

## Making waves

Former professor creates adaptive canoe paddle.



in Northland Outdoors, Page B5

# SUPERIOR Telegram

Covering Northwest Wisconsin since 1890

Friday, January 7, 2022

## Candidates scarce for local races

By Shelley Nelson  
Superior Telegram

The Superior City Council could see some changes following the April 5 election, but little change is anticipated on the Douglas County Board.

Nineteen of 21 incumbent supervisors are running unopposed in the 2022 election cycle for the Douglas County Board.

Supervisor Peter Clark is making plans to step down as the 4th District representative in April; William Fennessey of Billings Lane is running unopposed for the seat.

No candidates will appear on the ballot in the county's 3rd District, currently represented by appointee Marquise Slay.

The filing period ended Tuesday, Jan. 4, and there will be no extension in the 3rd District because the person who filed to run for the seat returned documents that were not sufficient for ballot placement, said Susan Sandvick, county clerk.

On the Superior City Council, two incumbents are facing a challenge during the April 5 election so far.

Spencer Koskie of East Seventh Street in the Central Park neighborhood is running against Councilor Brent Fennessey in the 5th District. A Superior native, Koskie has worked in

**RACES:** Page A10



Photos by Jed Carlson / Superior Telegram

A pair of Superior firefighters walk back to a burning warehouse in Superior's North End Thursday morning.

## WAREHOUSES BURN

Vacant North End buildings destroyed by fire

**Duluth News Tribune Superior**

Two vacant buildings were lost to a fire Thursday morning in the North End district.

Superior firefighters received the call at 5:50 a.m. and 13 off-duty firefighters also responded at 6:10 a.m., Fire Chief Scott Gordon said in a news release. The fire quickly consumed the Sivertson warehouse at 1507 N. First St. and spread to the Bayside building next door at 1515 N. First St. Both buildings are a complete loss.

No injuries or fatalities were reported. Crews were expected to remain on the scene throughout the day to manage the buildings. As of 8:45 a.m., the temperature was 10

degrees below zero, with wind chill at 22 degrees below zero, according to the National Weather Service in Duluth.

Superior Mayor Jim Paine posted on his Facebook page Thursday morning that the loss of the buildings is a "terrible tragedy."

"They were both priceless pieces of historic architecture and both had potential for new life," he said. "I'm deeply sorry for the loss to the owners and to our community."

The four-story brick Sivertson building, 1507 N. First St., is listed for sale on the Follmer Commercial Real Estate website for \$795,000. The 48,000-square-foot warehouse was built in 1890 and formerly home to Lake Superior Fish Co. According to Douglas



Fire lights up a warehouse in Superior's North End on Thursday morning.

County land records, it's currently owned by Duluth/Superior Concrete Services LLC. The Bayside building

was also built in the late 1800s, Gordon said in the release. The fire department received two new aerial

ladder trucks in late November that it used for the first time to

**FIRE:** Page A9

## New Year's baby born at St. Luke's

**Iron River couple welcomes daughter 94 minutes into 2022**

**Duluth News Tribune DULUTH** — The city's first baby born in 2022 arrived just 94 minutes into the new year.

Roberta Margaret Paananen was born at 1:34 a.m. Jan. 1 at St. Luke's hospital. For parents Jennifer and Peter Paananen, of Iron River, it was a long time coming.

"We had been trying for seven years and kind of given up when we found out we were pregnant with her, so it was a big shock to us,"



Roberta Margaret Paananen was the Northland's first baby born in 2022. She was born to Jennifer and Peter Paananen at St. Luke's at 1:34 a.m. Jan. 1.

Peter said. "We're really excited." Though she wasn't

due until Jan. 14, Jennifer went to St. Luke's on Thursday for an induction after some complications.

Roberta arrived Saturday morning healthy at 6 pounds, 15.5 ounces and 17 inches.

Roberta and Jennifer were still at St. Luke's Birthing Center as of Monday afternoon, trying to get Roberta's weight up a bit. But both the mother and baby are happy and healthy.

"It's pretty incredible," Jennifer said. "I just got to feed and snuggle her and that was like the best experience of my life."

