

OPINION

OUR VIEW

A deadline to be met

Koochiching County homeowners and business owners who experienced flood damage to their property will play an important role in helping to determine whether financial assistance may be available.

Koochiching County commissioners this week agreed to publish a survey in an effort to collect information from property owners about physical damage to private property, other than main dwellings, caused by the flooding.

But, as county officials stressed, the participation of property owners is crucial to the process — it’s the only way to collect accurate information to determine if enough damage has been caused to qualify Koochiching County for private business relief programs, such as those through the Small Business Administration.

We urge anyone who experienced damage to get online, complete the survey and do it now. The link to the survey will be posted on the county’s website, www.co.koochiching.mn.us. The survey must be completed by Sept. 3 in order for the county to meet a deadline to apply for a low-interest loan program for private businesses.

County Assessor Len Peterson said it’s critical people understand they need to take the survey so the county has a complete picture of the flood damage. Peterson assessed property, but that did not include items like cribs and docks. County staff have already collected data on damage to private structures.

While paper copies of the survey can be obtained from county Administration Director Teresa Briggs, completing the survey online is a more efficient way to provide the information. Paper surveys require county staff to rehandle the information, costing manpower hours.

We understand not everyone has access to or feels comfortable using a computer or the Internet, but perhaps those folks can tap into the expertise of family and friends, or even courthouse staff, to get a hand completing the online survey.

Flood relief programs that provide financial assistance to members of this community may be available. We won’t know if we’re eligible if we don’t provide the needed information in the most efficient way by the Sept. 3 deadline. As a community, this is a deadline we must meet.

How to contact your lawmakers

FEDERAL OFFICES

President Barack Obama
Democrat
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20500
202-456-1111
Website:
www.whitehouse.gov
E-mail:
president@whitehouse.gov

U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan
2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515
202-225-6211
Website: www.nolan.house.gov
Facebook: US Rep Rick Nolan
Twitter: @USRepRickNolan

Duluth Office of Congressman Rick Nolan
11 East Superior Street
Suite 125
Duluth, MN 55802
Phone: 218-464-5095
Fax: 218-464-5098

Brainerd Office of Congressman Rick Nolan
Brainerd City Hall
501 Laurel Street
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-454-4078

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar
Democrat
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-3244

Minnesota Office:
1200 Washington Avenue

South, Suite 250
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612-727-5220
Website:
www.klobuchar.senate.gov

