



THE VOICE OF THE CHAIN OF LAKES

The Misquah Pilot-Independent

“Where the coffee’s hot, the lakes are cold, and all the children are above average.” — Serving the Chain since 1897.

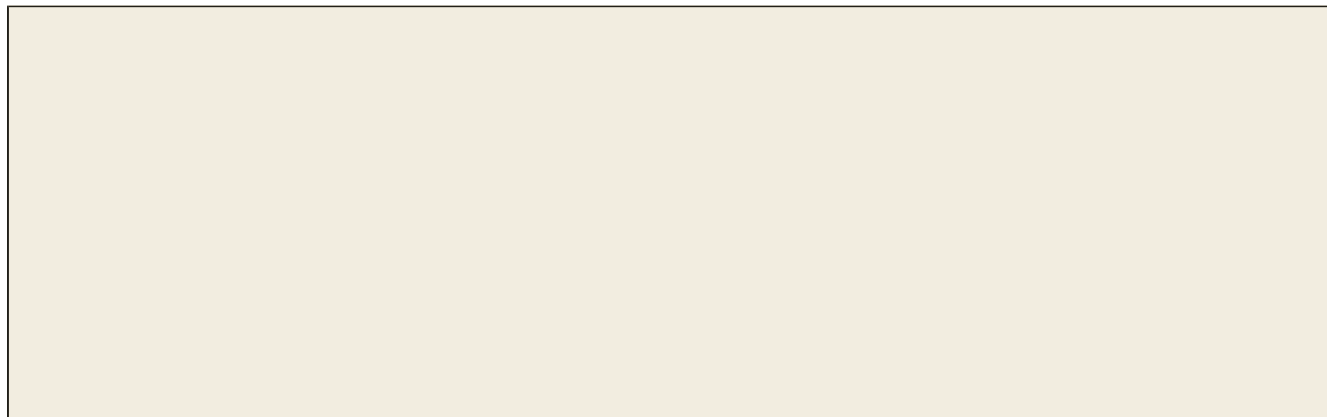
FROM THE ARCHIVE You are reading No. 30, July 28, 2026. [Return to this week’s edition →](#)

THE SMOKE

The Sky Is Borrowed This Week: Smoke Settles Over the Chain, and the Town Is Advised to Take It Easy

Haze from the fires burning up north arrived Sunday evening and stayed. An air-quality advisory runs through Wednesday, the elders have been moved indoors with varying degrees of consent, and the sunsets are spectacular in a way no one feels entirely right about.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026





THE EVENING CROWD AT THE PUBLIC LANDING, OBSERVING THE ADVISORY FROM DIRECTLY INSIDE IT.
— PILOT-INDEPENDENT PHOTO

The smoke came down Sunday evening on a north wind, the way company arrives from that direction generally: unannounced, all at once, and planning to stay a few days. By Monday morning the far shore of Big Pelican was a rumor, the sun rose the color of a canning tomato, and the state pollution people had posted an air-quality advisory for the north country through Wednesday morning — orange for everyone, red for stretches, with the standard advice to take it easy, stay indoors

where possible, and move what can be moved.

Misquah has spent the week moving what can be moved. Band camp has gone into the gym (story elsewhere in this edition). Monday's Legion game was called after seven (likewise). The library propped its door shut instead of open, which the building found confusing. And Harold Aas, 81, was relocated from his bench at the fish-cleaning station to the Daybreak's window table by a

coalition of parties he described as “organized against me.” He is taking it under protest and cream, and reports that the fish being cleaned without his supervision are “smaller, probably.”

The fires themselves are a long way off — up in the border country and beyond it — and this newspaper wants to be plain that Misquah’s inconvenience is the smallest possible share of them. Fire chief

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

Gary Sundberg, asked what the department was doing, said “watching the wind, same as everybody,” and noted that two of his crew have people up north they are calling every night. A county burn ban is in effect and printed in the Public Notices, where it is worded more formally than Sundberg’s version, which is: “don’t.”

IN BRIEF · ELSEWHERE IN NO. 30

Second Avenue. Batches two and three pronounced “closer,” then “close.” The canvas stays on; the steam was bread. →

County fair. Entries close Saturday at noon. Noon, per Verna Tho, means noon — the pie and the story can both wait for next year. →

The season. The sweet corn is in — nine days behind 1976, which remains safe, and right on time, which is what matters. →

Municipal affairs. The good oak chair has been requisitioned by the fire hall six weeks early, citing “elevated operational tempo.” City hall has responded through Donna. →

The library. Forty-one readers, one room, three days. The building held, the beanbags rotated on a system, and the new ladder rung is in ink. →

Loon Ridge. The men’s league played nine instead of eighteen. Scores improved. No one is investigating. →

“A gate is infrastructure, not correspondence.”

