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WEATHER



Kelly Grinsteinner

Margie Ritter of Grand Rapids scrapes the snow and ice off her windshield on Saturday afternoon after visiting a Hibbing residence. The snow had only been falling for a few short hours, but had accumulated. The Range is expected to get a foot of snow between noon Saturday and noon Sunday.

Winter wallops Iron Range

■ Hibbing predicted to receive a foot; continues 'til noon today

by Kelly Grinsteinner
Assistant Editor

HIBBING — The first major winter storm to bore down on the state was predicted, and arrived just before noon Saturday.

Most of Minnesota — including the Iron Range — was under a winter storm warning.

The snow began falling Saturday morning across a large part of western Minnesota and quickly spread across the rest of the state.

It was forecast to become heavy as the day went by, with accumulations of 6 inches in many areas to as much as 16 inches in some parts of east-central and northeastern Minnesota, the National

Weather Service told the Associated Press. The flakes started flying around 11 a.m. here in Hibbing, and were predicted to continue until noon today.

Range residents can expect to see around a foot of white fluff, according to Meteorologist Dave Anderson of the Northland's NewsCenter.

"The Range computer model is showing between 12 to 18 inches in 24 hours," Anderson reported around 4:30 p.m. Saturday. "It's just a good, healthy storm."

The type of storm is what meteorologists refer to as the "Texas Hooker."

"It's not as crude as it sounds," commented Anderson. "What it means is that it starts in Colorado, goes down to Texas, hooks to the Oklahoma Panhandle and then tracks right to us. That common

storm path allows plenty of Gulf of Mexico moisture to come our way.

"(This type of storm) has much more muscle than an Alberta Clipper."

Once the snow passes on Sunday afternoon, Anderson said several smaller systems will try to keep snow coming through the work week ahead but at a slower pace. He also forecasted that colder than normal temperatures will accompany all of this.

Forecasters started warning about the impending storm several days in advance, giving residents and officials plenty of time to prepare.

The snow seemed more welcome than the recent cold as evidenced by the num-

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HONORING OUR VETERANS



George Bicanich

Civilian Conservation Corps was good training for the Army

From the CCCs to overseas

■ Bicanich recalls his years serving his country

Editor's Note: This is the fifth in a series of articles published in the Hibbing Daily Tribune honoring World War II veterans. The stories were written by HDT summer student intern Matt Nelson.

CHISHOLM — George Bicanich was born on the south side of Chisholm in 1918, and grew up in a world many Iron Rangers have never seen.

He lived close to the ballpark, spending summers playing baseball. In the winter, a skating rink would be set up for the community's enjoyment.

The Roosevelt School, where Bicanich received his elementary education, has since been closed. Schooling doesn't stand out particularly to Bicanich — most likely it has become shadowed by later events, such as the Great Depression, which hit when he was 11.

As Bicanich puts it, "Everyone was in the same shape, so there wasn't much differ-



George Bicanich

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HOLIDAY EVENT

A sip in time

■ Christmas tea, boutique held in Hibbing

by Kelly Grinsteinner
Assistant Editor

HIBBING — Katie Stoneburner was bummed she wasn't able to make it home to Side Lake from Minneapolis last week to celebrate Thanksgiving.

But she made up for it Saturday by engaging in tea for two.

Her guest? Her mother, Nancy.

"This was something new for us to try, and we thought it would be a good way to spend some time together," said Nancy while sampling raspberry tea and a country French raspberry desert.

"It's also a great way to get into the holiday mood and kick off the season," added Katie.

The Stoneburners were among the nearly 130 who sipped tea and snacked on open-faced sandwiches and scones during the Christmas Boutique and Tea held at the Mitchell Tappan House Bed and Breakfast.

Those tea-tasters also had a chance to shop for unique holiday items by scouring nearly every nook and cranny of the highly-decorated three-story historic house.

Host Pam Turnbull, owner of Mitchell Tappan, said the two-day event has grown substantially over the years. This weekend marks their third year. Word of mouth, she said, is growing.

"This year we started getting reservations before we advertised," she said. "It's gain-

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Kelly Grinsteinner

Nancy and Katie Stoneburner taste new treats, sip tea and simply enjoy each other's company during the third annual Christmas Boutique and Tea at the Mitchell Tappan House Bed and Breakfast on Saturday afternoon.

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Inside

Hibbing falls to the state's second ranked team

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DEATHS

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NEWS

Tea: Openings remain for Sunday

From Page 1A

ing a reputation. Each year more and more people are calling and asking about it."

