

WIN AN ICE CASTLE FISH HOUSE



SEE PAGE 15

Drawing held on St. Patrick's Day!



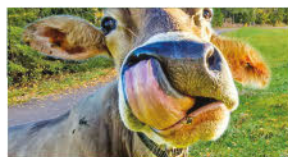
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Technicality Resolved

A Technicality during the 2022 Ice Derby has been resolved.

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Escape from the Funny Farm

Vigilante Justice ends in a Tasty Meal and Concludes a String of Oddball Crimes.

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New Dock Tax Proposed

A Five Million Dollar Droan Investment will put \$290 million into State Coffers in 2024.

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A SPOOF PUBLICATION OF THE MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER

THE Maple Flake

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MAPLE LAKE ICE-FISHING DERBY

THE MAPLE LAKE ICE FISHING DERBY HAS BEEN CANCELED DUE TO POOR ICE CONDITIONS IN 2024

Issue 01 VOL. 49

Saturday, February 3, 2024

Reefer Baits are a big hit!

By Paige Turner

After months of development, CBD of Maple Lake has released a revolutionary new marijuana infused bait just in time for the ice fishing season owner Mary Jane announced at 4:20 this afternoon.

Concocted in the local store's own basement laboratory, the bait combines the smells fish love with a tincture of THC that will be as addicting to fish as the store's fudge brownies are to humans.

The key to the bait's success is in the two-step process, Jane explained. First a THC oil laced with fragrance is used as a liquid attractant.

"Two or three drops in the water is all it takes," she said. "The fish will home in on the vapor trail and ingest the oil as they swim. Once ingested, they will start to experience a false sense of well-being, then the munchies will hit, that's when you drop the lure."

Something shiny is really all it takes to impress the fish's heightened sensory perception at this point, but to make it irresistible, Jane has created her Funny Fish Lure (sold separately) that plays to the fish's sudden craving for bizarre snack foods. Jane's vast expertise being high as a kite has helped her to come up with four irresistible flavors: potato chip, ice cream, pepperoni, and French fries.

"My Reefer Oil combined with the Funny Fish Lure is foolproof. Any creature swimming within 50 yards is going to go bananas for it," she said. "If there are fish in the area, you will catch them."

Local bait store owners predict Jane's Reefer Oil and Funny Fish Lures will sell like space cakes and they are eager to get in on the action.



This fish was half baked before it ever hit the frying pan thanks to the local CBD store's marijuana infused bait.

Photo by Cam Raman

"In theory, anglers won't have to worry about water temperature, or the phases of the moon affecting how fish bite anymore. As every stoner knows, there is no resisting the munchies when they set in," said Rip Bong owner of Kiss my Bass Sports Shop.

Jane's invention is already putting Maple Lake on the map. Prior to its public release the bait was given a trial run on the state's largest bass fishing tour, The Bad Bass Open. "My friend who fishes professionally said he'd give it a go and they all loved it," Jane said.

It's already been nominated for best new product of the year and even attracted national attention when a post went viral of

the President himself swaying on his yacht to Black Sabbath's "Sweet Leaf" with a lunker on his line.

"This hooch is downright addicting, man," commented 2023 US Bassin Champion Holden Dink, "not to say I've indulged in Reefer Oil myself, although I may have taken a rip from my own stash before this interview, what I mean to say is those fish won't stand a chance once they puff the dragon."

Despite local bait shop's eagerness to carry the product in their stores, Jane says she plans to sell it exclusively at Maple

(See "Reefer Baits" page 11)

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City councilors are appalled by city flag finalists

By Paige Turner

The Maple Lake City Council held a special meeting Thursday to review submissions for a new city flag, a process that called into question what is art, and do we really want it waving boldly high above City Hall?

Councilors voted last month in favor of designing a flag that would be a visual symbol representing Maple Lake's great people, storied past, and natural beauty. Rigid stipulations were set (which no one paid attention to) and an invitation drafted to all local artists for the chance to have their work on display above all others (literally as it would be strung to the top of a very tall pole).

Stipulations included: Nothing too flamboyant, or too dull; nothing too abstract but realism should be avoided; refrain from using geometrical shapes and squiggly lines (we are not in kindergarten folks) and lastly, representations of citizens, living or deceased are strictly prohibited.

Councilors were disappointed to receive only four submissions and were further disappointed at the quality of the submissions, or lack thereof.

Councilor Ileana Wright opinioned that the no squiggly line stipulation was like tying artists' hands behind their backs and asking them to paint with their teeth. "It's just another example of big government sticking their fingers where they don't belong," she said. "We should let art be art."