— M. Aakre, on the letters page, minding the scale

NEWS IN THIS EDITION



THE SMOKE



The Sky Is Borrowed This Week: Smoke Settles Over the Chain, and the Town Is Advised to Take It Easy

Haze from the fires burning up north arrived Sunday evening and stayed. An air-quality advisory runs through Wednesday, the elders have been moved indoors with varying degrees of consent, and the sunsets are spectacular in a way no one feels entirely right about.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



THE HAGEN PASTURE

Planning Board Sets the Hagen Date: Tuesday, August 25, Recommendation Expected

The special meeting the board promised at the July hearing has a date, a room, and — per Chairman Ross Vig — “no intention of



needing extra chairs twice.” Written comment is open through August 18.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



THE OLD CO-OP CREAMERY

Test Rounds Two and Three Brew on Second Avenue; the Canvas Stays On; the Steam Is Reported as Smoke

The Holts pronounce batch two “closer” and batch three “close,” the covered sign enters its third week of not being looked at, and the fire chief makes a brief, bread-scented inspection.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



COUNTY FAIR

This Is the Actual Final Call: Fair Entries Close Saturday at Noon

Two dollars, open class, no exceptions after twelve o’clock — “not even the good kind,” says fair board chair Verna Tho. The 4-H barn is at record enrollment and the pickle categories are, as usual, underestimated.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



THE SEASON

The Sweet Corn Is In: First Dozens Sold Saturday, Nine Days Behind the Record and Right on Time

The stands are open on the county roads, the honor boxes are out, and the first ears came through the haze tasting, by universal report, like they always do. The Paulson stand opened Saturday morning; the reason it almost didn’t is on the Obituaries page.



BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Fire Hall Asserts Out-of-Season Claim to the Disputed Chair, Citing “Elevated Operational Tempo”

The chair that summers at city hall and winters at the fire hall has been requisitioned six weeks early. City hall has responded through channels, the channels being Donna.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

LAKES & OUTDOORS IN THIS EDITION



THE FISHING REPORT

The Fish Have Not Read the Advisory: Walleye Steady, Dusk Bite Strong, Visibility Optional

Tim Brevik on a week when the lake disappeared from the middle out, the walleye carried on underneath it, and the evening bite moved to what several anglers described as a different planet.

BY TIM BREVIK, FISHING & WEATHER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)





THE LOONS OF BIG PELICAN

One of Them Flew

Thursday morning, in the haze, after a summer of practice and a runway measured in astonishment: the brave one got up, stayed up, turned once, and landed like a dropped duffel. The log has been updated.

BY TIM BREVIK, FISHING & WEATHER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

SPORTS IN THIS EDITION





POST 162 LEGION BASEBALL

Called After Seven, Counts All the Same: Post 162 Beats Pine City 5–2 Under the Haze

The first game in anyone's memory shortened for air quality ends as an official win, Lindholm goes the distance such as it was, and the one working light tower spends the evening wearing a halo.

BY CURT "SONNY" HALVORSEN, SPORTS • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



LOON RIDGE MEN'S LEAGUE

Men's League Plays Nine Instead of Eighteen; Scores Improve; No One Investigates

The Tuesday league shortened its round on the advisory's advice, and the back nine — which is where several members traditionally encounter difficulty — went unplayed. Head pro Greg Mattson is being diplomatic.



BY CURT “SONNY” HALVORSEN, SPORTS • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

OPINION COLUMNS & EDITORIALS



OUR VIEW

Our View: On Borrowed Weather

The smoke is not ours, the fires are not near, and the week was still hard on lungs, plans, and nerves. Some things a town can do about weather it did not order.

BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Letter: On Carts, Gates, and the Reading of Other People's Gardens

