

PAPER

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RFP is ceasing production of the No. 5 machine because the markets for the papers it produces have deteriorated, according to a release, and

are expected to stay soft through at least the first quarter of 2014. Due to these conditions, the out-age is expected to last through at least the first quarter of 2014. Machine No. 5 produces ground-wood specialty printing papers, most commonly

used in books, magazines, and advertising circulars. The affected employees will remain on call for RFP, Van Chau said, and receive regular wages and benefits up to March 12, at which time severance will begin. Employees will also be able to transition

to other RFP locations in Northwestern Ontario, including the construction of a new sawmill in Atikokan, the upgrade and restart of the idled Ignace sawmill, and the production capacity increase and building of a new wood pellet plant at the Thunder Bay sawmill.

RACE

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however, he dropped out, or scratched, at Barney's Resort in Spring Lake, Minn. – the race's designated rest spot.

Anderson said he was happy with fourth place, especially because he competed with a team of younger dogs with very little or no racing experience.

"I used five dogs that have never raced before," he said. "Everybody has a first race. I really didn't expect a lot because out of the last 10 days, they've had five days off...I don't know if they would have done better with more conditioning, but they did good. They all finished strong."

The newly-routed Voyageur Classic race is in its third year and has had a challenging start – or lack thereof. The event has been canceled the last two years due to lack of snow in 2012 and inclement weather in 2013.

This year, however, race

officials said they were overjoyed with the 20-degree, overcast weather.

"It was beautiful," race Marshall Dan Bergerson said. "It might have even been a little on the warm side."

Winter packed a punch last week with temperatures plunging to 50 degrees below zero. While most of the country hunkered down, taking shelter from the Arctic temperatures, mushers and their dogs embraced the prime racing conditions.

"The dogs weren't used to this warmer weather," Anderson said. "But at least everyone is in the same boat."

Unique to this year's musher lineup for the Pro Class was three generations of the Nelson family. Grandmother Jamie Nelson is a veteran musher known across the country. Locally, Nelson is the musher who, for many years with her team of sled dogs, provided a ride for Santa Claus in the Twas the Lights Before Christmas Parade. She is a four-

NOLAN

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"We're trying to stop these Asian carp," he said, describing the fish as growing to 70-80 pounds and consuming native fish. While that bill hasn't become law, it is included in House and Senate bills and will be included by the conference committee in the final bill, he said. Nolan also said he was able to include in the law a new definition of "invasive species" to include fish and animals, not just plant life as is defined in current law.

In recent days, Nolan said he's been involved in a behind-the-scenes battle with the U.S. Senate on a matter — catfish inspection — that may not seem important to the district, but actually is. The 2008 farm bill established a United States Department of Agriculture catfish inspection program, while the U.S. Food and Drug Administration inspects fish and seafood in the nation.

"Believe it or not, Motley, Minn., has the highest per capita of workers in fish and seafood processing of any city in America," he said, adding at any time the city has up to a couple thousand people working in seafood processing there.

FDA inspectors are monitoring the seafood, but under law, a USDA inspector must be on site waiting for a catfish. That catfish program costs \$170 million annually, said Nolan.

"It's just an absolute, total, unmitigated waste of taxpayers money to have someone sitting around

waiting for a catfish," he said.

Nolan said one of the points of differences between the agriculture bills in the House and Senate is the catfish program bill.

"One of the problems you have heard me describe is that this Congress' committees don't meet," he said. There are enough votes to kill the catfish program among the 36 members of the agriculture conference committee, but he said only "the so-called big four" — two chairs and ranking members of the agriculture committee — are meeting on the bill.

Nolan said he's been pushing for an open meeting of the conference committee and Sen. John McCain supported his effort.

"I am not sure what the ultimate outcome will be," he said, adding Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken are supporting Nolan on the Senate side. "We're trying to push the chairs and ranking members to have a meeting and take a vote on it."

He said the catfish program effort is illustrative of the problems in Congress, which he called "a very undemocratic institution. When you have open meetings, things like this have the chance to see the light of day, that's when you end up with really good bipartisan collaboration and are able to fix things and get things done that make sense."

Where, when and how did Congress evolve into a close-door institution? Nolan said when he served in Congress from 1976-1981, each session of Congress saw 7,000 to 8,000 subcom-

mittee, committee and conference committee meetings, where anyone could offer any amendment, debate them and vote on them.

"This Congress, albeit only halfway through, this last year had only about 500 such meetings," Nolan said, and most of them were procedural. "Very seldom are you allowed to make an amendment."

The lack of committee meetings forced members to seek out individual members to push issues.

Nolan said his accomplishments have been bipartisan, and said the success of Congress relies on bipartisan agreements, but requires more opportunities for discussion, debates and votes.

Nolan reiterated his feelings that the way the nation handles its candidates and their campaigns must change. Having the most money should not mean getting the most votes, he said, adding members of Congress representing both parties are encouraged to put in time at call centers seeking contributions.