Her comment led to hours of bickering about what delineates good art from bad art, which this journalist will edit from her report and spare you the agony of reading except for this one thought, is not the best art, that which is left open to interpretation? Either way what the council had before them could not be considered in any way to be art.

In fact, the submissions were so terrible,



Maple Lake city council member, Ileana Wright, had high hopes for a new city flag design. Wright believes the ridiculous stipulations tied the hands of artists, and by the looks of the entries Maple Flake editors literally, couldn't agree more!

councilors who had earlier decided to simplify democracy by choosing the new flag themselves at a closed meeting, in an uncharacteristic change of mind opted to put the designs to a vote by the public instead.

"That way we won't be blamed," Mayor Cam Pane stated judiciously.

Citizens living within the city limits have until the end of the month to cast their vote on The City website www.thiswasabadidea.org. There they will face the daunting task of choosing the

best of some of the worst specimens they'll likely ever see. Just to prepare you for the horrors, you will find a detailed description of each design submitted by the artist in the sidebar at right.

Councilors ask that the public vote very conscientiously despite the abysmal options and consider the following before making a decision:

1. Will this design stand the test of time? "We don't want anything that's going to go out of style like skorts or jelly sandals," Councilor Helen Bach said. "There's no way I'm going through this torture again just to make our flag more relevant to the times."
2. Will this design make Maple Lake stand out above the rest? "I don't think this will be a problem, any one of these designs is going to draw attention, in fact, I bet we'll be laughed at for many years to come," Councilor Jerry Atrick said.
3. Does it use meaningful symbolism? For legal reasons City Attorney Sue Yoo advises voters to abstain from selecting a design with shapes or pictures that could be in any way considered obscene, offensive, or mistaken for body parts.

Have your say at www.thiswasabadidea.org

FLAG 1

Artist:
Sheneeda Life

Medium:
Watercolor on plain old paper

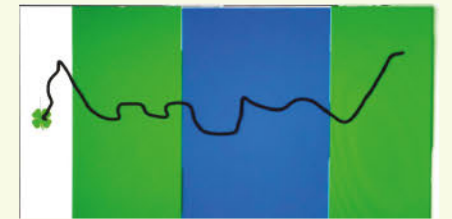


This may look like a simple bowl of fruit painted by a middle-aged mom who enrolled in a painting class at the local community center after binge watching the entire fifth season of "Yellowstone" in one afternoon and was struck by the sudden fear that if she didn't get out of the house that minute she'd end up like her mother, but in truth this bowl of fruit is an illustration of our great community and has nothing to do with her mother. The apples represent our good health, the pears depict our shapely citizens, oranges represent our sunny disposition, grapes because we are a "grape" bunch of people, the bananas represent our soft, sweet interior and the bowl is like a pair of open hands holding us all together.

FLAG 2

Artist:
Terry Bull

Medium:
Oil on canvas



The four colored bars in my painting depict the unforgiving landscape that lay between our ancestors and the new world. The green bar on the far right represents the Emerald Isle, the blue bar is the vast Atlantic Ocean, the next green bar is the American wilderness, and the white bar is Minnesota, the land of snow and ice. The squiggly line running through it all depicts our ancestor's meandering journey to Maple Lake. I know there was a rule against squiggly lines, but this literally tracks my great, great grandfather Jameson's journey who is said to have enjoyed a pint or two along the way. Sláinte!

FLAG 3

Artist:
R. U. Joking

Medium:
Sharpies on a napkin



My flag needs no explanation.
Maple leaf plus a lake equals. you got it!

FLAG 4

Artist: P. Brain

Medium:
Fingers on my computer



Editor's note: This design came without an artist description but it's pretty obvious it's just a bunch of random clip art thrown together in a weirdly sinister way (check out the cat with the creepy eyes and unnatural smile).

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FISH OR FIB?

Derby takes steps to freeze future fiascos



Ben Makinitup drove off with the prize for heaviest fish thanks to a technicality that has now been fixed, Maple Lake Ice Fishing Derby officials said.

Photo courtesy of Cam Raman

By Paige Turner

A technicality has been fixed after Ben Makinitup won an arbitration settlement for the heaviest fish at the 2022 Maple Lake Ice Fishing Derby, officials reported.

Makinitup drove off with the top prize two years ago for a pike encapsulated in a block of snow and ice. As he told the judge at the settlement hearing, there was no rule in the books that stated a fish couldn't be frozen at weigh-in time. His catch also set the record for longest, widest, coldest, and most blocklike.

Makinitup contends the fish was alive and ice free when he pulled it out of the hole and only accumulated its frosty exterior during transport to the weigh-in table. He said the derby committee was at fault for holding its annual contest on such a cold day.

