



Rice Lake
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100 Years In The Family
LeMasurier / Jacobson
- Since 1924 -

Lakes Break Records With Earliest Ice-Outs

Koronis Breaks 100-Year-Old Record



The ice went out of Koronis on Friday, March 15, breaking a 100-year-old record for earliest ice-out. The Press keeps records dating back to 1921 and the earliest previous ice-out was March 17, 2016. Koronis Ministries put a dock into the lake on Saturday, March 16 – doubtless the first time in the 102-year history of Koronis Ministries that we have had a dock in in time for St. Patrick's Day, said director Dan Ziegler. The ice also went out of Rice Lake on Thursday, March 14, which also set a new record (see Page 3).

Photo Courtesy of Dan Ziegler

1921	April 2	1939	April 20	1955	April 11	1971	April 17	1987	March 24	2003	April 13	2019	April 21
1923	April 22	1940	April 26	1956	April 24	1972	April 27	1988	April 8	2004	April 5	2020	April 8
1925	April 5	1941	April 13	1957	April 21	1973	April 2	1989	April 20	2005	April 8	2021	April 4
1926	April 19	1942	April 7	1958	April 12	1974	April 20	1990	April 10	2006	April 7	2022	April 21
1927	April 12	1943	April 13	1959	April 6	1975	May 3	1991	April 8	2007	April 16	2023	April 29
1928	April 9	1944	April 23	1960	April 18	1976	April 9	1992	April 10	2008	April 25	2024	March 15*
1929	April 6	1945	March 29	1961	April 7	1977	April 11	1993	April 19	2009	April 16		
1930	April 7	1946	April 2	1962	April 26	1978	April 18	1994	April 15	2010	March 31		
1931	April 8	1947	April 22	1963	April 12	1979	April 25	1995	April 15	2011	April 14		
1932	April 13	1948	April 17	1964	April 16	1980	April 19	1996	April 24	2012	March 22		
1933	April 19	1949	April 17	1965	April 17	1981	March 27	1997	April 22	2013	May 7**		
1934	April 10	1950	May 7**	1966	April 4	1982	April 20	1998	March 31	2014	April 27		
1935	April 13	1951	April 29	1967	April 9	1983	April 15	1999	April 5	2015	April 9		
1936	April 22	1952	April 23	1968	March 31	1984	April 14	2000	March 24	2016	March 17		
1937	April 22	1953	April 9	1969	April 19	1985	April 15	2001	April 21	2017	March 31		
1938	April 13	1954	April 13	1970	April 26	1986	April 11	2002	April 16	2018	May 2		

Press records as well as dates from L.K. Pederson journal (1921-42).
*Earliest Ice-Out - March 15 1
**Latest Ice-Out - May 7

LOCAL AUTHOR

Betty Schmidt reads book to third graders

St. Martin woman presents new book for I Love to Read Month

By Michael Jacobson

This year, for I Love to Read Month in February, Betty Schmidt of St. Martin read her new book, which was inspired by a true story in the spring and summer 2023.

Third graders held Literacy Camp on Tuesday, Feb. 13, and Schmidt read her book, *Murphy and his Rock Baby*?, to the three classes.

In 2023, a bald eagle at the World Bird Sanctuary near St. Louis, Mo., adopted “an egg,” actually a rock, in his enclosure. Schmidt heard the story on the national news in April 2023, she thought to herself: “That sounds like that would be a good story.”

Then, when the sanctuary staff swapped the rock for a baby eaglet, she thought: “That’s really a story. That’s a story of hope, love, perseverance, and doing the right thing. It really stuck with me,” she explained.

When she contacted the bird sanctuary in June 2023, the staff told her about the bird’s release the following week, so she went to take photos herself. “If I do it, I want to make it real,” she said.

She also got permission from the World Bird Sanctuary to use some of their pictures. “Watching that bird fly away was just amazing,” she said of the release on July 2, 2023.

