



CROOKSTON WATCH

"NORTHWEST MINNESOTA'S REGIONAL NEWSPAPER"



Publication of the Thief River Falls Times



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Semifinalists selected for superintendent

The Crookston School Board has selected six semifinalists to interview for the school district's superintendent position. The semifinalists are:

- Jeremy Tammi, superintendent, South Koochiching/Rainy River
- Tara Lere, superintendent, Plummer-Worley, Idaho
- Jason Stanoch, principal/career academies director, Bemidji

- Todd Selk, superintendent, Fosston
 - Brad Johnson, superintendent, Renville County West
 - Tim Godfrey, superintendent, Red Rock Central
- The semifinalists were selected from a pool of 20 applicants based on criteria established by the school board, as well as survey input provided by Crookston Public Schools staff and

members of the public. The school board has scheduled interviews for the semifinalists beginning at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 10 and Wednesday, Feb. 11. All interviews will be held at the Crookston School and are open to the public. To ensure a level playing field for all candidates, the interviews will not be livestreamed or recorded.

Application process opens for judicial vacancies

On Thursday, Jan. 28, the Commission on Judicial Selection announced two vacancies in Minnesota's Ninth Judicial District. The vacancies will occur upon the elevation of the Honorable Anne M. Rasmusson to the Court of Appeals and the retirement of the Honorable Jeffrey S. Remick. These seats will be chambered in

Warren and Crookston. The application process is now open for these vacancies. The commission is searching for fair, experienced, and civic-minded individuals to serve on the bench and offer their talents and services to Minnesota's judicial system. Per statute, the commission will consider the following qualifications

for judicial office: integrity, maturity, health (if job related), judicial temperament, legal knowledge, ability, experience, and community service. The commission is seeking applicants who reflect Minnesota's full diversity.

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Council holds public hearing for Northstar Lime request

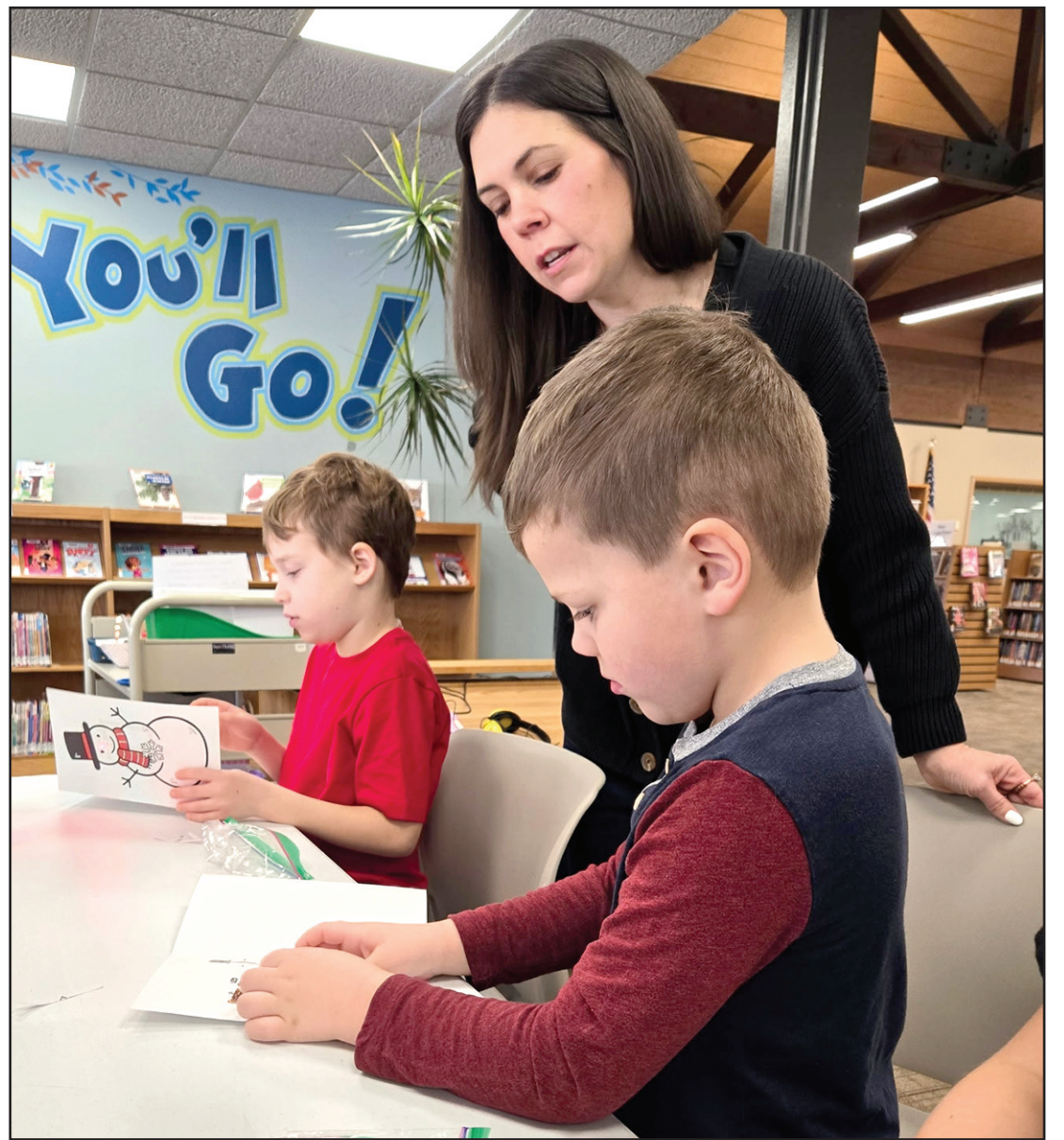
by Anna Phalen Correspondent

The Crookston City Council held a public hearing Monday, Feb. 2 to consider a request related to Minnesota Investment Fund assistance previously provided to Northstar Lime LLC. Bill Schram, a Crookston resident and employee of Northstar Lime, addressed

the council and spoke about the company's expansion and growth, including increases in employment. Council Member Joseph Shostell asked whether Northstar Lime would be able to utilize ash trees if the city were to obtain a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant to remove approximately 100 ash trees throughout the

community. Schram responded that this could be a possibility and noted that the company has also had discussions with the forestry council and the State of Minnesota regarding the use of wood waste in its production process. The public hearing will consider a proposed one-year

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Circuit labs were offered at the Crookston Public Library to Our Savior's Lutheran School students. The activity was part of National Lutheran Schools Week. (Submitted)

Our Savior's students celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week

Students at Our Savior's Lutheran School celebrated National Lutheran Schools Week Jan. 25-30 with Lutheran schools across the country.

Their theme was "Let's Make a Joyful Noise," and they did just that. Musical highlights of the week were

singing at Nimens Apartments, a 1980s-themed glow dance party, and learning about different instruments from alumni and friends of the school.

Students also enjoyed painting pottery at Queen City Arts Center; participating in circuit labs at the

Crookston Public Library, participating in a Mystery Meal planned, prepared, and served by the sixth grade class; and the annual battleball tournament. Learning about mission work in Mongolia and swimming at the Crookston pool rounded out the week.



North Star 4-H Club members are pictured after packing 254 meal kits to help with food insecurity at Highland Elementary

School. The meal kits will be distributed to students confidentially when needs are identified. (Submitted)

North Star 4-H Club packs meal kits

by Ella Capistran North Star 4-H Club Reporter

North Star 4-H Club packed 254 meal kits to help with food insecurity in their community. Support for the project was made possible by a community donor and Minnesota 4-H through the Food Partner Challenge Grant, which is sponsored by Copecer Financial and generous donors to the Minnesota 4-H General Fund.

The club also partnered with North Country Food Bank to purchase as much of the food as economically possible. 4-H members were in charge of planning a variety of meals from non-perishable items, staying within budget when shopping, picking up the food, packing each grab-and-go meal-kit, and delivering to Highland Elementary School for distribution. North Star 4-H is grateful for the partnership

with Tara Miller-Rodriguez, school mental health provider, for ensuring the meals are confidentially distributed when needs are identified.

