

LOCALNEWS

City seeks camp hosts

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Wanted: Someone to attend to campers and provide light beach upkeep in exchange for a beach side place to reside in their recreational vehicle in the summer at City Beach.

International Falls officials are looking for a couple of folks to serve as City Beach camp hosts from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

The City Beach Citizens Committee has found that the couple who had been lined up to serve as hosts this summer cannot because of a death in the family.

International Falls City Councilor Pete Kalar said part of the deal with allowing tent camping at City Beach is securing camp hosts, who control the gate, lock and unlock the bath house, collect \$10 per night camp fee and sell \$5 bundles of certified firewood. In addition, camp hosts make sure the beach rules are being followed.

“If there are no camp hosts, there will be no camping,” he said. “That was part of the agreement when we started allowing camping.”

Kalar said a little light maintenance, such as pulling a rake with an all-terrain vehicle across the beach and picking up litter, is also required.

“Most of the heavy stuff is done by the city crew,” Kalar said. “It’s mostly just to have someone there to keep an eye on things. And it makes people staying there feel better.”

Kalar said city officials

are trying to get the word out to “snow-birds” at recreational vehicle parks in the southern states that City Beach might be a pretty nice place to spend the summer. Hosts get city water and electric hook-ups and a concrete slab on which to park their RV for the summer.

But Kalar stressed the camp host job does not require being at the beach 24/7. “They are not anchored to the beach,” he said. “They can leave, go fishing, come to town and stuff like that.”

Meanwhile, Kalar said the bath house renovations are complete, with sky lights and paint added in the fall. He called the updates there a work in progress.

“I remember when we were kids, everybody went to beach,” he said. “We’ve done a lot of work and it’s come a long ways. We’ve got the nice bath house, camping, and now it’s just to promote the use and let people know it’s there.”

A new lifeguard stand and playground equipment has been added to the beach, he said.

“Now, we are just doing little things here and there,” he said. “There’s not a whole lot of the real big things left to do.”

He said a recent meeting of the citizens committee included the idea of planning a work session at City Beach prior to its opening



Pete Kalar

on Memorial Day weekend.

“The citizens committee are neighbors to the park and city residents,” he said. “They are the hearts and soul of City Beach.”

Allowing tent camping the past couple years has been successful, he said, with sometimes three or four tents set up. No RVs, other than that of the camp hosts, are allowed at City Beach, he added.

And, if no one is camping at a site, visitors may use it for the day as a base camp, where the may use the grill and fire pit.

“We try to promote City Beach,” Kalar said. “Not everybody has access to the lake with a boat or cabin. This is a beautiful spot where people can come out and enjoy the day.”

He said the size of City Beach allows people to set up for the day with plenty of room to their selves.

The committee, he said, will discuss whether to provide transportation by bus to the beach. The bus was used little in the past summer, he said.

“People are not as apt to throw their kid on a bus to get to the beach anymore,” Kalar said. “It’s not like when I was growing up and you could go to the beach and get home before dark and no one worried.”

Kalar also said the city is open to proposals by civic organizations to use the pavilion to conduct fundraisers.

“Groups are always trying to raise money,” he said. To reserve the pavilion to conduct a fundraiser, or for a gathering, contact the Falls Municipal Building at 283-9484.

‘The Mill’ set to take local stage

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

If you go

What: ‘The Mill’

When: 7 p.m. Feb. 28 and March 1

Where: Backus Community Center

Why: To reflect on the riots of 1989

Cost: Adults – \$12; students – \$6; families – \$25

A quarter century has passed since 1989 when hundreds of men came to International Falls and started a riot at a housing camp for non-union construction workers. The riot peaked after months of resentment between Boise Cascade, which was constructing one of North America’s largest paper mills, and the trade union workers who had hoped to build it. When Boise hired the non-union Atlanta firm BE&K as general contractor for the half-billion dollar project, an ugly struggle broke out and made history.

Now, 25 years later, “The Mill,” written by International Falls native Jeannine Coulombe, will cause viewers to reflect on those events once again. The play, which explores labor unions, corporate power, immigration, and the state of the American Dream, comes to the Backus stage 7 p.m. Feb. 28 and March 1.

The play, produced by Workhaus Collective of Minneapolis, focuses not on reciting dry historical events but rather tells the story through one fictional family that is pulled into the conflict, according to a release. Taking some dramatic license with the event timeline, Coulombe sets the play in International Falls in June 1989 during a week-long heat wave when a company is at odds with its unions, workers are fighting to save their livelihoods and

one family is swept into the powder keg.

Workhaus Collective, theater-in-residence at the Playwrights’ Center in Minneapolis, first produced the play in April 2012 to sold-out audiences. It was voted one of the best plays of 2012 by both City Pages and Lavender Magazine. Ward Merrill, Backus executive director and his wife Linda were there on opening night.

