

LOCALNEWS

Busy hands knit gifts for Borderland

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

With Borderland’s historically-cold winter making national headlines, it’s also drawing the attention of a group sending some goodwill and warm clothes to the area. The nationwide Pink Slipper Project sends homemade slippers, hats, and washcloths to women and children living in shelters for victims of domestic violence. Using a Facebook page to pool the resources of thousands of followers, the group knits, crochets, and sews these items and sends them to shelters nationwide. Friends Against Abuse was recently the subject of the group’s “Icebox of the Nation Challenge,” which resulted in sending nearly 200 items to the local domestic abuse advocacy group.

FAA executive director LeeAnn Meer said the group contacted her after seeing International Falls in the news for the severely cold temperatures the area’s been experiencing. “It was amazing to us,” Meer said. “We didn’t seek them out or were even aware of them. Our cold, severe winter put us in the news, and they saw us that way.” Even though the agency doesn’t have a physical shelter space, Meer said that didn’t matter, the Pink Slipper Project still wanted to do something for them. “They know how isolated we are, and they wanted to do something,” she said. These booties, slippers, and hats may not seem like much, but they symbolize much more for victims of abuse, Meer said. Victims often must flee with nothing

more than the clothes on their backs, she said, and giving them basic needs items helps transition them through the rough stages. “If you could see the looks on people’s faces when they get these things, the joy on their faces,” Meer said. “The act of kindness is huge. It shows people really do care. It really helps them through a tough time.” The Pink Slipper Project volunteers are responsible for packaging and shipping their items, and often include a short note of encouragement or comfort, Meer said. The past week has seen packages coming in from Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, Arizona, California, Oregon, and elsewhere, she said. National volunteers aren’t the only ones supporting the agency this winter,

Meer said. Regular contributors like the Littlefork Lutheran Quilting Ladies and Northern Lights Quilter’s Guild donate homemade quilts, pillows, pillowcases, and bags filled with toiletries and basic hygiene products, she said. The Pajama Program donates pajamas and books, and the group’s phone fundraiser provides donated phones to victims, so they can call 911 in case of an emergency.

Friends Against Abuse executive director LeeAnn Meer sorts through some of the slippers, hats, and washcloths volunteers with the Pink Slipper Project have sent FAA recently.

STAFF PHOTO BY SPENSER BICKETT



Child’s death from suspected exposure reminder of dangers of cold

Jespersen urges people to use caution with children, elderly, pets

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

A Bemidji child’s death Thursday suspected from exposure to the frigid temperatures is a reminder even northern Minnesotans must think about and prepare for the cold.

The Bemidji Police Department responded at about 6:30 a.m. Thursday to an emergency call at Carter Circle in the community to treat a 6-year-old girl. The child had signs of exposure to the cold and was pronounced dead at the scene, according to a news release issued later that day. Koochiching County Sheriff Brian Jespersen said the Bemidji death should remind people to take precautions with children, elderly and pets. Exposure to the cold temperatures in Minnesota this winter have

been blamed for a number of deaths and injuries. Jespersen cited as an example, a Duluth college student’s injuries in December that occurred when friends dropped her off after a night of drinking assuming she would enter her home. She was unable to and spent several hours outside suffering from severe frostbite. Since then, she has had multiple surgeries and amputations. “Common sense has to come into play, but anytime we have this kind of cold people need to think — think about children, the


elderly and their pets,” he said Thursday. The sheriff encouraged area residents to consider placing latches high on the inside of doors to the outdoors if young children are able to open them, or if you suspect they are able to open them. Some parents have said their youngsters have opened locked front doors to greet strangers or to let the dog out while their parents were in another room, showering or preparing food in the kitchen. Elderly and people with dementia can also be at

risk of leaving a residence and risking injury in the cold. Again, Jespersen suggested adding latches to make sure doors are locked in a way they cannot be opened by someone who should not open them without assistance. He recalled the death in International Falls a couple of years ago of an elderly woman suffering from dementia. He said she left her house during the night in very cold temperatures. When her adult children woke in the morning, they found she had left the house. She was

found dead at the end of her driveway due to exposure, he said. And, Jespersen said, good communication among family members is crucial. Deaths have occurred when infants and small children have been forgotten in the backseats of vehicles in hot summer weather. The same could happen in the frigid below zero temperatures Borderland is experiencing. He encouraged parents of very young children to remind one another the baby is in the backseat sleeping.

PANCAKE TUESDAY SUPPER

SHROVE TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2014
5:00 TO 6:30 P.M.



Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Fourth Street and Ninth Avenue

FREE WILL OFFERING

All Welcome

The family of
Julia Frahm
would like to take this time to say
Thank You

to all our relatives and friends for the condolences, support, cards, food and flowers provided during this time of the loss of our mother.

Special thanks to Pastor Stephen Olson, Joe Belanger, Pam Ladsten and the women of Zion Lutheran Church, Green-Larson Mortuary, Rainy Lake Medical Center Clinic and Hospital, Fairview Healthline Home Health Care, SuperOne Catering, and all others who helped us during this time.

Our sincere appreciation,
Julia’s Family



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AGENDA

City Council
Monday, March 3, 2014 • 4:30 P.M.
Council Chamber

CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
ROLL CALL
MINUTES
• Approve minutes of the February 18, 2014 regular City Council meeting
SPECIAL ACTION CLAIMS
TRANSFERS
To: City of Intl Falls - Fund #101
From: City of Intl Falls - Fund #812 \$822.23
Lodging tax

REGULAR CLAIMS
• Regular Claims

AUDIENCE
BIDS AND/OR QUOTES
UNFINISHED BUSINESS
CONSENT AGENDA
• Approve/allow necessary expenses for Mayor and/or Councilors to attend the CGMC Legislative Action Day on March 5, 2014 in St. Paul, MN
• Approve/allow necessary expenses for Mayor and/or Councilors to attend the Transportation Alliance – Transportation Day at the Capitol lobbying session , March 13, 2014 in St Paul, MN
• Approve/allow necessary expenses for Mayor Anderson to attend the 2014 Minnesota Mayors Association Annual Conference April 25-26 in Fergus Falls, MN
NEW BUSINESS
1. Jenny Greenlaugh- dragon boat race update/information
2. Resignation from part-time patrol officer – K Morrison
3. Letter of retirement from Firefighter Engineer – Richard Houghlum
4. Resolution # __-14 application for a 1 to 4 day temporary on-sale liquor license for Citizens for Backus/AB, Inc.
5. Resolution # __-14 application for a 1 to 4 day temporary on-sale liquor license for Rotary Club of International Falls
6. Resolution# __-14 application for exempt permit for International Falls Lions Club to conduct a raffle
7. Any other business
PUBLIC HEARING
REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATOR, ATTORNEY, AND DEPARTMENT HEADS
REPORTS OF MAYOR, COUNCIL COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
AUDIENCE – 2nd CALL
CORRESPONDENCE
• January 15, 2014 Convention and Visitors Bureau meeting minutes
• February 19, 2014 Arrowhead Library System 2014 Annual Budget
• February 21, 2014 Minnesota Energy Notice to Counties and Municipalities of the evidentiary and public hearings
REMINDERS
• Next regular Council meeting is Monday, March 17, 2014 at 4:30 PM

The City of International Falls complies with the ADA. Individuals with disabilities requiring special aids should contact the City Administrator, 600 Fourth Street, International Falls, MN, 56649, 218-283-9484, 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.