The story goes: Murphy, a



Photo by Michael Jacobson

Betty Schmidt of St. Martin read her book manuscript, *Murphy and His Rock Baby*, to PAES third graders in February. Her book, based on a true story, has been accepted for publication.

31-year-old bald eagle had injured his leg when he was young and had lived most of his life at the sanctuary. One day, “he knew. He wanted a family,” she read. When he saw an “egg” on the ground – actually a rock – he built a nest around it.

Meanwhile, when Cindy and Mike found an eaglet on the ground and brought it to the sanctuary, the staff needed an eagle to care for the baby bird, so they switched the

“rock egg” for the eaglet.

“Murphy was delighted when he returned to his nest and found two dark eyes staring at him,” she read. “His egg had hatched!”

“Murphy was in love,” she continued. “He was a daddy!”

In the wild, eagles work together to feed their babies, noted Schmidt, but Murphy raised the eaglet for six weeks by himself. “Babies are a lot of work, but Murphy didn’t mind,” she read.

Then, when the eaglet needed to learn how to fly, the sanctuary staff moved Rock Baby in with an adult eagle, who was about ready to return to the wild. There, Rock Baby learned to fly from the older eagle. It was hard, she read, but in every attempt his wings got stronger and his landings better.

After nearly three months at the sanctuary, Rock Baby was released into the wild, an

BETTY SCHMIDT – Page 5B

CITY OF PAYNESVILLE

City agrees to contribute \$50,000 to proposed park

Council divides on \$50,000 contribution to land purchase, if legal

By Linda Lorentzen

The Paynesville Area Community Foundation requested funding from the city for the Koronis Hills Woodland Park, the proposed county park in Paynesville.

At the council meeting on Monday, March 11, Paynesville Area Community Foundation representatives asked for \$50,000 in funding from the city, which would go to Stearns

County for the purchase of the 202-acre property. As long as it’s legal, the council voted 3-2 to give \$50,000 (\$10,000 over five years) to the project.

Linda Liestman of Paynesville has agreed to sell the wooded 202 acres, located between Business 23 and Lake Koronis, for \$600,000 (it has been valued as worth more than \$900,000). While Stearns County is applying for two DNR grants to help the county purchase the property, the Paynesville Area Community Foundation has created a fund for donations towards the future county park.

While the council voted to support the county park in

CITY COUNCIL – Page 8

BRAIN SURGERY

Mayor discloses medical condition

Shawn Reinke likely will have brain surgery this summer

By Michael Jacobson

Last week, Mayor Shawn Reinke revealed to the Paynesville City Council that he would likely need brain surgery this summer.

He was diagnosed with a Chiari malformation in October 2023, met with a University of Minnesota surgeon at the end of February, and is hoping to have surgery this summer. The surgeon would cut a postage-stamp-sized hole “in the back of my head,” he explained.

A Chiari malformation, according to the Mayo Clinic, “is a condition in which brain tissue extends into the spinal canal. It occurs when part of the skull is misshapen or smaller than is typical. The skull presses on the brain.” The surgery should make more room for his brain and “take the pressure off the spinal column,” said Reinke, who has suffered from chronic migraines since being a teenager.

How the Chiari malformation presents, pain in the back of the head, can vary from mild annoyance to debilitating, he said.

Longtime councilor Jean Soine, the mayor pro tem



Mayor Shawn Reinke disclosed his medical condition – a Chiari malformation – the city council last week. He will likely need brain surgery this summer.

(mayor pro tempore), will act as mayor as Reinke has surgery and recovers, which could take up to two months.

“Because of the weak mayor thing, I don’t make any decisions outside of a council meeting,” explained Reinke, who has already consulted with city attorney Bill Spooner his pending absence. Due to Paynesville’s weak mayor system, Reinke has no day-to-day administrative authority. (In “strong” mayor systems, the mayor might also act as a department head, or have everyday administrative authority.) “I do not,” he said. His role is limited to running city council meetings, to attending city and community events, signing documents, etc.

While he has had headaches for years, “My symp

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