongside such caring individuals."

## Letter: UMN Crookston works to tackle health care worker shortage

To the Editor,  
A growing concern in the Red River Valley has been the issue of delivering high quality, rural health care. Numerous studies have pointed to a growing shortage of health care workers in rural Minnesota and North Dakota. This lack of medical professionals in turn leads to health outcome inequities which hurt our Minnesota and North Dakota communities.

The University of Minnesota system trains 70% of all healthcare professionals in the state - not just doctors - impacting all 87 counties, including our own. At the Crookston campus, they

are working to tackle the health care worker shortage and meet our responsibilities in filling gaps.

UMN Crookston is making an impact through offering a bachelor's degree in health sciences, which provides the opportunity for our students to explore the many pathways into the health care field. There is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to careers in health care, but this foundational degree provides students with the prerequisite knowledge and skills required for admission to professional programs such as nursing, chiropractic, dentistry, occupational and physical therapy. The program gives UMN Crookston students a high-level view of the health care industry and allows them to choose a focus that best fits their career aspirations. Additionally, students enter an immersive experience that brings together faculty, staff

and students in all health professions and areas of expertise - including rural health expertise - that is unmatched across the country.

UMN Crookston aims to expand this program to strengthen the pipeline of future health care professionals - people who will support our rural communities and our region by welcoming your babies into the world, preparing your medications, restoring your mobility, safeguarding your dental health, caring for your pets, and, in the most challenging moments, help you access life-saving care that brings hope.

The University of Minnesota is one of a handful of public universities in the country that work across all of the health sciences - medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing, public health and veterinary - to deliver research, education and care that changes lives in Minnesota and beyond. As Min-

nesota's only public medical school, The University of Minnesota must continue to thrive so that, at every stage of life and in every corner of the state and our region, our graduates can be there for you for decades to come.

Sincerely,  
The University of Minnesota Crookston Campus Advancement and Advisory Board, which includes:

- Chairperson Carl Wittenburg, Alexandria
- Tom Anderson, Alexandria
- Jason Carlson, McIntosh
- Diane Cilengi, Brooklyn Park
- Tim Dufault, Crookston
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## City Hall to be closed New Year's Day

City Hall will be closed Thursday, Jan. 1 in observance of the New Year's Day holiday.

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Nathan Weiss  
D.C., C.ACU

# Minnesota Crookston uses balanced scoring performance in NSIC win over Jamestown

The University of Minnesota Crookston women's basketball team used a team effort Wednesday night to earn a dominant 99-70 win over the University of Jamestown. Emma Miller (Fr., G, Albertville) scored 33 points, while Anna Westby (Fr., F, Eveleth) added 21 in the victory at Lysaker Gymnasium. The Golden Eagles played strong defensively, forcing 21 turnovers and scoring 31 points off turnovers. They also shared the ball well, with 18 assists to 10 turnovers.

The Golden Eagles improved to 2-9 (1-5 NSIC) with Wednesday's win. Jamestown dropped to 4-6 (2-4 NSIC). Minnesota Crookston remains unbeaten all-time against the Jimmies, improving to 5-0. Wednesday's tilt was the first meet-

ing as NSIC opponents for Minnesota Crookston and Jamestown.

Miller put up her best effort of the season, as she scored 33 points on 10-of-17 from the field, and 4-of-8 from beyond the arc. Miller added six assists, four rebounds, and five steals. Westby produced back-to-back standout games. The freshman scored 21 points on 8-of-12 from the field, and 3-of-4 from distance. She added six boards, five blocks, and two steals. Riley Jenkins (R-Jr., G/F, Galesburg, Ill.) added 19 points on 7-of-15 from the field. Halle Winjum (So., G, Crookston) made her second-consecutive start, and was a glue player making a lot of high-effort plays. She finished with six points, five rebounds, and two assists. Rayna Klejeski (Jr., F, Bar-

num) added six points and five rebounds, while Brynlea Mahlen (So., G/F, Fosston) chipped in five points and three boards.

