

St. Pauli News in Detail



Greeting and Ushering

Feb. 4 Jim Strandlie

- Feb. 11 Skip Swanson
- Feb. 18 Craig Torkelson
- Feb. 25 Chad Torstveit

Altar Preparation: Tammy Haugen

* * * * *

February Milestones

Birthdays

- Feb. 15 Jordan Rondorf
- Feb. 18 Becky Stickler
- Feb. 20 Gary Iverson
- Feb. 25 Arlo Rude
- Feb. 26 Evie Johnson



Anniversaries

None that the editor is aware of.

* * * * *



Ash Wednesday Services

February 14
7:00 pm

Holy Communion

Quilting

We have again changed things up a bit so those with day jobs can join us!

We will quilt on Friday from 10:00 pm – 3:00 pm with a lunch at noon. We will finish with our WELCA meeting at 3:00 pm.

Saturday we will quilt and make soup from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm with lunch again served at noon. At 3:00, we will deliver soup to special friends in the community

Friday, February 9

10:00 am – 3:00 pm with lunch at noon
WELCA meeting at 3:00 pm

Saturday, February 10

Quilting *and* Soup Making
10:00 am – 3:00 pm with lunch at noon
3:00 pm Soup Deliveries

Come and enjoy the fun, fellowship and food!



The ladies made 10 quilts in January!

Minutes of the Church Council

December 14, 2023

The St. Pauli Church Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 7 p.m. at St. Pauli Church. Members present: Jim Strandlie, Cindy Cedergren, Myles Alberg, Sue Kotz, and Marisa Benson. Guests: Kevin Reich, and Faye Auchenpaugh and Tammy Haugen, representing the Call Committee.

Council President Jim Strandlie called the meeting to order and Kevin Reich opened with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Several items were added to the preliminary agenda.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the November 16, 2023 meeting were previously approved via email. M/S/C (Alberg/Strandlie)

Treasurer's Report: The report for November was approved as sent via email from Treasurer Benson. M/S/C (Alberg, Kotz)

Checking Account Balance End of Oct 2023	\$ 22,157.23
Nov 2023 Revenue:	2,730.00
Nov 2023 Expenses:	<u>(2,781.63)</u>
Checking Account Balance End of Nov 2023:	\$ 22,105.60
Other Account Balances End of Nov 2023:	
Education Fund	\$ 1,430.22
Edward Jones	73,805.32
Memorial Fund	8,471.52
Mission Grant	5,549.89
Savings	<u>37,590.99</u>
Total St. Pauli Balances End of Nov 2023	\$148,953.54

Reports of Members in sickness or distress: The Council extended well wishes to Jim Kotz, Gary Iverson, and Larry Hurst, following recent surgeries.

New Members or Interest in Membership: No report.

Other Reports:

- 1) WELCA: Cindy Cedergren reported that WELCA served a soup and sandwich meal following the Christmas Cantata performed by the Middle River Area Community Choir on Sat, Dec. 9, and served it again on Sunday, December 10, following worship service. Approximately 40 people attended the event on December 9, despite very poor weather conditions. WELCA officers have met and are finalizing the 2024 handbook updates.
- 2) Sunday School Committee: The Sunday School Christmas program will be held this Sunday, December 17, with potluck lunch following.
- 3) Requests from Kevin Reich: Kevin inquired about whether the Council would like him to do outreach for parishioners in need of visitation. The Council stated they don't expect Kevin to do outreach but is very willing to compensate him for any trips he makes to visit those in need, on an hourly basis, as we did for Pastor Carl. Kevin stated that he and his wife would be interested in doing so as needed. The Council invited Kevin to attend any Council meetings, as

well, and will be compensated for each meeting he attends. A motion was made to invite Kevin to attend the meetings as a non-voting member, with \$50 compensation per meeting. M/S/C (Benson/Alberg)

Kevin inquired about whether the Council would be interested in holding contemporary services, perhaps once a month. The Council did not know how the congregation feels about that, so it will be brought up at the annual meeting to seek input.

Kevin asked the Council if he was meeting the Council's and congregation's expectations. The Council assured him we are very pleased with his performance, and very fortunate and grateful to have him at St. Pauli.

Regarding Lenten Services, Kevin is available to preach every other Wednesday, plus Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14) and Good Friday (March 29) services. He has assisted Black River Church with Lenten services in the past, and wishes to continue that tradition, serving them on the other Wednesdays during Lent. The Council may utilize Pastor Carl's past sermons on the Wednesdays Kevin is preaching at Black River. Pastor Grafstrom will be scheduled to conduct Easter Sunday services, with the worship time to be determined.

Old Business:

- 1) Stained Glass Window: Marisa Benson stated that we could expect the window in March, and suggested an engraved plate be purchased to designate the memorial for Ivette Garrett. She will contact Ivette's daughter, Kirsten, to discuss a date for a dedication of the window. Myles Alberg will work with Marisa on a wooden frame that will be part of the window.