4-H members also decided to create 12 birthday kits, which included cake mix and the ingredients to prepare it, frosting, candles and a birthday card to help spread cheer for birthday celebrations. 4-H members were excited to help kids and their families in their

local community and are thankful for all the assistance with the project.

North Star 4-H Club members thank the community donor, Minnesota 4-H, North Country Food Bank, and Highland School for the partnerships to make this project possible.

If you would like to financially support this project in the future, contact Tara Miller-Rodriguez at Highland School or any member of North Star 4-H Club.

Ways and Means Committee hears from Water District

by Anna Phalen Correspondent

The Crookston Ways and Means Committee met Monday, Feb. 2 to hear presentations and discuss redevelopment and organizational matters.

Regional Water District presentation

Lucas Spaeth presented an overview of the West Central Regional Water District, a multi-county initiative designed to provide a long-term regional water supply for portions of Clay, Norman and Polk counties. (The excluded areas include the Marshall and Polk Rural Water System service area in Polk County and the area served by Moorhead Public Service in Clay County.) The counties formed the district by resolution in spring 2024. The district's study area covers approximately 30 cities and 40,000 people. Thirteen of those cities have approved memorandums of inclusion. The district is governed by a nine-member board with representatives from each county.

Spaeth explained that a regional water system allows multiple communities and rural customers to share infrastructure, spreading operational and capital costs across a larger population.

By serving roughly 15,000 users instead of smaller systems serving as few as 1,500 people, regionalization can reduce financial strain, improve reliability, and strengthen emergency preparedness.

The need for the project is driven by aging infrastructure, high capital costs, water quality concerns, a shortage of licensed water operators, and emerging contaminants. Testing of private wells in the three counties has shown arsenic levels exceeding EPA standards in 39% of wells in Clay County, 43% in Norman County, and 21% in Polk County. Long-term exposure to arsenic has been linked to increased health risks.

Since the project's inception in 2019, boundaries and scope have evolved to better meet demand and infrastructure feasibility. Development is planned in phases, beginning with population centers and expanding into rural areas. Approximately \$3.25 million in local funding has been spent to date, along with extensive public outreach including informational meetings, resident mailings, and resolutions of support.

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Support the RiverView Foundation

Giving Hearts Day is Thursday, Feb. 12. Support RiverView Health through a donation to the RiverView Foundation to aid in RiverView's mission of providing exceptional care for exceptional outcomes.

The RiverView Foundation has participated in the online, non-profit fundraiser since its start in 2008. Donations and gifts given in memory or honor of loved ones have been used to start projects and programs and purchase essential equipment to keep our community healthy.

The RiverView Foundation Board has determined that undesignated Giving Hearts Day 2026 contributions be used to support the

Immunoassay Chemistry and Blood Culture Incubator Replacement projects, along with rural healthcare services in our region. IA testing is often used to confirm or rule out a heart attack in as little as one hour. In 2025, RiverView's IA machine processed 7,645 samples.

Early giving is open
If you do not want to wait until Thursday to donate, you can give your gift now, ahead of the big day, by going to <https://rvhealth.org/GHD>. Online giving is open through Thursday, Feb. 12.

The Dakota Medical Foundation, Impact Foundation, and Alex Stern Family Foundation host Giving Hearts Day. This year, these

generous donors and others will provide up to \$100,000 in match contributions to the Foundation to stretch donations even further to make the maximum impact.

"Thank you for your past support and consideration of a gift to Giving Hearts Day 2026," said Foundation Director Randy Schoenborn. "Your belief and trust in our mission will make a positive difference in the future health and vitality of our rural region."

For more information about the Giving Hearts Day program, contact Schoenborn at rschoenborn@riverviewhealth.org or call 218-281-9249.



The Crookston Ambassador Team has regrouped and visited Queen City Art Center, which opened in August, at 124 S. Broadway. Queen City Art Center hosts classes, including painting, pottery, shibori and mosaic. Customers can pick their own pottery, paint it, and then their masterpieces are sent off to be fired and are ready to be picked up in seven to 10 days. After a remodeling project has been completed, the kilns will return to Queen City Art Center, and the pottery will be fired on-site. Several forms of art from local and area artists, as well as artist supplies, are for sale at the shop. Hours are Monday by appointment, Tuesday through Friday from 2 to 6 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m.

to 3 p.m., and Sunday by appointment. Pictured are (front row) Tracy Kuchan (LeBlanc Realty), Lydia Hoffman (AgCountry Farm Credit Services), Kristy Morris Leas (Old National Bank), Alicia Berhow (Tri-Valley Opportunity Council); (back row) Bobbie Torkelson (H&R Block), Randy Schoenborn (RiverView Health), Taylor Wyum (Economic Development Authority), owner Jenn Walz, Lindsey Erdman (Benedictine Living Community in Crookston), Kacie Forness (First Community Credit Union) and Keenan Devier (City of Crookston). Carrie Bergquist (America Federal Bank) isn't pictured. (Submitted)

Public hearing for Northstar/Continued

(Continued from Page 1) extension of the MIF compliance date. Northstar Lime has requested the extension due to documented operational challenges that delayed the company's ability to fully meet job creation requirements within the original compliance period. If approved, the compliance date would be extended to Dec. 30, 2026.

During the regular

portion of its meeting, the council approved its consent agenda. Among the approved items was a \$100 donation for the Parks and Recreation Department in memory of Jackie Frantz from Chuck Leonard and Lynn Tiedeman. The council also authorized the Crookston Fire Department to enter into a fire service agreement with the Regents of the University of Min-

nesota Crookston.

Council reports
During council reports, council members thanked Taylor Wyum, Keenan Devier, and Michelle Christopher for their assistance with the recent Crookston Connected event. Shostell also commended snow removal crews for their work throughout the community.



Our Savior's Lutheran School students painted pottery at Queen City Arts Center as part of National Lutheran Schools Week. (Submitted)

Applications for vacancies/Continued

(Continued from Page 1) Rasmusson currently serves as the assistant chief judge of the Ninth Judicial District. She was appointed to the bench in 2013 and elected in both 2014 and 2020. Rasmusson earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Catherine University, Master of Arts degree from the University of Minnesota Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Policy, and her Juris Doctor degree from

the University of Minnesota Law School.

Remick was appointed to the bench in 2006. He was elected in 2008, 2014 and 2020. Remick holds a B.A. degree from Concordia College and a J.D. degree from the University of Minnesota Law School.

For more information about the judicial selection process, visit the Governor's Judicial Appointments webpage (<https://mn.gov/governor/appointments/>).

nor/appointments/judicialappointments).

Board to meet

The Crookston Park Board will meet Monday, Feb. 9 at 4:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Notices may be found at www.crookston.mn.us. There may be a quorum of City Council members present.

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.fisherbyglad.org
Pastor Gretchen Enoch
Phone: 218-893-4243
Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HARVEST CHURCH
520 Fisher Avenue - Crookston
218-281-2264
Pastor Dave Finsaas
www.harvestchurchcrookston.com
Sundays: Worship Service online or in-person at 10:30 a.m. Livestream can be found on our Facebook and YouTube channel. Facebook: Harvest Church Crookston, 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 January, February, and March, weekend Mass on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Tuesdays: Mass at 8:30 a.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, FISHER (LCMS)
Church Office: 218-891-4581
Pastor Doug Thompson
Website: 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: 9:45 a.m. Sunday School (Sept. - May), 10:45 a.m. Worship (Communion 2nd Sunday)

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THIEF RIVER FALLS Times

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DEATH NOTICES

Todd Strem, 63

Crookston - Todd Michael Strem, 63, of Crookston, passed away at his home on Tuesday, January 20, 2026.



Todd was born on May 31, 1962 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Polly and Jean Strem; their second boy. The Strem family lived in South Milwaukee for two years before returning to Crookston. Todd attended school in Crookston at Franklin, Highland, and Crookston High School, where he joined the Army Reserves at the age of 16.

