

Closing shop

Big Falls business to shut down

A10



Lights, camera, action!

Fundraiser to help Hollywood film

A9



International Falls Journal

ifallsjournal.com



Find us on Twitter



Find us on Facebook



Scan for The Journal online

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

International Falls, Minnesota

www.ifallsjournal.com

\$1

RLMC becomes part of Wilderness Health

Group forms to improve patient care, outcomes

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Rainy Lake Medical Center in International Falls has joined with eight other regional health care providers to form Wilderness Health, the group announced Monday in Duluth.

While the member health care providers will remain independent, they will work together to improve the quality of patient care

and outcomes.

Along with RLMC, members of Wilderness Health are Bigfork Valley Hospital, Bigfork; Community Memorial Hospital, Cloquet; Cook County North Shore Hospital, Grand Marais; Cook Hospital, Cook; Fairview Range, Hibbing; Lake View, Two Harbors; Mercy Hospital, Moose Lake; and St. Luke's, Duluth.

Dan Odegaard, RLMC CEO, called the formation of Wilderness

Health and the independence of its members a good thing for RLMC and the other facilities.

"The ultimate goals are for clinical integration within the systems in northeastern Minnesota and greater efficiency in the treatment of patient populations," Odegaard told The Journal Tuesday. "The formalized collaboration allows the organizations to reap the benefits of a shared service model, while retaining independence."

Wilderness Health values rural health care providers but also understands the challenges that can arise providing care in small communities, especially when there are limited resources available, Cassandra Beardsley, executive director of Wilderness Health, said in a statement.

"The nine members of Wilderness Health will be working collaboratively to share best practices and coordinate patient care, which is not always feasible working alone," Beardsley said. "By working together we can help ensure pa-

tients that their care will continue to be in their local community, just like it always has been."

Odegaard agreed, saying the nine member organizations want to keep health care local to patients and ensure patients' freedom of choice by maintaining the independence of smaller facilities.

"They hope to do this by working together to identify operating efficiencies and reducing costs through shared service opportunities," Odegaard said. "They hope

RLMC to A7 >

Members of the Northland Art Society work on a painting in the front window of Corrin's Plumbing and Heating Friday.

painting

WITH A PURPOSE

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

One local business is getting into the holiday spirit by trying a different take on an old tradition.

The front windows of Corrin's Plumbing and Heating on Fourth Street were painted last week by members of the Northland Art Society in a festive winterscape.

Art Corrin each year decorate the front windows with homemade decorations for more than 60 years, Jerry Kostiuk said.

More information

For more photos, turn to page B10.

After Art passed away in January, the tradition stopped.

Family and staff of Corrin's contacted the members of NAS this year to continue the tradition, Kostiuk said, and they responded with a window painting of a wooded scene featuring a mother bear and her cubs.

STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

The painting in the front window of Corrin's Plumbing and Heating is based on a rough sketch by one of the artists.

CITY COUNCIL

Extra fee to be added to cable bills

Each cable subscriber to pay extra 50 cents each month to support PEG channel

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Cable subscribers in International Falls will support the city's public educational government channel with an extra charge on their bills each month starting in January.

The Falls City Council Monday agreed on a 4-1 vote to adopt a resolution calling for implementation of a 50-cent fee each month for every cable subscriber within the city to help offset expenses of the city's public educational government local access Channel 7, known as the PEG channel, operated by KCCTV.

The proposal was supported by members of the International Falls Cable Commission and members of the public, several of whom attended Monday's

Council to A7 >

Superintendent Grover optimistic about district finances

District expects to have a reserve balance of about \$3.4 million

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

As the end of the year approaches, Independent School District 361 is sitting in good financial shape, according to a school administrator.

Superintendent Kevin Grover Monday told board members projections for the 2014-2015 budget appear to be moving in the right direction and a reserve balance of about \$3.4 million is expected.

Last year, Grover said, the board approved a budget that included deficit spending of



Kevin Grover

\$224,688.

"We're to the point of \$53,502 deficit spending," he told The Journal Tuesday. "It's definitely moving in a positive direction."

The district's fund balance is based on projections and can fluctuate depending on several factors – the biggest being student enrollment figures, he said.

"(The district) can lose kids and gain kids, which all plays into it," he said, adding about 90 percent of the district's revenue is based on student numbers.

At this time last year, board members were expecting to make several cuts in school staff and programs after the district lost 86 students.

District principals Monday reported Falls Elementary has gained three students from last month bringing the total enrollment up to 584. And, Falls High School is expecting an addition of three students next month which would bring its enrollment up to 630 students.

"We're getting some kids back

(from other schools)," Grover said. "We're not losing as many students as we thought we might."

On the same note, the superintendent added enrollment can change quickly, as experienced last year, which can affect the district's fund balance.

"A couple of kids can make a big difference," he said. "And it can happen half way through the year, so numbers are always changing."

Finances to A7 >