New Business:

- 1) Worship leaders: Kari Torkelson will lead services on January 7 and February 4.
- 2) Community Strong request: Marisa Benson reported on information sent to the church via the website, from Kayla Jore, representing Community Strong-Pennington County. This organization is a local coalition of community partners working on improving the mental wellbeing of our community. The organization would like to provide information via a bulletin insert (or copies to have on hand) describing the purpose of this organization. The information also invited our congregation to join this coalition if there is an interest in attending the meetings, held on the first Tuesday of each month, with lunch provided, at Sanford Behavioral Health. Marisa will request copies of the brochure, and this topic will be brought up at the Annual meeting to see if there are any members interested in representing St. Pauli at the meetings.
- 3) Election of Officers: Marisa Benson stated that it was the intent of the Constitution, updated in 2021, that the terms of the secretary and the treasurer be staggered, to prevent both officers leaving the Council on the same years. However, it hasn't worked out that way this year. She

offered to extend her term as treasurer by one more year, if the Council and congregation agree to that. The Council agreed with that offer and will bring it up for discussion at the Annual Meeting. Jim Strandlie, Myles Alberg, and Cindy Cedergren have fulfilled their terms, in addition to Marisa Benson.

- 4) Nominating Committee: Virginia Anderson has offered to serve, Jim will ask Ron Anderson, and Faye Auchenpaugh was asked and agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee for the election of Council members.

Call Committee Business:

Faye Auchenpaugh and Tammy Haugen joined the Council meeting at 8:10 pm and addressed the Council.

The Call Committee recommended the Council enter into a shared service contract with Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom to provide worship and Holy Communion on the last Sunday of each month. Compensation would be \$350 per Sunday, including travel expense, and give her approval to utilize up to

\$400 from the Continuing Education line item in the budget, on a reimbursement basis. There would be no contributions to her pension, and no paid vacation. Pastor Grafstrom would be invited to attend Council meetings if desired and compensated on a per-meeting basis. Discussion was held, and a motion was made to accept the Call Committee's recommendation and enter into said contract beginning January 2024. M/S/C (Benson, Kotz).

Jim Strandlie will contact Pastor Grafstrom and make the offer. Marisa Benson will prepare the draft agreement and email it to the Council for approval.

Next Meeting: Set for Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7 pm.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Cindy Cedergren
St. Pauli Church Council Secretary

* * * * *

St. Pauli Cemetery Association

September 21, 2023

The St. Pauli Cemetery Association board met on Thursday, September 21, 2023 at the church.

Present: Arlo Rude, Myles Alberg, Marisa Benson, Faye Auchenpaugh, Tammy Haugen, Gary Iverson, co-sexton

Meeting opened at 8:00 pm and was called to order by President Arlo.

Church Mutual: They billed us for \$417.22, which came out of our funds in June. When they sent Arlo the policy, our name was incorrect so he called the agent to have them correct and resend.

Elections: Marisa and Myles agreed to run again in 2024 for three-year terms. Christi Mathson Carter is interested in being a community member if there are any openings.

Aerial Photography: The product should be completed by next week. The documents will be to scale so we can take measurements off the drawings. This Pennington County project is being overseen by Widseth Smith Nolting.

Water Tank: Arlo has purchased the tank and will submit the invoice to Marisa for reimbursement. He will bring the tank to Paul Donarski for him to weld a base for it.

Pastor Carl request for a plot: The Board will check with Bruce as to the results of his meeting with Pastor Carl at the cemetery this week.

Faye Auchenpaugh, Secretary

* * * * *

St. Pauli WELCA

November 20, 2023

The St. Pauli Women of the ELCA met on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:00 pm with six members present.

President Kathy opened with devotions titled "Silencing the Doubt" based on John 16:32.

Secretary's report: Approved as read.

Treasurer's report: October 26-November 15, 2023: Expenses \$25 for a memorial to the Harlan Mostrom family; Income: \$41. Checking account balance as of November 15: \$3,852.78. Savings account balance as of October 31: \$584.34. CD balance as of December 31, 2022: \$6,258.88.

Stewardship: 24 school kits and 16 baby care kits were delivered. Thank you to Virginia and Ronnie for doing the delivery. Tim Carlson from Hartz Trucking delivers for the Roseau and Thief River Falls areas.

Council Report: Council did not meet in October, so there was no report.

Election of Officers: Secretary Faye made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate of officers presented at our October meeting. Seconded by Cindy. Motion carried.

President: Jan Strandlie
Vice President: Virginia Anderson
Second Vice President: Sue Kotz

Secretary: Faye Auchenpaugh
Treasurer: Cindy Cedergren
Stewardship: Kathy Alberg.

New Business: Katy Haugen will assist with communion in November. Jan Strandlie has communion for Christmas Eve and December 31st.

Planning meeting set for Tuesday, December 5, 1:00 at Faye's house.

December WELCA meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 20, will be at Marisa Benson's home at 7:00 pm.

Virginia and Ronnie will pick up the Xmas tree for the church. Cindy, Sharon and Kathy will decorate.

December 17th is the Sunday School program followed by potluck with Lydia Circle serving.

Fall Event gift designations: (M/S/C) Cindy/Virginia to donate a total of \$2000:

TRF Area Community Fund	\$200
Heritage Center	200
Salvation Army	500
ELCA Scholarship Fund	300
ELCA Good Gifts	500
Prowler Pantry	200
Little Brother/Little Sister	<u>100</u>

TOTAL: \$2,000

Jan led us in a meaningful Thankoffering program. We passed the basket for Thankoffering and WELCA donations. Lord's Prayer was prayed and table grace said.