After graduating from Crookston High School with the Class of 1980, Todd left Crookston to attend Army Basic Training. Todd served in the Army until 1984 and loved the opportunities he was afforded to travel overseas to destinations such as Germany, Amsterdam, and other European countries.

After serving his country, Todd returned to Crookston and embarked on a new adventure. He and his brother, Jan, bought Old Main in Crookston. They loved to bring in live music to entertain and Old Main became the place to be while they owned it.

Around the same time that he and Jan were bringing entertainment to Crookston, Todd started courting Julie Ann Austin. Todd knew Julie was the love and his life, and it was not long before he proposed marriage to her at the Bronze Boot. On July 13, 1985, they were wed and began their lives together.

The couple rented their first home and later that year, on December 2, 1985, they welcomed their first child, Cole. A few years later, on October 17, 1988, Tye was born into the family. After the birth of their third child, Mackenzie, on November 18, 1992, Todd and Julie decided it was time to get a bigger house. This led to their purchase of the big house on the hill in 1995. With more room

for the family in the bigger house, it was time to welcome Macy to family on December 30, 1998.

Todd worked many jobs in his younger years from Fertile Flow and Dahlgrens, to Bremer Bank, and Aflac Insurance. He even started his own insurance company for crop insurance. Later, Todd became the sales representative manager at Woodmaster in Red Lake Falls. Later, Todd returned to working in Crookston for Don Boone's Insurance office. Todd loved selling insurance, especially since Julie started working there as well.

Todd was a social butterfly and enjoyed numerous hobbies. He was often outside enjoying activities such as hunting, riding motorcycles, kayaking, four-wheeling, and gardening. Todd loved watching the Vikings play football as well as cooking, but his ultimate passion was watching his kids play sports!

Todd always made time to be involved in his children's lives. He found ways to connect with them no matter what they were doing. He coached hockey and basketball, taught Sunday School and alpha at Trinity Lutheran Church. Todd was like a second father figure for so many of his kids' friends and members of his community.

Todd is preceded in death by his parents, Jean and Polly Strem; mother-in-law, Nina; brother, Jan; and his favorite dogs, Kelly and Stella.

Todd is survived by his loving wife, Julie; children, Cole (Bill Tamlyn) Strem, Tye (Alyssa Krenke) Strem, Mackenzie (Ryan Brown) Strem, Macy Strem; brother, Corey Strem; grandchildren, Teaghan, Nova, and Navy.

Todd's family will celebrate his life with a memorial service on Saturday, February 7, 2026, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston beginning at 11 a.m. Visitation will begin at 10 a.m.

www.stenshoelhouse.com
A00003B2026FB07

Glen Thompson, 92

Crookston - Glen Ordell Thompson, 92, of Crookston, passed away on Thursday, January 29, 2026, at the Benedictine Living Community in Crookston.



Glen was born on June 17, 1933, in Caledonia, ND to Engebret and Alma (Overgsten) Thompson. He attended Caledonia Consolidated School where he graduated with the Class of 1951. After graduating from school, Glen worked with his brother moving buildings.

In 1954, he enlisted in the United States Army and served a tour of duty in South Korea. In 1956, after being honorably discharged from the Army, he returned to North Dakota where he would spend the next 15 years operating heavy machinery working road construction.

On May 2, 1959, Glen married Lois Helen Opdahl at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston, and they lived in Caledonia until 1966. In 1966, they moved to Buxton, N.D., where Glen spent 3 years driving school bus and doing maintenance for Buxton School.

In 1969, Glen and Lois moved to Crookston, and he began a 27-year career at the University of Minnesota Crookston as an auto mechanic. In 1996, Glen retired from the University and enjoyed a long retirement.

Glen was a good and kind man. He was a pillar of quiet strength who lived his life with a consistent set of values. He had a strong work ethic, took pride in his work, and enjoyed staying active.

Before and after retirement, he enjoyed visiting with Thompson and Opdahl family members, making improvements to his house, meticulously tending to his lawn, flowers, and garden, operating a small garden rototilling business, learning to play the guitar in his 50s and forming a band with four friends from work to play country and polka music at small dances in the area, and

helping his neighbors when needed.

He was a loving husband of 66 years, giving and supportive father of three, and beloved grandfather/great-grandfather to six. His loving legacy will continue to live within the family and friends that were part of his life.

Glen is survived by his wife, Lois; children, Kimberley (Bryan) Seaton, Karen Langer, and Kevin Thompson, all of Crookston; grandchildren, Amy (Chris) Johnston, Ashley (fiancé Wyatt Remmick) Langer; great-grandchildren, Colten and Cayden Johnston, and Brooklyn and Beau Remmick; brother, Arvid Thompson; brother-in-law, Alan Sandberg; and sisters-in-law, Janis Thompson and Wanda Wilkens.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Engebret and Alma Thompson; brothers, Orville, Duane, Wallace, Edwin, Elmer; sister, Muriel (Baukol); son-in-law, Gary Langer; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-laws; and many other beloved family members.

Glen's family will celebrate his life with a funeral service held on Saturday, February 7, 2026, at 2 p.m. at Stenshoel-Houske Funeral Home.

Visitation will begin at 1 p.m., with family visitation at noon. A social at Irishman's Shanty (backroom) will be held from 3-5 p.m. and is open to all of Glen's family and friends.

A graveside service will take place at a later date at the Oakdale Cemetery in Crookston.

A00003B2026FB07

Angeline Steichen, 92

Angeline Steichen, 92, of Ulen, died on Sunday, February 1, 2026.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, February 6, 2026, at 11 a.m., with a visitation 1 hour prior, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Ulen. Inurnment will be held at West Bethlehem Cemetery, Ulen.

Arrangements entrusted to Anderson Family Funeral Home in Twin Valley.

Claudia A. Cirks, 89

Claudia Annette Cirks, 89, passed away on Friday, January 23, 2026.

A funeral service celebrating Claudia's life will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston on Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 11 a.m. Visitation will be one hour prior. Interment will be after at Oakdale Cemetery in Crookston.

Melvin Larson, 88

Melvin Martin Larson, 88, passed away on January 19, 2026.

Graveside services will be held at Oakdale Cemetery on July 18, 2026.

Thomas Keeney, 84

Thomas C. Keeney, 84, of Shelly, passed away on Monday, January 26, 2026.

Visitation was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at Fredrikson-Ganje Funeral Home, Halstad.

Interment will be at Augustana Lutheran Cemetery, rural Halstad at a later date.

Marian Gorder, 102

Marian Gorder, 102, of Fertile, formerly of Gary, passed away on Friday, January 23, 2026.

Funeral services will be held on Monday, February 9, 2026, at 2 p.m., with visitation one hour prior, at Ness Lutheran Church in rural Gary.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, February 8, from 2-4 p.m., with a prayer service at 3 p.m., at the Anderson Funeral Home in Twin Valley. Interment will be held at the Ness Lutheran Cemetery.

Arrangements entrusted to Anderson Family Funeral Home of Twin Valley.

Coauette graduates from NDSU

Morgan Coauette of Crookston graduated from North Dakota State University in fall 2025. Coauette graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing.

Author to host reading Tuesday



Sarah Louise Dale

Sarah Louise Dale, a Thief River Falls author, will hold a special reading of her book "Chasing Time" on Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 2 p.m. at the Red Lake Falls Public Library.

Dale will do a special reading of the book, and there will be a question and answer session. The event will serve as a celebration of the one-year anniversary of "Chasing Time." Copies of the book will also be available for purchase.

MSUM dean's list released

Four Crookston students have been named to the Minnesota State University Moorhead dean's list for fall 2025. They are Ava Davidson, Talia Hamre, Dukessa Ramirez and Jayden Taylor. Students must maintain a 3.25 or higher grade-point average and carry 12 graded credits to qualify for the honor.

