

**Memories made**  
Pioneer Days celebrates 13th year

**A11**



**Successful fair**  
Fun was had by all in Littlefork

**A12**



# The Journal

Wednesday,  
July 17, 2013

International Falls, Minnesota

www.ifallsjournal.com

\$1



STAFF PHOTO BY LAUREL BEAGER

A group of the Multiple Sclerosis Society's The Ride Across Minnesota cyclists leave International Falls early Monday morning. The about 800 bikers traveled 81 miles through Littlefork to Orr during the first leg of the five-day trek.

## Cyclists seek to end sclerosis

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

New friendships were made and old ones rekindled as hundreds of bicyclists set up camp Sunday in Smokey Bear Park before kicking off a 280-mile bike trip across northern Minnesota with one goal in mind – finding a cure for multiple sclerosis.

Featuring about 800 cyclists and 200 support volunteers, the Multiple Sclerosis Society's The Ride Across Minnesota, or Tram, began in Borderland early Monday morning and continued for 81 miles through Littlefork and down to Orr to complete the first stretch of the five-day trek.

"I think 81 miles is one of

the longest routes we've had in one day since this began," said Mary Nelson of the Tram.

Nelson, who lives in Austin, Minn., has been involved with the Tram since its 1990 debut. Back then, the now 60-year-old cyclist said she was unsure about taking on the length of the trip.

"I'm active, but I didn't know about riding that far," she said. "But I was with a group of friends and I said, 'If you're in, I'm in.'"

Twenty years later, Nelson is still going strong.

"I've been blessed with good health, so I get out there and help people when I can," she told The Journal Sunday while setting up camp.

Multiple sclerosis is a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system, according to



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

Mary Nelson shows off her bike full of pig memorabilia inspired by her hometown Austin, Minn., which sports the nickname "Spam Town USA." The name hails from the community's largest employer, Hormel Foods Corporation, where Spam is made. Nelson has been involved in the Tram since it began in 1990.

nationalmssociety.org. The site said symptoms may be mild, such as numbness in the limbs, or severe, such as paralysis or loss of vision. The progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS are unpredictable and vary from

one person to another.

Pam Emison, one of the Tram's cyclists from White Bear Lake, Minn., looks like the average person on the outside, but on the inside, mul-

**TRAM to A7 ►**

## Oberstar to meet on multimodal district, FTZ

City retains state grant for infrastructure

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

Former Congressman Jim Oberstar is expected to visit the International Falls Economic Development Commission next week to discuss potential clients to occupy the city's multimodal district and create jobs as a result.

The EDA Commission Monday, during a special meeting, agreed to pay \$900 to cover Oberstar's travel expenses from International Falls to Washington D.C., lodging and food.

Oberstar is scheduled to tour the multimodal district, located along County Highway 155, and the foreign trade zone at 8 a.m. July 26; meet about the district and FTZ at the Voyageurs National Park headquarters, located within the James Oberstar Complex at 8:45 a.m.; and then head to the Falls International Airport at 11:35 a.m.

The EDA Commission may ask the Koochiching Economic Development Authority Board to kick in on the costs of Oberstar's visit.

Oberstar, now a transportation consultant, has said he would not charge consultation fees for the discussion, said Shawn Mason, International Falls economic and community development director.

Oberstar is known as a leading expert on transportation. He represented the 8th Congressional District for 36 years and chaired the U.S. Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Subcommittee on Aviation.

Mason said Oberstar may be able to help identify the type of clients that use Canadian National Railway, which transports goods from Vancouver through Ranier and into Chicago where they are warehoused, packaged and distributed.

"He knows the frustration" of clients using Chicago facilities, she said. That frustration, she added, involves the cost of warehouses in Chicago and the time traveling through Chicago.

EDA commissioners said they supported the idea and said the

**Oberstar to A7 ►**

## Response teams formed to address impact of terminated jobs

First meetings planned for July 24

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

Three teams formed in response to the plan by Boise Inc. to terminate 265 jobs at the International Falls paper mill will meet next week to organize and discuss opportunities.

Falls Mayor Bob Anderson, a member along with Councilor Pete Kalar, of a Path Forward

Committee, or the Economic Response Team, provided membership to each of the three teams. The teams are made up of community members who volunteered to serve. The Path Forward Committee also includes Koochiching County Commissioners Wade Pavleck and Rob Ecklund.

Anderson said the three meetings will be facilitated by Randy Lasky of The Northspan Group, Duluth, and are planned for 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. July 24 in the third floor courtroom at the courthouse.

The teams are called: Business Development and Retention; Long-term Vision and Strategy; Worker Retention and Assistance.

Anderson said he wants the members of the teams to feel empowered to bring their ideas forward.

Kalar noted that Shawn Mason, city economic and community development director, and Paul Nevanen, director of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority are not members of the teams, but will serve as resources to do the legwork of the teams. Should

a team request that members of the Path Forward Committee, Nevanen or Mason be a member they will be appointed, he said.

"We want the citizens on these to take ownership, control," said Kalar. "We want to see what they come up with. It's a good core group of people."

**DONAHUE PROPERTY**

In other business Monday, the council reversed an earlier decision and agreed not to seek an estimate of the acres considered wetlands in the 125 acres of un-

developed property known as the Donahue property.

Anderson told the council earlier this month that the information about wetlands may be beneficial to a community discussion planned for 6:30 p.m. July 31 at the AmericInn intended to develop a vision for the future of the property.

Anderson said he had believed the cost to gather the information to be minor, but in followup conversations with Dave Serrano of

**Council to A7 ►**

**INSIDE TO REACH US**

OBITUARIES/A6  
PHONE: (218) 285-7411

OPINION/A8  
FAX: (218) 285-7206

LEISURE/A9

SPORTS/B1  
ONLINE: IFALLSJOURNAL.COM OR FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

CLASSIFIEDS/B4

COMICS/B11

VOLUME 4  
NUMBER 57