**BABY:** Page A10



Contributed photos / Peter Paananen

Jennifer and Peter Paananen hold their newborn daughter, Roberta Margaret Paananen, while watching the Minnesota Vikings game on Sunday from their St. Luke's hospital room. Roberta was born at 1:34 a.m. Jan. 1, making her the Northland's first baby of the year.

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# Last Place on Earth merch up for auction

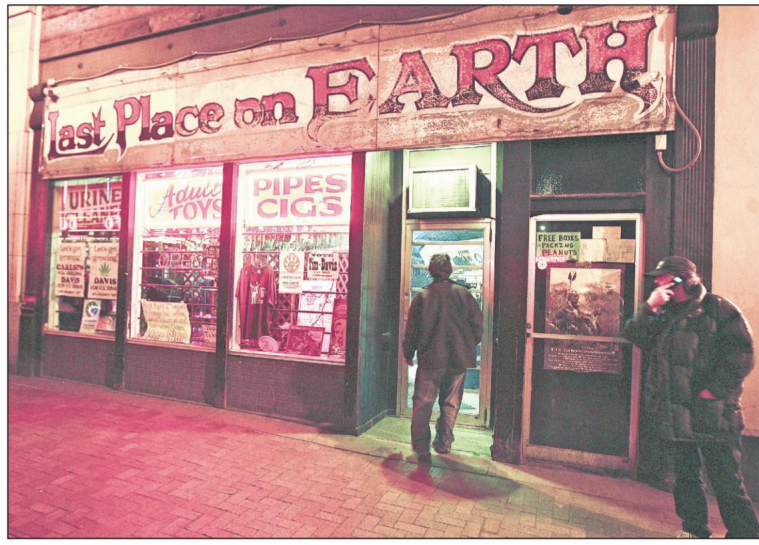
**Editor's note:** This story first appeared in the Tuesday, Jan. 4, e-edition of the Telegram.

**By Peter Passi**  
Duluth News Tribune

Duluth's Last Place on Earth was shut down ignominiously in July 2013, and its owner, Jim Carlson, is still serving time for the mind-altering products he was convicted of selling out of the shop, including "bath salts" and synthetic marijuana.

While federal agents seized all those drugs, as well as many of Carlson's other assets, some less illicit merchandise, as well as signs, remained. When the dust settled and agents had finished their work, Carlson's son, Joseph Gellerman, gathered that stuff and placed it in a storage unit.

But after a while, he stopped paying the storage facility, and it gave Gellerman formal notice that he had to settle up or forfeit the contents of his storage unit. The memorabilia and merchandise will be going



Clint Austin / Duluth News Tribune file photo

Duluth's Last Place On Earth head shop in April 2013, shortly before it was forced to close. The storefront sign is among the items that will be offered up for auction Jan. 8.

up for auction at Sellers Auction, 102 Belknap St., Superior.

Christina Greene, who manages the auction house, said the sale, slated to take place at 5 p.m. Jan. 8, will be an adults-only event, due to the nature of some of the items to

be put up for bid. She said it just wouldn't be appropriate to have children in the mix when bongos, other smoking paraphernalia and sex toys are being offered for sale.

Greene said the storage unit was a large one and its con-

tents filled a 24-foot trailer from top to bottom.

"We have hundreds of albums, everything from '70s rock to disco and whatever else they carried. I know for certain there are a lot of adult items and also all the smoking items, as well as stuff like Bob Marley T-shirts, throwing stars, black lights and posters. But most of it's packed in boxes right now in a 40-foot container behind our building. So, we won't know exactly what we're selling until next Thursday, when we unpack everything and set it out," she said.

Sellers Auction has two intervening auctions that will precede the Last Place on Earth event.

"We're going to make it a party. I'm getting a keg and some champagne. We're calling it date night. We'll be selling all the PG items first. Then we'll take a little 15-minute intermission. So, if anybody doesn't feel comfortable sticking around for the other stuff, they can go," Greene said.

"What else are you going to do on a freezing Saturday night in January?"

Some people still wax nostalgic about Last Place on Earth — located at 120 E. Superior St., now home to Blacklist Brewing Co. — in the days before it began trafficking heavily in synthetic drugs. Therefore, Greene said she's not surprised there has been such interest in the approaching auction.