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You Make THE Difference Workshop is coming

The Heartland Association of Fairs, Festivals & Events has announced that Crookston will be an official stop of the You Make THE Difference Heartland Tour on Monday, March 2, from 4 to 8 p.m., at Drafts, located at 925 Fisher Ave. This workshop is made possible through a grant awarded to HAFPE and is designed to support the people who power fairs, festivals, events and community organizations across the Heartland.

The workshop is free. Pre-registration is encouraged to assist with planning. Complimentary food and refreshments will be provided during each session as a thank you to attendees.

The You Make THE Difference initiative, created and led by award-winning humanitarian Ian Hill, focuses on strengthening leadership, inspiring volunteer engagement, and building long-term sustainability for community-based organizations. Fairs and rural communities across the Heartland are facing increasing challenges, including volunteer fatigue, leadership transition, and growing expectations with limited resources. This program is designed to address those challenges head-on.

Through engaging, in-person training, participants will gain practical tools and real-world strategies they can immediately apply within their organizations. Topics include volunteer recruitment and retention, leadership development and succession planning, communication strategies, and ways to reduce burnout among boards, staff, and volunteers. Each session is designed to be interactive, relatable, and applicable across a wide range of community organizations.

While the grant was awarded to HAFPE, the workshop is intentionally inclusive and welcomes participants from Crookston and surrounding communities. Attendees may include fairs and events, chamber members, volunteers, FFA chapters, Extension services, agricultural programs, Lions Clubs, civic organizations, Farm Bureau members, and city and state influencers.

This workshop is one of ten stops Hill will be making throughout the Heartland, beginning the last week of February and concluding the first week of March. Together, these stops represent a regional investment in people, leadership, and the long-term vitality of Heartland communities.

Registration information and additional details can be found at www.heartlandassociationffe.com/you-make-the-difference-tour. This program is made possible through the support of Fairs.com.

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Nathan Weiss D.C., C.ACU

Rural Reflections ...

Recovering from the purchase of three vehicle batteries

by **Grant Nelson**



Dear Dave, I believe I have "impending spring" anxiety. Surprisingly, there are few support groups for this pretend disorder, more on that later.

Lisa and I had to replace our vehicle batteries this winter, Dave. My concept of replacing a battery is apparently anchored in nostalgia more than reality. I can easily recall buying a battery for under \$78 and then getting a delicious little bit of cash back for my core exchange.

I use two batteries in my truck as I plow snow. Lisa's vehicle uses just one. There are two factors at work here, Dave. The first is that vehicles have enough on-board technology that replacing a battery is not a simple operation. It is actually more like the old "Operation" game where an errant electrical connection is a serious error which is followed by a bright light and a disturbing noise.

The second factor is the cost of the battery – something that at one time might have totaled \$200 minus core exchange for both of us. Recently, all three batteries installed equaled the cost of my nostalgic idea of the price to replace a transmission. In the end, I was thankful that we were both back up and running; the trade-off is we will just have to eat baloney on white with the cheaper mustard for a few weeks until we recover.

I don't like the cold or wind of winter, Dave; however, I do enjoy semi-hibernation. My version of this is mostly indoor projects and streaming video. I did take up a new craft this winter, leather tooling. I have only begun and am already overwhelmed with questions created by my need for endless detail. I have the ability to overthink any relaxing hobby into a dreaded task. The only cure for this is to go hands-on and make some mistakes and claim a few victories. I am steadily making and claiming, but time is running short for these sorts of activities.

Spring will soon be here, this is without regard to Punxsutawney Phil's recent prediction. The groundhog's

prediction of six more weeks of winter in Minnesota is pretty safe; however, spring preparation will begin before those six weeks run out. Anyway, the time to trim trees and perform mower maintenance will soon be here and a quiet hobby like leather tooling will no longer find a spot in my schedule. Perhaps I can learn more next winter without the distraction of the Winter Olympics.

I hope things are going well in Carrington, Dave. I enjoy reading posts from the North Dakota State University Experiment Station and updates from the Cows and Co. Creamery. I know you have been busy at Erickson Implement as your mechanics perform service specials and attend workshops on technology updates. I like to think about your career that has played out over the last half-century. You have seen a farm crisis, booming prices, manufacturer consolidations and everything in between. It really has been quite a career and I am proud of what you have done. Tell all the Nodak relatives hello.

Your little bro

POLICIES

Letters To The Editor: The staff of the *Northern Watch* encourages written responses to editorial comment or letters with original thoughts or ideas of general interest. Letters should be intended for publication in *Northern Watch* exclusively; letters sent to multiple publications will generally not be accepted. Right is reserved to edit letters for length and clarity and to reject letters deemed to be promotional in nature or in poor taste.

Letters Must Be Signed: All letters must be signed and contain an address or phone number of the writer so authenticity can be verified. **Signatures must appear on letters published.** The staff believes that there is greater credibility in letters signed in print and will not withhold names of writers from publication.

Responses Invited: Letters critical of individuals or other entities may be shown to those individuals or representatives of those entities in advance of publication with an invitation by newspaper staff for response in the same issue as the original letter.

Corrections: If an error is made in news or advertising publication, the staff encourages readers to call it to our immediate attention by calling 681-4450. We will attempt to correct the error or clarify the misunderstanding in the next issue.

LETTER

Problems persist with Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Per the Crookston Watch's policy, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota was given the opportunity to respond to this letter. It didn't respond to multiple emails about this letter.

To the Editor:

I'm reaching out to you for my wife, Dana Mooney. We currently use Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota for health insurance. We have been having significant issues with getting information, the correct information from them to address my wife's health issues. Dana suffers from Hypermobile Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, Mast Cell Activation Syndrome, Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia and Poland Syndrome, which are all rare diseases.

I'm her full-time caregiver. I've mailed dozens of grievances with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and pretty much none of them have been corrected.

I have files, dates, names, etc. I have hundreds of pages of supporting data, but Blue Cross and Blue

Shield just ignores it all. I've gone through the entire appeals and grievance process with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. I went to the Department of Labor, Department of Commerce and the Minnesota Department of Health. MDH said "they just had their three-year audit and we will address your concerns in three years." I also contacted the NCQA, the organization that audits HMOs.

Issues with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota:

- Incorrect phone numbers on forms.
- Forms have errors.
- Letters sent to us with errors/mistakes/lies. I call and they won't send the correct letter.
- I've been hung up on.
- Lied to by customer service staff.
- Bounced from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota to Prime Therapeutics (owned by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota).
- Staff are not trained to do their job.

If you are denied a medication, you can request the

paperwork used to deny it. I called over 10 times for the paperwork. It took them over five months to send the paperwork for one appeal. We have had four appeals ongoing since last May/June.

I've met with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Corporate Appeals Committee. That was a waste of time.

They "bundled" all our grievances under one tracking number. This essentially hides the number of grievances sent by us. I sent each issue separately. I had a feeling that they would lump issues together.

I have several Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act issues with staff saying "we will mail her medical records."

I have also attached a few of the files I created and sent to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota – to no avail.

We do about five to 10 medical appointments with my wife per week. Yes, per week. We reach our out-of-pocket in May.

Joe Mooney
Crookston

Valentine's Day isn't just for sweethearts

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Committee hears from Water District/Continued

(Continued from Page 1)

A final hearing is scheduled for Friday, April 17. The meeting will be held from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Clay County Courthouse in Moorhead. Attendance is optional. Spaeth believed a Zoom option will also be available. Clay County District Court will mail notices to approximately 19,500 residents within the project area. Spaeth explained the hearing will enable the district to be formally established and eligible for state funding.

For Crookston, the project presents opportunities for continued coordination, potential future collaboration, and possibly serving as a regional water supplier.

Tri-Valley Building grant discussion

The committee also discussed the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Redevelopment grant application for the former Tri-Valley building. The original grant request was \$650,000, which requires a 50% local match. Updated estimates indicate demolition costs could exceed \$1.3 million, prompting discussion about increasing the grant request to \$984,000. If awarded, the city's share would be approximately \$866,000. Engineering, permitting, and related costs would not be covered by the grant.

