

The hand that feeds

Harsh winter prompts deer feeding program

A10



I've been everywhere

Indus class tracks Flat Stanley

A9



The Journal



Saturday,
February 22, 2014

International Falls, Minnesota

www.ifallsjournal.com

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STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE

Four-year-old students in Missy Walls' afternoon class work on an estimating and counting exercise Wednesday. An all-day preschool section for both 3- and 4-year-olds will be offered for the first time next year at no cost to parents following action by the Falls School Board Tuesday.

Board: Thumbs up to early investment

Action supports local preschool program

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

The first school experiences for many people happened at age 5 when they entered kindergarten.

Now, however, that experience occurs two years earlier as youngsters enter the school system as preschoolers.

More Borderland families may be able to have that preschool opportunity next year with action taken by the International Falls School Board this week.

The board Tuesday agreed to offer an additional all-day preschool option for both 3- and 4-year-olds at Falls Elementary as well as eliminated tuition fees for all sections.

The move is "huge," for the district, according to Falls Elementary and West End Elementary principal Melissa Tate.

"I feel like investing early is an investment that will pay off in the long run," she told board members. "You really get more bang for your buck."

An open house to register preschool and kindergarten students is set to run from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and 6-7:30 p.m.



Parents of preschool students who will enroll in kindergarten next year can register their children during an open house Monday. The open house will feature tours of the school and runs from 10 a.m. — 2 p.m. and 6-7:30 p.m. in the Falls Elementary library.

Monday in the Falls Elementary library. Tate says registrants will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis.

"This is our first time offering free tuition and we felt this was the most fair way to give everybody the opportunity to choose the schedule they want," she said.

Next year's academic options are

■ 3-year-olds: 8:30-11 a.m.

Tuesday-Friday; 12:30-3 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 8:30 a.m. — 3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.

■ 4-year-olds: 8:30-11 a.m. Monday-Friday; 12:30-3 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8:30 a.m. — 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Tate said there are several local at-risk families who would benefit from enrolling their child in preschool.

"We are trying to close our

achievement gap as we start to invest in younger children," she said.

In addition, Tate said research supports that kids involved in a solid preschool program experience better graduation rates, and crime rates in the community go down. "Again, it's about investing early."

Preschool to A7 ►

Public pianos coming to Ranier

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

RANIER- The Ranier City Council Tuesday approved a motion allowing the Ranier Recreation Club to move forward with grant applications.

Roberta Hagen, giving a presentation prepared by Lindsey Goulet, informed the council of the two programs the club is working on, and requested action on a motion that would allow the club to move forward with grant applications for one of the projects. Goulet and Hagen are members of the club's board, and Goulet prepares applications for the grants, Hagen said.

The Ranier "Keys to the City" project would place three pianos in public spaces for anyone to play. A similar project, the "Play Me, I'm Yours" project places painted pianos in public spaces worldwide for anyone to play, and was launched in 2008 by British artist Luke Jerram, according to the project website.

Ranier to A7 ►

City to seek sewer board members

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

International Falls will advertise for two citizens to serve on the North Koochiching Sanitary Sewer Board.

The action to advertise was approved 4-1, with Councilor Cynthia Jaksa casting the dissenting vote.

The vacancies were created after Falls Mayor Bob Anderson told the council the city was out of compliance with its charter, which prohibits city employees from serving as appointed members of boards or commissions. Anderson sent letters of thanks to Shawn Mason, city Economic Development Authority director, and Falls Building Inspector Kelly Meyers, who served on the board, and asked them to continue serving until new members are appointed.

Prior to the action to advertise, Jaksa moved to appoint one member of the council to the sewer board and advertise the second vacancy. Jaksa suggested she be



Cynthia
Jaksa

Council to A7 ►

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NUMBER 16

Opens
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