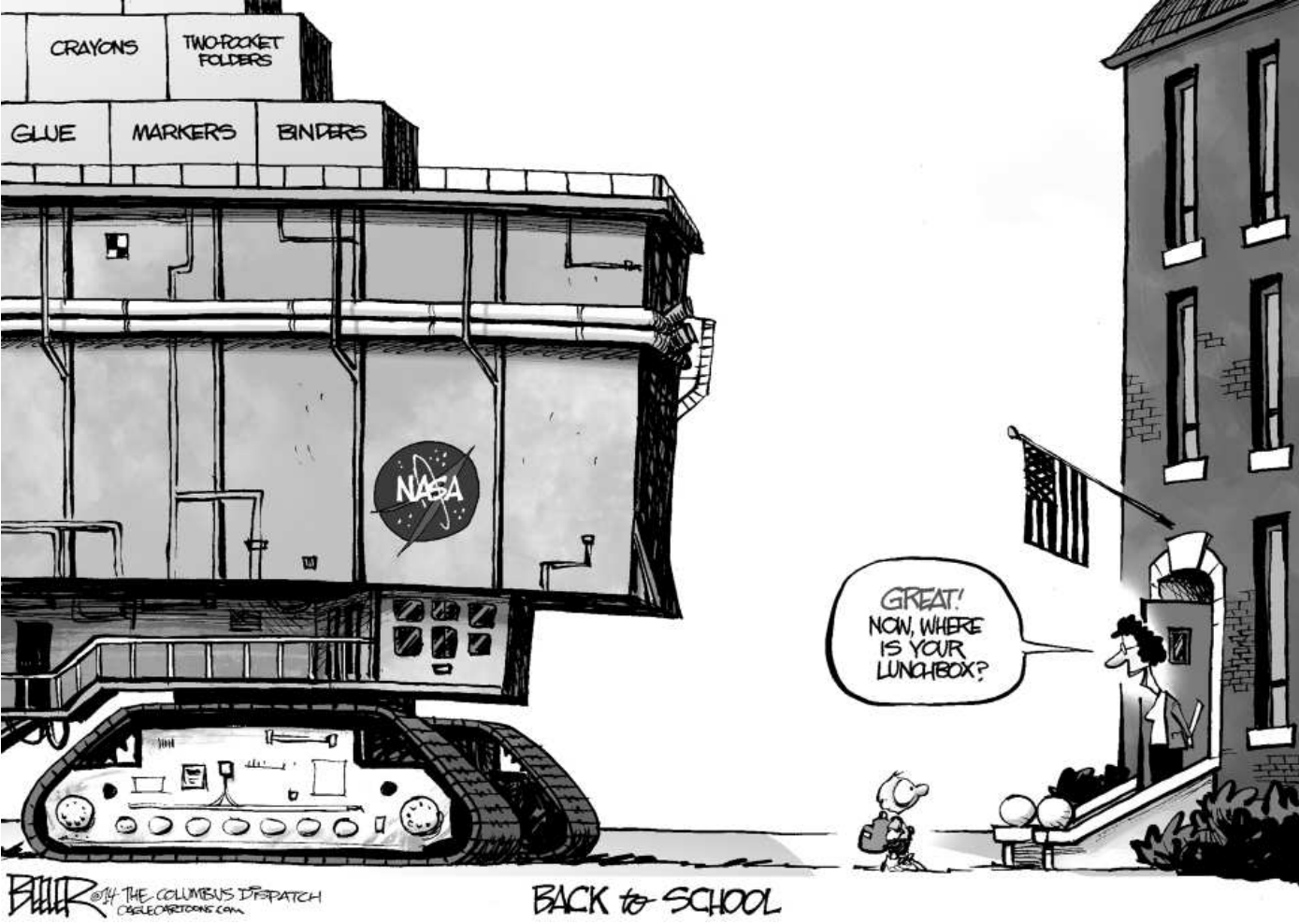
U.S. Sen. Al Franken
Democrat
Senate Hart Building 320
Washington DC 20510
202-224-5641
Website:
www.alfranken.com
E-Mail:
info@franken.senate.gov

STATE OFFICES

Gov. Mark Dayton
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN, 55155
800-657-3717
E-mail:
Mark.Dayton@state.mn.us

Rep. David Dill
571 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190
800-339-0466
rep.david.dill@house.mn
Assistant: Joan Harrison

Sen. Tom Bakk
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol, Room 226
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
Capitol Office phone:
(651) 296-8881
Email:
www.senate.mn/
senatorbakkemail



GUEST COLUMN

Rage, rage against the editing of the songs

If you’re frustrated by the skimpiness of “fun-size” candy, wait until you hear some “fun-size” songs.

On August 1, Calgary Top 40 station AMP Radio became the first station in the world to switch to the new QuickHitz format. Developed by Vancouver-based SpakNet Communications, QuickHitz (without having to consult with composers, singers or musicians) whittles songs down to half their length, so twice as many can be crammed into an hour.

Forget solutions to world hunger, AIDS and genocide! What the world has really been needing is songs such as “Play Half That Funky Music, White Boy,” “Eight and One-Quarter 12-Packs of Beer On The Wall” and “Me” (sorry, Janis, no time for “and Bobby McGee”).

Let’s kick Thomas Edison and Jonas Salk off their pedestals and give the QuickHitz folks the prominence they deserve! I’m delighted that there are experts out there who can tell us that stairways takes up too much of the listener’s precious time.

There’s really a burning need for Led Zeppelin to



Danny TYREE

TYRADES!

sing, “And she’s buying an express elevator to heaven.”

SparkNet supposedly did two years of exhaustive research before launching the format, and found that hip young people with shortened attention spans really crave such a revolution. Do we really need music watered down for ADHD sufferers? When the QuickHitz gimmick wears thin, will we hear DJs blaring, “All diverticulitis-based songs, all the time”?

Proponents ask us not to shoot the messenger over the attention-span message. Of course not, because the reverberations from the gunshot would probably drown out three whole albums.

Sure, let’s cater to microscopic attention spans among those who will be reading your nursing home charts someday. Hilarity ensues.