City Administrator Darin Selzler stated that regardless of grant funding, the building will need to be demolished due to safety concerns and would require bonding. Selzler recommended moving forward

with the increased grant request. Minnesota Department of Transportation officials have indicated that traffic safety improvements could proceed even if the building remains, but demolition could allow for partial property acquisition and additional safety enhancements at the intersection.

Council members discussed potential cost offsets, including salvaging materials from the building. It was also noted that the building is listed on the historic register, requiring additional review and documentation before demolition. Mayor Dale Stainbrook expressed concern about selling the property, citing the possibility that a buyer could delay redevelopment.

CHEDA reorganization discussion

The committee discussed reorganizing Crookston Housing and Economic Development Authority (CHEDA) staffing and reporting structure. Members noted that the existing organizational structure has led to inconsistencies and confusion, as well as strained working relationships in the past.

Under the proposed reorganization, the community development director and housing director would report directly to the city administrator, and city bylaws would be revised to reflect the changes. Committee members expressed support for the proposed structure, noting it would clarify reporting relationships and improve consistency going forward.



Synergy Nutrition Hub, 116 W. Robert St., recently received a visit from the Crookston Ambassador Team. Deano and Tracy Hundt took over Synergy on Dec. 8. Synergy Nutrition Hub offers a variety of dreamsicle teas, protein snack teas loaded with 160 milligrams of caffeine plus 15 grams of protein, kid-friendly teas, diabetic-friendly teas, power teas, and a limited protein-based coffee menu – small enough not to compete with coffee powerhouse businesses. Consumers can also take the product home with them in a kit and make it when it's convenient for them. Synergy Nutrition Hub also

offers fundraising opportunities for various groups. Business hours are weekdays 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The team is considering hours on Sundays, stay tuned. The Handts also own locations in Detroit Lakes and Fergus Falls. Pictured are (from left) Keenan Devier, Taylor Wyum, Kristy Morris Leas, Alicia Berhow, employee Isabell, co-owner Deano Handt, Lydia Hoffman, Lindsey Erdman, Kacie Forness, Carrie Bergquist and Randy Schoenborn. (Submitted)

Krona advances in MFBF Discussion Meet

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee held the preliminary rounds of the Discussion Meet competition Jan. 30-31 in Bemidji.

Lily Krona from the West Polk County Farm Bureau was among the eight semifinalists who now advance to the finals. The finals will be held during the MFBF Annual Meeting in November

in Minnetonka.

Krona was among 19 competitors who competed in the preliminary round of the Discussion Meet. The meet evaluates participants on their knowledge of key agricultural issues and their ability to exchange ideas and collaborate in a problem-solving environment, highlighting the leadership skills of agriculture's next generation of leaders.

McFadzen named campus winner of Collegiate Meet

University of Minnesota Crookston student Stephen McFadzen was a campus-level winner of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Collegiate Discussion Meet.

The Collegiate Discussion Meet gives students from across Minnesota the opportunity

to demonstrate their understanding of critical agricultural issues, and their ability to engage in cooperative problem-solving and idea exchange. Last fall, a total of six campuses hosted meets, with a combined 56 students participating.

Crookston students named to NDSU dean's list

Five Crookston students have been named to the North Dakota State University dean's list for fall semester 2025. They included Leila Bautista, Emma Gunderson, Nathan Kelly, Bran-

non Tangquist and Alexia Threatt.

A student must earn a 3.50 grade point average or higher and be enrolled in at least 12 class credits to qualify for the NDSU dean's list.



Members of the Crookston Ambassador Team recently visited H&R Block, which has officially moved into its new space at 2015 Sahlstrom Dr. (across from Walmart). H&R Block provides tax preparation, payroll, notary and bookkeeping services. Tax forms can be dropped off or customers can scan them to the H&R Block portal. Sessions may be in-person, via video chat or on the phone. Currently, H&R Block is open seven days a week during its peak season. Call 218-281-3658 to get on its schedule. Pictured are (from left) Randy Schoenborn, Taylor Wyum, Kacie Forness,

Alicia Berhow, Caden Bruley, Melissa Weiland (with H&R Block), Bobbie Torkelson (H&R Block), Lydia Hoffman, Keenan Devier, Lindsey Erdman and Kristy Morris Leas. Carrie Bergquist isn't pictured. If you would like an ambassador visit or would like to join the Crookston Ambassador Team, call or text Carrie Bergquist at 218-289-1823. Activities and responsibilities include gathering to recognize, honor and congratulate innovative businesses in Crookston. Ambassadors also offer support, encouragement and resources to local entrepreneurs. (Submitted)



The annual battleball tournament was held at Our Savior's Lutheran School recently. The tournament was part of the

school's observance of National Lutheran Schools Week. (Submitted)

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Pirates shut out Blades in home finale



Senior forward Gavin Aakhus (7) battles for the puck following a face-off in the third period of the Pirates' 5-0 victory over the Blades. Aakhus recorded a goal and an assist in the game for Crookston. (Photo by Isaac Telle)

Chandler and Johnson combine for shutout

by Isaac Telle
Crookston Watch Intern

The Crookston Pirates earned a 5-0 shutout victory over the Breckenridge/Wahpeton Blades on Tuesday. The winning effort was fueled by strong performances in goal from Brady Chandler and Teegyn Johnson, who made 11 and 13 saves, respectively. Gavin Aakhus, Greyson Ecker, Garrett Fischer, Jay Reese, and Tate Hamre all recorded goals in the win.

First period
The game started off well for Crookston, as much of the game was played in the Blades' end of the ice. The Pirates had several great chances early on, including a shot from Masen Reitmeier that went off the post and somehow stayed out of the net.

With just over nine minutes remaining in the first, Crookston was able to strike first off the stick of Aakhus. Following an offensive-zone faceoff, Aakhus was able to control the puck down low, make his way to the slot, and send a wrist shot past the glove of Breckenridge/Wahpeton's Cale Gilbertson for a 1-0 lead.

The Pirates would score again a few minutes later after a costly Blades turnover resulted in a wide-open lane for Ecker, who went top shelf to make the game 2-0. Chandler started for the Pirates in net and stopped all eight shots he faced in the period. With the remaining time running out, the Pirates ended the first period with a 2-0 lead.

Second period
It only took 20 seconds for the Pirates to extend their lead against the Blades. After winning a puck battle in the offensive zone, Ecker was able to find Fischer with a cross-crease pass that was buried to make it a 3-0 game. Three minutes later, it would be Reese who found the back of the net to make it 4-0. After a feed from Cody Demarais, Reese was able to make his way into the offensive zone and send a blistering slap shot past the Blades' goaltender.

After making three more saves in the period, the Pirates made a goalie change with just over seven minutes remaining in the second. Johnson kept the team's shutout alive, making three

saves, including a nice glove save on a shot that skipped on its way to the net. The period ended with the Pirates leading by a score of 4-0, with both teams having similar shot totals.

Third period
The third period was mostly controlled by the Pirates, as they were able to limit the Blades to only three shots in the first ten minutes of the period. Crookston was able to add some insurance about halfway through the third period, thanks to a goal from Hamre. He scored on a shot from the point following a pass from Aakhus to make it 5-0. The Pirates had a few more scoring opportunities but were unable to add more to the scoreboard.

The shutout was kept alive in large part due to a strong effort from Johnson, who made five saves in the final minute of the game. The Blades were able to get a final shot off in the closing moments, but Johnson made the save to secure the shutout victory. The Pirates won by a final score of 5-0 and improved to 14-9-1 on the season.