Faye Auchenpaugh, Secretary

* * * * *

Kevin Reich's sermon, January 14, 2024

John 1:43-51 NRSV: *The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."*

Cynic - a person who believes that people are motivated purely by self-interest rather than acting for honorable or unselfish reasons.

Today's world seems to have a fair amount of self-obsessed, self-seeking people. They live with the attitude; what is best for me, what is in it for me? If you are involved with or associated with farming today, you have heard or maybe experienced how water drainage from one farmer's or landowner's property, onto another's, can challenge or possibly even ruin a relationship with a fellow farmer or neighboring landowner. Too often the mindset is; if I get the water to drain off my land then it is the neighboring landowner's concern, not mine.

I have experienced this personally in two fashions. First as a landowner along Browns Creek. Second as a supervisor for the Red Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District. Water is a big concern. It can be a problem. It is a very delicate matter.

Personally, I think I am a person of the old school. I like to consider the "big picture" for most situations. I try not to look at

it as to, what is in this for me but rather what is the best scenario for all those involved or affected?

Occasionally I have been told I am too trusting of others, but I know there are still good unselfish people in today's world. Having worked for and with the public all my employed career, I am generally able to discern whether or not a person is genuine.

I found a list with some tidbits of cynical wisdom. Some of the phrases included:

If you think nobody cares about you, try missing a couple of loan payments.

- Change is inevitable, except from vending machines.
- For every action, there is an equal and opposite criticism.
- One who hesitates is probably right.
- No one is listening or watching until you make a mistake.
- A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
- Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.
- If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving definitely isn't for you.

Experience can be a hard teacher. Often life is not fair. Life does not always meet our expectations. Sometimes we find ourselves revising our expectations downward.

A few weeks ago, we looked to John the Baptist as an outstanding example as to what we should look for in a spiritual leader. We heard that he proclaimed: he was not the Christ, he pointed others to the Christ, and he prompted others to follow the Christ. These are things we should look for, but our spiritual leaders don't always rise to these standards. Our spiritual leaders can disappoint us. We have heard and seen this in the past with some television evangelists who were not forthright. An example of a true spiritual leader was Billy Graham.

In this week's passage we meet Nathaniel, who had realized disappointment and had turned cynical. But Nathaniel comes face to face with Jesus Christ, and because of that personal

encounter his perspective changes. After this encounter, Christ promises Nathaniel greater insight than he had ever dreamed.

The passage starts off with Christ's call to Philip. We aren't given many details about the call; John only tells us that Philip responded in faith and followed. Then look at what Philip did: he found Nathaniel and told him, We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote, Jesus of Nazareth. Again, the gospel doesn't provide details, but maybe we can assume a couple of things:

- 1) Philip knew Nathaniel well enough to know his interest in the coming of the Messiah;
- 2) Philip was enthusiastic about sharing his encounter with Christ.

Nathaniel, however, came back with a cynical reply, "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Many critics make this out to be a reflection on Nazareth, that Nazareth had the reputation of being full of foolish people. That may be the case, but maybe there was more going on with Nathaniel. It seems Nathaniel had become cynical.

Nathaniel was passionate about Israel. The Israelites' deep longing for meaning and worth came from their national identity as the people of God. Nathaniel longed for God to redeem Israel. He longed for God to send a messiah who would lead Israel into a new era of prominence. Nathaniel bound up his sense of purpose and worth with his people. But he suffered disappointment. Prophets and preachers wandered throughout Israel proclaiming that the messiah was coming, yet Israel was still in Roman control. Nathaniel was cynical. His attitude was, show me the result. I've heard all the claims, now let's see some action. Philip persevered and invited Nathaniel to come and see. Philip was not put off by Nathaniel's sarcastic response.

Francis Schaeffer, a great apologist, once said that honest questions deserve honest answers. The key words here are "honest questions." The questions skeptics ask are often smoke that clouds the deeper heart questions. They ask questions like; doesn't the Bible contradict itself? Or they make statements like; science has proven that miracles don't happen. But underneath they ask the "heart" questions: What makes my life significant? How can I become whole when I feel so empty?

Nathaniel's question was smoke. He didn't really want an answer. Philip didn't bother to answer because he knew the deeper heart questions that Nathaniel had. Philip simply said, Come and see. Come and see the Christ and encounter him for yourself. You'll get the answers you really want.

The scene shifts to the encounter between Christ and Nathaniel. As we read it, it sounds odd. We get the vague sense that Christ was somehow complementing Nathaniel, but Nathaniel's response to Christ's words seems a bit too much.

Jesus saw Nathaniel and said two things. 1) He called Nathaniel a true Israelite in whom there was no deceit. 2) He told Nathaniel that he had seen him sitting under the fig tree. On the surface, Jesus simply said, "You are faithful." On another level, this statement was a play on words referring to the patriarch Jacob. Jacob was a man in whom there was a lot of deceit, a lot of untruths. If one reads Jacob's story in Genesis, he was a person of trickery until he wrestled with

God. Then his perspective changed, he turned his life around, and God named him Israel, which means, he who struggles with God. There was a subtle playfulness when Jesus called Nathaniel a true Israelite in whom there was no deceit.

The fig tree, on the other hand, was a place of rest and comfort. The prophets of ancient Israel had used the image of the fig tree to convey a picture of God's end-time kingdom. In Zechariah 3:10, after describing how God would remove the sin of the high priest and the land, the prophet wrote, "In that day, each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree, declares the Lord Almighty." Because of this imagery, faithful Israelites would sit under a fig tree as a place of prayer and hope.

