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STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

From the left, Mike Lemieux, chairman of TruStar Federal Credit Union's board of directors; Dale Johnson, TruStar's chief executive officer and president; and Bob Anderson, mayor of International Falls, dig shovels into the ground surrounded by TruStar employees, city and Koochiching County officials, and others involved with a nearly \$2 million expansion of the credit union that kicks off May 26.

BREAKING GROUND

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Before dust and debris start flying May 26 at TruStar Federal Credit Union, several officials gathered Wednesday for a groundbreaking ceremony.

"This is an exciting day for TruStar and for the community," Dale Johnson, TruStar's chief executive officer and president, said of the project that is expected to be completed next March.

Johnson, TruStar Board Chairman Mike Lemieux and International Falls Mayor Bob Anderson dug shovels into the ground next to the credit union Wednesday as a ceremonial kickoff to the nearly

\$2 million project.

The almost 8,000-square-foot addition, which will extend over all three floors of the existing building, was announced in September. It will accommodate almost 20 new positions, Johnson said.

Lemieux said the extensive project is key to moving the community as a whole forward.

"I would look at this project – the expansion of the credit union – as not necessarily a home run for the community, but maybe a single or a triple," he said. "We need a number of these to really inject a lot into this community and keep it going."

Lemieux credited city and county officials, TruStar employees as well as community

members who he said have worked hard to bring economic investment into the community.

He recalled it was a little more than 20 years ago that TruStar, formerly Boise Employees Federal Credit Union, was located in a small building on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street. It employed eight people.

"Then we built an expansion," Lemieux said of the current building. "Who would have thought 20 years ago that we'd need anything bigger?"

Johnson said when the building was expanded, a commitment was made by the board to continue the growth of the credit union.

TruStar to A7 >



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

A group of family and friends from Coon Rapids celebrate a day at their shack on the Haney Road last week. Pictured in the front is Mathew Goodwin; second row, from left are Devan Bancroft and Lukas Bancroft; third row Jim Sawyer, Austin Bancroft and Ed Bancroft. The shack the group was staying at is nicknamed "Poncho's Palace," and belongs to Ed's father, Milton Bancroft.

A day with dad

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

When I think of moments I've felt embarrassed, one always stands out to me. I can still remember my already rosy-colored cheeks turning an even more crimson shade and feeling the overwhelming desire that if I had a superpower, it would be to turn invisible.

I was in elementary school and my dad, Craig Halla, was the guest speaker in my class. He worked for Boise Woodlands at the time as a forester and he was educating our short attention spans on trees. My memory is foggy about the conversation leading up to the sentence that mortified me back then, but brings a lot of laughter today.

"Emily lives out in the woods," he told the class.

That was it. He told everyone I lived out in the woods. I remember a few kids laughed. I guess

to an elementary student, that's about as bad as life gets. My life was over.

Of course it wasn't over. I survived and have listened to the true forester talk about trees since. But have I really listened?

My dad and I decided to merge our professions last Friday and he gave me a glimpse into who he becomes when he's not at home while I asked questions for a story. To be honest, I got more out of the experience than I thought I would.

My dad now serves as the Minnesota property manager for Molpus Woodlands Group, LLC. With 286,000 acres of private land, Molpus is the largest single private landowner in Minnesota. It also owns 1.7 million acres in 17 states. Not too shabby. To get a feel of what he does, we took a drive down the Haney Road which, combined

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KOOCHICHING COUNTY BOARD

Board moves on courtroom security proposal

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

The Koochiching County District courtroom should be more secure with action taken by the Koochiching County Board this week.

The board Tuesday authorized Sheriff Perryn Hedlund to add a second courtroom armed bailiff

as a part time position and to bring to the board designs and costs for installation of a courtroom metal detector for consideration.

The board met with Hedlund and Undersheriff Jon Froemke to discuss their proposal for added courtroom security, which was reviewed earlier by court staff.

"The courtroom is always a

source of contention and tempers can change in a instant," Froemke told The Journal of the motivation for the proposal.

Now, one bailiff is on duty during court sessions, but is unable to at the same time stand guard in the courtroom and screen people coming into the courtroom, Froemke said. "Also, that bailiff is frequently tasked

with going over to the jail to get inmates for court which leaves the courtroom completely unattended," he added.

Board Chairman Wade Pavleck said he recognized the unique security concerns of the courtroom, but wondered whether implementing the proposal would invade people's privacy, according to the meeting minutes. He

also noted there are other areas of the courthouse susceptible to violent outbreaks.

The wand-type metal detector now used may be more invasive to people than a walk-through detector proposed, Hedlund said.

National security standards recommend a metal detector be a

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