	1	2	3	T
Breckenridge/Wahp	0	0	0	0
Crookston	2	2	1	5

First period - Crookston, Gavin Aakhus (unassisted) 7:38; Crookston, Greyson Ecker (unassisted) 13:12.
Second period - Crookston, Garrett Fischer (Greyson Ecker) 0:20; Crookston, Jay Reese (19 Cody Demarais) 3:36.
Third period - Crookston, Tate Hamre (power play) (Gavin Aakhus) 5:40.
Shots - Breckenridge/Wahpeton 8-7-9 - 24; Crookston 10-8-11 - 29.
Power plays - Breckenridge/Wahpeton 0-for-3; Crookston 1-for-2.
Penalties - Breckenridge/Wahpeton 2 (4 minutes); Crookston 3 (6 minutes).
Goalie saves - Breckenridge/Wahpeton, Cale Gilbertson 24; Crookston, Brady Chandler 11, Teegyn Johnson 13.

Hlucny wins championship at Tyler Moening Invitational

Crookston senior Gavyn Hlucny went 4-0 with three pins to claim the individual championship at 152 pounds in the Tyler Moening Invitational in Walker on Friday, Jan. 30.

Hlucny opened the round robin bracket with a 6-0 win over Talen Kubesh of Rocori. From there, he recorded three straight wins by fall, pinning Clay Nelson of Thief River Falls, Ian Benham of Deer River and Aiden Eidelbes of Thief River Falls.

Also placing for the Pirates were Mauricio Arriaga, third place at 107 pounds; Jaron Knutson, fourth at 172 pounds; and Lucas Perala, sixth at 160.

Tyler Moening Invitational
1. Rocori 283.5; 2. Thief River Falls A 243.5; 3. Rock Ridge 124.5; 4. Fosston-Bagley 119; 5. Walker-Hack-Akeley/Nevis 95; 6. Thief

River Falls B 91.5; 7. Deer River 83; 8. Hibbing 80.5; 9. Crookston 67; 10. Blackduck/Cass Lake-Bena 26.5; 11. Northeast Range Ely 5.
Mauricio Arriaga (4-1) 107 - 3rd (17.5 pts) - Bout 1021 (Mat 2) - Quarters: Boys Varsity - 107 - Ryan Fuenfingger (18-5) Fr., RORI over Mauricio Arriaga (20-3) So., CROO (Dec 5-3); Bout 1070 (Mat 3) - Cons. Quarters: Boys Varsity - 107 - Mauricio Arriaga (20-3) So., CROO over Bodhi Hendrickson (4-13) 8th, HIBB (F 2:50); Bout 1100 (Mat 2) - Cons. Sub-Semis: Boys Varsity - 107 - Mauricio Arriaga (20-3) So., CROO over Aeson Evans (11-10) 7th, DERI (TF 21-5 (2:29)); Bout 1136 (Mat 3) - Cons. Semis: Boys Varsity - 107 - Mauricio Arriaga (20-3) So., CROO over Grant Orton (20-9) 8th, WHAN (F 0:39); Bout 1162 (Mat 2) - 3rd Place Match: Boys Varsity - 107 - Mauricio Arriaga (20-3) So., CROO over Jaxon Linn (7-2) 7th, ROCO (Dec 9-2).

Gabriel Perala (0-2) 121 - DNP (0 pts) - Bout 1005 (Mat 2) - Champ. Rd of 16: Boys Varsity - 121 - Jace Gibson (15-13) Fr., RORI over Gabriel Perala (4-11) So., CROO (F 0:57); Bout 1073 (Mat 2) - Cons. Quarters: Boys Varsity - 121 - James Engel-

stad (4-9) Sr., TRFB over Gabriel Perala (4-11) So., CROO (F 2:53).

Gavyn Hlucny (4-0) 152 - 1st (30 pts) - Bout 1048 (Mat 2) - Champ. Round 2: Boys Varsity - 152 - Gavyn Hlucny (17-1) Sr., CROO over Talen Kubesh (4-2) 8th, ROCO (Dec 6-0); Bout 1125 (Mat 3) - Champ. Round 3: Boys Varsity - 152 - Gavyn Hlucny (17-1) Sr., CROO over Clay Nelson (4-9) Jr., TRFB (F 1:21); Bout 1149 (Mat 1) - Champ. Round 4: Boys Varsity - 152 - Gavyn Hlucny (17-1) Sr., CROO over Ian Benham (8-13) Sr., DERI (F 1:56); Bout 1182 (Mat 2) - Champ. Round 5: Boys Varsity - 152 - Gavyn Hlucny (17-1) Sr., CROO over Aiden Eidelbes (16-14) Jr., TRF (F 0:16).

Lucas Perala (2-3) 160 - 6th (7 pts) - Bout 1051 (Mat 3) - Quarters: Boys Varsity - 160 - Wyatt Gullickson (13-10) Sr., DERI over Lucas Perala (6-11) Sr., CROO (Dec 6-2); Bout 1130 (Mat 1) - Cons. Sub-Semis: Boys Varsity - 160 - Lucas Perala (6-11) Sr., CROO over Jonathan (JD) Knox (2-2) Sr., WHAN (F 1:47); Bout 1152 (Mat 1) - Cons. Semis: Boys Varsity - 160 - Carson Alvarado-Konz (4-3) Sr., ROCO over Lucas Perala (6-11) Sr., CROO (F 3:32); Bout 1184 - 5th

Place Match: Boys Varsity - 160 - Parker Tsuji (9-18) Jr., BCLB over Lucas Perala (6-11) Sr., CROO (MFF).

Jaron Knutson (2-2) 172 - 4th (12.5 pts) - Bout 1055 (Mat 3) - Quarters: Boys Varsity - 172 - Jaron Knutson (13-11) So., CROO over Koltyn Larson (5-12) Sr., FOBA (TF 19-4 (2:31)); Bout 1084 (Mat 2) - Semis: Boys Varsity - 172 - Landen Larson (30-3) Jr., TRF over Jaron Knutson (13-11) So., CROO (F 1:13); Bout 1154 (Mat 2) - Cons. Semis: Boys Varsity - 172 - Jaron Knutson (13-11) So., CROO over Braxton Kintner (7-26) Sr., HIBB (MD 19-9); Bout 1188 (Mat 2) - 3rd Place Match: Boys Varsity - 172 - Hunter Rhodes (15-10) Sr., DERI over Jaron Knutson (13-11) So., CROO (F 1:59).

Miles Corneille (0-2) 189 - DNP (0 pts) - Bout 1060 (Mat 1) - Quarters: Boys Varsity - 189 - Craig Cloud (3-9) Fr., DERI over Miles Corneille (4-7) Sr., CROO (F 3:57); Bout 1133 (Mat 2) - Cons. Sub-Semis: Boys Varsity - 189 - Keenan Seelen Fr., ROCO over Miles Corneille (4-7) Sr., CROO (TF 22-4 (3:58)).

Minnesota Northern Lights to host Open House today

The Minnesota Northern Lights hockey team will have an open house from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7 at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.

Season tickets are on sale now, and the open house will give potential season ticket holders the chance to pick out their seats. Concessions will be available. For more information, call 218-416-3334.



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Jacob Halvorson

Current Sport: Basketball
Position: N/A
Favorite Subject: English
Favorite Sports Team: Timberwolves
Favorite Food: Buffalo wings
Favorite Movie/TV show: Good Will Hunting
Career Highlight/favorite memory: All of the bus rides
Other Sports/Activities: Tennis
Hobbies outside of athletics: Hang out with friends or play video games with friends.
Plans After High School: Attend a college or get a job somewhere where it's warm.



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Gunnar Groven

Current Sport: Basketball
Position: Guard
Favorite Subject: History
Favorite Sports Team: UND Hockey Team
Favorite Food: Wings
Favorite Movie/TV show: Lord of the Rings
Career Highlight/favorite memory: Hitting a three in TRF to win the game.
Other Sports/Activities: Soccer, tennis
Hobbies outside of athletics: Anything outdoors, board/card games, spending time with family, going to the lake.
Plans After High School: Attend Montana Wilderness School of the Bible gap year program in the fall.