Iban Robbed, the derby volunteer that confronted Makinitup that day, said he knew something was fishy about the man the minute he saw him.

"Here he comes pushing this giant block of ice and he says he wants to submit his catch," Robbed told the Maple Flake. "He claimed there was a fish inside there. I thought he was crazy, but he made me walk around to the other side and after scraping away some of the snow, I could just make out something that may have been a

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fish. It was long and greenish so it could have been a pike, or maybe an eel. Does Maple Lake have eels? Anyway, I told him politely to get lost and he says, 'there's no rule my fish can't be frozen.' I laughed because I thought he was joking and without another word he walks over to the wall where we hang the nicest of the catches, grabs one of the fish and slams it down against the weigh-in table. Broke the table right in half and he says, 'you can't tell me these fish aren't frozen.' I told him the difference was you could tell those were fish. He could have told me he had a woolly mammoth in that block of ice, and I wouldn't have known any better. So, then he storms off and I thought that was the end of it. A couple days later I get a call from the derby president Burt N'urney saying he got a summons from the county courthouse on account of a guy named Ben Makinitup who filed a suit against the derby committee. Can you believe that? Some people will go to any lengths to get their hands on one of those lavish fish houses."

According to the report, Makinitup claimed he would have won for the heaviest fish and was entitled to an Ice Castle Fishhouse or \$50,000. In addition, he wanted a public apology from Robbed at the following year's derby and the official title of Grand Champion 2022.

"I'm surprised he didn't ask for a parade," Robbed fumed.



The judges watch in disbelief at the weigh-in tables on Maple Lake as the Derby submission table lays in shambles after Ben Makeinitup made it clear to judges he was not happy with their 2022 Derby Contest decision.

Robbed told The Flake that the Derby Committee's lawyer, Ima Dufas was so confident Makinitup didn't have a fin to swim with she encouraged them to go to court and when they won, sue Makinitup for damages. To everyone's surprise Judge Norma Lee Lucid ruled in favor of the plaintiff.

One bright spot of the entire ugly affair is Makinitup was required to buy the Derby a new table to replace the one he broke.

The committee has since learned its lesson, said president N'urney. New language has been added to the rule book that states derby judges must determine, without a doubt

the fish being submitted is in fact a fish. Details on the criteria for what constitutes a fish are still being discussed, N'urney said. Some of the suggestions include licking the fish under the assumption if it tastes like a fish and looks like a fish it must be a fish. Another suggestion that was less popular than the licking test, was the smell test in which the fish must be placed in a warm vehicle until it starts to stink. The answer would be in the smell. A game of rock, paper, scissors would determine whose car is used.

"We haven't ironed out all the details yet, but when we're done, it will be fool proof," President Burt N'urney said. Emphasis on the "fool."

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Udder Nonsense

By Paige Turner

Justice was swift and merciless for Bessie Bovine, the brown eyed beauty whose only crime was walking through that open fence and grabbing life by the horns.

Bovine who is described as well-proportioned with a sweet disposition was captured last night after an extensive search led by Mayor Cam Pane who had a personal grievance with the elusive Bovine. In an act of vigilante justice, Bovine has been skewered and spitted; “Steaks for everyone,” Mayor Pane declared early Tuesday morning.

As you have probably guessed by now, Miss Bovine is none other than the roaming cow that escaped her enclosure at Funny Farms in late August and has been wreaking havoc on local flora, vegetation, and children’s toys in the area ever since.

The mystery of Bovine’s identity

was unknown until just last week when her image was captured on Mr. and Mrs. Reid N. Rite’s doorbell camera. For months citizens had been convinced there was a psychopath on the

loose in the wake of a string of oddball crimes. It started when Mrs. Jacqueline Hyde woke up one morning to find someone had beheaded her prize-winning begonias. The palatial petals that

last year won her Grand Champion honors at the County Fair had been cleanly sliced off and taken, leaving only the woody stems behind.

“Who would do such a thing

to innocent flowers, they were my babies . . . even though they were nothing but trouble always wanting sunlight and water,” sobbed an inconsolable Mrs. Hyde to Flake reporters.

Poor Mrs. Jacqueline Hyde’s Begonias weren’t the only victims of Bovine’s crime spree. Mr. Lee King woke one morning to find strange, cylindric impressions scattered throughout his newly poured cement patio and Miss. Ima Nutt had to employ the rather spendy services of Riff Raff Roofers to replace half a dozen broken shingles on her gnome house.

