

Orchestra rehearsals

Concert planned for Friday

B10



Veggie vendor

Littlefork man sells produce for charity

A3



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RLMC and Essentia Health end negotiations

RLMC remains independent community hospital as organizations terminate affiliation

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

An effort to fully integrate the hospital in International Falls with Essential Health has ended. On Monday, Essentia Health provided notice to Bob Haley, interim CEO of the hospital, that it intends to end an affiliation agreement that began in 2009 with the hospital, Dan Nikcevich told The Journal Tuesday.

Nikcevich, president of Essentia Health East, said Essentia received notice about six weeks ago from the Rainy Lake Medical Center Board that it had terminated professional and management services agreements with Essentia. Nikcevich said he was disappointed the negotiations had ended, but stressed Essentia Health will remain a presence in the community through Rainy Lake

Medical Center clinic campus, but said the clinic and hospital will remain separate entities. "Our conclusion was the timing is just not right," he said. "Hopefully, we will find sufficient common ground in the future on our vision of how health care can be delivered so we can return to the notion of full integration." In a statement provided to The Journal Tuesday, Susan Congrave, vice chair of the RLMC

Board, said "Rainy Lake Medical Center remains a strong, independent and community-minded hospital with an incredibly dedicated and skilled team of employees. We value our relationship with Essentia-affiliated physicians in the community and will continue to work closely with the Rainy Lake Medical Center Clinic. But at this time, local members of the hospital's board feel strongly the International Falls community

is best served by maintaining local ownership and control of our community hospital." In 2009, Essentia Health and Falls Memorial Hospital entered into three agreements: an affiliation agreement and management services and professional services agreements. As part of the new relationship, Falls Memorial Hospital and

Hospital to A7 ➤

County puts annexation agreement on hold

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Moving toward development of International Falls' multimodal district was put on hold Tuesday after the Koochiching County Board took no action on a request by the city to enter into a joint orderly annexation agreement for the 52-acre property. County commissioners appeared to be in favor of the annexation, but said further discussions regarding about 12 acres of a buffer zone between the district and pri-

vate properties near Second Bridge were necessary. The International Falls City Council Aug. 5 unanimously agreed to seek annexation of the multimodal district property into the city limits. The property is located east of the existing city limits and is owned by the city's Economic Development Authority. "I've stated my support for this," Commissioner Wade Pavleck said of the annexation process, of which discussions about began

Annexation to A7 ➤



STAFF PHOTOS BY LAUREL BEAGER
Ron Jean, Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club, works with VNP Superintendent Mike Ward to plant spruce trees Saturday.

Tree planting draws variety of interests

Reforestation effort funded by Nature Valley

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

In its last week of work in northern Minnesota, members of a Conservation Corps Youth Crew got a hand Saturday in planting trees along the Rat Root River as a part of a larger project to restore walleye habitat. They actually got about 60 extra hands as members of the crew were joined at the Ettestad property along the river by about 30 other people including 4th District Congresswoman Betty McCollum, members of the Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club, and representatives of the Nature Valley company, National Park Conservation Association, Voyageurs National Park



Congresswoman Betty McCollum places a spruce seedling in the ground along the bank of the Rat Root River Saturday with assistance from Conservation Corps crew member Brian Kammyeller from Stillwater.

Conservation Association staff and board members and others.

Tree to A7 ➤



STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

Ranier Days featured a parade down Spruce St. with numerous classic cars, including this one-of-a-kind ride.

Festival provides fun for all

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

The annual summer festival Ranier Days took place last weekend, and the schedule was full of activities to entertain visitors.

The main attraction Saturday was the parade, which was preceded by a dog parade, featuring Ranier's furry four-legged residents. There was a variety of food vendors there providing refreshments, as well as musical acts playing at Woody's throughout the day. Ranier's municipal liquor store was open during the day to provide for thirsty patrons. Nighttime entertainment for Friday and Saturday fea-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lawnmower races were one of many rare sights at Ranier Days. To see more photos, turn to A10.

tured live music and dancing, highlighting the picturesque sunset on Rainy Lake. Acoustic Smoke, a folk, rock, and blues band from Bemidji played Friday night. Rainy Lake Orchestra, Acoustic Smoke, and Ice Box Radio Theater followed the parade Saturday.

There were plenty of activities for kids, too. Games, face painting, and a treasure hunt provided ample entertainment for the little ones. Voyageurs National Park also brought along the North Canoes, the historically accurate canoes used by voyageurs.



Silent Run Adventures from Monticello brought some of their sled dogs up for a unique ride down Spruce St.