

CORONA-TIMES PSAs

Week of 2/1/21 A

BLOOD DRIVES:

Call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org) to schedule a donation time or to find a drive near you. **NO WALK-INS due to COVID- 19.**

Tues.	2/9	10:00-4:00	VFW in Brainerd
Wed.	2/10	12:00-6:00	American Legion in Pequot Lakes
Thurs.	2/11	12:00-6:00	Palisade Assembly of God Church
Thurs.	2/11	10:00-4:00	Cascade United Methodist in Deerwood
Fri.	2/12	8:00-2:00	Cascade United Methodist in Deerwood
Fri.	2/12	12:00-6:00	Fellowship Bible Church of Pierz

2/1 - 2/7

The **Nisswa Chamber** wants your help **in filling the town with love for Valentine's Day!** They have launched the Nisswa Love Local Project. Here's how it works: 1. Stop in to the Chamber office for a heart. (or two. or ten.) 2. Write something you love about Nisswa on the heart. 3. They will fill our windows with love for Nisswa! If you're not able to stop into the office, send them a message and we'd be happy to fill a heart out for you. [#NisswaLoveLocalProject](https://www.NisswaLoveLocalProject.com). Learn more at [Nisswa.com](https://www.Nisswa.com).

Downtown Brainerd Businesses Can't Get Enough of Your Love "event" is on **now through Fri. Feb. 12th** and you are encouraged to show your love for the businesses and maybe win a huge prize package! Give some love to (a.k.a. SHOP at) downtown Brainerd businesses and when you do, pick up a "heart card" at the 22 participating businesses and have your dollars spent checked off of your heart with each purchase made between now and the 12th. Completed hearts need to be entered at The Purple Fern & Co...or at Knotty Pine Bakery for a chance to win a Romance Bundle by that Friday at 3:00pm. The winner will be announced on the Destination Downtown Business Coalition Facebook page and by email/phone on Feb. 13th.

Join the **Chamber in Crosslake** for the next **Explore Crosslake Business Meeting** on **Thurs. Feb. 4th** from 8:00-9:30AM via Zoom. Always the first Thursday of the month, and usually in person, you can join them for a meeting of local business owners, managers and key staff. Network with others, learn more about events, activities and organizations in Crosslake, plus share info about YOUR business. For more info about the link to the events, visit [Crosslake.com](https://www.Crosslake.com).

Central Lakes College invites the community to attend its **virtual Cultural Thursday** event: Mapuche Culture and Identity as Expressed Through Visual and Literary Art with Dr. Eva Palma, a native Chilean and University of Minnesota adjunct professor. The free presentation will be held at 12 p.m. on **Thurs., Feb. 4.** Palma will share how elements of the native South American Mapuche culture are expressed through art, both visual and literary, in alignment with esteem for the natural environment. Please register in advance for this webinar at TinyURL.com/y2nwalko. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. For more information about this presentation or the Cultural Thursdays Program, please contact Tracey at 218-855-8183.

It's time for **Crosslake Winterfest** and it's all happening in Crosslake **Thurs. Feb. 4 – Sat. Feb. 6**, with good old fashioned winter fun for the entire family! It all begins Thurs., Feb 4th as the first of three daily clues is released to guide you and your friends or family to the Hidden WinterFest Medallion! Find it and cash in on a prize basket valued at hundreds courtesy of Crosslake Chamber Member businesses. On Friday evening, it's time for outdoor activities at the Crosslake Community Center including ice skating, sledding, and a fabulous fireworks display! Rise and shine **Saturday morning, Feb. 6** for a full day of activities including Kite Flying, Ice skating, Helicopter Rides, shopping, food and drink specials all over town and of course SOUPFEST tasting begins at noon! For the entire rundown of the weekend's events and specials (get those Winterfest masks or gators!), visit Crosslake.com or download the Crosslake Chamber app.