Tiffany Biermaier
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Minnesota Crookston baseball team set for 2026 season

Conference play opens Feb. 14

The University of Minnesota Crookston baseball team is looking to build on successes over the last decade as it embarks on the 2026 season. The Golden Eagles have made seven NSIC Tournament appearances since 2016. In addition, Minnesota Crookston has posted eight 20-win seasons during this span. The Golden Eagles are in their 12th season under Head Coach Steve Gust. Gust is the winningest coach in any sport in program history.

The Golden Eagles will have a mix of familiar faces and new faces on the staff. Rich Loomis is in his third season as pitching coach. In addition, Clarke Peterson is back for his second year in his current stint at Minnesota Crookston. A former Golden Eagle catcher and pitcher, Peterson is the player development coach for Minnesota Crookston.

Kaiden Zacharias is in his first season as hitting coach and offensive coordinator, while Cal Fougner is also in his first season as an assistant coach for Minnesota Crookston.

The Golden Eagles are set to play 50 games. They will compete in 10 non-conference games, including a three-game set at the University of Colorado-Corona Springs, and seven games at the RussMatt Central Florida Invitational. Minnesota Crookston was set to commence the season Friday, Feb. 6 in Colorado Springs, Colo. They open conference play Feb. 14 versus Southwest Minnesota State University in a neutral-site game in Fort Scott, Kan. Their home opener is slated to be March 14 against Wayne State College.

Position-By-Position Breakdown

Catchers

The group is led by red-shirt sophomore Jackson Fliflet (R-So., C, Wahpeton, N.D.), who played in two games in 2025, batting .500. In addition, Jonah Norman (R-Jr., C, Winnipeg, Manitoba) returns after playing 10 games, with one start. Dylan Alexander (R-Fr., C/OF, Glenwood) should see

time in his second season, after redshirting in 2025. In addition, Reece Berberich (Jr., C/OF, Thompson, N.D.), John Albrecht (R-Fr., C, Barrington, Ill.), and Isaac Telle (R-Jr., C, East Grand Forks) will battle for time.

First Base

Aaron Wensloff (Jr., IF/OF, Roseau) is a versatile player that could play all over the infield and the outfield. He looks to be a major factor in the first base discussion. Wensloff hit .308 as a sophomore, with 34 runs scored, 13 doubles, eight home runs, and 36 RBI. Cole Hebl (R-So., 1B/OF, Hillsboro, N.D.) also factors in at first base, after missing a lot of time in 2025. Hebl hit .300 in 10 at-bats last season, with one RBI. The Golden Eagles are also excited about the future of newcomers Elias Leach (Fr., OF/1B, Plymouth), Noah Jensen (Fr., 1B, Glenwood), Cam Justice (R-So., 1B, Bemidji) returns after appearing in four games last season.

Second Base

The leader in the second base discussion is Caden Kappes (Jr., 2B/SS, Wahpeton, N.D.), who appeared in 39 games with 22 starts. Kappes hit .172, with 13 runs scored, two doubles, nine RBI, and a stolen base. Newcomer Thomas Schumacher (Fr., IF, Thompson, N.D.) looks to factor in as a newcomer for the Golden Eagles. In addition, Jaiden Smith (R-So., IF, Aberdeen, S.D.) returns after batting .333 in nine games last season.

Third Base

The Golden Eagles have versatility here with Wensloff factoring into this discussion, as well as at first base. Terrence Moody (Jr., IF, Sauk Rapids) looks to factor in at third base after hitting .374 in 48 games for St. Cloud Tech in 2025. Moody began his career at St. Cloud State.

Short Stop

The leading candidate to hold down shortstop is Kyler Miller (So., SS, Grand Rapids, Minn.) who came on strong as a freshman in 2025. Miller hit .250 in 31 starts, and 36 games played. He had 23 runs scored, three doubles, three home runs, and 14 RBI. Kappes, Schumacher, and Smith all can play the position, as well.

Outfield

Minnesota Crookston has

a deep core of players competing in the outfield. Americo Sculati (R-Sr., OF, Golden Valley) returns after swinging .273, with 34 runs scored, 12 doubles, four triples, seven home runs, and 32 RBI last season. Connor Bushbaum (R-Sr., OF, Saginaw, Minn.) is back after hitting .250, with 19 runs scored, six doubles, one triple, one home run, and 18 RBI. Landon Hanson (So., OF, Bemidji) appeared in nine games as a freshman.

In addition, the Golden Eagles have several newcomers who will look to step on the scene in 2025. Tori Uhlich (Jr., OF, Wahpeton, N.D.) hit .389 as a sophomore at NDSCS with 47 runs scored, and 44 stolen bases. Nate Heymann (Jr., OF, Waimea, Hawaii) hit .351 with 37 RBI, 12 doubles, and five home runs at Dakota County Technical College.

Elias Leach (Fr., OF/1B, Plymouth), Garron Opsahl (Jr., UT, Hermantown), and Cameron Dean (Fr., OF, Maple Grove) could factor in as newcomers, as well. Look for Jack Hansen (Fr., OF, Mankato.) possibly to see the field due to his base-running ability.

Starting Pitchers

The Golden Eagles have three starters returning from last season's squad. Isaac Wensloff (Sr., RHP, Roseau) anchors the staff after being a proven player in recent seasons. Wensloff went 4-2 with a 4.81 ERA in 10 starts as a junior. He pitched 58 innings, with 40 strikeouts, and 20 walks. Nate Benning (Jr., LHP, Browerville) has also been an experienced starter over the last two years. He went 3-4 with a

6.59 ERA in 56 innings as a sophomore. Benning struck out 42, and walked 26. Kyle Odenbach (Sr., LHP, Thompson, N.D.) went 1-7 in 12 starts, with a 7.92 ERA as a junior in 44.1 innings pitched. Isaac Roers (R-Sr., RHP, Stacy, Minn.) is an experienced player that will either be a factor starting or anchoring the bullpen. Roers went 6-4 with a 5.77 ERA in a team-high 27 appearances last season. He struck out 43, and walked 14. Aaron Bennett (R-Jr., RHP, Saginaw, Minn.) and Ashton Detloff (Fr., LHP, Perham) will also compete for time in the starting rotation.

Bullpen

The bullpen will be largely unproven, but have a key mix of returning players and newcomers. Roers could factor in both starting, and in the bullpen. Joey Connelly (Sr., LHP, Eden Prairie) is the next most-seasoned player in the pen, as the southpaw posted a 2.08 ERA in 11 appearances as a junior. Jaxson Bennett (R-Jr., RHP, Saginaw, Minn.) will look to have an increased role. Bennett made nine appearances last season. Aaron Bennett (R-Jr., RHP, Saginaw, Minn.) also will look for an increased role, after making five appearances a season ago. Carsen Barta (R-So., RHP, Fargo, N.D.) will look for an increased role after an injury-plagued 2025.

Derek Carpenter (R-Fr., RHP, Hatton, N.D.) is a red-shirt who came in as a two-way player and is now focused on pitching, and has made an impact in fall ball. The Golden Eagles also have several freshmen to watch with Asher Blaine (Fr., RHP,

Fraze), Drew Odenbach (Fr., RHP, Thompson, N.D.), Bodhi Mossestad (Fr., RHP, Thief River Falls), Jaxon Hams (Fr., RHP, Thief River Falls), Heymann, and Ashton Detloff (Fr., LHP, Perham). Junior college transfer Lake Hagen (Jr., RHP, Alexandria) was 1-0 with a 3.42 ERA in 26.1 innings, with two saves for Dakota County Technical College.

In addition, Minnesota Crookston has several other players with some bullpen experience who could see added duty with Jake Jaroszewski (So., LHP, Fargo, N.D.), Eli Denisen (R-Jr., LHP, Winona), Kaylor Chamberlain (So., RHP, Mankato), and Sean Felker (So., RHP, Audubon).

