

Pioneer Days set
Old-time festival returns to Birchdale July 13-14

A3



Grand opening
Family Dollar is located on Highway 53 and 11th Street

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Franken to meet on impact, recovery of Boise job termination

U.S. senator to meet with local officials at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

U.S. Sen. Al Franken will discuss with local officials Wednesday the economic impact of the anticipated elimination by October of 30 percent of the workforce at the Boise Inc. paper mill in International Falls and plans for recovery.

Koochiching County commissioners set a special session for 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at the third floor courtroom in the county courthouse. The meeting is a part of the Path Forward Committee, made up of International Falls Mayor Bob Anderson, Falls Councilor Pete Kalar, and Koochiching County Commissioners Wade Pavleck



Al Franken

and Rob Ecklund. Boise officials have said the job elimination will allow the mill to be more competitive and help retain the remaining 580 jobs at the mill. Anderson told The Journal that the meeting with Franken is a great opportunity for community leaders to share their concerns.

“Hopefully, he and his staff will be able to assist the community in economic recovery,” said Anderson. Franken, said Anderson, were among the first people to contact community officials after the May 2 announcement of the job reduction at the mill to express his concerns for the community, Boise employees and families that will be impacted.

Ecklund also said he’s pleased that Franken is coming to the Falls to show interest and throw whatever support he can to the

community with the Boise job curtailment.

“I think it’s good that so far, two of three federal legislators, as well as state legislators, have responded to offer us whatever assistance they can,” said Ecklund.

Local, regional and state officials met with 8th District Congressman Rick Nolan on June 7. Prior to that meeting, a June 4 forum on the impact and recovery of the community

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STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE

Keeping watch

A white-tail deer keeps a watchful eye as her young fawn grabs a snack Tuesday morning. The pair were spotted along County Road 24, also known as the Van Lynn Road, with an older fawn seen nearby. According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource’s website, white-tailed deer mate during the months of October to December. The male deer, or buck, plays no role in raising fawns. After the female deer, or doe, gives birth to one or two fawns and nurses them, she leads them into secluded habitat within her familiar home range. The doe then leaves them alone for extended periods of time, returning periodically to nurse them and to relocate them to new secluded habitat. This pattern will continue for up to three



weeks. By this time the fawns are mature enough to keep up with their mother and able to race out of real or perceived danger. DNR officials urge

people who may find fawns hidden by their mothers to stay away and leave them alone as the mother will return to the fawns.

Falls schools seek security upgrades

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

The safety of students and staff at Independent School District No. 361’s three schools will be enhanced when they return for the first day of school next fall.

During a special meeting of the board Thursday members agreed to spend about \$79,000 for improvements that will make for more secure entrances at Falls High School, Falls Elementary and West End Elementary. Construction is expected to be next week.

“With our society today, media emphasis and the public opinion, it’s necessary to restrict open access to our school facilities when the students are here during their education day,” said Falls Superintendent Nordy Nelson.

Although the Dec. 14 Sandy Hook Elementary shootings might be in the backs of people’s minds, the board has remained in the forefront of making schools safer for students and staff. Last week, board



Nordy Nelson

members directed Nelson and other school administrators to begin the process of developing a plan to better secure the district schools’ entry and lobby areas as soon as possible. According to the superintendent,

district Safety Director Jeff Veeder, last spring secured quotes for the project in anticipation that future action would be taken.

“I think it’s important we get it moving as quick as possible,” board member Willi Kostiuk said last week. “I’d like to see that by the first day of school, the elementary and the high school have some kind of restriction on how to get in.”

Upgrades to the schools’ security will include electronic accesses, panic buttons and cameras. Nelson said no walls will be torn down or added as part of the renovation process, however,

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KEDA meets on variety of topics

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

The Koochiching Economic Development Authority Board met in Littlefork Wednesday for its regular meeting.

The meeting drew few members of the public, but KEDA Director Paul Nevanen said that’s understandable given the pleasant summer weather experienced during the evening.

A variety of issues and projects were discussed, Nevanen reported.

Among the projects reviewed at the meeting was an update on the Renewable Energy Clean Air Project, a waste to energy project known as RECAP.

Nevanen said the project is funded with state and federal dollars through the end of the design and permitting process. Once those processes are complete, a decision by local officials about whether to proceed to the construction phase is expected, possibly next summer.

“We’re at the homestretch of design and permitting,” Nevanen told The Journal.

Board members also discussed a team made up of local officials to find ways to respond to the economic impact of the loss of 265 jobs at the Boise Inc. paper mill in International Falls.

Nevanen said several committees have been formed with community members to cover various aspects of response. A committee involved with business retention, long-term job creation and economic diversification is being formed.

“It’s a good approach and they have a good process in place,” he said. “Now is the time to focus on getting beyond initial emotions.”

Nevanen reported that a cold-weather testing client is just finishing use of the cold box facilities. He said the cold-weather testing season has been strong, adding that Minnesota Department of Employment and Eco-

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