Crossing Arts presents its newest exhibition '**Visual Flow In New Landscape And Nature Photography**', Photography by Mark Moser, Crystal Olson, and Mike Vogt. 'Visual Flow In New Landscape And Nature Photography' blurs the distinction between observed and constructed imagery. This exhibition examines how three local photographers, stretch the boundaries of traditional photography in nature and landscape settings, to reflect their environmental attitudes, perceptions, and values. **Opening Fri. Feb. 5**, this exhibition will be on display in our gallery through February 26. Due to COVID-19 and regulations for large group gatherings, we will not be having a public reception for this exhibition, but the public is invited to visit our gallery during regular business hours to view the artwork. For more information contact Crossing Arts at 218-833-0416. Hours are Tuesday - Friday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, and Second Saturday 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Crossing Arts is in downtown Brainerd at 711 Laurel Street.

The **Northwoods Pond Hockey Classic** will be held on **Fri. and Sat. Feb 5 & 6** at Breezy Point Resort on Pelican Lake. The exact schedule is being put together, but to register your team, visit NorthwoodsPondHockeyClassic.com.

Minnesota dentists are offering free dental care for children in need on **Fri. 5 and Sat. 6**. The **Give Kids A Smile** appointments can be booked **now**. **The Minnesota Dental Association** has nearly 1,000 dental professionals volunteering at over 50 clinics across the state for Give Kids a Smile. Finding a clinic with open appointments is as easy as calling United Way 211 (just dial 2-1-1) or by visiting MNDental.org. Appointments can then be scheduled directly with the dental office. No eligibility questions are asked, in an effort to remove any possible barrier to care. Patients must be 18 years or younger and accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Specific services provided at each location will be outlined when an appointment is scheduled. Volunteers speaking multiple languages are also available at many locations to help with language barriers.

The public is invited to take part in a webinar hosted by the Brainerd Lakes Chamber and its **Blue Ox Success Series: "Showing Up to Build and Lean and Inclusive Workplace"** on **Fri. Feb. 5th** from 10:00-11:30. The webinar is free to attend and will look at what it means to have an inclusive workplace. It will also answer the question as to how do we show up and understand what we can do as a community or business leader to be more inclusive? The Keynote Speaker is expert Sarah Oquist. You'll also hear from Inclusive Workplace Award Recipients ((CLC President Dr. Hara Charlier and Essentia Health's Nathan Hamilton.)) To be a part of this very important webinar and to register, visit BrainerdLakesChamber.com/InclusiveWorkplace or call 822-7113. A Zoom link will be emailed upon registration.

The **Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen** wants to remind lakes area residents that that if you are in need of a lunch on the weekends, they provide free weekend lunches to anyone regardless of age. If you know anyone who might benefit from a free lunch on the weekends, just stop by the sharing Bread Soup Kitchen at 923 Oak Street in Brainerd on **Sat. Feb. 6th** between 12:00 and 12:30. Meals will be given out then.

The **17th Annual Cuyuna Lakes Chamber's Ice Fishing Contest** will take place on **Sat. Feb. 6th** from 12:00-3:00 on any public lake in Minnesota! \$20 to enter (you MUST register with the FishDonkey app)...and over \$4,000 in prizes will be awarded! Catch a fish, win cash and gift cards to Cuyuna Lakes bars, restaurants and more! Raffle tickets are also being sold separately for \$10 and available at most Cuyuna Lakes Area businesses. To learn about the contest, the huge prizes and for more info, visit CuyunaLakes.com/calendar.

Tickets for **Brainerd Public Schools Foundation's Big (un)Event** are on sale now, with the virtual event scheduled for **Sat. Feb. 6th**. Entitled "Hook, Line & Sinker – Catch & Release Generosity", this 8th annual event will look different, but the cause is the same! Tickets are \$45 and each ticket holder will receive a "Party in a Box" which includes access to the event, raffles and a \$25 gift card to one of our local restaurants! The raffles are still taking place, but all online...There is also an online auction! Visit BPSF.org and reserve your tickets now!

