

# Down Memory Lane

10 YEARS AGO • AUG. 30, 1999

The work crew in charge of assembling the new electric substation for the city of Grand Marais was surprised last week when one man opened a box which supposedly held some important electrical connectors only to find 14 matching pink and white baby outfits.

Apparently, the box had been delivered many weeks ago and had been sitting near the new transformer site until the parts were needed. On Aug. 19 a crew member opened the box and, shocked, held up the baby clothes. The clothes were supposed to be delivered to an outlet mall in Nebraska on July 19, but obviously never made it.

As for the electrical connectors, Public Works Director Russell Good said, "I would guess that somewhere in Nebraska there's a clothing store with a box full of electrical apparatus, and that they have no idea what to do with any of it."

Minnesota's 1999 moose hunt will continue as planned in the storm-ravaged portions of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and adjacent forests.

A DNR spokesman said some hunters who were drawn for storm-damaged zones have asked to cancel their hunts. They are allowed to do so and can re-apply in future years.

State wildlife officials do not believe the storm adversely affected moose, although some animals may have been killed by falling trees.

20 YEARS AGO • AUG. 28, 1989

The 75th annual Cook County Fair attracted dozens of exhibitors who competed for ribbons, fortune and fame.

A total of \$715 in prizes was awarded.

The halls and walls and lockers of Cook County schools fairly well gleam with clean, new paint, polish and wax as the custodial workers have once again outdone themselves in readying facilities for the first day of school Sept. 5.

The Gunflint Home Owners had their fall meeting at Heston's Lodge with about 50 in attendance.

The main speakers were Tom Peterson, Tom Westby from the Sea Gull Guard Station, and Mitch Bouchenville from the Grand Marais office. They discussed fire hazards and the spruce bud worm.

This was the 20th anniversary for the group.

50 YEARS AGO • AUG. 27, 1959

About 3 inches of rain fell in the night Tuesday morning, and during the day. It helped soak the forest, which was getting quite dry.

The first reported watercraft accident which has happened in this area since the new license law went into effect came to Sheriff Emerson Morris Friday night.

Two boats collided in the Narrows on Saganaga Lake about 10:45 p.m. The impact tore a large hole in the fiberglassed boat as the two came together. Each craft was traveling about 20 mph. There were minor injuries, and damages to both boats totaling about \$450.

The gas tank on Andy Johnson's pick-up truck exploded and was cause for the fire alarm to be sounded Monday forenoon. No one was hurt.

Patty Swanson, 12, was in a bike accident Sunday, and in falling tore the ligaments in her knee. She is at St. Luke's Hospital, Duluth, where the leg has been put in traction, and on Friday will be operated on.

90 YEARS AGO • AUG. 27, 1919

Andy Lindberg has been laid up the past week with a sore hand.

The town of Colvill is fixing up a two-mile stretch of road leading from the lake past Andrew Beck's homestead. This will make a saving of several miles for some of the farmers in that vicinity.

Castle Hussey had two of his fingers badly injured by the fall of a large boulder while surveying last week.

Mr. K. Nutson, owner of the Rock Harbor Lodge, Isle Royale, was here in his yacht Sunday on his way from Duluth to Isle Royale. They had a slight breakdown when off Chicago Bay and had to come to Grand Marais in a car to get some repair work done.

# Hospital considers trends in long-term care

Jane Howard

After listening to a Thursday, August 20, 2009 presentation from Tom Kooiman of Pope Associates, an architectural firm specializing in health and long-term care facilities and senior housing, the North Shore Hospital board voted to pursue a feasibility study on alternatives to the Care Center's current operating model. The study is expected to cost about \$3,500.

The trend in long-term care, Kooiman said, is for people to have private rooms with private baths. More people are choosing assisted living and fewer are choosing nursing home care when possible.

Many facilities are offering a continuum of care starting with independent living and moving to assisted living and memory and/or skilled care, Kooiman said. Some assisted living facilities offer "kindred care" where 24-hour nursing services are available as needed. These are more common in wealthy communities and can accommodate husbands and wives who have different needs but want to remain together. Some churches and groups of churches are starting to develop continuing care campuses, Kooiman said.

Nursing homes once funded the hospitals they were attached to, Kooiman

said. Now, however, nursing homes attached to critical access hospitals, such as the one in Grand Marais, tend to lose a lot of money. One reason is that these nursing homes tend to offer critical access hospital pay scales but do not get reimbursed by Medicare at the same rate. Howard Abrahamson said the care center has not received an increase in its reimbursement rate in four years.