“That gnome house is the center piece of my garden, and someone just came and stomped on it; it was like they stomped on my heart. Not only that, Riff Raff charged me \$150 just to come out and look



Bessie Bovine pictured above, fell victim to an act of vigilante justice after escaping her enclosure at the Funny Farm. Ms. Bovine was skewered and spitted by an angry mob early Tuesday morning, “Steaks for everyone,” declared Mayor Cam Pane.

Picture courtesy of Cam Raman

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at it," Nutt stated.

The crimes seemed to ebb as winter set in and police theorized the culprit had hunkered down in some barn somewhere, then out of the blue they started up again.

Little P. Nutt found his new Flybar Gizmo Riders Stratos Sled broken in two just days after Christmas and the carrot nose on six-year-old Ima Pane's snowman went missing shortly after. Ima who is the Mayor's daughter - if you didn't know that already - was so distraught by the theft of her favorite of her snowman's features, she refused to eat her vegetables for the next two weeks and suffered a severe Vitamin A deficiency that required hospitalization.

Despite the Mayor's pressure to capture



The carrot nose on six-year-old Ima Pane's snowman went missing.

Picture courtesy of Cam Raman

the odious offender, police were stymied by the lack of evidence.

"The culprit must be a criminal mastermind because there are absolutely no fingerprints to speak of," Officer Pat Downe told Flake reporters.

Public sentiment was nearing hysteria as rumors spread over social media of a mad man prowling our peaceful neighborhoods in the wee hours of the morning. Glimpses were caught on camera of a bullish form emerging then disappearing into the shadows. Normally sane people were seen sharpening their pitchforks and wooden stakes and law enforcement warned anyone caught inciting an angry mob would be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Threats began flying as neighbors turned suspicious eyes on each other. The City went so far as to set a 5 p.m. curfew for children under the age of 16. Then, last week, the case broke wide open.

Mr. and Mrs. Reid N. Rite were spending their winter in Florida as they always did when their phone alerted them that their Ring camera detected a visitor at their front door back home.

"We figured one of the kids stopped by to check the house," Reid N. Rite's better half Norma Lee Rite said. "To our surprise, when we looked at the video, there was very non-human face staring back at us. The picture was so distorted - you know how those cameras are - that at first, we couldn't tell what it was. Was it a pig or a cow? But what was really creepy were its eyes. They were almost human looking. Just thinking of it now gives me the shivers," Norma Lee said with a tell-tale shake.

Before long the Mayor got wind of the photo and the witch hunt, I mean cow hunt began. You know the rest of the story. That angry mob law enforcement decried just days earlier took up their pitchforks and before the day's end they had that poor, half-witted creature roasting over an open flame.

The owners of the cow, Mr. and Mrs. Funny, said they won't press charges for the destruction of their property considering it was their fault the animal escaped. Their only comment was that Bessie Bovine had always been a free spirit who was never content to stay in her pen.

Much of the town turned up at the mayor's house on Tuesday, for a delicious meal of steak and eggs prepared by the mayor himself. Even little Ima Pane ate her vegetables that day.



The mystery of Bessie Bovine's identity was unknown until just last week when her image was captured on a doorbell camera.

Picture courtesy of Reid N. Rite



Image courtesy of Drew Itmaself

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Bashful Bob

"Pick me Girl" at left is one of the nine compelling characters in a new reality series that has Maple Lake on the brink of anarchy .

Image courtesy of Cam Raman

By Paige Turner

A strange new phenomenon has gripped Maple Lake, one that has employers shaking their heads and police fearing for residents' lives.

The once lively and energetic town has grown quiet of late. Local watering holes that three months ago would have been filled with loud music and raucous laughter are now silent as tombs.

"People don't come in to socialize anymore," said the proprietor of Lit Lounge, Iona Bar "They just come in, park their butts in a chair and stare down at their phones. Half the time they don't even order anything. If I were a conspiracy theorist, I'd say aliens had used their superior technology to turn our phones into hypnotizing devices, making us all as placid as cows and that much easier to control when they arrive

to take over the world!"

Editor's note: This reporter wants to assure everybody right now that there are no aliens trying to take over the world, so don't let me catch you stocking up on toilet paper again. I repeat, this is not the end of the world!

The truth, sadly, is much more pitiful. A locally produced YouTube channel called Rocky and the Rockets has been livestreaming a trail cam recording of the daily interactions of a raccoon family and that is what has drawn the attention of our friends and loved ones. Employers are reporting an uptick in procrastination, lethargy and general laziness as employees' faces turn more and more to their computer screens not to do work, but to watch these animals, dubbed The In-laws by creator Howie Dunit.

Police are responding to reports

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**Cheeky Little Brother**

of near collisions as pedestrians, walking with their faces glued to their phones, step heedlessly into oncoming traffic.

