

NORTH SHORE JOURNAL

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Christine Mallary, Editor

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Bay Area Vineyard to host Covid - conscious HALL-oween

By Laurie Kallinen



In years past, Bay Area Vineyard's Harvest Party in Silver Bay has served 350 to 400 kids and parents with fun games, prizes, and treats. With all the separations, restrictions and cancellations that have been brought by Covid-19, they sought a way to host a safe and socially distanced version this year. With the permission of City Hall, they will host a HALL-oween.

It will not be the free-flowing event of past years. It will be a one-direction flow with entry by Wildly Organic and exit by the pharmacy. Entry will be staggered to maintain social distancing and hand sanitizer will be at the entrance and exit, as well as at additional points along the route. Young children will need to re-

main with an adult and masks will be required. The route will take the children along the hall, through the kitchen, and back out the opposite hall, with several stations along the way.

Although there will be some of the old games, the "hands-on" games will be limited and operated by a volunteer at the child's direction. All treats will be pre-packaged. "We'll be doing some guessing games like "How many candy corns in the jar", but mostly it will be a chance for the kids to do some safe trick-or-treating," says Shelley Cheney of the Vineyard.

The event will be held from 5:30-7:30, Oct 31st at the Mary MacDonald Center, 99 Edison Blvd., Silver Bay.

Bonding Bill Approves Funding for North Shore Construction Projects

By Kitty Mayo

State legislators have finally come to an agreement for the bi-annual bonding bill, allocating millions of dollars to infrastructure projects in the northland.

The almost \$1.9 billion bonding bill is the largest ever passed in Minnesota includes monies for improvements to bridges, roads, parks and trails and water treatment plants throughout the state, as well as \$13.5 million for Duluth's Lakewalk and seawall.

A \$1.1 million grant will be awarded to the city of Silver Bay's construction of a trailhead, including pre-design, design, construction, furnish and equip a multimodal trailhead center. The trailhead will be designed at the convergence of several trails that include hiking, bicycling, snowmobiling and all-terrain vehicles. The trailhead center will have parking, a wayside rest area, and a trailhead center building with lavatories and showers. The total project cost estimate is \$3.8 million, which encompasses removal of the old recreation building that is currently at the site.

The city of Silver Bay is just in the beginning phases of applying for various potential funding sources, such as IRRRB and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, but anticipates the project will take more than a year before it is completed.

In Two Harbors \$11.5 million was designated for a new water treatment plant, something that Mayor Chris Swanson says has been in the works for almost three years already.

The water treatment plant project has been estimated to cost about \$20 million, so more work is yet to be done to obtain additional funding through the state's low-interest loan program, and potentially additional grant funding.

"This is a direct appropriation, so that gives us a lot of flexibility for additional funding through the Public Facilities Authority, and that is going to help keep end-user fees as low as possible," said Swanson.

Replacing aging infrastructure,

AEOA Taking Applications for Housing Improvement Assistance

By Kitty Mayo

The Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) has restarted its Housing Services Rehabilitation programs, and is seeking applications in Two Harbors and Silver Bay. Some program funding is available for both homeowners, and business owners.

After a several-month long suspension of the programs due to the pandemic, Jodie Mattila says that the programs are moving forward again, and AEOA is eager to get funding in place to help as many people make home improvements as they can. Mattila is AEOA's Housing Services Rehabilitation manager.

Because of the interruption to programming, AEOA has received a year extension for the current round of government funding, but projects must be completed by September of 2021 to use these monies.

Several programs address emergency and long-term housing needs:

- Covid-19 Housing Assistance. This is an emergency-need program for both renters and homeowners with overdue housing expenses (rent, in some cases mortgage payments, and utilities) between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020 and are at or below the 300% federal poverty guidelines. Apply through the United Way by calling 211, or going to their website: www.211.org.
- Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program. This is a "deferred loan" program for up to \$27,000. "Deferred loan" means if you continue to live in the home for 15 years you do not have to pay back the loan or pay any interest. This is also called a forgivable loan. Homeowners

can use the funding for health and safety issues, like doors, roofing, siding, electrical, and plumbing. Income eligibility for a household of two is under \$24,800 annual income.

- Minnesota Housing Emergency Loan Program. Also a deferred loan, with a maximum of \$15,000, these loans are for accessibility improvements or emergency repairs to restore water, sewer, electric and heat, and the process moves more quickly than a rehab loan. Income eligibility for a household of two under \$24,800.

- Small Cities Development Program. For homeowners in Two Harbors and Silver Bay for target areas within each city, and could be for safety, livability and energy efficiency projects. These loans are deferred after seven years, and require a homeowner contribution. The maximum amount of this forgivable loan is \$24,750, and assistance for the homeowner contribution portion of the deferred loans may also be available. Income limits for a household of two, \$47,300. This program is also available for business owners in Silver Bay and Two Harbors.

- Emergency CSBG Program. This new program provides emergency funding for home repairs of Lake and Cook county homes, including electric, sewer, water, and heating. The maximum grant amount is \$1,000, with an income limit of \$34,480 for a household of two people.

Matilla says that funds are currently available and encourages people to apply. If you have questions about income limits, and your eligibility, call Kim Perala (218)735-6879, or Beth Davies (218)735-6819.

the need to improve the removal of mercury from water released into Lake Superior, and increasing overall capacity are some of the issues that will be addressed through the project. Addressing the issue of increased use of water treatment by a high cohort of visitors, Swanson says that a case was made that the cost should not be put entirely on residents.

"One aspect we are really excited about is that the aesthetics of the plant are going to be improved, with it being at the waterfront and along the hiking trail the prelimi-

nary design is going to make it look nice," said Swanson.

Swanson says that collaboration between local entities including the city, Lake County and Castle Danger Brewery was instrumental in getting approval for the project funding as the groups lobbied at the Capitol. He also credits Senator Tom Bakk and Rep. Mary Murphy as strong advocates.

It is anticipated that the project will begin next summer, and be a two-year process as water treatment operations continue.