

# BOISE

► continued from A1

CLP, you would forfeit your call back rights,” he said. “After the CLP closed in June, we had a relatively close idea as to who would be laid off.”

Steele’s position was secure, however, his department needed to cut an additional eight positions in July and the CLP was reopened in August. It was then the 2003 Falls High graduate opted to take the CLP.

“I will miss a lot of the people I worked with mostly,” he said. “You really become a family in (the mill)...We spend a lot of time together and have a lot of laughs.”

Steele was among the handful of Boise employees who is taking advantage of the federal assistance for reemployment and job assistance with designation by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance.

The program assists U.S. workers who have lost or may lose their jobs, and provides the adversely affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become re-employed.

However, as of Thursday, Federal TAA operations are suspended due to the government shutdown. Staff are unable to provide technical assistance; determinations will not be rendered; petitions will not be instituted; and the TAA online petition system will not be operational. However, petitions may be submitted via fax or U.S. said the agency website.

“After I found out all the facts about TAA, I saw it as an opportunity,” Steele said. “Without TAA this would be a much more difficult situation.”

Steele’s decision doesn’t involve selling a house or packing up a family; others are less fortunate.

Beth Peterson’s husband, Blake, lost his job as the storeroom manager and now works 100 miles away for US Steel Corporation in Mountain Iron.

“We have two lives,” Peterson said. “We closed on a house (in Buhl) July 12, so we have two house payments, two electric bills, two everything.”

The Falls License Bureau office manager said with two kids in college and two at home, the couple felt they had little choice about Blake taking a job almost two hours away. Peterson added she opted to stay in town because her daughter is a senior in high school.

“When Hilary graduates, I’ll probably move (to Buhl),” she said. “That is, if I can find a job.”

Still, the couple wants to keep their Rainy Lake home where Blake grew up.

“It has more sentimental value than anything,”

Peterson said. “And Blake wants to retire here.”

Peterson said her husband his hopeful he’ll be able to return to International Falls with the possibility of returning to work at the mill, especially if Boise’s recently-announced sale to Illinois-based Packaging Corporation of America turns out to be a positive thing.

“I really don’t want to leave (International Falls),” Peterson said. “Our friends are here, our family is here, our home is here.”

In the meantime, Peterson said Blake drives home on the weekends, arriving around 6 p.m. Friday night after work and leaving bright and early Monday morning to make his 6 a.m. shift in Mountain Iron.

“It sucks,” Peterson said. “There is no other way to put it. I am frustrated every day. I don’t know how to live like this. I don’t want to know how to live like this.”

Peterson’s daughter, Abby Fox, agreed.

“She is sad all the time,” she said of her mom.

Tuesday’s high winds reminded Peterson of the maintenance she is left with at the house. “My daughter called and said a tree fell across the driveway. What am I supposed to do with that?”

Adding that she was happy her husband was able to find work as close to home as he did, Peterson said she still feels

defeated by the situation.

“We were finally to the point of feeling financially comfortable,” she said. “And then this happened. It is so disappointing.”

Like Peterson, Briggs said she was unwilling to leave the place she calls home.

Briggs said after being told she would be laid off, she decided to spend more time with her 7-year old son, Kaeden, for awhile.

“I was really looking forward to being a stay-at-home mom for awhile, being able to bring Kaeden to school and pick him up,” she said.

When she first told her son she was going back to work already, she said he was disappointed at first, but then realized, with a laugh, the opportunity for more Christmas presents.

Briggs, who is one of many mill employees in her family, saw herself retiring from the company, and while she didn’t see something like this happening, she remembers to take one day at a time.

“I am a very optimistic person,” Briggs said. “I looked at this as a chance to continue in life with a different career and opening a new chapter in my life. I never took my job for granted, but looked at it as I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work for a great company. Life goes on and there is no sense on dwelling on something you cannot change.”

both the sewer project and RECAP.

However, he said the requests for money far outweigh the amount the state is likely to seek in bonds.

“From some Republican members of the Senate and House bonding committee I got the message of caution,” he said. “Until the day the Legislature adjourns and the governor signs the bill we won’t know if we get the money.”