We are assured that editing is an art and that editors will adjust songs with a scalpel, but all I can picture is finding a surgical sponge sewn up in “Bohemian Rhapsody.” I suspect that the editing process will become as aggravating as runaway spelling autocorrect programs. Look for every occurrence of “Oh, baby, baby” to wind up as “Oh, twins!”

The format magnanimously gives an artist twice as much of the intangible asset “exposure,” but of course it also gives twice as much exposure to the OTHER artists competing for consumers’ limited dollars. Those doggone “level playing fields” — they’ll make your head spin faster than a 78 r.p.m. record.

One industry figure brags, “A lot of listeners won’t even notice what they’re missing.” That may be true enough (my wife’s grandfather once felt neglected as church organist and bet himself

he could slip a secular song into his repertoire, before launching into a slower arrangement of “Roll Out The Barrel” that never raised an eyebrow), but it’s an insult to the more discerning listeners.

And what caliber of sponsors will these “won’t even notice” stations attract? (“Don’t even think about shopping anywhere except Murphy Motors. And don’t think about the air bags, anti-lock brakes or alarm systems, either. You’ll sleep better.”)

We really are not set up to handle the inevitable social upheaval if the QuickHitz format succeeds. Romance will suffer (“Listen, honey, they’re playing our — never mind”), concert roadies will be replaced with split-second NASCAR pit crews and underemployed musicians will wander the streets with signs proclaiming, “Will perform self-indulgent guitar solos for food — as long as it’s food that doesn’t mess with my diverticulitis diet, dude.”

Tyree’s weekly column is distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons Inc. newspaper syndicate.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Natural resources based industries under fire

We are very pleased that Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Commissioner John Linc Stine dashed off a letter to the federal EPA criticizing that agency’s absurd decision regarding a water variance for Mesabi Nugget. We roundly applaud him for doing so.

But for this issue to have reached the level of a state environmental agency publicly bristling at a federal environmental agency speaks to just how bad and disgusting is the Washington regulatory offensive against natural resource-based industries throughout the country.

And it is attack underway with the full blessing of the President Barack Obama administration. In fact, it

is actually devised right out of the White House’s regulatory game plan.

The MPCA and Mesabi Nugget worked attentively with the Environmental Protection Agency’s Region V office in Chicago to get a water quality variance for iron nugget facility near Hoyt Lakes. In 2012, the variance was granted _ and for good reason. All the company wanted was some time to identify, install and test technologies needed for the proper treatment of the four pollutants at issue in Mesabi Nugget’s water discharges.

But a few months ago, EPA officials decided that was a big no-no, even though they had actually granted the variance in 2012. So, the EPA overrode

its own ruling. Now there’s a real functional agency.

The national narrative on the EPA’s regulatory war has been focused on coal. But that’s far, far too narrow.

The Obama administration and its minions at various agencies, especially the EPA, have launched a personal assault on all natural resource-based businesses. And that most definitely includes the iron ore industry. Taken to the next level, that means the Iron Range is targeted.

Minnesota’s Democratic U.S. Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken should be speaking out loud and clear and often about that threat that is coming directly from the White House.

Much to his credit, we do hear such vocal objec-

tions from 8th District U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan. But Franken and Klobuchar are pretty much mum. And in being so docile on this issue, they are not serving as watchdogs for the region ... they are being lap dogs.

Enough, for crying out loud. What is at stake is the very survival of the Iron Range. Minnesota’s elected officials need to stand tall and be brazen and outspoken to help ward off this continual assault on natural resources-based industries.

Rick Nolan has done admirably well in this regard. But the state’s U.S. senators are using pea-shooters against federal regulatory missile launchers.

Mesabi Daily News, Aug. 2

The Journal welcomes letters from readers

Letters should be limited to 500 words or less. Longer letters may be edited. Letters must be signed and include the telephone number and address of the letter writer. Only the author’s city address will be published.

Mail letters to The Journal, 1602 Highway 71, International Falls 56649. Letters can also be sent by e-mail to laurel@ifallsjournal.com.

Candidate letter policy

The beginning of 2014 brought a new policy to The Journal. A charge of \$30 will be required to publish letters to the editor from candidates or about candidates. The letters must be 500 words or less and the fee must be paid prior to the letter being published. The name and city of the author will be published with the letter.

Letters may be emailed to laurel@ifallsjournal.com. The Journal will publish a deadline for publication of paid election letters prior to the Aug. 12 primary and Nov. 4 general elections.