"It's a real concern that someone is going to wind up a pancake on Main Street," officer Pat Downe said.

Dunnit insists he did not intend to create such anarchy when he opened his channel. He said he had no idea it would be so addicting. It all started when a family of raccoons moved in under the porch of his Maple Lake home last fall, he said.

"My wife wanted me to get rid of them by any means necessary, she's got the backwards view that all raccoons, bats and dogs that drool too much are rabid – although I wouldn't put it past the one we call Evil Cousin Stan. I wouldn't stick my hand down a hole he's hunkered up in, if you know what I mean. The rest though are kinda cute, especially The Baby

**Evil Cousin Stan**

with the little handkerchief tied around his neck."

There are nine raccoons in all living under Dunnit's porch and they all have nicknames, inspired Ironically by his wife's side of the family.

There's "The Cheeky Little Brother" who can never stop clowning long enough to take a nice picture, "Disappointed Dad," "Hand-wringing Mom," "Bashful Bob" who tries to hide his face from the camera and "Pick Me Girl," who always has to be the center of attention."

There are also the black sheep of the family - Grandpa Seymour who has a gambling problem and Uncle Sticky Finger who is very wealthy but gained it through questionable means.

Dunnit said he got to know the raccoon family by watching them on a trail cam in his back yard. "They'd come out at night and rummage

**Grandpa Seymour**

through our garbage cans looking for scraps of food, bits of clothing and shiny objects. You can learn a lot about critters by watching their behaviors, expressions, and body language. For instance, Disappointed Dad may look beaten down by life, but he's a good provider," Blewit said seriously.

After a few weeks of watching the raccoons' nighttime antics, Dunnit became curious as to what they did during the day, so one night after they had all gone out, he snuck into their home under the porch and planted some hidden cameras.

"That's how I found out about Grandpa's gambling problem," he said. "I admit, it felt a little like invasion of privacy, then I told myself, hey, if the DNR can play Peeping Tom with those bald eagles, it can't be wrong."

Before long, Dunnit realized that like the DNR, he wanted to share his love of nature with all of Maple Lake.

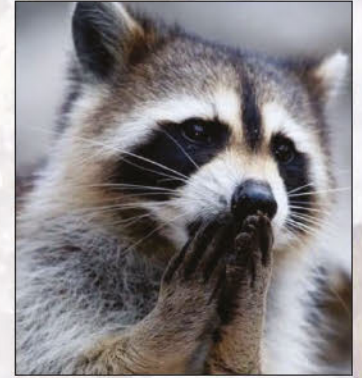
**The Baby**

"It's like there's a whole other little society living just under the surface of our own," he said.

Now exhausted authorities and frazzled employers are trying to think of a way get residents away from their screens and back to reality.

"We've thought of trapping The In-laws and transporting them to a forest far, far away like Itasca, but the public outrage would be too great," Officer Pat Downe said. The other questionable plan to revoke the internet privileges of the entire town was also quickly rejected.

The local chamber of commerce has decided it will hold a meeting Monday for business owners and local law enforcement to come together and brainstorm ideas to get our community back on track. Anyone without plans to watch raccoons that night is invited to attend.

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DOCK TAX

HAS RESIDENT UP IN ARMS

By Al Beebak

The Minnesota Legislature is considering a new law that doesn't bode well for lakeshore owners.

The bill introduced by Senator Iova Alltax will charge a yearly property tax for all docks on Minnesota lakes. The law will take effect July 1, 2024, for taxes payable in 2025.

The bill, which has bipartisan support, would assess a tax of \$12.50 per square foot

of all docks, boat lifts and floating rafts on a lakeshore owner's property.

Barn-storming the state

Alltax and a contingent of aides have been barn-storming the state, urging citizens to contact their representatives to vote for the new dock tax.

Recently Alltax stopped in Maple Lake to get feedback from local citizens. Unfortunately, only two Maple Lake residents

attended due to heavy snowfall and slippery roads.

"The residential docks of lakeshore property owners are taking up water space and should be taxed," Alltax told the group.

"I already am paying too much in property taxes," said local restaurant owner Sal Minella. "You liberals are always after my hard-earned money."

"I have to laugh when I hear a \$1 million

Example of Proposed Dock Tax

DOCK LENGTH
48' x 4' (192 sq ft)
@ \$12.50 sq ft = \$2,400 per year

DECK / FLOATING DOCK
12' x 4' (48 sq ft)
\$12.50 sq ft = \$450 per year

BOAT LIFT
9' x 9' (81 sq ft)
@ \$12.50 sq ft = 1,012.50 per year

Total added to property tax:

\$3,862.50

In 2016, the Minnesota Department of Revenue counted 135,000 non-commercial seasonal recreational properties on its tax rolls.