2/8 – 2/14

The **Brainerd Lakes Chamber** invites its *members* to a **Chamber POWER HOUR Speed Networking Event** (via Zoom) on **Tues. Feb. 9th** from 4:00-5:30. Just like speed dating, but without the date! Attendees will be able to meet a lot of people in a short amount of time. They will rotate among small groups to have face-to-face time and discussions with multiple Chamber members. Just plan ahead with your “elevator speech” (name, business, title, brief descript. of your business/what you do and what you wish to achieve by attending. To register, visit BrainerdLakesChamber.com and click on Events.

The next **Ruby's Pantry Pop-Up Pantry** will be on **Tues. Feb. 9th** at The Northern Pacific Center - Building #2, 1511 Northern Pacific Rd, Brainerd, MN 56401. Food distribution begins at 4:30 p.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m. Ruby's Pantry is a non-profit food ministry serving our community on the second Tuesday of the month. There are no income guidelines to participate; Ruby's Pantry is for everyone who eats. For a \$20 cash donation, participants will receive a "share" with an abundance of groceries. The variety and amount of food varies each month. Contact The Journey North Community Church at 218.824.5617 about volunteer opportunities at Ruby's! ((To comply with COVID-19 guidelines it will be an outdoor, drive-thru distribution. *You must stay in your vehicle.*))

Crow Wing Energized reminds are seniors about the **Senior Dining Frozen Meal Expansion Pop-Up** for Meal Pickup which will be held on Wed. Feb. 10th from 11:00-1:00. Meals can be picked up at the Salvation Army Worship & Service Center 208 S Fifth Street in Brainerd. Catholic Charities Senior Dining is offering seniors in central Minnesota access to additional food support. Healthy frozen meals are packaged in oven and microwave safe containers and handed out via a no-contact drive-through. Participants must be 60 years of age and older to be eligible. Meal quantities are available from 10 to 30 per month. There is no cost, but donations are accepted. For more information, visit CrowWingEnergized.org. These meals are being funded in part by Central MN Council on Aging & Minnesota Board on Aging.

The **Nisswa Chamber** wants your help in **filling the town with love for (before) Valentine's Day (Sun. Feb. 14).**! They have launched the Nisswa Love Local Project. Here's how it works: 1. Stop in to the Chamber office for a heart. (or two. or ten.) 2. Write something you love about Nisswa on the heart. 3. They will fill our windows with love for Nisswa! If you're not able to stop into the office, send them a message and we'd be happy to fill a heart out for you. [#NisswaLoveLocalProject](https://www.facebook.com/NisswaLoveLocalProject)

It's time for the **Nisswa Winter Jubilee, Fri. Feb. 12 through Sun. Feb. 14** in Nisswa, however it will be quite different with many events NOT taking place. The parade, hammerschlagen and smooch racing will NOT be happening this year. At this time, events that allow for social distancing, such as the snow sculpting contest, wood splitting contest, bean bag tournament at the Legion and the Fire Department's Ice Fishing Derby are still planned. Check out the Nisswa Winter Jubilee page on Facebook.

The **Northland Arboretum** invites couples to a **Valentine's Day Snowshoe Hike & Dinner** on **Sat. Feb. 13th**. The event will start at 6:00 at the Arb where couples will enjoy a guided snowshoe hike through the woods lined with ice luminaries (bring own snowshoes). You'll receive a certificate for a heart shaped pizza. After, cozy up at home with a bottle of wine and chocolates, which are included! Advance registration is required **by Thurs. Feb. 11th** and is limited to the first 12 couples. Payment due at registration. \$55/couple. To learn more, visit the NorthlandArb.org.

Pay It Forward Foundation will host the annual **Sunny Zwilling Memorial Ice Carousel Extravaganza**, otherwise known as **I.C.E. Fest**, on **Sat. and Sun. Feb. 13th & 14th**. The event takes place on Green Prairie Fish Lake in Little Falls from 10:00-6:00 each day! Stop by with the whole family and enjoy the World's Largest Ice Carousel! Activities include curling, log rolling, spear fishing, Striders in the Snow, figure skating, igloo building, snow shoeing and more! The event is free, but donations will be accepted to help stomp out children's hunger. Learn more at MNIceFest.com.