Money for the sewer project failed to be included in last year’s bonding bill by just six votes, said Pavleck. But he said last year was not a full bonding year, so chances for funding this year may be better.

RECAP, he said, is “an unknown” to many legislators. But he said they paid attention to the presentation by Korstad and Howard. “And they asked me a lot of questions,” said Pavleck. “They are interested but not a lot have heard about it.”

RECAP has received funding from the state in past years, but new lawmakers may be more interested in providing money to projects with an environmental benefit.

“The Republicans are more cautious, but some of the Democrats are very interested in environmental projects and tend to lean more toward cleaning up the environment or anything that lends to that,” said Pavleck.

RECAP would gasify garbage and other biomaterial

# MONEY

► continued from A1

to produce energy and other biproducts. Should the project move forward, less garbage would need to be placed in landfills throughout the region.

Testimony on both county projects pushed not only the environmental benefits, but also the economic benefits, said Pavleck.

“These are also huge economic development factors we need to address to try to help alleviate some of the issues with the lack of employment and Boise layoffs,” said Pavleck. “There is a chance we could get some of this funded, but at a lesser rate and we would have to deal with that.”

Anderson said the funding for the airport is needed for a variety of reasons.

“The airport is a huge economic development tool for the area and for the county, and we talk about that 360-degrees: Fort Frances and many of the camps or fishing places, resorts on the Canadian side count on the Falls International Airport,” aid Anderson.

Anderson said he believes that just one other airport in the region is also seeking bonding money.

He acknowledged that the requests will be more than the bonding bill allows, and he said he hopes that lawmakers believe that airports should take higher priority for funding that zoos and other similar requests.

“If jobs and economic development are key, certainly the airport should rank up there for some attention,” he said.

What residents can expect for October, Kraujalis said, are near-average temperatures, and near-normal precipitation for the month, with some above-average temperatures in the second half of the month.

# WEATHER

► continued from A1

temperatures might indicate a mild winter to come will have to keep hoping, as warm fall months have

no correlation with other trends like a mild winter, Kraujalis said.

While some early week-end forecasts predicted some snow for the weekend, Kraujalis said it’s not on the NWS’ forecast, and it’s not likely

to happen, as it will be too warm. However, the average snowfall for October is 2.3 inches, he said, so there might be snow to speak of before the month is out.

“There’s been Octobers where there’s been very

little if any snowfall in October, so we’ll just have to see,” he said.

Outdoors enthusiasts enjoyed the warm weather in September, and also didn’t have to worry about the rain often, as precipitation was

an inch below average for the month, according to the NWS. While not unheard of, it was tied for the 12th driest September on record, Kraujalis said.

“It is somewhat unusual,” he said.

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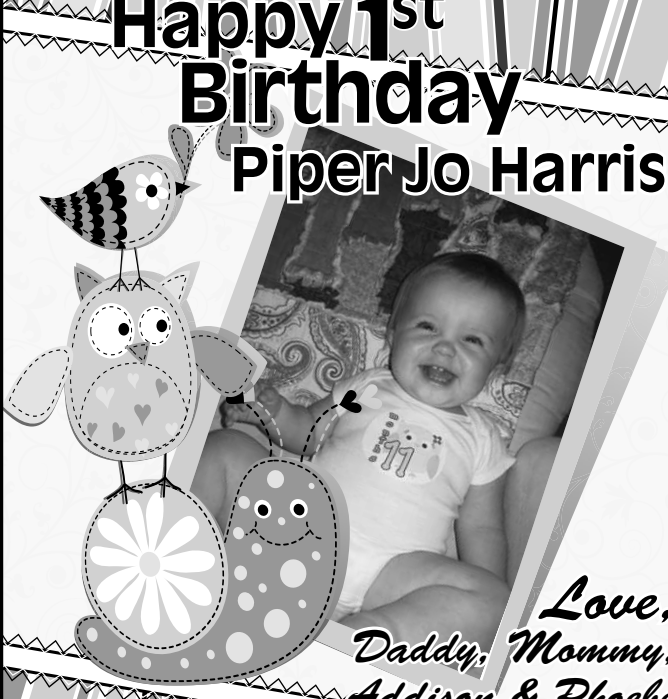
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