About 98 percent of those visiting the bed and breakfast on Saturday had reservations for tea, according to Turnbull. A few stopped by to merely peruse the place.

"People were able to see the whole house decorated, with about 30 decorated trees throughout," said Turnbull. "Everyone seemed to enjoy looking at things — the various ornaments, different arrangements and holiday decorations. Most people walked out with something in their hands."

Turnbull stressed the uniqueness of the event — having tea, eating lunch and shopping all under one roof.

"And where around here are you going to find a place to purchase peacocks or glass ornaments off an upside-down white Christ-

mas tree?" she asked. "These aren't things you can just find anywhere."

The weather didn't deter many from keeping their reservations on Saturday. Turnbull said less than 10 canceled, adding they were from long distances away and were kind enough to call.

"The snowfall didn't play a big part. Everybody who is local came," she said. "One pair talked about having already visited five bazaars and still had more plans for the day, so the weather was definitely not slowing them down."

But taking a breather was another upside to the boutique and tea.

"Most people enjoyed taking their time visiting and sampling," said Turnbull. "We got backed up a bit with reservations, but everyone was OK with that. Nobody was in a rush. They took their time and enjoyed the tea. They were ready to relax, and were relaxed by

the time they finished."

Friends Margie Ritter, of Grand Rapids, and Tammy Jerkovich, of Hibbing, took in the tea experience together. They also went home with a few goodies and a holiday memory.

They pair said they enjoyed themselves, while also noting the tea was just part of their annual weekend of Christmas baking. They headed out once Ritter's vehicle was dug out of the snow.

There are still openings for tea reservations today between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tea is served every half an hour. Shoppers are also welcome to stop by.

"If you don't want to venture out of town, come on over," said Turnbull. "It's not far to go and we still have spots available."

For more information or to make a reservation, contact the Mitchell Tappan House Bed and Breakfast at 262-3862.

Winter: Several accidents reported

From Page 1A

ber of people out and about on foot Saturday. Many played in the snow, took a walk in the middle of the street as the flakes fell, or found small a pile to try out a sled on.

The brushing off of vehicles, snowplowing and snow shoveling were also common, as many worked to try to stay ahead of the accumulation.

Comments were positive. Many were anxious for snow, whether it be for recreational purposes or simply to get into the holiday spirit.

"I don't mind this," said Travis Haverkost as he shoveled a sidewalk early Saturday afternoon. "It's about time we got snow, and I'm anxious to go skiing."

Margie Ritter of Grand Rapids was also accepting as she brushed and scraped

the windows of her vehicle.

"It's kind of pretty," she said. "It makes it feel more like December."

Tammy Jerkovich of Hibbing concurred.

"I think most of us are ready for it."

The Minnesota Department of Transportation reported difficult driving conditions by midday across many parts of the state, stretching from south to north and west to east, including the Twin Cities.

Roads throughout Hibbing were slick and travel a bit slow. Area law enforcement agencies and other emergency services responded when needed.

There had been several vehicle accidents reported to the Hibbing Police Department by late evening Saturday.

"Since shift change at 5 p.m., we've had probably three or four," said Capt. Rich Sellman. "They were nothing major; fender benders due to the weather."

Accidents were occurring in various locations, including on local bridges. Major highways were still passable.

Sellman advised drivers to use common sense if they need to go out, but stressed that the best driving plan in this kind of storm is none.

"People need to just slow down and drive to the conditions," he said. "And when it's this bad out, don't go out."

Others storm driving tips include refrain from using cruise control, leave the cell phone down and simply pay attention.

George: Bicanich contracted malaria overseas

From Page 1A

ence."

It's an interesting comment when one considers the diversity of the Iron Range at that time. Bicanich's neighborhood alone was composed of several nationalities.

"My neighbor was Italian, the one next to him was Finnish, the one next to him was Serbian," he said. "There was another Finn, then a Croatian. Right across the street was someone else. I think it might have been Russian."

This myriad of nationalities can be attributed to immigration policies in effect in America in the late 19th century. Those policies allowed almost 9 million immigrants into the United States from 1881 to 1900.

The timing was perfect for the Iron Range, where iron ore mines were in full swing. Because of the number of jobs available, many immigrants chose to settle in the area, creating an ethnically diverse region.

Despite the diversity among the multitudes of people, Bicanich doesn't remember any resulting hostility or violence.

"All the kids played together," he said. "We didn't have any problems."

