



These little skaters are all dressed up and ready to perform.

STAFF PHOTOS



Working together, these skaters use precision in their moves.



Holding the position, this skater waits for the music.



Hitting her mark, and smiling for the crowd.



Making the move with her group, this skater stretches into position.

Ice show time

JUNKER

► continued from A9

my contract with my dad,” Junker recalls. “He’d go get his contract and I’d go along with him. I think my first contract was probably 100 cords, it may have been before I even finished high school. And you’d always go up there and you’d always see how much I could

get. How much will they give me? And you’d take all they could give you. Now the mills are all in need of wood. You can’t cut enough. I never thought I’d see that.” It wasn’t the best time to get into the logging business, however. By 1973, a global oil crisis caused not only long lines at the gas pump but also a stock market crash as well as a spike in unemployment. The re-

sulting recession lasted for the next few years, making conditions tough on everyone, including Minnesota’s logging community. Fortunately for the Junkers, at the same time Bruce was getting into logging full-time, Carl sold the dairy herd and started growing oats, with father and son helping each other out. That decision was pivotal in helping Bruce weather the difficult economic times of the 1970s.

“We had a few years of good weather,” Bruce says, “and a few years of a good crop. And prices were good, so that was good for three or four years.

“Times were tough, but I

never thought about doing anything else. I was living at home and I wasn’t married, so I didn’t have that pressure of supporting a family. I was able to wait until the good times came around again.”

The work ethic Junker was blessed with didn’t hurt, either.

“With logging,” he says, “the harder you work the more reward you get. And I love to work, so that’s where the fit is.”

The 1980s were different. For one thing, the economy was in much better shape. Soon, forest products mills in the state were growing, including the Boise mill with its I-1 paper machine

that started production in 1990.

These days, Junker Logging remains a small operation, but steady, with one four-person conventional logging crew and four truck drivers. Bruce’s son Jace runs the Tigercat 822C feller buncher, and also services the trucks on the weekend and moves equipment from job site to job site as needed. Nick Franko driving the John Deere 748 G-III skidder, and Clayton Kimball operating the Link-Belt delimeter with a ProPac boom. In addition, Bruce handles most of the slashing and loading with help from Ron Horn as needed, and William Reller, Bruce Budris, Peter Bortnik, and Reba Kessler handle the hauling.

Right now most of the crew is working on this 167 acre, 3,350 cord state sale south of Littlefork, featuring 1,800 cords of tamarack, 1,300 cords of spruce, and smaller amounts of ash, balsam, jackpine, and aspen. Half of it was harvested last year, and they’ll finish the job before break-up. The vast majority of the wood is headed for Boise, but a small percentage is being hauled to the Verso Paper mill in Duluth, 150 miles away.

Junker is optimistic about the future. With mills hungry for wood, last year was a good one for the business, and 2015 is shaping up to be the same way. Plus, Bruce has his son Jace working alongside of him. A graduate of Littlefork-Big Falls, he initially went to Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Wadena to be an electrical lineworker, but changed his mind and

came back to join the family business, representing the fourth generation of Junkers in the logging business. Jace is even back living on Cingmars Road, right down the way from Bruce’s place, in the house where his father grew up—remodeled and updated, of course.

In fact, the whole family is involved. Bruce’s wife Bonnie runs parts and handles the books, making sure everyone gets paid on time, all while also holding down a part time job at the post office.

“She’s the backbone,” Bruce says of his wife of 28 years. “Thank God I have her.”

The Junkers also farm a little on the side. When his dad sold the dairy cattle he bought ten or so head of beef cattle, and they’ve been increasing the herd gradually ever since. Now they have 90-some head. But logging is his first focus.

“With logging, I like that you can see what you’re getting done,” Junker says. “You’re accomplishing things. But it’s very challenging. The weather is the biggest thing. It can be for you or against you. You have to be able to adapt.”

Junker’s hoping as well that the agencies adapt to the increasing demand for wood in Minnesota.

“There’s no doubt they’ll need to step it up or we’ll be in dire straits,” he says. “I would rather see a young healthy forest than old mature forest blow-down. It’s as simple as that. And the people is going to blow down. What looks better if it’s managed right? It’s not going to look any more scenic if it’s logged or not logged.”

It’s a sensibility learned from the generations of Junkers, Hauners, Imhofs, and Promersbergers of Cingmars Road. Bruce’s father lost a battle to cancer in 1991 at the age of 77, and his mother passed away in 2004, but the lessons aren’t forgotten. If all goes well, he’ll be able to see the family business continue to thrive as the torch is passed on to the next generation and the continuation of what his grandfather and father passed on to him.

“My dad was awesome because he’d always help me,” he says. “I hope I can do the same for my son.”

Laminate...

Maps, posters and shop drawings up to 38" wide. No seams.

Also, we can mount documents onto 3/16" or 3/8" foam core.

North Star PUBLISHING
Printing & Design

1602 Hwy. 71 • 285-7411

GET THE MAX FROM YOUR LOCAL TAX PROFESSIONAL!

Call me today to set up your appointment or stop in to see me!

North Border Financial Services, LLC
400 3rd Street International Falls
Call 285-6111
Owned and operated by Bill Higham, EA

I have been serving the International Falls area with professional tax preparation, consulting, and payroll tax assistance, for over 20 years.

NATP
Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 6:00 pm
Saturday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
Other times are available by appointment.

Borderland's Favorite Pizza

FREE DELIVERY
PLAY PULL TABS
LIVE MUSIC

THE BIGGEST BURGERS AROUND

283-2222

Or Try Other Foods On Our Full Menu!
Chamber Dollars Gladly Accepted Here!

LIVE MUSIC ON SUNDAYS

4:30 to 8:30 p.m. with Patty O'Porter

Texas Holdem Thurs., Fri & Sat Nights!

BORDER BAR PIZZA PARLOR

283-2222 3rd Ave. & 5th St. • I. Falls
Mon-Thur 11:00am-10pm • Fri & Sat 11:00am-11pm • Sun 11:00am-9pm

Happy 90th Birthday to Edith Sheasby!

We would like to extend an invitation for an open house at the Rivers Edge Villa located at 1406 Hwy 71 on March 28th 3-6 PM to share birthday wishes and refreshments with her friends and family. No presents are necessary, your presence is gift enough.

Wedding Invitations

Custom Printed by North Star Publishing

- Invitations and Envelopes
- Programs
- Save the Date Cards and Magnets
- Thank You Cards

North Star PUBLISHING
Printing & Design

1602 Hwy 71 • Int'l Falls, MN
218-285-7411

City Drug

Bridal Registry

Cassie (Bramhall) Thompson & Ryan Thompson
Reception May 9, 2015

Nicole Ball & Nathan Nelson
May 16, 2015

Britni Hendrickson & Jason Gapp
May 30, 2015

Brittany Martinez & Zach Lemieux
August 15, 2015

Free gift wrapping & a large selection of Hallmark cards.

283-3061
www.citydrugstore.com
314 3rd. St.
M-Sat 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

"Your Health and Happiness Headquarters"