The Golden Eagles had an offensive showcase, shooting 34-of-67 for 50.7 percent. They were 13-of-30 for 43.3 percent from beyond the arc, and 18-of-19 for 94.7 percent from the stripe. The Golden Eagles hit their most threes since hitting 13 against Augustana January 25, 2025. Minnesota Crookston scored their most points since tallying 98 and 104 in back-to-back games November 20 and November 30, 2013 against Finlandia University and Bemidji State University. The Golden Eagles were even on the glass 35-35 against the Jimmies.

Jamestown shot 22-of-56 for 39.3 percent. They were

8-of-19 for 42.1 percent from distance, and 18-of-23 for 78.3 percent from the line. Samantha Paulsen guided the Jimmies with 18 points on 7-of-10 shooting. Haidyn Crockett added 13, while Jes-

sika Lofstrom and Allie Berns finished with 12. Berns paced the Jimmies on the glass with nine. The Golden Eagles had their second-best defensive performance in terms of score, as

they held their second team of the season to 70 points or under. They are 2-0 when accomplishing the defensive note.

## Wolverines edge Pirates in boys basketball

The Crookston boys basketball team was unable to hold onto an early second half lead as it dropped 67-60 decision on the road at Wadena-Deer Creek Saturday, Dec. 20.

The Pirates battled foul trouble stayed within striking distance until the final minutes. Reggie Winjum led the Pirates with 23 points and he was a rebound away from a double-double, finishing with nine boards. Carter Fee also hit double digits in scoring for the Pirates with

10 points.

The Wolverines were led by Leo Petrowski with 26 points and Raleigh Parker with 18 points.

The Wolverines improved to 2-2 with the win, while the Pirates fell to 0-5.

Scoring			
	1	2	T
Crookston	29	31	60
Wadena-Deer Creek	30	37	67
Crookston - Reggie Winjum 23, Carter Fee 10, Beau Smith 9, Jacob Halverson 6, Nolan Cassavant 5, Gunnar Groven 4, Nolan Johnson 3, Wadena-Deer Creek - Leo Petrowski 26, Raleigh Parker 18,			

Hunter Sweere 12, Trevin Kern 6, Ben Krelkow 5.

Section 8AA			
	Overall	QRF	
	W	L	
East Grand Forks	5	1	54.7
Thief River Falls	4	1	46.3
Osakis	4	2	44.2
Perham	3	2	43.5
Barnesville	3	2	40.9
Staples-Motley	4	3	35.4
DGF	3	2	35.2
Wadena-Deer Creek	2	2	30.8
Warroad	4	5	25.6
Menahga	3	3	23.7
Hawley	1	3	16.3
Park Rapids Area	1	4	14.2
Roseau	0	7	8.7
Crookston	0	5	6.1

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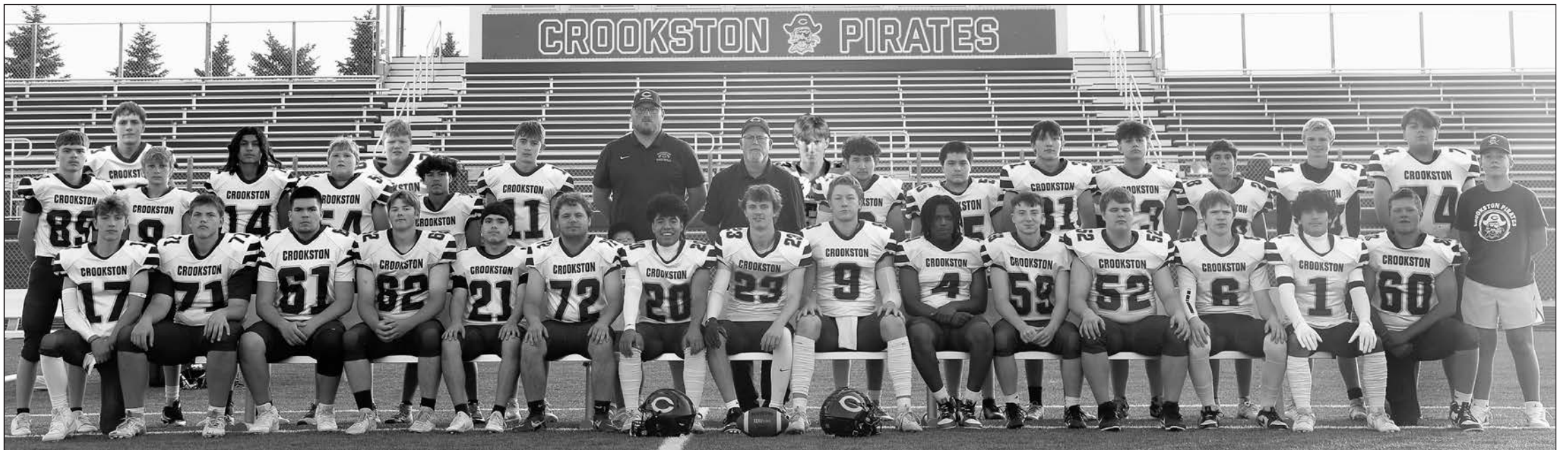
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## 2025-26 Crookston Pirates