To cope with the effects of the Depression, families in the community grew vegetable gardens and lived off them as much as they could.

"Just about everyone had them," said Bicanich.

Hard times devastated the mining communities, causing a 12,000-man workforce in the 1920s to shrink to fewer than 2,000 people in the 1930s. Some towns experienced as much as an 85 percent drop in employment.

This lack of work propelled Bicanich and 250,000 other young men to enroll in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps. The money they earned was usually sent home to help financially strapped families.

trees and scalping.

"Scalping was where you take sod and cut off maybe a three, four-foot square and peel it off and plant trees in there," Bicanich explained. "One guy would go out with a spade and plant the trees. That was my job."

Bicanich doesn't know how many trees he planted in the time he spent in the CCC, but he knows he never had a problem with working. The work ethic shared by many members of the CCC was partially fueled by the food the camps provided, which he firmly attests was delicious.

The time Bicanich spent in the CCC wasn't all used for the planting of trees and eating, however. The camps were run by the Army, Army-style.

"They were strict," he admitted. "I think that it was a training ground for the Army. Later on, Army life never bothered me. I suppose it was because of the CCC."

The Army kept enough entertainment opportunities available so the work wouldn't become dull. Bicanich said, "At nights we used to play basketball. Our first team went to state CCC championships."

The intramural-type sport allowed CCC camps to compete against other camps. The matches would be held at the Brooklyn School in Hibbing.

"If they wanted to keep anything cold [such as a drink], they'd need to steal a box of ice [before the game]," he recalled.

Bicanich left the CCC after a year and went to Shakopee, Minn., where he worked in a body shop. He was drafted in April 1941 as part of the peacetime draft.

The Selective Service Act, which began the first peacetime draft, inducted 15 million Americans into the armed services. The shift in

policy came because of the conflict raging in Europe — as Hitler steadily took over the continent, seemingly unstoppable, Americans realized that they might one day face aggression.

Their prediction proved correct on Dec. 7, 1941.

Bicanich was stationed at Camp Claiborne in Louisiana in December 1941.

"That's where we went into the infantry," he said. "We did mostly close-order drill. That's where we learned how to march."

Basic training ended after Pearl Harbor was attacked, and Bicanich was sent to various locations. He was sent to California, then up the West Coast and later to Missoula, Mont.

"They were afraid the Japanese were going to fly over and bomb the bridges."

When it became clear the Japanese were not a threat to America's mainland bridges, Bicanich was sent through Melbourne to Guadalcanal.

On the way to Guadalcanal, he remembers seeing strange flashes beyond the horizon.

"That was when the Battle of Coral Sea was going on."

Bicanich and the other men in his unit hiked 32 miles to the airport where they were stationed on Guadalcanal. The first night at the airport, he and the men were shelled copiously by the Japanese. The atmosphere was tense.

"The Marines had been there before us, and they had dugouts [trenches]. There were 13 of us in one," he explained. "We could hear the shells whistling. People were just sitting around me in that hole, waiting to get it over with."

Days on Guadalcanal were quiet. Bicanich spent his time guarding the airport. Many aircraft passed

the area, Allied and enemy.

"Every night, a plane would come and drop a bomb or so. You knew it was coming. You could hear it whistling."

The emergency response was to jump in a trench and wait.

Bicanich was stationed at Fiji in 1944, where he served for only a few months before he caught malaria, which he believes was caused by the many mosquitoes. The disease became severe enough that it sent him back to the United States.

As Bicanich recalls, the reaction to his affliction differed from one shore to the other.

"If a man caught malaria overseas, they would laugh and throw a blanket over him," he said. "When I came back to the States, you would think I was going to die with all the attention I got! Over there, it was just an everyday occurrence."

After three years and nine months in the armed forces, Bicanich was discharged because of his illness. He came back to the Iron Range in December of 1944, poised at the brink of the war's final stages.

Bicanich remembers the response to the war's end on the Range.

"People were real excited," he said. "They were running around on the streets telling about it. So many people had kids in the Army and Navy. It was something."

Bicanich's only regret is that he never was sent to Europe at the end of his time in the service.

"You had to be free of malaria for six months, and I had two months left," he said.

Still, Bicanich was happy to be back at home on the Range. Today, he lives comfortably in Chisholm.



Kelly Grinsteiner
Travis Haverkost shovels snow early Saturday afternoon in front of a residence in the 2100 block of Fifth Avenue East all the while knowing he'd likely have to shovel once again shortly thereafter.

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