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The Journal



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Koochiching County Undersheriff Bruce Grotberg comforts Littlefork-Big Falls student Taylor Wendt during a mock accident at L-BF School Wednesday afternoon.

Board monitoring snow melt impact

Dam owners to attempt to avoid high peak lake levels

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Water regulation officials are considering the risk of high levels in the area's lakes as the deep snow melts across the Rainy River basin and are taking action intended to avoid it.

"We're concerned and trying to be proactive, rather than wait till the last minute," said Lee Grim, a member of the Water Levels Committee of the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board.

The Water Levels Committee is monitoring conditions closely and directing the dam owners at Rainy Lake and Namakan Reservoir to adjust outflows with the goal of avoiding high peak lake levels this spring, said a news release from the board.

The action is being taken because of the very deep snow pack in the region resulting from the exceptionally cold temperatures and regular snowfall this winter. It's intended by the Water Levels Committee to provide additional storage room in both lakes for the anticipated strong freshet flow.

Flood to A7 ➤

Littlefork to hold special meeting

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The Littlefork City Council and Littlefork Medical Center Board of Directors will conduct a special joint meeting at 5 p.m. Monday at the Littlefork City Hall.

The meeting has been scheduled to consider a formal request to Koochiching County for financing, establishing a taxing district and incorporating the city of Littlefork into the taxing district to raise funds for the LMC facility.

This meeting is the first step toward creating a taxing district to support the LMC, which is owned by the city and in need of major improvements to become viable long-term care facility, Koochiching County Administration Director Teresa Briggs said.

The request will be sent to the Koochiching County Board. Briggs said the board will consider the request at its April 15 meeting. Following that, a public hearing to take input on establishing a district will be scheduled.

Meeting to A7 ➤

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

Broken glass everywhere, and sheet metal folded up like origami? No, it's not the latest Michael Bay blockbuster, but a mock accident staged by local emergency response personnel at Littlefork-Big Falls School Wednesday afternoon.

Students gathered around a smashed car in the L-BF parking lot while the driver, Agim Bekteshi, staggered around the car, trying to coax the three passengers out, one of which, Karsyn Wendt, had already "died."

Koochiching County Undersheriff Bruce Grotberg, also a member of the Littlefork Fire Department, pulled Freddie Reiersen from the crowd and told him to call 911, and give the dispatcher as much detail as he could. The dispatcher knew it was a drill, Grotberg said, but didn't know what kind of situation they'd be responding to.

The Littlefork Ambulance Service and Littlefork Fire Department arrived soon after and started treating the students. Responders pulled Emily Knaeble from the backseat of the car and started treating her injuries. Responders used a "jaws of life" rescue tool to get a door off the car to reach the other backseat passenger, Alli Fairchild.

Accident to A7 ➤



STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

Littlefork Fire Department crew members use a "jaws of life" saw to cut the door off the vehicle badly damaged as a part of the mock accident.



L-BF student Taylor Wendt tries to get to front seat passenger Karsyn Wendt during the mock accident at the school Wednesday.

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