Jesus used these two literary images to convey his understanding of Nathaniel's identification with Israel and his longing for its deliverance. In effect, Jesus was saying to Nathaniel, I know what's on your heart. I know you've been praying for the Messiah. I know you want God's kingdom to be restored.

We don't know what Nathaniel expected. Maybe he expected a sales pitch or pep talk such as; this is why you should follow me, let me tell you what I can do for you, let me explain to you, my qualifications. But Jesus greeted Nathaniel unexpectedly by speaking directly to what was most on his heart. Jesus immediately got past the cynicism and smoke screen to get to the core issue for Nathaniel. Jesus didn't play games. And Nathaniel responded with simple faith and joy. He told Christ, you are the Son of God, the King of Israel. His quick switch from cynicism to an attitude of understanding indicates the depth to which Christ had touched him.

This is an example of the kind of appealing encounter we can expect of Jesus. Jesus gets past our defenses to speak to our longings. He reminds us that we were designed and created with dignity. We have been given talents and abilities that can be used for a purpose. As God's people, we are cherished and loved.

We've seen that Nathaniel had an inner yearning that was crushed; therefore he became a cynic. Christ spoke to that inner yearning in a way that only he could, and Nathaniel responded in faith. What Christ promises in his statement in verses 50-51 shattered Nathaniel's thoughts because it spoke to his heart, but in a way that far exceeded his expectation. Christ didn't promise to restore Israel. He promised to open up heaven and show the inner workings of creation.

The image of angels ascending and descending comes from the vision of Jacob's ladder in Genesis 28:12. There, God promised that Jacob would be father to a great nation. Through this image, Christ let Nathaniel know his plans to build a great nation, but it would not be the kind of nation Nathaniel expected.

Christ did not take for himself the title king of Israel, but Son of Man. Most of the Old Testament uses the term "Son of Man" to refer simply to a human. But the prophet Daniel used the term to describe the individual to whom God would give authority over all creation. Jesus was in effect saying, I'm a bigger king than you ever expected.

We the readers say, of course. Who else could speak to our deepest yearnings but the one who was present at the

beginning of creation? Christ knows those yearnings even better than we do. As we walk with him, and grow deeper and wiser in faith, he'll teach us. He'll reveal to us understanding about the yearnings he's placed within us, and about the negative effects sin has toward those yearnings. Christ is a totally different kind of king.

Nathaniel's inner yearnings were crushed, and he became a cynic. But when Christ, the King of All, spoke to those yearnings, Nathaniel responded in faith. Then Christ promised the unexpected: spiritual insight.

In his book, *Les Miserables*, Victor Hugo tells the story of Jean Valjean, a hardened convict who has just been released from prison and cannot find work. Everywhere he goes, he must show his papers telling of his crimes, and people turn him away. In desperation, he jumps parole and destroys his papers, an act that could send him to prison for life. While on the run, he finds shelter at the house of a priest. That night, while the priest is asleep, Valjean steals objects of worth in the house; the silverware and silver candlesticks.

Valjean is stopped by the police for violating curfew, and they find the stolen goods. When the police take him back to the priest's house, the priest, says that he had given the candlesticks as a gift. He tells the police they can go on their way. Then he turns to Valjean, saying that he has spared Valjean in the name of Christ. He gives Valjean the

candlesticks and the silverware, and charges him to become an honest man.

All that day, Valjean wrestles with inner turmoil. He is shocked and confused by what the priest has done. He debates whether he should kill the priest or if he should run with the goods. But somewhere in the midst of this turmoil of anger and confusion, God enters the picture and breaks Valjean's heart.

In response, Valjean dedicates himself to the pursuit of goodness. For the rest of the book, Valjean tries to live a just and noble life while a merciless inspector Javert hunts for him.

Valjean had been a cynic. Christ came to him through unexpected means and spoke to him. Valjean was so touched, he responded in faith. Thereafter, Christ carries him through the unexpected and hard circumstances of his life.

Do you ever experience cynicism? If so, in these times one needs to let God get past our defenses and smoke screen. We need to let him get "to the heart" providing us spiritual insight.

Dear Heavenly Father, we know, you know, what is on our hearts. Help us to not be cynical. Help us to acknowledge what is best for your kingdom here on earth and guide us as we execute a plan to carry out your will.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen!

* * * * *

MnDOT reveals winners of 2024 Name a Snowplow contest

The winning entries range from "Taylor Drift" (of course) to "Clark W. Blizzwald" and "You're Killin' Me Squalls."

Since the Vikings didn't come close to making the playoffs this year, maybe we should consider the unveiling of MnDOT's 2024 "Name a Snowplow" Contest winners in Minnesota's Super Bowl.

Gov. Tim Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan joined MnDOT Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger at the Cedar Truck Station in Richfield to reveal the year's eight winners, each of which will adorn a plow door in one of Minnesota's eight MnDOT highway districts. More than 8,000 names were submitted to the agency's website and then whittled down to the eventual chosen eight by state residents. In all, 32,500 people voted online.

With no further delay, here they are.

