

Rainy Lake Orchestra and Sinfonia

The Rainy Lake Orchestra and Sinfonia's 46th Annual Summer String Concert

was a truly wonderful performance. It was an evening filled with artistry, heart, and the kind of musical magic that brings our community together.

This year's Summer String Concert was so much more than just a performance; it was a testament to the dedication and passion of the musicians who attended this year's Strings Camp. The many people who came to listen that evening experienced a night to remember. The concert was a truly wonderful performance, brought to life by

conductors

Aron Bohnert, Dr. Douglas Scott,
Beth Bistrow, and Dr. Eric Koperda.

Their leadership and artistry guided musicians and audience alike through an evening of music that resonated with heart, warmth, harmony, and community spirit. It was a beautiful gift to the community.



From the Director's Desk

What a summer it's been! The Backus team is taking a moment to reflect on the incredible array of arts and entertainment our community shared with residents and visitors alike. From music and theater to hands-on creativity, joy was never far from reach. Let's keep the momentum going! Look at Backus's fall line up:



On the horizon:

- **Icebox Radio Theater**
John Faith Little Theater
October 30 ~and~
November 29
- **Looney Lutherans**
Backus Auditorium
Dinner Theater Comedy Show
November 23
- **Rainy Lake Orchestra**
Backus Auditorium
Holiday Concert
December 5
- **Christmas Concert with Thrive productions**
Backus Auditorium
December 13

Pickleball (auditorium, winter season)
Sunday 5:30pm, Tuesday and
Wednesday 7:30pm

Ifalls Rec. Volleyball (auditorium)
Monday and Thursday 7:30 pm

Bridge (room 202)
Tuesday evenings

Indoor walking available during Backus
hours. Hallways and stairs as you wish.

The Backus Showcase offers a beautiful, secure space to celebrate creativity and community. If you have a collection or artwork you'd love to share, we'd be honored to help you display it. Reach out to Backus to schedule your time in the spotlight!

Backus is honored to partner with Joe Belanger in showcasing the delicate beauty of his late mother's cherished Ladro figurine collection. This display features a selection of Nao figurines. Handcrafted in Valencia, Spain since 1968, the Nao Collection is known for its gentle expressions and soft pastel colors. Skilled artisans bring emotion to porcelain through subtle expressions and flowing lines.

This collection honors Carol's memory and invites all who view it to experience the quiet elegance, emotional warmth, and timeless artistry that brought her joy.



BACKUS STAFF

Lois Lundin,
Executive Director

Hoa Sobczynski,
Business Manager

Michelle Boelk
Music Director

Darcy Sullivan,
KCC-TV Director

Alyssa Crawford,
Office Assistant

Summer Arts 2026 declared a SMASHING SUCCESS!

The long-awaited return of ***Broadway on the Border*** lit up the Backus stage and left the audience cheering for more! This year's program celebrated generations of Broadway hits, weaving together timeless melodies and show-stopping numbers. Local talent dazzled with heartfelt performances, bringing beloved songs to life through vibrant singing and dancing. The energy, enthusiasm, and artistry on display reminded us all of the power of live performance to unite and inspire.



Adding to the excitement, young storytellers captivated the crowd with theatrical renditions of four one-act plays:

The Fisherman and His Wife,
The Bremen Town Musicians,
The Robber Bridegroom, and
Is He Fat.

These emerging actors brought each tale to life with charm, creativity, and infectious enthusiasm. Their performances were a testament to the thriving love for theater in our community and a joyful reminder of the next generation of artists taking the stage.

Backus was proud to be a part of these events held to support families across our community.

UNITED WAY
Northeastern
Minnesota

STEP INTO SCHOOL

AUGUST 13TH
ONE DAY ONLY DINNER AT:
BACKUS Community Center
FOLLOWED BY SHOE SHOPPING AT:
FOOT LOCKER

SUPPORTED BY:

Essentia Health

TruStar
Federal Credit Union

PCA
PACIFIC NORTHWEST COMMUNITY ACTION

MIDCO
FOUNDATION

BORDER
KANSAS

Rainy Lake
SOCIETY

Ruby's Pantry
Benevolence Fund

SANFORD
HEALTH

SPECIAL THANKS: Local Volunteers
International Falls Fire Department | International Falls Police Department
Koochiching County Sheriff's Office | Shear Perfections

UNITED WAY
Northeastern
Minnesota

BUDDY BACKPACKS

FREE SUMMER LUNCH

FOR KIDS & TEENS

June 9 - August 28
Monday - Thursday
12:00 - 1:00 PM

Summer Buddy Backpacks available on-site every Thursday!

- Babbitt City Park
- Biwabik City Park
- Chisholm Kiwanis Park
- Cook Public Library
- Hibbing Bennett Park
- Hibbing HRA Playground
- Hoyt Lakes Public Library
- International Falls - Backus
- Keewatin City Park
- Mountain Iron Public Library
- Nashwauc Rec Center
- Virginia AEOA
- Virginia Pine Mill Court
- Virginia Olcott Park

Lunches are served first-come-first-served and are available to all children ages 1-18 rain or shine.

UNITED WAY
Northeastern
Minnesota

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

USDA

218-215-2424
michelle@unitedwaynemn.org
www.unitedwaynemn.org

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LEARNING TREE

BACKPACK & SCHOOL SUPPLY DISTRIBUTION

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13TH FROM 4 - 7 PM
BACKUS COMMUNITY CENTER (900 5TH STREET)
CONFERENCE ROOM

School supplies available for K-12 students who are:

- registered for United Way of Northeastern MN's Step Into School program, OR
- In a household that is on / eligible for an income based program like Energy Assistance, SNAP Food Support, Section 8 Housing, MFIP/DWP, etc. These are available on a first come, first served basis

Learning Tree is made possible by:

United Way of
Northeastern MN
KOOTASCA Community
Action
Int'l Falls Salvation Army



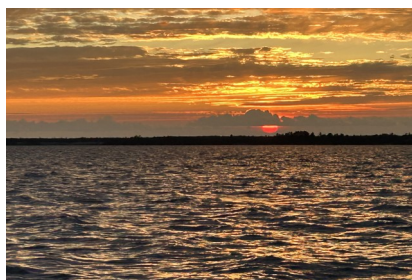
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www.backusab.org

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August 2025



“Historic Backus Community Center, the heart of International Falls, where all generations celebrate arts, culture, recreation, wellness, and life-long learning.”

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julie Bartkowski, *President*
Donna Frederickson, *Vice President*
Patti Ballan, *Secretary*
Tim Fairchild, *Treasurer*
Lauire Knapp
Jim Lyman
Joe Nikolanci
Gail Rognerud
Mike Williams

*The next board meeting is September
11 at 5:15PM in room 101/102.*

**Do you want to join the Backus
Board? Reach out to us.**

BACKUS VALUES YOUR INPUT!

Do you have comments, questions, suggestions,
or concerns regarding Backus?

Please contact the Backus Board at
backusboard@backusab.org

Welcome new Backus Board Directors!!

Laurie Knapp
Joe Nikolanci

COMING SOON TO BACKUS

- Finger Knitting Blanket Class—Fall 2025
- Kids Interactive Concert -
September 20, 2025
- Looney Lutherans Dinner Theatre -
November 23, 2025
- Christmas Concert presented by Thrive
Productions, December 13, 2025