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Decade of
decorations

Backus craft fair showcases
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Board looking for new superintendent

Nelson’s contract expires June 30

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

In the midst of a declining enrollment and the need to settle a teacher’s contract, the International Falls School District is in search of a new superintendent for the 2014-2015 school year.

The Falls School Board Monday agreed to seek applicants for the superintendent’s position, which is currently held by Nordy Nelson.

“We’re sorry to see you go,” board Chairman Darrell “Boxer” Wagner said to Nelson following the board’s decision.

Nelson, whose contract expires June 30, told The Journal he will leave International Falls to pursue his St. Cloud-based consulting business part time. Before he leaves, however, he said he will help his successor transition into the role.

“Anybody coming in really needs to have someone to sit

with them,” he said. “It is helpful to have the person leaving go through the mechanics of the school’s infrastructure on what is taking place...That is really important.”

Nelson has more than 30 years of education experience under his belt, and has been with the school district since June of 2012.

In February, after just about seven months on the job, Nelson announced his resignation effective last June 30, but later in April, reversed course and accepted a one-year contract.

In February, Wagner said Nelson is one of the better superintendents the district has had. In Wagner’s 16 years on the board, he said the district had seven or eight different superintendents.

TO-DO LIST

A new superintendent will be faced with the district’s declining enrollment. An issue Nelson says will be an ongoing challenge.

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Falls City Council hears from Representative Dill

Dill discusses local priorities for bonding money

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

The International Falls City Council Monday discussed local priorities for state funding that could be awarded by the 2014 Legislature.

The discussion was prompted by a visit to the meeting by Minnesota Rep. David Dill, DFL-Crane Lake.

The project is among many requests submitted to lawmakers as part of a 2014 state bonding bill to fund construction projects. Minnesota lawmakers typically pass large bonding bills in even-numbered years. It is estimated the state will



Rep. David Dill

bond for just less than \$1 billion in the next session, expected to begin in March.

Falls Mayor Bob Anderson told Dill local officials agreed the highest priority for bonding money is a sewer project involving communities adjacent to Voyageurs National Park. Koochiching County officials are seeking \$8.5 million for the project, with \$7.3 million for an extension of sewer service to Dove Island on Rainy Lake and the remainder for a sewer system in Crane Lake.

Anderson said the No. 2 priority is \$3 million for improvements to the terminal at the

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TIME OF GIVING



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

Missy Trickel, left, and Bev Mayfield of the local Salvation Army, decorate an “angel tree” at Kmart Monday. The tree is decorated with wish lists created by Koochiching County children whose families struggle to make ends meet during the holiday season. Another tree full of wish lists is located in Menards. Shoppers have until noon Dec. 16 to drop off wrapped gifts at The Salvation Army, 1301 Third Avenue West. The organization is also still accepting applications from eligible families to fill out wish lists until Nov. 27. For more information, call 283-3394.

Ranier City Council seeks replacement councilor

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

RANIER- The Ranier City Council Monday accepted the formal resignation of one of its councilors, effective December 31.

Councilor Fred Woods will be resigning his position, effective December 31. In a letter submitted to the council, he said he has taken a job in North Dakota, and will be unable to effectively serve Ranier, due to his long absences. He will maintain his



Fred Woods

permanent residence in Ranier.

In order to fill the vacant seat on the council, the remaining councilors will appoint a replacement to serve out the remainder of the term, City Clerk Kim Nuthak said. Referencing an article on the topic from the League of Minnesota Cities, Nuthak said because less than two years remain on the term,

the council doesn’t need to hold a special election to fill the vacant seat.

According to the article, “state law does not require a council vacancy to be advertised. However, it is a good practice to provide some notice to the public before the council makes an appointment.”

A potential candidate for the seat must be a U.S. citizen living within the city limits of Ranier, Nuthak said. Those interested in the seat must submit their name and contact information to Nuthak before the council’s

committee meeting on Monday, Dec. 9, mayor Dennis Wagner said.

“At that time, we’ll discuss all the nominees and all their attributes, and make a decision and continue that way,” Wagner said.

In other business, the council passed a motion to fund the remaining balance of the project to install power at the Spruce Street landing. According to a project estimate from July from Mary Ann Kasich, the project costs \$2,649. The Koochiching Community Development As-

sociation in October granted Kasich \$2,250 to fund the project. The council Monday passed a motion to fund the remaining \$399 for the project.

Minnesota Power and Davis Electric will install the electrical box and four outlets at the landing, which will provide power for new community events, Kasich said in the estimate.

“The ability to carry out or encourage new community events is stymied by the lack of power in our central waterfront area,” Kasich said.