“Having experienced this play that evening and spoken with Jeannine, I was determined to bring the play to International Falls,” Merrill said.

Months later and after countless hours of work, the release said an Arts Tour Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board will “bring the play to the town that inspired it.” The grant process is highly competitive with Backus vying for funding with groups such as the Guthrie Theatre, The Ordway, MN Orchestra and state universities.

“We have been fortunate to have received two consecutive grants which

help fund this season’s concerts and will bring five more to the Falls in 2014-15,” Merrill said. “Only 41 of 101 requests were funded this time.”

In further recognition of the 25th anniversary of the 1989 events, Backus will also feature a book signing event with local author Mary Casanova. The new edition of “Riot,” Casanova’s book which tells the story of the riot and burning of the man-camp through the eyes of a sixth-grade student, will be on sale both evenings of the performance. All profits from the book sales will be donated to Backus.

As part of the arts outreach efforts of Backus, the playwright will visit Falls High School classrooms to discuss the play, acting, playwrighting and careers in the arts. Complimentary student tickets will be provided to all 6-12 grade students in the Falls, Littlefork and Indus. If parents attend with their student – they may purchase a half-price ticket for \$6.

Following each performance Doug Skrief will host an informal audience discussion with the playwright, director and cast members.

Tickets are on sale at Backus, City Drug, Betty’s in Fort Frances and at the door. Admission for adults is \$12; student tickets are \$6; and families can attend for \$25. Backus is fully accessible to persons with disabilities – call the office at 285-7225 for specific accommodations.



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Community Ed Classes

1515 11th Street, Int'l Falls, MN 56649 (218) 283-2571 ext. 186

Defensive Driving:
Monday, February 24, 2014, 9:00 a.m.
RRCC Theater, \$20/person

CPR/First Aid:
Adult CPR & AED, Feb. 18, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Child & Infant, Feb. 19, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.
First Aid, Adult & Pediatric, Feb. 25, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.
All Three offered on Saturday, Feb. 15
\$45/per session

Dog Obedience:
Mondays, March 3 – April 14
Falls Elementary School Gym 6 – 7 p.m.
\$25/person (dog)

Firearm Safety:
Session 1: March 10 – 14
5:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Instructor: Steve Battalion
Session 2: March 17 – 21
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Instructor: Jim Dornhecker & Henry Carey
\$5.00/student
Student must be at least 11 yrs old

Snowshoe/Ski Rental:
Wednesdays through Sundays
10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. January through Spring
Equipment can be signed out at
Voyageurs Nat'l Park's
Rainy Lake Visitor Center
Cost: Snowshoes are free and skis are free to Youth or \$5/adult

Open Swimming:
Adult Workout Lap Swimming:
Sept. through May
Monday – Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Family Open Swimming:
Tuesdays & Thursdays
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Saturdays
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

WSI Lifeguard Training and Recertification:
Planning Meeting and Pre-test
Thursday, April 3, 2014
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Falls High Pool
Instructor: Amy Amundsen

Water Safety Instructor:
Interest Meeting
Thursday, March 6, 2014
6:00 p.m. Falls High Pool
Instructor: Amy Amundsen

Cinema Swim:
Friday, Feb. 28, 2014
Movie: Turbo
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
\$3.00/swimmer (payable at the door)
Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult

Driver's Training:
March 3 – 24, 2014
Instructor: Leon Ditsch
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Mon., Tues., Thurs.
\$100/student

April 7 – 22, 2014
Instructor: Tony Casareto
6:00 – 8:30 a.m.
Mon – Fri.
\$100/student

May 19 – June 3, 2014
Instructor: Tony Casareto
3:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Mon – Fri
\$100/student

July 7 – 28, 2014
Instructor: Leon Ditsch
8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Tues, Wed., Thurs.
\$100/student

Tae Kwon Do:
Beginners Tues & Thurs 5:45 – 6:45 p.m.
Advanced Tues & Thurs 6:45 – 8:30 p.m.
Falls Elementary Gym or Cafeteria
Instructor: Ken Krueger
\$25 for an 8 session ticket

Yoga:
Tues & Thurs through May 1
5:15 – 6:15 p.m.
2nd floor of Faith United Church
Cost: \$20 for a 5 session ticket or \$4/class
Instructor: Shirley Earley

Chess Club:
Mondays, Feb. 24 – May 12, 2014
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Falls Elementary Library
3rd Grade and up
All levels welcome
\$30 for 12 weeks

Call Community Education at 283-2571, ext. 186, for more information or to register, or view our catalog and flyers at: www.isd361.k12.mn.us/communityed Or look us up on Facebook at Community Education of International Falls