"We're not at all trying to make light of the situation. I wasn't living here at the time, but I understand that there were people that died due to synthetic drugs. It was a tragic turn, and that's why he (Carlson) is where he is right now. We obviously didn't have anything to do with that, and we're just trying to help out the owner of a storage facility that got stuck with all this stuff," Greene said.

In keeping with the business owner's wishes, Greene declined to disclose the operator's name.



Steve Kuchera / File / Duluth News Tribune

The building at 1507 N. First St., Superior, on Nov. 11, 2016.

## FIRE

From Page A1

respond to the Thursday fire. Gordon said their debut went "very well."

The Blatnik Bridge to and from Superior was closed at 6:30 a.m. to protect the scene and reopened at 7:32 a.m., according to Gordon.

## Once a fishery

For more than 30 years, the large timber-framed building at 1507 N. First St. was owned by the Siverston family, which operated Siverston Fisheries and a ferry service connecting Grand Portage and Isle Royale National Park out of the building.

Stuart Sivertson, 80, of Duluth, the fishery's former president, had just found out about the fire from his daughter when the News Tribune reached him by phone Thursday morning.

"It's just a feeling of sadness, I guess," Sivertson said. "Because that building was just a lifesaver for our family business and for a number of other fishermen."

Sivertson hails from a fishing family that

began fishing along the North Shore and Isle Royale in the 1890s when his grandfather and great uncles immigrated from Norway.

The fishery moved to several locations in Duluth, including 366 Lake Ave. in Canal Park, but needed more space to freeze all the smelt they were catching in the late 1960s.

"We were catching several million pounds of smelt annually at that time," Sivertson said.

After going to college and working as an industrial engineer out east, Sivertson's father in 1967 asked him to return to the area and help with the family business. Sivertson was responsible for finding a new place and securing financing for the building and equipment.

"We were desperate to find a place. We'd been searching since 1967 to find a place," Sivertson said. "Here was this ideal location right on the waterfront where we could land smelt."

So in 1974, the family bought the warehouse, brought over their dressing machines, outfitted the building with 4,000 feet of cold



Jed Carlson / Superior Telegram

Fire engulfs a warehouse in Superior's North End Thursday morning.



Jed Carlson / Superior Telegram

The Superior Fire Department's ladder truck drives on scene as fire shoots out of the windows of a warehouse in Superior's North End Thursday morning.

storage that dropped to 40 degrees below zero, compressors that could freeze 5,000 pounds of fish per hour and rebuilt the dock with white pine lumber reclaimed from a nearby grain elevator.

The fishery would then ship 25-pound cartons of smelt throughout the U.S. and even some overseas destinations like Japan and France, Sivertson said.

But the Lake Superior smelt population plummeted just a few years later.

"The building kind of represented the last of the remnants of when Duluth was an

important commercial fishing place," Sivertson said.

The family continued to use the building, and it housed the staff offices for their Grand Portage Isle Royale Transportation Lines, a ferry service between Grand Portage and the island national park out in Lake Superior.

And they sold the fishery to a group of men who ran it as Lake Superior Fish Co., using the cold storage to keep trout caught in Canadian lakes.

Eventually, the building would be sold to Duluth/Superior Concrete Services LLC and return to the market in spring 2016.

Officials planned to release additional information on the fire after the Telegram's deadline. Please check [superiortelegram.com](http://superiortelegram.com) for the latest.

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# 6th OWI charge filed against Hawthorne man

**Editor's note:** This story first appeared in the Tuesday, Jan. 4, e-edition of the Telegram.

**By Maria Lockwood**  
Superior Telegram

A Hawthorne man accused of driving while intoxicated for a sixth time waived his preliminary hearing in Douglas County Circuit Court Wednesday, Dec. 29.

Scott Robert Wermter, 47, faces felony counts of sixth-offense operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated and bail jumping. Cash bail



Wermter

of \$2,500 was set for Wermter, and he was ordered not to use or possess alcohol and not to operate a motor vehicle without a valid license or permit.