Nursing homes are moving away from traditional floor plans with long hallways to smaller units that look and feel more like households, Kooiman said. Personnel are cross-trained and spend more time with a smaller number of patients, which both staff and residents prefer. Negative behaviors, falls, and medicine errors decrease in these types of settings.

North Shore Hospital loses about \$1,000,000 a year because of the nursing home, Abrahamson said. Some nursing homes are dealing with this type of problem by selling or turning management over to outside companies. Another option to increase reimbursement dollars would be to integrate the clinic and the hospital, Kooiman said.

Dealing with an aging population will be important, Kooiman said, because "the silver tsunami" will start in 2010, when

Baby Boomers will start retiring in large numbers.

## Paramedic services

Dr. Sandy Stover recommended that the hospital consider hiring paramedics who could help provide advanced life support on ambulances. LifeFlight helicopters are not always available, she said, and the cost of receiving advanced life support from a paramedic on an ambulance would be cheaper for the patient than a helicopter transport. Having paramedics in the field would also enable more to be done for trauma patients before they reach the hospital.

Several community members are now receiving paramedic training, Stover said, adding that the emergency room seems to be getting busier as time goes by.

Ambulance service director Darrell Smith suggested that recruiting paramedics might be easier if they offered a staff position in the emergency room rather than trying to use them only on an on-call basis.

Hospital Administrator Diane Peterson said that she is working with Smith on creating an application for a paramedic position and will discuss it with the board when they have it completed.

# County agreeable to funding request from Gunflint Fire Department

Jane Howard

Gunflint Trail volunteer firefighter Rick Johnson asked the county board on Tuesday, August 25, 2009 to designate \$50,000 from Title III Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding for communication upgrades for the Gunflint Trail Fire Department. The department has been making numerous capital improvements over the last year, Johnson said.

Since 1967, Johnson said, 16 fires of over 100 acres each have occurred in Cook County, all in the Gunflint Trail fire district.

The county receives SRS funding from the federal government to compensate for federal land that does not generate property taxes. Title III allows counties to designate 7% of their SRS funding for programs such as wildfire protection plans or emergency services on federal land. Cook County received a little over \$50,000 for Title III projects this year.

Communication improvements for the Gunflint Trail fire district are already on

a list of county priorities, Commissioner Fenwick said. The board passed a motion to advertise a notice of its intent to designate \$50,000 of its Title III funding to the Gunflint Trail Fire Department. The notice will begin a 45-day comment period.

## 2010 budget

The county's state-imposed levy limit of \$5,678,614 is 12.7% higher than last year's limit, Auditor-Treasurer Braid Powers reported to the board.

Commissioner Bruce Martinson said he would like to see next year's state and federal payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILT) funding put into the Building Fund and the Highway Department Equipment Fund. The Highway Department has been trying to replace its old equipment to save on repair costs.

Commissioner Fritz Sobanja thought the idea needed further discussion.

"I really think we need to make a commitment to the highway Equipment Fund and the Building Fund," Martinson

said.

Commissioner Fenwick agreed but urged that they be cautious about dedicating funds into the future.

An August 19 memo from Highway Engineer Shae Kosmalksi states that the Highway Department spent \$39,395 less than was budgeted for 2008. Figures for the first half of 2009 show that during the first six months of 2009, the department had spent only 37% of its annual shop budget, 6% of its construction budget, 46% of its maintenance budget, and 51% of its administration budget.

## New well for Tofte highway garage

Maintenance Director Brian Silence reported that a new well is being drilled at the Tofte highway garage. The water in the current well was contaminated 15 years ago by a ruptured underground diesel tank, Silence said, and has not been drinkable since then. Clean water is required for the garage's emergency eye wash station and emergency shower.

The last well was 191 feet,

and McKeever Well Drilling expects this one to be about the same depth.

## Tower ordinance hearing

The board authorized Planning & Zoning Director Tim Nelson to set up a public hearing to review a proposed amendment to the county tower ordinance.

The amendment would bring the ordinance more in line with state statutes that expand grandfathering laws by allowing existing structures that do not conform to land use ordinances to be repaired or replaced if damaged as long as they are not expanded. If a tower were destroyed or significantly damaged, a tower owner could restore the tower to its former use, location, and physical dimensions as long as a land use permit was obtained and application for a building permit were made within six months.

The public hearing will take place at a Planning Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, October 14 in the Cook County Courthouse.

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