If 75,000 out of 135,000 were taxed an additional \$3,862.50, it would put \$290 million into the Minnesota coffers.

lakeshore owner complain about paying any taxes," Alltax said. "You should count your blessings."

(See "Dock Tax" Page 11)



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Dock Tax

(From page 10)



The Minnesota Legislature is considering a new bill that will charge a yearly property tax for all docks on Minnesota lakes, including Maple Lake.

Drones

The bill includes \$5 million to purchase drones used to identify and measure the docks, boatlifts and floating rafts currently on all Minnesota lakes.

“There will also be costs to hire the drone operators,” Alltax said.

The additional charges will be automatically put on the property owner’s 2024 tax statement.

“Sadly, we just can’t trust individuals to be honest in reporting their docks in the water,” Alltax said.

Follow the money

“I want to support my state,” said Sandy Beach. I am sure the money would be used

very wisely. What will the revenue be used for?”

“You don’t even live on a lake Ms. Beach, much less have a dock,” Sal Minella said. “I bet you would feel differently if the government wanted \$3,862 a year for every one of your darn cats. So, you and your socialist friends should just keep your mouths shut.”

Sen Alltax pointed out that the revenues raised by the new tax would go to many different projects to make Minnesota great again.

“Included will be money for the Department of Natural Resources and earmarks for rural communities like Maple Lake,” Alltax said. “Not included will be any tax cuts for the millionaires in our state.”

Reefer Baits

(From page 1)

Lake CBD at least until all the kinks are worked out. One of the hiccups she’s had to deal with, she said, is finding a way to make the bait less attractive to people. She’s put labels on the product stating it’s not for human consumption, but some anglers have taken to ingesting the oil themselves.

“The oil itself won’t hurt them, but when the munchies set in and they start eating the potato chip flavored lures then they have a problem,” Jane said. “A half a dozen of those ‘professionals’ on the bass tour last summer had to have hooks surgically removed from

their lips.”

“My lawyer Sue Yoo says I’m not liable because I have that indemnity clause on every Reefer Oil and Funny Fish Lure label, so I’m not worried about that, I just don’t want anyone to get hurt,” she said. “My products are meant to make you feel groovy, not the opposite of groovy.”

As an incentive to use her product only as directed, she is offering a free package of THC Gummies with every Reefer Oil and Funny Fish Lure combo bought at her store now through the start of the big Ice Fishing Derby. The hope is that anglers will munch on the gummies, mellow out and leave the bait to the fishes.



Fishing with the Maple Lake CBD store’s new bait is so much fun, you’ll be happy no matter how big your fish is.



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Ruckus on the Roundabout

By Paige Turner

Twenty Maple Lake residents are recovering at a local bar after being trapped for more than two hours on the Division Street Roundabout in a shuttle bus bound for Mystic Lake Casino earlier today.

According to witnesses, the bus was heading east on Division Street when it entered the roundabout. The driver reportedly became confused at the multiple exits and was stricken with a sudden inability to commit.

“He kept saying ‘on your right is H&H, on your right is H&H’ over and over again like a tour guide on a broken record as we went around and around!” said Ron A. Muck, a passenger on the ill-fated shuttle.

For two hours, the blue bus filled with anxious would-be gamblers remained on its circular course until, left with no other option, the National Guard was called in.

“It was so scary,” said Ima B. Leever a woman who happened to be walking her dog in the area at the time. “All I remember were those pale, desperate faces pressed up against the glass as they went by me time and time again. I felt so helpless.”

By the time the National Guard arrived local law enforcement had already barricaded all five entrances to the traffic circle, and it was starting to disrupt traffic throughout the city. Eventually a portion of Highway 55 was closed as well to serve as a landing pad for the National Guard helicopter. For another half an hour, rescuers debated the best way to stop the bus which continued to race along at

a discouraging 15 mph. After dismissing an idea to tow the bus out of the roundabout with the helicopter – which would have required guardsmen to repel down onto its roof to attach the tow-cables – well known Psychiatrist Mel Practiss was brought in. Using poster-board signs he was able to effectively communicate with the driver, and in as little as five laps, had directed him back onto Division Street.

The passengers were evacuated from the bus and transported by ambulance to the local pub where The Shuttle Service Company bought them all a round of drinks. Although no injuries were reported and an alternate bus was quickly arranged to continue the trip, most of the passengers decided to forgo the casino and remain at the bar to further calm their nerves.

“I’m never leaving town again,” insisted a visibly shaken Jerry Atrick. “Owen Big and I, we like to take the shuttle to a new casino every so often and try to squeeze a little more out of our social security checks, if you know what I mean. Well, no more. From now on when I get the urge to gamble, I’ll just come here for the pull tabs. It’s much safer than trying to navigate the roads these days.”