Deputy Justin McIntosh with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the area of S. Klang Road and E. Town Line Road in Bennett Dec. 3. He found a truck parked and running with Wermter in the

driver's seat. Speaking with Wermter through the driver's window, McIntosh could smell a strong odor of intoxicants, according to the criminal complaint. The Hawthorne man's speech was slurred and his eyes were bloodshot and glassy, the complaint said. When he exited the vehicle, he was unsteady on his feet. A number of unopened cans of beer were found in the vehicle.

Wermter told the deputy that he was driving home from work in Superior. He said that he had been feeding the deer at

a residence down the road and that he had stopped to make a call. He admitted drinking one beer while feeding the deer.

Wermter exhibited signs of impairment on a number of field sobriety tests and registered an alcohol concentration of 0.16 on a preliminary breath test.

The Hawthorne man has five prior convictions for operating while intoxicated, the most recent in 2010. He has an additional open case in Douglas County in which he faces counts of sixth-offense

operating while intoxicated, sixth-offense operating with a prohibited alcohol concentration and resisting or obstructing an officer for an incident in March. As a condition of his bail in that case, Wermter was ordered not to possess or use any alcoholic beverages.

The operating while under the influence charge, a class G felony, carries a maximum penalty of 10 year imprisonment and a fine of up to \$25,000. Wermter's next court appearance in both cases was set for Jan. 31.

## DOUGLAS COUNTY PAST

### Jan. 7, 1921 Janitor admits show props theft

Fred Bigby, former janitor of the Rialto theater, who was arrested a week ago on a charge of stealing furniture from the theater, when it was discovered that a piano, a drawing room set, a settee and a number of tub palms had disappeared from a store room, entered a plea of guilty to the charge and was sentenced to serve six months at the state prison at Waupun.

During his confession yesterday, Bigby declared that he was drunk from moonshine when the theft occurred. He employed the services of a moving van and transported the furniture to a residence on North Third Street, where it was stored. Three trips with the van were required to move the furniture, according to Bigby.

### 99 big wolves slain in county

Ninety-nine full grown wolves were killed in Douglas County during the year 1920, according to W. J. Leader, county clerk. Nine cubs were killed during the last year.

This is an unusually large number of wolves for a year. Mr. Leader says and the records tend to show that either the wolf population is increasing or that the hunters are becoming more skilled.

John Griffith of Hines is the latest successful hunter. Mr. Griffith received a bounty of \$20 yesterday.

### Jan. 8, 1921



Contributed / Superior Public Library / Jan. 10, 1921 Telegram  
A diagram shows the path of a bullet that struck a man at a hotel in downtown Superior.

### Five-year-old has remarkable voice

John Martindale, son of Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Martindale, 1427 Baxter Ave., although only 5 years old, has twice made public appearances on the stage platform as a vocal soloist. John made his debut when he was only 4 years of age, singing at a patriotic pageant, and just recently was judged winner among 15 contestants in an amateur contest held at a local theater.

Master John has a truly remarkable voice, according to those who have heard him sing, and it is the plan of his parents to continue his training by sending him to a vocal school when he is a few years older. He is destined for grand opera, they believe.

### Jan. 8, 1947

### 52 meet violent death in Superior in year period

Fifty-two persons met "violent" death in Superior in 1946, the city health department disclosed Wednesday at its annual statistical report.

These deaths were

divided into nine categories, Miss Florence Lindberg, health department secretary, reported. They include 10 deaths in automobile accidents; three in collisions between cars and trains; 14 in falls; two industrial accidents; four by asphyxiation; five burned to death; two drownings; one by vicious animal; and one accidental shooting.

### Jan. 10, 1921

### Alleged "dope king" of the northwest taken; federal agents in Superior raid

Frank Insko, age 45, alleged to be the "dope king of the northwest, was arrested in his "dope fort," a house at 1219 Fourth Street, at noon today by E. A. McHugh, federal investigator, who has been in Superior for a month, and Police Officer Ole Peterson.

More dope raids are in progress.

When Insko was searched at the police station the first time, but little was found on his person. A second search revealed a money belt close about his body in

which were scattered 25 diamonds set in rings, lavaliers and earrings, and \$248 in cash.