- Dolly Plowton-District 1 (Northeast Minnesota)
- Clark W. Blizzwald-District 3 (Central Minnesota)
- Taylor Drift-District 2 (Northwest Minnesota)
- You're Killin' Me Squalls-District 6 (Southeast Minnesota)
- Beyonsleigh-District 4 (West Central Minnesota)
- Waipahinte (Dakota word for Snowplow)-District 8 (Southwest Minnesota)
- Fast and Flurrious-District 7 (South Central Minnesota)
- Barbie's Dream Plow-Metro District (Twin Cities)

"Rain or shine, blizzards or clear skies, we have a fleet of snowplows and drivers ready to clear the roads and make our lives easier and safer in the winter," reflected Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. "From Beyonsleigh to Barbie's Dream Plow, Minnesotans' creativity was on full display for this contest that celebrates the important work of our snowplow drivers."

"Whether it's a November election or a snowplow naming contest, you can count on Minnesotans to turn out and vote," added Governor Walz

This was the fourth annual "Name a Snowplow" contest. Previous winners include Plowy McPlowFace, Han Snowlo, Betty Whiteout, The Big LePlowski, Blizzo, The Truck Formerly Known as Plow and Blader Tot Hotdish.

How Do Birds Survive the Winter?

Story by Bernd Heinrich; Illustrations by Megan Bishop
From the Winter 2019 issue of Living Bird magazine.

Birds that stay north when the snow flies face two daily existential dilemmas—don't freeze, and don't starve.



It seems logical that most birds flee the northern regions to overwinter somewhere warmer, such as the tropics. Their feat of leaving their homes, navigating, and negotiating often stupendous distances twice a year, indicates their great necessity of avoiding the alternative—of staying and enduring howling snowstorms and subzero temperatures.

However, some birds stay and face the dead of winter against seemingly insurmountable odds. That they can and do invites our awe and wonder, for it requires solving two problems simultaneously.

The first is maintaining an elevated body temperature—generally about 105°F for birds—in order to stay active. Humans in the north, with our 98.6°F body temperatures, face the same problem during winter of staying warm enough to be able to function, as anyone walking barefoot at -30°F will attest to within seconds.

The second problem to be surmounted in winter is finding food. For most birds, food supplies become greatly reduced in winter just when food is most required as fuel for keeping them warm.

One might wonder if birds are endowed with a magic winter survival trick. The short answer is: they aren't. They solve the winter survival problem in many ways, often by doing many things at once. Although some species have devised the evolutionary equivalent of proprietary solutions, most birds follow a simple formula: maximize calories ingested while minimizing calories spent.

Black-Capped Chickadees

Chickadees (like most year-round northern birds) brave the winter in their bare uninsulated legs and feet. Yet their toes remain flexible and functional at all temperatures, whereas ours, if that small, would freeze into blocks of ice in seconds. Don't they get cold?

They do. Their feet cool down to near freezing, close to 30°F. Of course, a bird's comfort level for foot temperature is likely very different from ours; they would not feel uncomfortable until the point when damage occurs from freezing (ice crystal formation).



But chickadee feet don't freeze, and that's because their foot temperature is regulated near the freezing point and may stay cold most of the time all winter, even as core body temperature stays high.

Every time the bird sends heat (via blood) from the body core to the extremities, it must produce more heat in the core for replacement. Thus, if a chickadee maintained its feet at the same temperature as its body core, it would lose heat very rapidly, and that would be so energetically costly that any bird doing so would quickly be calorie depleted. Birds maintaining warm feet would be unlikely to be able to feed fast enough to stay warm and active.

However, a chickadee's feet are provided with continuous blood flow. The warm arterial blood headed toward the feet from the body runs next to veins of cooled blood returning from the feet to the body. As heat is transferred between the outgoing and incoming veins, the blood returning into the body recovers much of the heat that would otherwise be lost flowing out.

Birds retain heat in their body core by fluffing out their feathers. Chickadees may appear to be twice as fat in winter as in summer. But they aren't. They are merely puffed up, thickening the insulation around their bodies. At night, they reduce heat loss by seeking shelter in tree holes or other crevices, and by reducing their body temperature—the smaller the difference in temperature between the bird and its environment, the lower the rate of heat loss. Still, the bird may have to shiver all night and burn up most of its fat reserves, which then must be replenished the next day in order to survive the next night.

Nighttime is crunch time for winter survival because no food calories are coming in to replace those being expended. It is a tight energy balance, but by lowering body temperature and turning down heat production at night, chickadees and other small birds of winter spare the cushion of fat accumulated during the day.

While physiology is a key component of surviving the cold by temperature regulation, the more critical factor is food input. That little chickadee's internal furnace must be fed and stoked. Following chickadees in the winter woods, and watching them closely, reveals another secret of their winter survival.

Chickadees in winter travel in groups. In Maine, I seldom see them alone. Exploring for food, they appear to pick at just about everything, and when one chickadee finds something to eat, its neighbors notice and join in. All the while the chickadee winter flock learns by trial and error, and from each other.

For foraging chickadees in winter, food options are still broad—from various seeds, spiders, and spider eggs to insects and their pupae. Invertebrates may seldom be seen out in the open during winter in the frozen North, but they're around—hidden in the ground, under bark, even underwater—as they employ their own winter survival strategies.

Some caterpillars overwinter in a state of being frozen solid to tree branches. In one instance I found a flock of chickadees feeding on minute caterpillars hidden within the scale-like evergreen leaves of a cedar. Some lucky chickadee had discovered this cache of frozen caterpillars, perhaps with the help of a clue—a blemishing stain on the leaf from the caterpillars' previous munching.