The driver, Howie Blewit is relatively new to the job, according to a representative from The Shuttle Service Company. Co-workers described him as kind to animals and children, a bit overdependent on Google Maps for a bus driver, but completely harmless.

“It was your classic case of overthinking,” Dr. Mel Practiss later told Flake reporters. “When faced with one or



The roundabout on Division Street in Maple Lake looks calm now, but that’s not the way it looked earlier today when a shuttle bus headed to Mystic Lake Casino became stuck in a never-ending circle.

more options, some people just can’t make a decision. It happens all the time at restaurants.”

“That’s so like Howie” Blewit’s wife said later in a phone interview with The Flake. “He’s always had an inability to commit. We dated 15 years before we got engaged and it took another six to actually tie the knot. I’m not surprised at all.”

Blewit was transported by ambulance to the local hospital to undergo further psychoanalysis, “just in case,” officials said.

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OBITUARIES

Mr. Drained. He was known for his Type A behavior, positive attitude, and always giving 100%. His only mistake was to donate blood.

Jimmy Kennedy, who wrote the Hokey Pokey passed away. There was some difficulty at the funeral when they put the right foot in.

Douglas (Doug) Graves Drifted off this mortal coil on January 19 at his home surrounded by his loving wife of 57 years, Judy, who will now be able to purchase the mink coat which he had always refused her because he believed only minks should wear mink, his two sons, their wives, and his four grandchildren. Doug was preceded in death by his tonsils and adenoids in 1965, a spinal disc in 2000, a large piece of his thyroid gland in 2010, and his prostate on May 29th, 2020.

There will be no viewing since his wife

refuses to honor his request to have him standing in the corner of the room with a glass of Jack Daniels in his hand so that he would appear natural to visitors.

Cremation will take place at the family's convenience and his ashes will be kept around as long as they match the décor.

Everyone who remembers him is asked to celebrate Doug's life in their own way. Raising a glass of their favorite drink in his memory would be quite appropriate.

Instead of flowers, Doug would hope that you will do an unexpected and unsolicited act of kindness for some poor unfortunate soul in his name."

2024 Maple Flake Production Team

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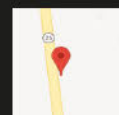
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Ice fishing nudists reveal all

Local chapter raises money for fish house to combat exposure

By Paige Turner

The Maple Lake chapter of the Nudist Ice fishing Post 911 International, or N.I.P.I., will hold a raffle, Thursday, Feb. 15, to raise money for a new fish house to use at next year's Ice Fishing Derby after several members last year were hospitalized for exposure.

"We're hoping the new fish house will provide some protection from the elements for our members," N.I.P.I. president Anita Coat said.

Temperatures dropped to 19 degrees last year with windchills reaching a frigid five below zero. At least three N.I.P.I. members succumbed to the cold and had to be transported by ambulance to Buffalo hospital where they were treated for frostbite.

"We took precautions," Coat said. "We hung a tarp to keep wind off our bare-backs and we handed out at least 10 hand and foot warmers. No one in our chapter actually got frostbite. The worst we suffered were a few chapped cheeks."

Members of the Goodview and Fairview chapters, however, weren't so lucky. Two were hospitalized and one reportedly lost an appendage.

Every year the Maple Lake Ice Fishing Derby attracts thousands of ice fishing enthusiasts from across the state and



N.I.P.I. member, Kelvin Scale admits the heated floors and couches would be an upgrade over his current equipment.

Photo by Cam Raman

N.I.P.I. is always well represented.

"I just love ice fishing, I love everything about ice fishing, except actually catching fish. I think that's cruelty to aquatic life," Ima Nutt, member of the Freeborn N.I.P.I. chapter said. "And I think it's just marvelous that Maple Lake is raising money for a fish house to stay warm in, of course they probably won't invite us Freeborns inside. They didn't exactly roll out the welcome mat to their lean-to last year, and those hand warmers they handed out, what a joke. They sure didn't help poor Seymour from Fairview. He's not so fair to look at anymore, if you get my drift," Nutt said.

Thursday night's raffle will take place at

7 p.m. at the Coat home, located at 1234 Bare Ave. The top prize is a one-year free N.I.P.I. membership worth an estimated \$1,000. Also raffled off Thursday night, are several styles of birthday suits designed by renowned artist Mother Nature.

"We have the skinny look for those who want to flaunt it a little, and the rumpled style, you know, the ones that look like they just came out of the drier and need ironing," Coat said. "Both designs come in two colors, mocha and ultra white."