# SPORTS SPOTLIGHT



Pictured from left to right are players and coaches from the 2025 Crookston Pirate football team: front row - Asher Weiland, Nolan Johnson, Juan Ramirez, Jack Overgaard, Unidentified, Casey Weiland, Jose Arriaga, Masen Reitmeier, Tate Hamre, Zechariah Ali, Lukas Helgeson, Tucker Lubinski, Jaron Knutson, Ean DeLeon, Jaxsen Reitmeier, Keegan Lessard, second row - Nathan Pahlen, Dane Peterson, Travis Black-

bird, Eli Marsyla, Mauricio Arriaga, Jacob Biermaier, Coach Devin Barton, Coach Jim McBride, Ean DeLeon, Joseph Burnette, Paul Thornill, Xsavior Ramos, Maddox Hoerner, Gavin Brault, Cameron Anderson; back row - Kolton Bahrenfuss, Jacob Doda, Davin Janek. (Photo by Tiffany Biermaier)

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Crookston's Garrett Fischer fires a shot on goal during the second period of the Pirates' 3-1 loss to Thief River Falls. The senior scored the team's only goal of the game late in the third period. On Saturday, Fischer recorded his 100th career point on an assist during the Pirates' 8-1 win over the Princeton Tigers. (Photo by Isaac Telle)



Crookston senior Brady Chandler sprawls to make a huge save in a 3-1 loss to Thief River Falls. Chandler made 24 saves on 27 shots in the game. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

Boys Hockey

# Crookston blows out Princeton, falls to TRF

The Crookston Boys Hockey Team extended its winning streak to seven games with a dominant 8-1 win over Princeton Saturday afternoon at the Crookston Sports Center.

The Pirates took control early with five first-period goals, while outshooting the Tigers 10-1 in the period. Scoring first period goals for the Pirates were Masen Reitmeier, Greyson Ecker, Isaiah Donarski and Jay Reese with a pair of goals.

Recording first-period assists for the Pirates were Cody Demarais (2), Gavin Aakhus, Reese (2), Garret Fischer (3) and Hamre.

Fischer's third assist of the period came on a power play goal with 1:47 left to play before the first intermission, and it gave Fischer exactly 100 points in his career.

The Pirates were up 5-0 with 4:13 left to play in the second period when Fischer scored his 101st career point on an unassisted goal.

The Tigers got on the board with 17 seconds remaining in the second period on a goal by Mason Clark with Lukas Bratulich on the assist.

Rounding out the scoring for the Pirates were a pair of unassisted goals. Ecker scored his second of the night 3:27 into the final period and Fischer scored his second goal and fifth of the night with 5:30 remaining.

Crookston goalie Brady Chandler faced just 16 shots on the night and turned away 15 of them to pick up the win.