Golden-crowned Kinglets—diminutive "gnomes" of the coniferous forest—are half the weight of a chickadee but still manage to survive bitterly cold winters.

Golden-crowned Kinglets

These diminutive coniferous-forest gnomes (about half the weight of a chickadee) are, because of their size, the ultimate marvels in warm-blooded winter survival.

Unlike chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets almost exclusively eat insects for their diet, yet they are too small to handle some of the larger food items—such as a silk-moth cocoon filled with a pupa. Kinglets are not cavity nesters like chickadees, and therefore not predisposed to enter tree holes for sheltering overnight. Thus, at both ends of the energy equation—food input and heat retention—Golden-crowned Kinglets seem highly challenged. Yet I have positively identified them in the Maine winter woods at -30°F. (These kinglets are only to be found in the coniferous forests of Northeast Minnesota.)

Various scenarios have been proposed for how these kinglets manage to survive winter, such as overwintering in squirrel nests. But having followed them many winters, I found no evidence of that. The Golden-crowned Kinglets I have observed traveled in small flocks of about half a dozen, often accompanying chickadees, yet I was never able to find where or how they spent the night. It was always almost pitch dark when I saw them last, and then they vanished suddenly. Could they have disappeared where I had last seen them?

That turned out to be the case. On one evening I saw four kinglets disappear into a pine tree. Later that night, with extreme caution and armed with a flashlight, I climbed the tree and spied a four-pack of Golden-crowned Kinglets huddled together into one bunch, heads in and tails out, on a twig. One briefly stuck its head out of the bunch, and quickly retracted it—indicating it was staying warm, and not in cold torpor.

Using each other as a heat source, as a means of reducing their own heat loss, is an ingenious strategy, as it alleviated these birds from searching for or returning to a suitable shelter at the end of the day. By traveling as a group and converging to huddle, they were their own shelter instead.

Pileated Woodpeckers and other excavators have two secret weapons for winter survival: the ability to feed on insects deep within a tree, and the power to create their own insulated roost holes.

Woodpeckers

Woodpeckers have the tools and behavior to stay fed all winter. Their long, drill-bit bills and ability to cling to tree trunks and branches allow woodpeckers to access wood-boring insect larvae (Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers), and also hibernating carpenter ants (Pileated Woodpeckers). As for overnight shelter, woodpeckers do something that few other birds can do: make themselves a shelter specifically for overwintering.



Shelter-building is an evolutionary outgrowth from making a nesting cavity in spring, but their winter dens differ substantially. I usually find the first evidence of woodpecker overnight shelters after the first frosts in late October or November. On the forest floor, I look for accumulations of light-colored wood chips on top of the recently fallen leaves or on snow; then I look up.

The excavated *roosting* cavity is usually in a rotting snag. In contrast, *nesting* holes are excavated in snags with more solid wood. The winter overnight shelters are often within about 6 feet of the ground, at least three times lower than a nesting cavity. The same woodpeckers attend their same roost hole nightly and may use it all winter long.

But not necessarily. Sometimes an overnighting hole, which can be excavated in as little as a day, is only used for a few days. Existing holes are also used opportunistically; in one case I flushed both a Downy and a Hairy Woodpecker out of the same hole. Usually, though, a hole is used by only one woodpecker at a time. I suspect the woodpeckers' shelters are so good, and their food supply so secure, that huddling in groups, as in kinglets, is not a necessity.



Ruffed Grouse

Ruffed Grouse can fly well for short distances when they have to, but they spend most of their time grounded. However, in winter their food supply is in the tops of the trees, where they feed on the buds of aspen, poplar, birches, and hophornbeam that are packed with nutrients and ready to burst into flower and leaf right after the first thaws of spring.

Winter is no time of food scarcity for grouse. A grouse in the top of a tree can pick enough buds in about 15 minutes to support its overnight needs. Similarly, at dawn it can feed again in a short time, filling its crop with enough buds to support its needs throughout the day. A half-hour is a trivial time investment in feeding, compared to a kinglet or a chickadee that can barely get enough food-as-fuel while foraging nonstop for the entire day.

Casual observers in the North Woods seldom see grouse in winter, even though grouse would seem to be hard to miss because of their large size. Bird watchers look for Ruffed Grouse at dusk and dawn, when they fly up into a tree, usually in the company of others, to quickly scarf down tree buds.

They can ingest so much food in just a few minutes because, unlike most other birds in the winter woods, they possess a large crop (a pouchlike extension of the esophagus where food can be stored). The crop is like a bag that, after being filled, can later deliver food to the gizzard for digestion throughout the day or night.

What then do Ruffed Grouse do with the rest of the winter day? For two winters I studied our local Ruffed Grouse in western Maine to find out. When there was fluffy snow, our grouse spent most of the day under the snow. The length of time they denned there could be calculated by counting poop. I found, from known snow-den residency times, that grouse produce on average 3.7 fecal pellets per hour. In one night, they produced about 60 fecal pellets, suggesting they may not just overnight in a snow den, but spend as long as 16 hours under the snow. That is, they also spent part of the day submerged.

Grouse are well known to burrow under the snow for insulation from the cold, and thus save energy. And grouse can access plenty of food, given the abundant tree buds available for them to eat. Their winter survival problem to surmount, instead, is not so much to find enough to eat, but rather not to be eaten.



