

Royal tradition
Indus celebrates homecoming

B8



Successful Senate
RRCC Student Senate sets annual goals

B7



Find us on
Twitter
Find us on
Facebook



The Journal

**Saturday,
September 20, 2014**

International Falls, Minnesota

www.ifallsjournal.com

\$1

Team: People needed to shape the future

Community members asked to become stewards

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

In response to recent economic changes in Borderland, a community call-to-action event is scheduled for Thursday.

Convened by the Koochiching/International Falls Economic Response effort, the “forward thinking discussion” will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Backus Community Center.

The effort was started after the termination of 265 permanent jobs at the local paper mill in 2013. That was followed by the shutdown of Resolute paper mill in Fort Frances and flooding this summer. All the events have played a role in affecting the local economy.

Members of the effort’s Long-term Vision and Strategy Team, which is sponsoring the meeting, said it’s time for community action to change the economic situation.

Jay Bartkowski told The Journal there have a a lot of tough times and days without much good news in the community.

“We want to change the paradigm a bit and switch to more

good news, with people taking action and taking control of the future,” he said. “We’re hoping to see people motivated to get involved.”

Michael Wellcome, also a member of the team, said the time is now to effect change.

“We want to energize the community to participate in creating our future,” he said. “No one else will do it for us. It’s totally up to us. Do we want to stand around and watch our future go by or participate in taking part in creating a vision of what we want to be in five or 10 years?”

Key to answering that question is the people of the community, Wellcome said.

“It’s not necessarily our elected officials that do this, it’s a groundswell of support from average Janes and average Joes,” Wellcome said.

The community meeting will feature presentations from Bemidji Leads and Advance Hermantown, intended to help this community learn what those cities have done to change their economic situations. For more information on those organizations see the websites at <http://www.bemidjileads.com/> and <http://www.advancehermantown.com/>

Randy Lasky, president of The Northspan Group Inc., has been facilitating meetings of several response teams since the

announcement of the local paper mill layoffs.

He said much has been done leading up to next week’s meeting, when community members will be asked to step up and get involved as “stewards.”

Stewards are ordinary people from all walks of life who care deeply about the community, according to materials describing Thursday’s meeting. Lasky said it’s important the community be viewed as all of Koochiching County and International Falls.

Stewards will be actively involved in shaping the future of the community, he said.

Future to A7 ►



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Borderland resident Tiffany Barnett snapped a photo of Cal and Rachel Litwiller as they completed the final leg of a journey that took them from the Gulf of Mexico to Rainy River.

Couple carries out tradition in Rainy River

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

What started as a simple request to take a picture turned into a story Tiffany Barnett wanted to share.

She did that by escorting Cal and Rachel Litwiller to The Journal where they described an adventure that would take them from the Gulf of Mexico at Grand Island, La., to the top of the nation at Rainy River Wednesday.

Barnett was walking her dog along the Rainy River when she saw the Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, couple dipping the front wheel of Cal’s recumbent three-wheeled sport cycle into the river and asked her to take a picture of them. As she used their camera to snap a few photos, they told her about their journey.

Cal, 68, has participated 11 times in RAGBRAI: The Register’s Annual Great Bicycle



Cal Litwiller completed bicycle trip that started last summer and ended Wednesday by dipping the front wheel of his sport cycle into the Rainy River.

Ride Across Iowa, a seven-day bicycle ride across the state. Heading into its 42nd year, RAGBRAI is the oldest, largest and longest bicycle touring

event in the world, says its website.

Tradition for riders in RAGBRAI is to dip the rear wheel of the bicycle in the Missouri

River at the start of the ride and the front wheel in the Mississippi River at the finish.

Biker to A7 ►

KEDA declared financially fit by auditors

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

The Koochiching Economic Development Authority Wednesday considered its 2013 audit with the consultants who conducted the audit, and found nothing wrong with the audit review.

Ryan Jarvi, of Walker, Giroux, and Hahne LLC from Virginia, spoke with the board in a conference call, and said the company’s opinion on KEDA’s financial statements is that they were presented fairly.

“That’s the best opinion you can have,” Jarvi said. “So that’s basically saying your financial statements in this packet are fairly presented.”

As far as operations go, Jarvi said he didn’t think there were any weaknesses in how the KEDA conducts its business. Since the company’s first audit of the KEDA in 2007, he said things have “gotten a lot better.”

“You guys are doing a great job, with the board and the staff, and everyone involved is doing a very good job with the organization as a whole,” Jarvi said.

In other business, the board approved two proposed 2015 budgets, one for KEDA and one for the cold weather testing facility. The KEDA budget is fairly consistent with recent years, KEDA Director Paul Nevanen said.

The total income for the KEDA on the proposed 2015 budget is \$281,950, with \$128,553, or 46 percent, coming from cold weather testing center income and reserves. Grants from the city of International Falls, Koochiching



Paul Nevanen



Pete Kalar

KEDA to A7 ►

**INSIDE
TO REACH US**

OBITUARIES/A6
PHONE: (218) 285-7411

OPINION/A8
FAX: (218) 285-7206

SPORTS/B1

CLASSIFIEDS/B3
ONLINE: IFALLSJOURNAL.COM OR FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

COMICS/B6

EDUCATION/B7

VOLUME 5
NUMBER 76