M. Aakre of Loon Lake responds to recent correspondence concerning the width of a certain gate.

BY M. AAKRE, LOON LAKE • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

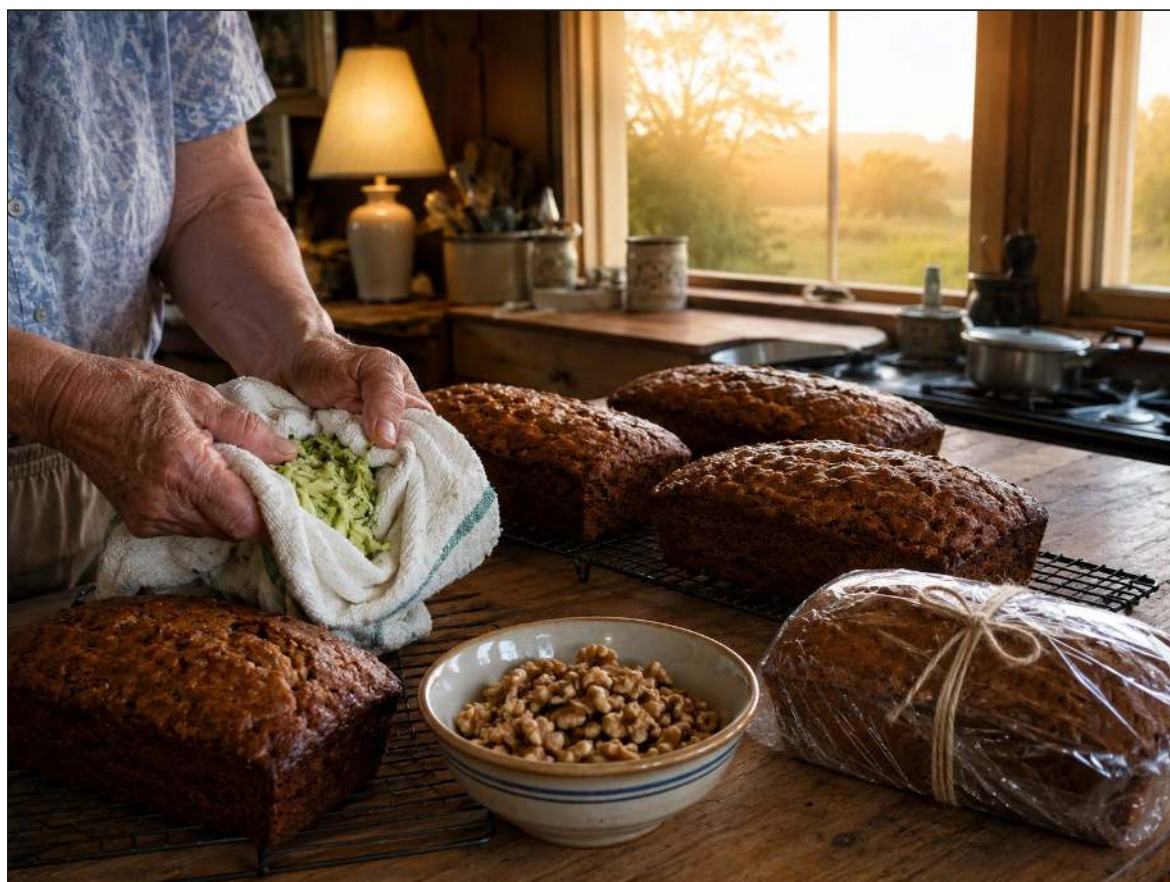
Letter: The Sunsets Are Not a Reward

A reader objects, briefly, to the week's aesthetics.

BY J. SANDVIK, MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

LIVING FEATURES





THE KLATCH • FROM EUNICE

The Zucchini Enters Its Bread Phase, the Klatch Goes Indoors, and the Coffee Sets a Record Nobody Is Counting

Eunice on a week of closed windows and open ovens: the anonymous squash converts to loaves, the loaves begin their own migration, and the Sorensens' Saturday approaches with the whole town pretending it hasn't bought a card yet.

BY EUNICE DAHLQUIST, THE KLATCH & LIVING • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

Also on the Klatch page this week: [The Recipe Box](#) • [Stars Over the Chain](#)

SCHOOLS



SCHOOLS • BAND CAMP



Final Week of Band Camp Moves Into the Gym, Where the Melody Not Only Survives but Echoes

The smoke relocated the last mornings indoors, the green-and-gold acoustics added what Director Moe calls “free reverb,” and the lawn concert is confirmed for Thursday, August 13, at 7 p.m., air permitting.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)



THE LIBRARY

Forty-One Readers, One Room, Three Days: The Library Absorbs the Smoke Week and Holds

With the outdoors canceled, the record summer-reading class arrived all at once and stayed. Megan Tollefson kept the desk, the beanbags rotated on a system, and the animal-sticker ladder gained a rung in ink.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

OBITUARIES





OBITUARY

Arvid Paulson, 89: Sixty Summers of Sweet Corn, Picked at Six, Sold by Nine, Gone by Noon

He built the stand on County 12 in 1966, priced a dozen at whatever was fair rounded down, and trusted the honor box because, he said, he knew where everybody lived. He died Tuesday. The stand opened Saturday, on time, because the corn was ready.

BY MARVELLA TOLLEFSON, EDITOR & CHIEF TYPESETTER • MISQUAH • JULY 28, 2026

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

ALSO IN NO. 30

News

Lakes & Outdoors

Sports

Schools

Opinion

The Klatch & Living

Obituaries

Blotter

Public Notices

Classifieds

Calendar

Puzzles