Grouse are a favorite prey of raptors in the winter woods. Unlike the Arctic ptarmigans, they do not molt into a camouflage of white feathers in winter. Ruffed Grouse stay earthen-colored all year long, which makes them visible on white snow from afar. A plump Ruffed Grouse perched atop a bare tree is a convenient offering for a Great Horned Owl or goshawk. The Ruffed Grouse's snow dens, then, may also be a means of reducing predation.

It might be supposed that small perching birds might benefit greatly from snow-burrowing as well, at least during the night. But by and large, they don't. High Arctic-dwelling redpolls and Snow Buntings may shelter briefly under snow drifts, but no small birds in the northern United States and southern Canada den in the snow overnight.

The fact that they don't, given the huge potential benefit from insulation, is likely explained by the potential cost. Warming on some sunny winter days melts the top layer of snow, which then refreezes into a solid seal of crust at night. A whole population of small birds over a huge area, then, could be killed in a single night—locked beneath the snow to starve and be vulnerable to subnivean mammals. The large size of the grouse not only gives it a large advantage in energy balance, relative to songbirds, but that size also makes escape from the snow easier if needed. (The subnivean zone is an opening beneath the snow where small mammals live during winter, with connecting tunnels made by them to travel through, hunt prey, and gather plant material.

Ravens will kill almost any animal they can catch, but given their high energy needs, surviving winter for them means feeding on the carcasses of large animals they could never kill.

Crows and Ravens

Every winter, crows gather by the thousands in communal roosts where they sleep at night. Come morning they sally forth on their daily excursions, but again they return in groups at night. Such roosts are often in an urban area, where masses of crows convene in the same area each winter.

Like the snow-denning of grouse, this phenomenon is unlikely to be explained by one function only. Communal roosts serve as information centers. They are where knowledge of food locations is shared, probably unintentionally, as those crows that don't know where there is a dump or a corn field simply follow others, which then becomes the crowd. The presence of many crows together also spreads the risk of predator attack at night, as well as provides a social network for mutual warnings of danger.



Ravens are quintessential winter birds that live and thrive in winter like few others. They range into the High Arctic and begin nesting in mid-February in northern North America. Their large size is an advantage, as they have a slower rate of heat loss than other passerines. Ravens also exploit carnivores such as wolves (and perhaps human hunters), and they profit from each other's experiences, thus pooling information.

Ravens will kill almost any animal they can catch, but given their high energy needs, surviving winter for them means feeding on the carcasses of large animals they could never kill. The raven's carnivore connection is most prominently displayed by association with wolves. Under natural conditions, ravens arrive at and feed on wolf kills within minutes after a pack kills an ungulate, such as elk in the Yellowstone ecosystem. In other areas, a single raven may locate a carcass and return to the nocturnal roost, at which point a crowd of ravens follows the discoverer to the food bonanza.

The first fortunate raven to discover the carcass probably does not share information with its fellow ravens willingly. During the breeding season a territorial pair of ravens will fiercely defend a carcass from others. But in winter, ravens share food as a crowd. By accessing large, clumped food resources, ravens can range as far north as their providers—wolves, humans, and polar bears.

Ravens, as with other corvids (and chickadees and nuthatches), also capitalize on a temporary abundance of food by caching surpluses. Storing food is an insurance policy against the uncertainty of future food availability during the lean times of snow and cold.

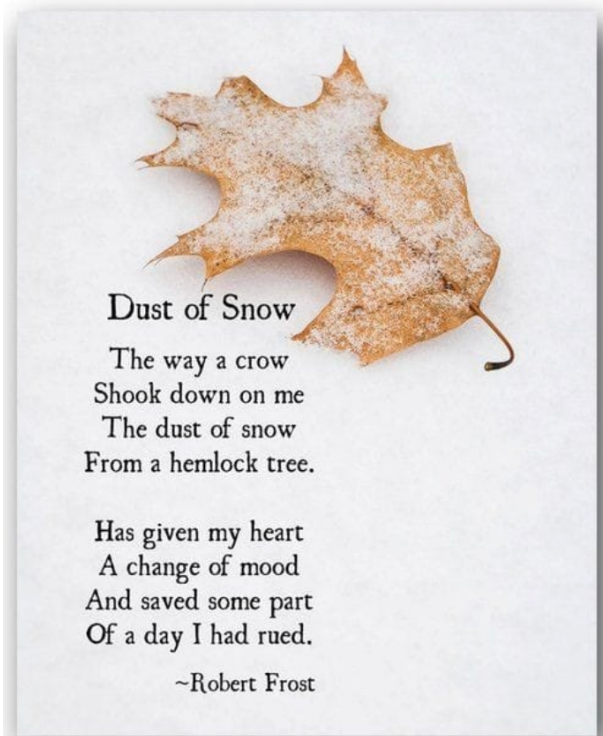
Surviving winter is not always survival of the biggest and strongest. It is a matter of mastering the equation of energy input versus output, taking into account all of the variables and always leaving enough calories to live another day.

On February 25, 1862, Congress passed the Legal Tender Act, which made paper notes legal tender. The act created the first national currency in the United States.