Get ready for fun at the **Nisswa Fire Department's Annual Fishing Derby (as part of winter jubilee)**! The event will be held on **Sun. Feb. 14th** from 12:00-2:00. \$5 per hole for fishing....plus enjoy prizes, food and fun! Nisswa Lake... Nisswa.com for more information.

MISC...

The **Gull Lake Frozen Fore** is deemed as the world's largest snowmobile and winter golf event (AKA pub crawl) and will be taking place on **Sat. Feb. 20th** around Gull Lake. 2021 will bring limited tickets to adhere to MN and CDC guidelines. Participants will have the ability to start at one of our eleven locations! Each participant is encouraged to sign up with a group of friends online. Once signed up each participant will be assigned a designated bus they will stay on for the duration of the day (11am-6pm). Tickets will be on sale soon online at GullLakeFrozenFORE.org

The **Gull Lake Frozen Flop** is still taking place **Sat. Feb. 20th** on the ice at Hole-in-the-Day Bay. Warm changing rooms will be provided. Get on your favorite goofy costume and prepare to have a great time raising money for charity, pick up sponsors for our charities and win fantastic prizes. Start raising dollars and visit GullLakeFrozenFore.com and click on Frozen Flop! Proceeds benefit The Confidence Learning Center and the Outreach Program of Brainerd Lakes Area!

As the construction of the new **Performing Arts Center** addition continues at Brainerd High School, the Board of Education is **looking to name the new facility** and it wants your help! The Board is requesting input from the community which is invited to submit ideas for the new center via a short survey. Name submissions will be **accepted through Fri. Feb. 12**, then a committee of community members and district staff will narrow down the submissions the week of Feb. 15th. The committee will submit the top three names to the Board at a Feb. 22nd. To take the survey and submit your entry, visit BluePrint181.org.

The **Family Safety Network** of Cass, Hubbard and Clearwater County (based in Walker) is asking the public to help **"Share the Love"** through a **February Gift Card Drive!** They are asking people to share that love by donating a gift card of your choice to help a family in need. Grocery cards, gas cards, etc.... Purchase the gift card at an area business, drop it off at a designated drop box in Walker, or mail/deliver it to the Walker office. Drop off sites include Walker Home Center Ace Hardware or Super One Foods in Walker. The Family Safety Network is a non-profit that provides advocacy and support services to victims of domestic violence and their families.

Brainerd Community Theatre is looking for local "show-offs" for a **Local Talent Show!** Singers, dancers, musicians, comedians, poets, jugglers, magicians, dog trainers, yodeler and any others with a special talent, this is for you! Sign up to be a part of this fun and you will be able to record your performance (max of 5 min) and submit it for the contest (ongoing)! To participate or learn more, visit CLCPerformingArts.com.

The **Brainerd VFW** is accepting **applications for the annual Scout of the Year Award.** This is a K-12 program. Last year's winner was Jenna Lee of Brainerd. She received \$300 locally, then won district competition. Jenna was a 12th grader and is now in college to become a teacher. The **deadline for applications this year is May 1st.** Awards go up to \$5000 nationally. Details and application forms can be found at BrainerdVFW.org/scout.

Would you like to implement healthy change in your workplace? Or perhaps create a community project to encourage healthy activity? **Crow Wing Energized** offers grants to support workplace wellness, healthy communities, and school health and wellness efforts. **Two grants** are currently available for Workplace and for Community. **The deadline to apply is Mon. Mar. 1st.** For support or questions on the grants please contact Kelsey Stults at kelsey.stults@essentiahealth.org. Grants will be awarded on April 1st, 2021.

Cass County businesses, nonprofit organizations and self-employed entrepreneurs may now apply for **COVID relief grants** on a first come, first served basis. Applications will be **accepted through Tues. Feb. 16** at 4:30 p.m. unless funds are exhausted earlier. Priority will be given to businesses and nonprofits that did NOT receive COVID-19 grant funding from Cass County in the past. *(If you received relief funds from Cass County last year, you are still encouraged to apply in case surplus funds are available.)* To see the criteria, learn more and apply, visit co.cass.mn.us.