### Pirates suffer first loss

Crookston's unbeaten streak to start the 2025-26 season ended in the eighth game of the season with a 3-1 loss to Section 8A rival Thief River Falls Monday night at the Crookston Sports Center.

Thief River Falls broke a scoreless tie 4:31 into the opening period with a goal by Hudson Brouse and assists credited to Hudson Brouse and Ian Winter.

The Prowlers added to their lead with just under 10 minutes remaining in the second period with an unassisted goal by Beckem Johnson.

Thief River Falls went up

3-0 with 9:37 left to play in regulation on a goal by Jed Kelly with an assist credited to Ryan Flaagan.

The Pirates broke up the shutout on a power play goal by Fischer with 4:44 remaining, with an assist by Reese.

Chandler defended 26 of the 29 shots he faced in his first loss of the season.

Thief River Falls goaltender Cooper Roff faced 18 shots on goal and finished with 17 saves to earn the win.

The Prowlers improved to 4-6 so far in 2025-26, while the Pirates fell to 6-1-1.

Scoring	1	2	3	T
Princeton	0	1	0	1
Crookston	5	1	2	8

First period - Crookston, Masen Reitmeier (Cody Demarais, Gavin Aakhus) 5:02; Crookston, Greyson Ecker (even strength) (Jay Reese, Garret Fischer) 6:05; Crookston, Isaiah Donarski (Jay Reese, Garret Fischer) 7:45; Crookston, Jay Reese (power play) (Garret Fischer, Tate Hamre) 15:13; Crookston, Jay Reese (even strength) (Cody Demarais) 16:27.

Second period - Crookston, Garret Fischer (unassisted) 12:47; Princeton, Mason Clark (Lukas Bratulich) 16:43.

Third period - Crookston, Greyson Ecker (unassisted) 3:27; Crookston, Garret Fischer (unassisted) 11:30.

Shots - Princeton, Zachary Ennis 22; TRF, Brady Chandler 15.

Power plays - Princeton 0-for-4; TRF 1-for-2.

Penalties - Princeton 2 (4 minutes); Crookston 4 (8 minutes).

Goalie saves - Princeton, Zachary Ennis 22; Crookston, Brady Chandler.

Scoring	1	2	3	T
Thief River Falls	1	1	1	3
Crookston	0	0	1	1

First period - Thief River Falls, Hudson Hall (Hudson Brouse, Ian Winter) 4:31.

Second period - Thief River Falls, Beckem Johnson (unassisted) 7:03.

Third period - Thief River Falls, Jed Kelly (Ryan Flaagan) 7:23; Crookston, Garret Fischer (power play) (Jay Reese) 12:16.

Shots - Thief River Falls 8-13-8-29; Crookston 5-6-7-18.

Power plays - Thief River Falls 0-for-6; Crookston 1-for-8.

Penalties - Thief River Falls 11 (30 minutes); Crookston 8 (16 minutes).

Goalie saves - TRF, Cooper Roff 17; Crookston, Brady Chandler 26.

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

### Pirates roll to win over Cougars

Chloe Boll and Grace Boll combined for 33 points to lead the Crookston girls basketball team to a 56-37 win over Ada-Borup-West Monday night at Ada-Borup-West High School.

The Pirates built a 28-21 halftime advantage before pulling away with several scoring runs in the second half.

Morgan Engel scored 27 points to lead the Cougars. She was the only Cougar in double figures, with three other players combining for 10 points.

Chloe Boll scored 19 points to lead the Pirates, with Grace Boll adding 14 points and 10 rebounds for a double-double.

### Section 8AA

Overall	W	L	QRF
Perham	9	1	63.8
Menahga	6	0	61.1
DGF	7	1	57.3
Frazee	5	2	54.9
East Grand Forks	5	3	50.7
Roseau	6	0	50.0
Pelican Rapids	3	3	48.6
Wadena-Deer Creek	6	1	46.3
Hawley	4	3	44.8
Barnesville	2	6	27.2
Park Rapids Area	2	5	25.5
Crookston	2	6	23.9
Thief River Falls	1	8	14.8
Warroad	1	8	11.1

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