

Massive moose

Local man takes down moose on trip

A10



Balloon remembrance

Students recognize girl's passing

A3



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Lawsuit claims 'deliberate indifference' in jail suicide

Millions of dollars sought in damages from county, sheriff, jail staff

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

A lawsuit seeking millions of dollars in damages in the suicide death of Kathryn Schneider from Koochiching County Sheriff Brian Jespersen, jail staff and the county was filed Tuesday in U.S.

District Court in Minneapolis.

The 27-page complaint, which seeks a jury trial, claims Schneider's death March 25 in the Koochiching County Jail resulted from the "deliberate indifference" of the county, six jail staff, and Jespersen, who supervises jail staff. Jespersen's son, Andy is one of the jail staff named in the suit. Schneider, 28, was found hang-



Brian Jespersen

ing from a door in the jail.

"There are two sides to every story and only one side is being told right now," Sheriff Brian Jespersen told The Journal. He declined discussing the lawsuit further, saying the attorney representing Koochiching County, Jason M. Hiveley, of the law firm Iverson Reuvers Condon, had instructed he and his staff not to speak to media representatives about the lawsuit. Hiveley is representing Koochiching County and its staff in the lawsuit as a member of the Minnesota Counties Insurance Trust.

Hiveley told The Journal Thursday he is in the early stages of investigating the case and still evaluating whether correct protocol was followed.

"We are in the process of preparing our answer to the complaint and will be serving and filing it shortly," he stated in an email. "We will then begin the lengthy process of conducting discovery."

Hiveley said some jailers had general knowledge of Schneider's history. Asked how many suicides have occurred in the Koochiching County Jail since 2000, he said he

is aware of one other suicide that occurred in 2007.

A request to talk about the case by The Journal to a member of Schneider's family member was not answered, and instead the family member provided a telephone number for the family's attorney, Jeffrey M. Montpetit, of Sieben Carey Ltd., Minneapolis.

Montpetit was out of the office Thursday, and an email response was received Thursday afternoon after deadline.

The complaint alleges jail staff

Lawsuit to A7 >



BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

With temperatures reaching up into the mid-60s accompanying sunny skies Thursday afternoon, a relaxing stint in a rocking chair could get quite sleepy.

But rockers at the ninth annual Rockin' for a Reason event at Ballan Furniture had a good cause to rock for, with the event raising money for the local fight against breast cancer.

As Angel Maish and Robin Steele, of the Good Samaritan-International Falls team, settled into their recliners Thursday, they remarked at how comfortable they were. Expecting hard wooden rockers, they relished the cozy comfort of a plush, cushioned

rocking chair.

Both said the event was for a good cause, and Steele said the event had a personal touch for her, as her grandmother died of breast cancer.

Griffin Parish joined Maish and Steele as rockers-in-arms, and said he "just wanted to help out."

Event organizer Suzie Best said the event offered a wide variety of things for rockers to do when they found their ways out of their rockers. Highlights included a silent auction and a jewelry dealer who was donating 10 percent of her sales to the cause.

Griffin Parish enjoys the view outside Ballan Furniture from his storefront recliner Thursday.

Kelly Millerbernd puts the final touches on a whiteboard at Rockin' for a Reason Thursday.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

Report to KEDA highlights business consulting

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

Since Jan. 1, 18 people have tapped into a local resource as they've looked at starting a business or buying an existing business.

Jenny Herman, business consultant with the local Small Business Development Center, reported to the Koochiching Economic Development Authority Wednesday she's worked with 81 unique clients from Jan. 1 to Sept. 30.

KEDA to A7 >

Achievement scores detail school performance

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

International Falls Schools fell slightly in terms of proficiency, growth, and achievement gap reduction, according to new Multiple Measurement Ratings release Oct. 1 by the Minnesota Department of Education.

In the International Falls School District, Falls High School's 2014 MMR of 71.29 percent was a slight decrease from the 2013 MMR of 74.34 percent. Falls Elementary students' 2014 MMR was 51.55 percent, slightly below 2013's MMR of 55.02 percent.

Superintendent Kevin Grover said his reaction to seeing the scores was mixed: He was happy they weren't near the bottom, but disappointed they weren't higher.

MMR to A7 >