"I made a decision from the beginning that I didn't come out here to be a professional fundraiser and so I haven't spent one minute in the call center across the street and I am not going to," he said.

Nolan is expected to face opposition in his reelection campaign.

Mills Fleet Farm Vice President Stewart Mills III has launched a bid for the 8th District Republican nomination. Mills reportedly owns assets worth from \$46 million to \$150 million. Americans for

Prosperity has purchased \$225,000 in television advertisements in the Twin Cities and Duluth TV markets criticizing Nolan for the Affordable Care Act.

Nolan was not a member of Congress when the ACA was approved. He said he was fortunate in the last election, when he was outspent 4-1 in the primary and almost 3-1 in the general elections, he was an exception to the most-money, most-votes theory. "But you can't expect that exception to go forward," he said.

Nolan said his campaign will have enough money to seek reelection, and he said he's unsure of how much money has been spent by corporations, which do not have to report their spending, to unseat him.

Responding to inaccurate information in those advertisements takes money, he said.

As an example, he pointed to an advertisement featuring a man who says he lost his insurance because of an earlier heart attack. That's one of the things that can't happen under the ACA, said Nolan.

Nolan said he broke with the party and was one of 39 Democrats who voted to allow people for the first year to keep the policy they have if they are happy.

"The ad is misrepresenting the Affordable Care Act in general, and me in particular," said Nolan. "But I don't have another \$300,000 around here to put out there."

Nolan said he'll continue to do his best to represent the district and the nation "and let the chips fall where they may."



STAFF PHOTO BY LAUREL BEAGER
Greg Walker, left, discusses mental health service issues with Rep. David Dill Tuesday prior to the Koochiching County Board meeting.

DILL

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Dill said after doing research, he found the courts set the amount, but the Legislature could pass a law to increase it or give counties the ability to increase reimbursement.

"But how will you pay for it?" he asked. "Counties may not be able to afford it."

County Administration Director Teresa Briggs said because the courts are a state expense, reimbursement for jurors should not be a county expense.

Meanwhile, different from Bakk's session with the board, Dill heard concerns about mental health issues from Greg Walker of Northland Counseling Center.

Walker discussed out-of-pocket expenses for people covered by the Affordable Care Act, which he said hits mental health agencies more significantly due to the length of time a patient may visit providers. He said as a result of the costs, some people may choose to visit their provider less often, causing social concerns. He said it may prevent organizations such as Northland from providing the care because it may not be able to write off the larger amounts of money not covered.

Walker also discussed concerns about restrictions to the number of beds allowed by the state for corporate adult foster care. He said he'd like a 2009 moratorium on the number of beds allowed to be lifted. The service, he said, allows people with mental health issues to return to their community where their support systems and families are located.

Meanwhile, Dill said he

favors spending some of the state's projected budget surplus on permanent spending in places that will have the most effect. Among those he said, could be increases to funding to counties for veterans transportation and the elderly.

Dill said he has three priorities for spending some of the surplus: in critical areas where there are deficiencies, such as veterans transportation; increasing a reserve or rainy day account; repeal of the business-to-business and warehouse taxes approved in the 2013 session.

Changes in the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act program are likely following a legislative auditor's report provided to the Legislature in November, Dill said. The program requires forestland owners to agree for eight years to practice sustainable forestry and keep the land open to the public in exchange for payments of \$7 per acre.

In Borderland, Molpus Timberlands Management has about 128,000 acres enrolled in the program.

Dill said he's asked the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to assemble stakeholders to develop recommendations to the Legislature. Action to make changes to the program may not be taken at this session, he said.


Other issues commissioners brought to Dill's attention include: local bonding requests, county state aid highway funding formula, and wetland banks and mitigation requirements.

As for use of the rulemaking process and other issues that change rules without much public input, Dill said "I am likely never to vote to usurp local authority. We need control as local as possible."

Endearing Recollections

Are you someone, or do you have a loved one who has something to share with your family/friends? Do you have knowledge about relatives, times in your life, wisdom you have gained, etc. that should be passed on?

Let us thoughtfully and carefully talk with you/your loved one while we video. We can bring out the information in a way that can be expressed and then preserved on dvd for your family. We will pre-plan with you a list of topics to be covered. We come to you. Only you/your loved ones appear on the dvd.



Call Roxanne S-Ditsch at 218-341-5036 or 283-9773 to schedule an appointment.

ICEBOX DAYS XXXIV

Fireworks!!

Under the Winter Sky
See You There - SATURDAY EVENING
JAN. 18 ABOUT 6 P.M.
3rd Street - Smokey Bear Park Area
Call the Chamber of Commerce, 283-9400 for more info.
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Thursday January 16 7:00 pm

PRIZES FOR THE TOP 3 SINGERS!

Icebox Idol Karaoke

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- \$5 per person admission

For the most current information on Rainy and Namakan Lake levels, visit the following:

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