N.I.P.I.'s goal is to raise \$40,000 to pay for the 30-foot-long ice shanty they had custom designed earlier this fall that is

(See "N.I.P.I." page 15)

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N.I.P.I president, Anita Coat, enjoys ice fishing and raising money for many charitable events, Coat says a new fish house will provide some protection for members representing N.I.P.I on the ice.
Photo by Cam Raman

currently sitting in storage in Fargo while they come up with the funds to pay for it.

"It's pretty posh," Coat's husband Harry said. "I'm not a nudist myself, that's my wife's thing, but it really does have everything a cold nudist could want, heated floors, heated couches, a heated shower, and lots of heated blankets. There is also a full kitchen, full bath, sauna, hot tub, satellite dish and some top-notch ice fishing equipment. It's almost enough to make an otherwise sane man go nude, if you know

what I mean."

"I'll admit it's nice, but our main focus is safety, and this fish house will go a long way in preventing any more tragedies like the one we had last year," Anita Coat insisted.

The club hopes to have the new fish house out on the ice for next year's fishing derby, as long as there is enough ice to support it. "It is rather big," Coat said.

Coat said you don't have to be a member of N.I.P.I to check them out on derby day, but you do have to dress (or undress) appropriately.

"Everyone is invited to join us for hot chocolate and strawberry daiquiris in our new fish house. And after the contest, we're all going over to the after party to get an eye full of The Naked Cowboys.

"Of course, frost bite isn't just a concern for nudists. Dr. Ben There reminded that the best way to protect yourself from frost bite is to limit your time outside if temperatures are below zero.

"And when you do go out," he said, "make sure to dress appropriately, including, well, wearing clothes.



N.I.P.I member Bill "The Iceman" Waters open's a hole for the Arctic Plunge on Maple Lake in 2020.

Photo by Cam Raman

Lake Superior

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Image courtesy of Drew Itmaself

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The 2024 Maple Lake Ice Derby has been canceled due to poor ice

By Brenda Erdahl

The 49th annual derby was supposed to take place Saturday, Feb. 3, but a combination of above average temperatures and rain left area lakes mostly ice free into early January. Despite the recent cold snap, ice uncertainty forced organizers to call off the festivities for the second year in a row.

WIN AN ICE CASTLE FISH HOUSE
SEE PAGE 15
Drawing held on St. Patrick's Day

MAPLE LAKE ICE FISHING DERBY
INSIDE

Technically Resolved
A technicality during the 2022 Ice Derby has been resolved.

See Page 4-5

Escape from the Funny Farm
Vigilante justice made in a Tasty Meal and Cucumber a thing of the past.

A SPOOF PUBLICATION OF THE MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER
THE Maple Flake
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MAPLE LAKE ICE-FISHING DERBY

THE 2024 ICE FISHING DERBY HAS BEEN CANCELED DUE TO POOR ICE CONDITIONS
Issue 01: Vol. 49
Saturday, February 3, 2024

Reefer Baits are a big hit!

By Paige Turner

After months of development, CEO of Maple Lake has released a revolutionary new reefer bait that just in time for the ice fishing season. Many have expressed a lot of interest.

Created in the local area's own home-based laboratory, the bait combines the results of fish oils with a mixture of TBC that will be as effective as fish in the water.

The key to the bait's success is in the way it is prepared. Just explained, this TBC, all mixed with fragrance is used as a liquid attractant.

"There is some drops in the water to all it takes," she said. "The fish will come in on the bait and they will start to experience a false sense of well-being, then the bait will be as effective as fish in the water."

Something that is really all it takes to improve the fish's likelihood of catching at this point, but to make it



This bite in Northern Minnesota was drawn last summer. The same is likely to happen to Maple Lake this summer.
Photo by Cam Raman

The good news is, there will still be a raffle for a brand new Ice Castle Fish House. Tickets are available at Madigans, H&H, the Maple Lake Legion, Cenex and Maple Lake Wine and Spirits. The drawing will be held at Madigans in Maple Lake during the city's St. Patrick's Day Celebration. Watch the Ice Fishing Derby website at www.maplelakefishingderby.com for more information in coming days.

The Maple Lake Ice Fishing Derby is heralded as the largest of its kind in Minnesota. It is hosted by the Maple Lake, Lake Property Owners Association and 100 % of proceeds are used to improve Maple Lake's waters.

We hope you enjoyed The Maple Flake's absurd, hilarious, and downright untrue stories in 2024. The official publication of the Maple Lake Ice Fishing Derby will be back next year. We always love to hear from our readers!

Lets us know what you thing at ads@maplelakemessenger.com.

~Thank you!

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