Part of the stuff confiscated in Insko's house follows:

- ▶ Half a dozen Chinese opium pipes, still warm from use by opium smokers.
- ▶ Two cigar boxes filled with dope needles and syringes.
- ▶ Hundreds of packages of opium, wrapped and labeled \$75, \$100 and \$50 each.
- ▶ Thousands of dollars worth of cocaine.

The dope was found in the walls and beneath the floors of the house. It is alleged by the police that Insko has carried on an extensive traffic in

drugs, bringing the stuff into the country from Canada.

### Bullet fired at feet of booze bandit ricochets and hits man seated in hotel room block distant

Charles Jokinen, 34, is in St. Mary's hospital suffering from a fright as the result of a palisade of bullets fired by Henry Kaukers, a grocer at 1301 North Third Street, to frighten three "booze bandits" from his place of business last night. It was reported today by hospital attendants that Jokinen would recover.

Kaukere, who is 56 years of age, is being held by the local police pending an investigation of the affair by the district attorney.

Jokinen declared that he had been shot by a man from "outside" while he was reading a newspaper in a chair in front of the window in his room.

Following the shooting, the hotel manager made inquiries of pedestrians on the street. Henry Westlund stated that a man at 1301 Third Street had fired a revol-

er several times. He stated that during the shooting he was compelled to throw himself into the snow along the sidewalk to escape being hit.

### Charges McLean robbed of title

Bobby McLean was robbed of the world's ice skating championship when he met Oscar Mathieson in Norway last winter, according to D. R. Scanlon, McLean's manager.

Scanlon claims that the moving pictures of the race proves his claim and carries newspaper clippings in which the sporting editor of the New York Mail and other scribes who have seen the pictures support Scanlon's claim.

The claim put up by Scanlon is that one of the Norwegian race officials, becoming excited, flagged down McLean and permitted Mathieson to continue in one of the races.

Scanlon is at the Head of the Lakes arranging for the appearance of McLean and Baptie in exhibition races across the bay the latter part of the month.

Articles and pictures courtesy of librarian Judy Aunet with Superior Public Library.

## BABY

From Page A1

The couple did not expect her to be Duluth's first baby of the year, something that

has brought more attention than they expected. Community members already know Roberta on a first-name basis.

"It's so crazy that random people are also congratulating us," Jennifer said.

About five and a half hours later, Essentia Health-St. Mary's Medical Center welcomed its first baby of the year when Bodhin Quast was born at 5:56 a.m. to Dyami Quast and Stephanie Madson.

## RACES

From Page A1

the hospitality industry at Barker's Island, the Boat House at Fitger's and can still be seen at Gronk's Grill and Bar. He is a sales professional with the Family Heritage Division of Globe Life.

Koskie said through true communication, respect and compromise, the community can better the lives of everyone.

Councilor Robert Pierce, appointed in December to finish the first year of Councilor Craig Sutherland's term, is facing a challenge from former 8th District councilor Mike Herrick in the special election for a one-year term. Sutherland resigned his post in November.

The 9th District council race remains open to challengers until 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 7, after Councilor Keith Kern didn't meet the deadline to file non-candidacy papers. Kern is stepping down at the end of his term in April.

Travis Leksell of New York Avenue was the only candidate on the ballot as of Thursday morning, but Superior High School teacher Mark Johnson announced Thursday, Jan. 6, that he'll be running to replace Kern on the council.

Leksell works in the building trade for Local 11 Plumbers and Steamfitters. A big reason he is running for office is his daughter, born in September, he said.

"I want to help make Superior a great place for her to grow up," Leksell said.

Johnson said he will focus on keeping the city's natural resources clean and the 9th District open for business.

"I excited by the opportunity to give back to the city that's given me so much, and I hope you'll join me in this journey," Johnson said.

Incumbents Nicholas Ledin in the 1st, Warren Bender in the 3rd and Ruth Ludwig in the 7th are running unopposed.

### Superior School Board

Three candidates will vie for two Superior School Board seats this spring. Incumbent Christina Kintop will face newcomers Brooke Taylor and Edward Gallagher. Incumbent Robert Morehouse turned in a notice of non-candidacy and is not running for re-election.

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