CROOKSTON SPORTS

Thursday, Jan. 29
 ■ Wrestling - Roseau 48, Crookston 20; Badger/Greenbush-Middle River 42, Crookston 28.
Friday, Jan. 30
 ■ Boys Hockey - Crookston 9, Greenway/Nashauk-Keewatin 1;
 ■ Boys Basketball - Climax/Fisher 81, Crookston 74.
 ■ Girls Hockey - Crookston 0, Sartell/Sauk Rapids 0.
Saturday, Jan. 31
 ■ Boys Basketball - Roseau 62, Crookston 61.
 ■ Boys Hockey - International Falls 5, Crookston 3.
 ■ Girls Basketball - Wadena-Deer Creek 72, Crookston 45.
Monday, Feb. 2
 ■ Boys Hockey - Detroit Lakes 8, Crookston 1.
Section 8A Girls Hockey Seedings Announced
 ■ Seeds - 1. Warroad 19-5-1; 2. East Grand Forks 14-9-1; 3. Thief River Falls 17-8-0; 4. Crookston 6-17-1; 5. Detroit Lakes 8-16-0; 6. International Falls 5-17-0.
 ■ Quarterfinals, Thursday, Feb. 5 - Detroit Lakes at Crookston; International Falls at Thief River Falls.
 ■ Semifinals, Saturday, Feb. 7 at East Grand Forks 1 p.m./3:30 p.m.
 ■ Championship, Thursday, Feb. 12 at East Grand Forks Civic Center 7 p.m.
Upcoming Saturday, Feb. 7
 ■ Boys Basketball - Crookston Girls vs. Menahga 2 p.m.; Crookston Boys vs. Menahga 3:30 p.m.
 ■ Wrestling - Crookston Girls at Section 8 Meet in Sartell TBD
Monday, Feb. 9
 ■ Basketball - Crookston Girls vs. Stephen-Argyle 6 p.m.; Crookston Boys vs. Stephen-Argyle 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 10
 ■ Hockey - Crookston Boys at Red Lake Falls 7 p.m.
 ■ Wrestling - Crookston Boys at Section 8A preliminaries/and quarterfinals TBD.
Thursday, Feb. 12
 ■ Basketball - Crookston Boys at Hawley 7:30 p.m.

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Pirates go 0-3 at home quadrangular



Mauricio Arriaga, pictured above wrestling Micah Tougas of Thief River Falls, and Gavyn Hlucny, pictured below wrestling against Tristan Hruby of Thief River Falls, went undefeated in their three matches at the Pirates home quadrangular Monday afternoon at the University of Minnesota Crookston Wellness Center. (Photo by Scott DCamp)



The Crookston boys wrestling team went 0-3 at its home quadrangular Monday, Feb. 2. The event was held at the University of Minnesota Crookston Wellness Center.

The Pirates opened the evening with a 59-16 loss to Section 8AA power Thief River Falls. The Pirates got wins from Mauricio Arriaga at 107 pounds, Gavyn Hlucny by fall at 152 and Jaron Knutson by 13-2 major decision over Ian Hruby at 189 pounds.

The Pirates won four of the nine weight classes in a 47-24 loss to Barnesville in the second dual of the night. Picking up wins for the Pirates were Arriaga at 107, Hlucny by fall over Tate Pauna at 152, Lucas Perala by fall over Henry Rotz at 160, and Jack Odegaard by forfeit at 215.

The Pirates' final dual of evening went down to the wire, with the Pirates coming up short in a 42-36 loss to the Blackduck/Cass Lake-Bena Bears.

The Pirates took a 6-0 lead with a win by fall from Arriaga at 107 pounds. The Bears answered with six straight wins – four forfeits and two pins – to take a 36-6 lead.

The Pirates rallied with four straight wins of their own – forfeit victories by Hlucny and Jose Arriaga, and wins by fall from Perala and Knutson to make the score 36-30 with two bouts remaining.

BCLB sealed the dual meet win with a win by Benjamin Headbird over Miles Corneillie at 215.

The Pirates answered with a win by fall at heavy-weight from Odegaard to conclude the scoring.

Monday's quad was the final regular season event for the Pirates. The Section 8A team tournament will be held Tuesday Feb. 10 at high seeds, with semifinals and championship rounds at Fertile-Beltrami on Friday, Feb. 13; and the Section 8A individual tournament will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 20-21 at Crookston High School.

Thief River Falls 59, Crookston 16

107: Mauricio Arriaga (18-2) So., CROO over Micah Tougas (3-11) 8th, TRF (F 1:12); 114: Kaiden Nelson (27-6) Fr., TRF over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 121: Lincoln Davis (29-5) Jr., TRF over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 127: Damian Kazmierczak (17-12) Jr., TRF over Gabriel Perala (4-11) So., CROO (F 0:35); 133: Thomas Eidsmoe (13-10) So., TRF over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 139: Brian Berg (26-14) So., TRF over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 145: Ian Lundeen (9-23) So., TRF over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 152: Gavyn Hlucny (15-1) Sr., CROO over Tristan Hruby (24-14) Fr., TRF (F 0:48); 160: Elias Motta (26-9) Fr., TRF over Lucas Perala (6-8) Sr., CROO (TF 19-3 (4:09)); 172: Jaron Knutson (13-9) So., CROO over Ian Hruby (5-13) So., TRF (MD 13-2); 189: Landen Larson (31-3) Jr., TRF over Miles Corneillie (5-6) Sr., CROO (F 0:44); 215: Chandler Pream (22-15) Jr., TRF over Jack Odegaard (4-9) Jr., CROO (F 0:59); 285: Joseph Brugge-man (25-12) Sr., TRF over Forfeit, CROO (FF).

Barnesville 47, Crookston 24

107: Mauricio Arriaga (18-2) So., CROO over Forfeit, BARN (FF); 114: Bridger Grabow (14-12) Fr., BARN over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 121: Chase Hauck (21-5) Jr., BARN over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 127: Brant Cox (16-8) Fr., BARN over Gabriel Perala (4-11) So., CROO (F 1:02); 133: Brock Grabow (12-10) Sr., BARN over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 139: Augustus Brown (3-12) So., BARN over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 145: Jaron Poepping (7-18) Jr., BARN over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 152: Gavyn Hlucny (15-1) Sr., CROO over Tate Pauna (14-17) So., BARN (F 1:42); 160: Lucas Perala (6-8) Sr., CROO over Henry Rotz (0-4) Jr., BARN (F 1:30); 172: Cameron Halverson (29-2) Sr., BARN over Jaron Knutson (13-9) So., CROO (TF 18-3 (2:13)); 189: Matthew Jahr (6-5) Fr., BARN over Miles Corneillie (5-6) Sr., CROO (F 2:46); 215: Jack Odegaard (4-9) Jr., CROO over Forfeit, BARN (FF); 285: Forfeit, CROO vs. Forfeit, BARN (DFF).

Blackduck/Cass Lake-Bena 42, Crookston 36

107: Mauricio Arriaga (18-2) So., CROO over John Henry (0-0) 7th, BCLB (F 1:07); 114: Alex Rossman (0-0) 7th, BCLB over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 121: Carson Madigan (0-0) 7th, BCLB over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 127: Zeke Spears (0-0) 7th, BCLB over Gabriel Perala (4-11) So., CROO (F 0:39); 133: Forest Peterson (0-0) 8th, BCLB over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 139: Aiden Holmberg (0-0) Sr., BCLB over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 145: Kacen Fineday (0-0) 7th, BCLB over Forfeit, CROO (FF); 152: Gavyn Hlucny (15-1) Sr., CROO over Forfeit, BCLB (FF); 160: Lucas Perala (6-8) Sr., CROO over Parker Tsuji (0-0) Jr., BCLB (F 2:57); 172: Jose Arriaga (8-8) Sr., CROO over Forfeit, BCLB (FF); 189: Jaron Knutson (13-9) So., CROO over Scott Hamer (0-0) 7th, BCLB (F 0:45); 215: Benjamin Headbird (0-0) Fr., BCLB over Miles Corneillie (5-6) Sr., CROO (F 2:53); 285: Jack Odegaard (4-9) Jr., CROO over Red Enright (0-0) 8th, BCLB (F 0:30).

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