

OPINION

OUR VIEW

History connects us to the future

We're pleased by a local effort to meet with state officials about the future of the Grand Mound Historical Site.

The site includes the Grand Mound and four smaller burial sites built by the Laurel Indians 5,000 years ago along the Rainy River. Trails lead around the mounds from a visitor center opened to help educate visitors about the mounds and the people that built them.

The site was closed by the Minnesota Historical Center in 2003 when state funding was increasingly tightening and attendance at the site was declining.

Now, it's time to reconsider the future of the site and to include all who have an interest in it. That group must include local, regional and state groups and officials, representatives of the native communities on both sides of the border, as well as community tourism leaders.

Clearly, public opinion is divided on the appropriate use of the site because it is considered a burial site, similar to a cemetery. However, the opportunities for educating people about the historic, cultural and spiritual significance of the site must also be weighed.

No one wants to see the site used in a disrespectful way. In fact, just the opposite is true. A successful example of a way to handle Grand Mound is just across Rainy River at the Kay-nah-chi-wah-nug Historical Center near Stratton, Ontario. That site has been called a sacred living link between the past and the present. It was designated a site of national historic significance in 1970.

That connection to our past grows increasingly important as our society hurtles into the future, and may be even more important for today's youth than ever.

We urge all who have an interest to consider the value of the site and the value of sharing the site with the public in some way. The Grand Mound Historical Site offers an opportunity to respectfully celebrate the cultures and the past that have made us what we are today.



PAID ELECTION LETTER

Duties of your representative to the Minnesota House

To the editor,

While the Legislature is in session our state representative needs to be laser focused on fighting legislation that helps the citizens here in District 3A and opposing legislation that hinders growth and opportunity in our district. Our representative should also fight against legislation that imposes unjust and unneeded taxes and regulations that harm the quality of life and the long-term economic viability of our area. Our representative needs to work with all of the legislators to make the state of Minnesota competitive not only regionally but also globally by implementing policies that are attractive to business and job growth. During session the representative needs to take time to meet constituents and reply to their thoughts and concerns and to be their voice on the House floor. Our representative needs to be a strong voice for the people of our rural district and not side with the metropolitan legislators on issues that only benefit the metro area. Rural Minnesota needs a person that will advocate for rural issues. The House Representative should also update local governments, counties and cities, of what progress has been made mid-session and what will be fought for, or against, in the second half of the session.

The work done while in session is only part of the necessary work to be done by your state Rep. During the other nine months, when not in session, your state rep should be engaging locals on their needs and concerns. The rep needs to meet with all local governments (counties,

cities, and townships) and not only update them on the last legislative session but to also listen to their concerns and needs and to develop a plan on how to address those needs in the upcoming year.

The rep should also attend other governmental meeting such as the local economic development authorities and see how to help and act as a conduit between local and state government. A Minnesota house rep should attend community events and engage citizens on a daily basis to hear their ideas and what direction they see their communities going. Most importantly as a state rep, one must take the time to meet constituents and to listen to them. In doing this the rep will be able to do his job, which is to represent the citizens of the district and to be their voice on the floor of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Listening to, talking with, engaging the people of Northern Minnesota and being their voice in St. Paul is not to be taken lightly and is of the utmost importance for our government to function properly and for us to have a true voice in St. Paul. I, Eric Johnson, look forward to being your next state rep and I will work hard to be that strong voice to bring northern Minnesota to St. Paul and work to have less St. Paul in northern Minnesota.

**Eric Johnson
International Falls,
Minnesota**

Editor's note: This letter and previous letters authored by Eric Johnson have been and are paid for on his behalf by the Committee to Elect Eric Johnson, 409 14th St. W. #2, International Falls, Minnesota 56649.

PAID ELECTION LETTER

Schwartz a great choice for Falls center ward councilor

To the editor,

Joe Schwartz's accomplishments for our community are many. I have gotten to know Joe through the Rec Commission where he has faithfully worked hard for the youth of this community.

Joe has served on the Rec Commission for 15 years. The last six years, Joe has been chairman where he has great leadership.

Joe always has the safety of our children his top priority. Several important policies have been passed in the last year that truly benefit our youth. Some of the policies passed are background checks for all programs sponsored by the Rec Commission, drug policy, code of conduct policy, discipline policy. These policies passed under his chairmanship have made it safer for our youth.

Joe also formed different committees in the Rec Commission to make it run smoother.

I am currently serving on the Rec Commission and Joe never misses

a meeting. I am totally impressed with his work ethic. Recently Joe spearheaded the purchase of an electric Zamboni which will make the air cleaner in Kerry Park Arena, which also makes it safer for our children.

Joe also is on the Koochiching Labor Assembly and the last two years has been chairman for the Labor Day Picnic.

Joe was a basketball coach for 13 years, which included elementary basketball through high school.

Joe is a graduate of

the Blandin Community Leadership Foundation. He also was an original ABB Committee member – Save Backus Committee.

Joe has been a Boise employee for 24 years. He has been a financial officer for Machinist Local W33.

Finally, I would like to say that Joe is an experienced and dedicated community servant that works extremely hard for International Falls.

**Mike Holden
International Falls,
MN**

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

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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.