Are you a caregiver for a loved one? Do you have a plan for if you were suddenly unable to care for them? **Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota** can help you build peace of mind through **Emergency Care Planning Services.** LSS can work with you to answer questions like: Who will care for my spouse if I no longer could? What resources would be available to my family? Work with an experienced care provider to develop a plan at no cost to you. Get started by calling 1-800-488-4146.

The Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Minnesota is scheduled to take place on **Sat. Mar. 6th** at Breezy Point Resort's Marina. Check in will be from 10:00-12:30 with the plunge starting at 1:00. You can register now to take a plunge into the icy waters of Pelican Lake at PlungeMN.org.

Is your home in need of repairs, but you're unsure of affordable financing options? You may be eligible for a **home repair loan or grant** through **USDA Rural Development**. They offer very-low-income homeowners affordable financing to repair, improve or modernize their homes. Grants are available for elderly homeowners 62 years of age or older to remove health and safety hazards. For more information, contact the Baxter Office at (218) 829-5965 or visit rd.usda.gov/mn. Let us help you make the repairs you need to stay in the home you love, because "Together, America prospers." A message from the USDA Rural Development, an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

The **Crossing Arts Alliance** is proud to open the application process for its annual **arts scholarship**. A \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a graduating senior from high school in the Lakes Area (Brainerd, Crosby, Crosslake Charter, Pequot Lakes, Pillager, and Pine River). The applicant must be planning to pursue further education in the arts including, but not limited to, visual art, music, drama, speech, literary arts, dance/movement, photography, and technology-produced arts. To apply, applicants are asked to answer five questions listed on our website, in either a written narrative (no more than 500 words) or presented through a video (3 to 5 minutes in length). The deadline to apply is March 26, 2021. Applications and more information can be found by visiting our website – CrossingArts.org/arts-scholarship. For more information contact Crossing Arts at 218-833-0416.

University of Minnesota Extension is excited to be partnering with North Dakota State University Extension to offer a series of **farm safety webinars** this winter. Each of us has been impacted in some way by an accident, injury, or fatality that has occurred on the farm. These events are devastating to communities and impact the livelihoods of those we know and love dearly. The purpose of these webinars is to empower communities and individuals to prioritize safety on the farm. **The webinar series will be January-March on Thursdays** at 11:00am. Each webinar will last one hour. The Farm Safety Webinar Series is offered free of charge. Participants must pre-register by visiting z.umn.edu/FarmSafetyWebinars. When registering for the webinar series, participants will have access to join each of the five webinar sessions. Questions can be sent to Emily Krekelberg at krek0033@umn.edu

Cuyuna Regional Medical Center is continuing to care for residents of our communities by offering **contact free COVID testing** in a mobile unit on its Crosby campus. The service is offered weekdays by appointment only. Call 218-546-7462 to schedule a test. The mobile unit is located in front of the Business Support Services building in CRMC's staff parking lot across Highway 210 from the hospital and clinic's main entrance. Patients drive up to the unit and remain in their vehicle during the brief test administered by a nurse. Visit CuyunaMed.org for more information and to schedule an appointment.

Crow Wing County residents can now view county highway department snowplows on county roads during winter snow events, to track where plows are and where they are headed. The "**Where's My Snowplow?**" link is a web based map activated during snow events. It uses GPS to track the 15 county snowplows and show their current locations. The map tracks in near real time and updates every 5 minutes during snow events. To access the link, visit CrowWing.us.

Pine Grove Zoo is taking applications for **Zoo Keeping Interns** for the upcoming 2021 season. As a non-profit organization and community partner, Pine Grove Zoo has created an Internship Program to give back and support students interested in the animal field and natural world. Interns gain knowledge and experience with all of Pine Grove Zoo's animal family, not just certain species. Internships allow individuals to learn and discover things about all areas of the Zoo, which can guide students in deciding which part of this field interests them more. Pine Grove Zoo has received high ratings from interns that have been part of the Pine Grove Zoo Team, while some even continue as paid staff during the season. If you are interested in an internship, call 320-616-5595 or email Info@PineGroveZoo.com.

