

**Mike Kostiuk,**  
Hello, Congratulations!  
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I appreciate that.

**Rich Mastin,**  
Hello, I wish you well  
I wish you Peace!  
Have a Great One!  
You are my Hero!

**Perryn Hedlund,**  
Congratulations!  
on becoming Sheriff!  
You are my County's  
Sheriff, my City's Sheriff!  
not my Sheriff.

**Troy Tilander,**  
Thank you for  
everything that  
you do!

**Dane Olson,**  
Hello, Great Dane!  
I wish you well  
I wish you Peace!

**Grant DeBenedet,**  
Thank you for scaring  
the P... out of me!  
Thank you for when you  
drive by my house!

It was great, to see you  
in action,  
on Sat. Nov. 15, 14.  
Thank you for  
everything you do!  
I appreciate you and  
I appreciate what you do!  
You are my Hero!

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# BUSINESS

9 TO 5

The Journal welcomes ideas for stories about people in our community who are starting a business or changing an old one.  
**Call the Journal at 285-7411**

## New coop provides plethora of products

BY SPENSER BICKETT  
Staff Writer

Hungry horses, sheep, goats, pigs, birds, dogs, cats and more will have a new place to go locally to get the feed they need, thanks to a new coop store opening.

International Falls Farm and Garden, a division of Moose Lake Coop, held a grand opening week Dec. 15-20, to introduce the new business to the community, and give residents an opportunity to see all the store has to offer.

Tony Ecklund, Moose Lake Coop general manager, said the week went well, and they got a lot of people in the door to see what the business is all about. There's not much need for seed or gardening products in the middle of winter, he said, but once it warms up, the store will have anything people need.

"If you want to grow it or feed it, we'll have those products available," Ecklund said. "If we don't have it, we can order it. And if we can't get it, you probably



STAFF PHOTO BY SPENSER BICKETT

**International Falls Farm and Garden, located at 516 Second Ave. carries a wide variety of feed, seed, and agricultural supplies.**

don't need it."

The store, located at 516 Second Ave., carries a huge selection of agricultural products and services, like feed, seed, supplies, lawn and garden supplies, pet food and supplies, fencing, feeders tools, equipment and general supplies. The store's selection of products is so vast, Ecklund said the

best way to understand it is to come into the store and see it firsthand.

There's cattle, horse, goat, sheep, dog, cat, alpaca, pot bellied pig and chicken feed, Ecklund said, to name a few. The store has all kinds of products for dogs and cats, a full line of steel gates and posts, bird feeders, rabbit feed, hamster feed and

guinea pig feed. The store is a Purina feed dealer, he said, which provides reputable brand recognition.

"Purina has been the premier feed for any animal for a long time," Ecklund said. "People recognize the checkerboard logo."

This is the third store for the coop, Ecklund said, with the other two in Moose Lake and Askov. A working relationship with recently-retired veterinarian Dr. Wade Himes led them to realize there was already an established market in the area, he said.

"It's a good fit for what we do, and we're always looking for a way to keep expanding," Ecklund said. "We couldn't walk away from the opportunity, we didn't want to give up on the market."

Customers don't have to be a member of the coop to shop there, Ecklund said. Customers can become a member after spending \$500 there, and filling out the proper application. Members will then get patronage under the coop model, which means if the store makes

a profit, members will get paid back, he said.

The biggest difficulty in expanding to International Falls came in finding a facility, Ecklund said. Once a place was found to call home, they brought in shelving, products, and a point of sale system to make it work, he said.

"We have a good idea of what we want for a product line for our stores," Ecklund said. "This is our third store, so we know to start by bringing in a line and tweaking it from there."

Coop staff have been looking to expand into the area for a while, and the situation turned out to be "almost a no-brainer," Ecklund said.

"We probably have really high expectations, but we have to have expectations," Ecklund said. "You can't go into it and say we won't do well."

The store is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. The store's phone number is 218-283-9061.

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