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# The Journal



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## City has new fire chief

**Mannausau takes oath of office**

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

International Falls has a new fire chief, with the presentation Monday of the badge and swearing in by Falls Mayor Bob Anderson.

Adam Mannausau took an oath of office Monday in front of many friends and family during the Falls City Council meeting. He will spend one month learning the duties and responsibilities of the position with current Fire Chief Jerry Jensen, who retires after more than 30 years with the department and 16 years as chief May 26.

As the council accepted Jensen's retirement letter, they thanked him for his service and wished him well. Anderson and councilors noted Jensen's accomplishments during his tenure including a fire prevention program and addition of paramedics to the Falls Ambulance Service.

A "five bugle" pin, signifying his rank in the department, was placed on Mannausau's uniform by his mother Mary Mannausau and friend Alex Ringhofer.

Under the city charter, the mayor appoints the chief, with approval by the council. Four candidates for the position were forwarded from the the Falls

**Fire chief to A7 >**

## Board to consider 'early outs' for next year

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

The bell at International Falls' three public schools may be ringing a little earlier during some school days next year.

Falls and West End Elementary Principal Melissa Tate asked Falls School Board members Monday to consider permitting a number of "early outs" during the school year to allow for administration and staff to meet to analyze data and improve the culture of the schools.

The trend of early outs is growing across many school districts as a way for staff to get together and ultimately better a school's environment. If the board approves early outs during a future meeting, students would be released from school earlier on the set days.

"We really need time to come together to look at data," Tate said. "Right now we have lots of data at our finger tips...but there is not enough time to come together."

Falls High School Principal

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STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE

A colorful group of dancers make their way around the drummer's circle during the grand entry of the tenth annual Ziigwan International Unity Traditional Powwow Saturday at Rainy River Community College.

## POWWOW PRIDE: RRCC CELEBRATES SPRING

Even with a light dusting of snow Saturday, spring was welcomed at Rainy River Community College during the tenth annual Ziigwan International Unity Traditional Powwow. The event, which focuses on tradition and the creation and rekindling of friendships, was organized by the Anishinaabe Student Coalition with guidance of RRCC Indigenous Services Director Steven Briggs. Bessie Mainville, one of the elders taking part in the celebration, in English and Ojibwa said, "I am happy to see the people come together and celebrate dance and songs."

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TURN TO **B10** TO SEE MORE FROM THE POWWOW.

**Right: A young dancer dons a feather headdress for Saturday's event.**



**Above: Cousins Harmony Brown, left, and Arianna January, giggle and dance to the beat of the drum.**

## Nolan pledges to assist in rail concerns

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

**RANIER** — As a Canadian National Railway train sounded its horn and idled on a lift bridge spanning Fort Frances and Ranier, Congressman Rick Nolan last Wednesday pledged to initiate talks with state and federal officials about moving a U.S. Customs and Border Protection rail inspection facility further away from the crossing at Ranier to alleviate a variety of rail crossing concerns.

Nolan met with members of the Ranier City Council and Koochiching County Board to discuss concerns of which they said they have made CN officials aware, but CN has not resolved.

Led by Mayor Dennis Wagner, the meeting seemed timed right

as windows in the Ranier Community Building provided a view of a CN train blocking the Ranier crossing, illustrating what has led to the meeting: the lift bridge normally remains in the down position impeding boat traffic on the Rainy River; the horn blasts a couple of times and the train idles, allowing Nolan and his staff to experience the noise concerns; and the crossing was blocked, as also occurs on County Road 24, known as the Van Lynn Road.

Tony Jackson, CBP port director in International Falls, told The Journal Tuesday, "CBP is continuing to work with Koochi-



**Rick Nolan**

ching County and the city of Ranier in developing a secure and efficient rail corridor. We continue to be open for discussion with any issues associated with this."

CN Railway spokesman Patrick Waldron said he would look into the proposed solution.

Key concerns involve safety, the economy, and inconvenience, local officials said. They told Nolan in Ranier during the summer of 2013:

- 12 minutes is the average time the crossing was blocked by each train.
- 44 minutes is the longest time the crossing there was blocked during a 31-day study period.
- 20 trains per day used the crossing.
- 3.6 hours was the average

time the crossing was blocked per day.

They told Nolan emergency services are delayed getting into Ranier and to the east end of the dead-end County Road 24, when trains are idle on crossings as they slow or stop for inspections by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol officials or American train crews are traded for Canadian crews as the trains head into Canada.

Ranier and county officials provided Nolan and his staff with background about the concerns as well as possible solutions.

Wagner and county Engineer Joe Sutherland told Nolan the best possible solution is to relocate the CBP inspection facility south of its existing site, which

**Nolan to A7 >**