The **Sunrise Sertomans** invite you to go "green" this season and recycle your non-working Christmas lights and extension cords as part of their **10th Annual Bites For Lights** fundraiser! Bring your non-functioning lights and extension cords to participating businesses throughout the Brainerd Lakes Area. With the help of Crow Wing County Land Services, **The Sunrise Sertoma Club of Brainerd** will recycle the lights and cords through Crow Wing Recycling with 100% of the funds raised going back into the Brainerd Lakes Area. Drop off locations are in Brainerd/Baxter, Aitkin, Emily, Crosby, Nisswa, Breezy Point, Crosslake and Pequot Lakes. To find a location near you, visit BitesForLights.org.

The Crisis Line & Referral Service is looking for compassionate **volunteers** to help answer calls from those in the area who may be experiencing a crisis and need someone to listen. Their volunteers are truly a lifeline for those who call the Crisis Line, with compassion, concern and with the highest level of integrity and confidentiality, the volunteers listen, affirm, encourage and offer hope by connecting with callers to resources that can truly help them. Hours for volunteers are flexible, you can do it from home or wherever! Training will be provided. You must be 18 or older. To learn more, visit CrisisLineAndReferralService.org.

In response to the recent surge of **COVID-19** across our region — and the frequent fluctuations in case rates — **Essentia Health has launched a COVID-19 Regional Projections Dashboard**. This user-friendly dashboard aggregates publicly available data and features an interactive map of Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin. Users can compare case numbers and projections by state, and drill down further by county. Available metrics include cases per 10,000 people, daily new cases, seven-day positivity rates, etc. It's intended to inform our communities by presenting rich data in a highly visual way. You can access the dashboard by visiting EssentiaHealth.org

The **Brainerd Public Library** is now offering **no-contact curbside service** for customers to pick up library materials. Library staff is available to help customers request materials over the phone and by email. Curbside pickup times include many hours throughout the week including Tuesday-Thursday evenings until 7:00 as well as Saturdays. You can book curbside appointment by logging on to TinyURL.com/BrainerdCurbside or by calling 218-829-5574.

As you may know, in late July, the **Brainerd Family YMCA** experienced significant structural and cosmetic damage to their facility from heavy rainfall and they found out that the damage is not covered by insurance – with damage estimates at over \$148,000. And before that, the pandemic forced the Y to scale back services, putting more strain on their finances. The Brainerd Family YMCA serves over 725 children and their families every year. They provide after-school programming, host summer camps, promote healthy lifestyles and they change peoples' lives. The Y has stepped up when businesses needed it. **IT'S TIME FOR BUSINESSES TO STEP UP. THE Y NEEDS US.** Both CTC and Digital Horizons have each donated \$1,000 to start the grassroots campaign to raise funds for the Y. If you can do the same or similar, please visit GoCTC.com/ymca.

Crow Wing County Sheriff Scott Goddard has announced the creation of a **"Safe Exchange Zone"** on the campus of Crow Wing County. The designated area not only provides a safe location for child custody and e-commerce exchanges but also allows people feeling the need to meet in an area that offers a sense of safety and security a place to go. Two parking stalls have been marked for this purpose in front of the Crow Wing County Judicial Center and can be used 24 hours a day. The safe zone is monitored 24 hours a day by law enforcement and officers are able to quickly respond if there were to be a problem.

The **Destination Downtown Coalition** wants to **bring Babe the Blue Ox back to downtown Brainerd** but needs your financial help to raise the \$2,400 needed. Nor-Son Construction has donated a Babe the Blue Ox statue that they've had at their Baxter office since 2008. Babe is in need of repairs and a new look. The coalition wants this to be a community project that adds to downtown Brainerd's uniqueness. The Crossing Arts Alliance has agreed to head the artistic side with a call out to local artists. They will be putting together a panel to determine placement, find great artists, and judge who will be doing the honors of creating downtown's latest attraction! If you would like to provide financial support for this project please make a donation by clicking on either link and add to the amount so far! Sponsors of \$500 or more will have their name or business logo on a plaque next to the statue. <https://downtownbrainerd.org/donate/>. **Submissions DUE BY APRIL 15th!**