"The Dust of Snow" by Robert Frost is a short poem that captures a transformative moment in nature. In the poem, a crow shakes off snow from a hemlock tree, and the falling dust of snow unexpectedly alters the narrator's mood. The crow's simple action serves as a catalyst for a positive change, lifting the narrator's spirits and bringing a sense of renewal.

The poem is a reflection on the power of small, seemingly insignificant events to have a profound impact on our emotional state. It suggests that moments of beauty and grace can unexpectedly enter our lives, changing our perspective and providing a fresh start.

"The Dust of Snow" emphasizes the interconnectedness of nature and human emotions, highlighting how even a brief encounter with the natural world can bring about a shift in our feelings.



There's a photo going around lately of a pine forest in the shape of Minnesota...and yes, it's real!

First, a bit of historical context. In 1988, when the shape was created, northwest Minnesota was covered by jack pine which grew up after the fires in the 1930s. Near the end of the century, forest management goals included breaking up that large expanse of single-aged forest to create younger, more diverse, multi-edged stands to create habitat and food for wildlife and reduce fire risk. To plant and grow these patches of younger forest, older stands had to be harvested.

Most of the timber sales set up at the time were simple rectangles – plots that looked more like North Dakota or Wyoming. But one DNR forester with a passion for cartography and flair for creativity wanted to do something a little different. Using a road map, a compass,

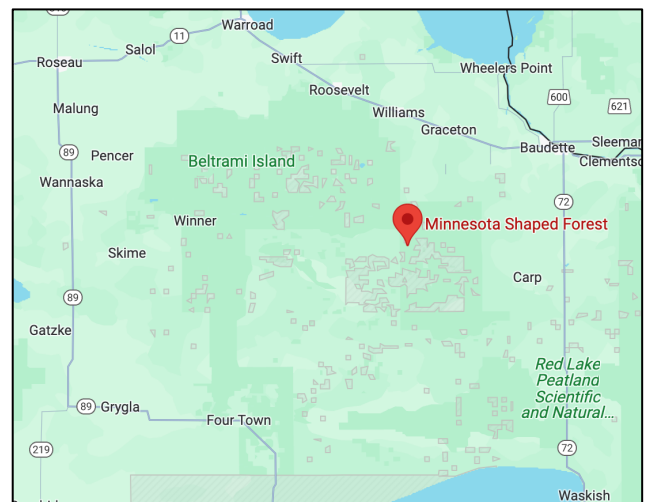
and a hip chain (a device to measure distances), he set up a 23-acre timber sale in half a day and created an outline that may last more than a century. When harvest was completed in winter 1988, the shape revealed Minnesota in miniature.

Red pine was planted and when the surrounding mature jack pine forest was cut in 2007, the mini-Minnesota had become a visible, young, pine forest.

The shapely stand will be thinned every 5-10 years, a harvest approach to reduce tree density to allow more sunlight and promote healthy growth of the remaining trees. Since the cycle of final harvest and replanting of jack and red pine happen on different timelines, the “stately” borders should be visible for generations to come!

Located on south side of Stony Corners Trail between Faunce Forest Road and Santa Ana Forest Rd.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

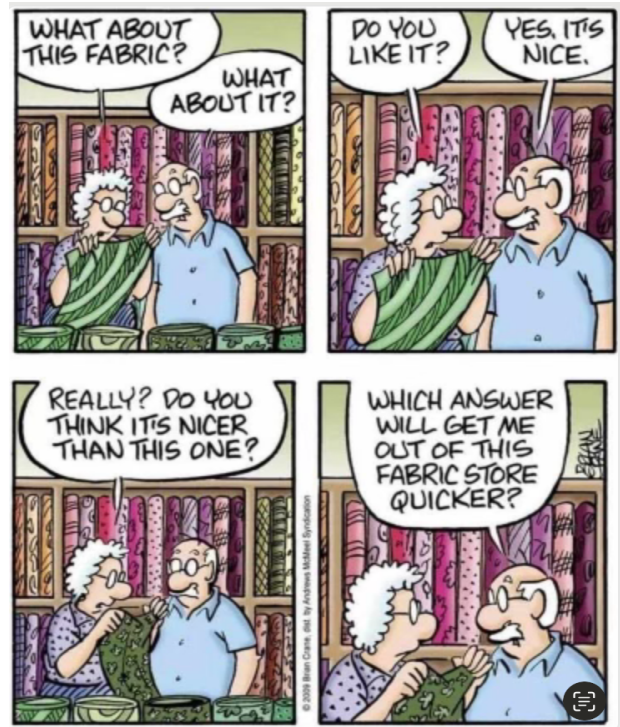


The Back Page

**GROWING UP I NEVER KNEW
IF I WAS OPENING THE
BUTTER OR LEFTOVERS.**



“ BEFORE YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DIET, I SHOULD WARN YOU, I FOLLOW YOU ON FACEBOOK. ”



INSOMNIA JEOPARDY

WAYS IN WHICH PEOPLE HAVE WRONGED ME	STRANGE NOISES	DISEASES I PROBABLY HAVE	MONEY TROUBLES	WHY DID I SAY/DO THAT?	IDEAS FOR A SCREENPLAY
\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20
\$30	\$30	\$30	\$30	\$30	\$30
\$40	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$40
\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50

BOSS: Do you believe in life after death?

EMPLOYEE: Certainly not! There's no proof of it.

BOSS: Well, there is now. After you left early yesterday to go to your uncle's funeral, he came here looking for you.