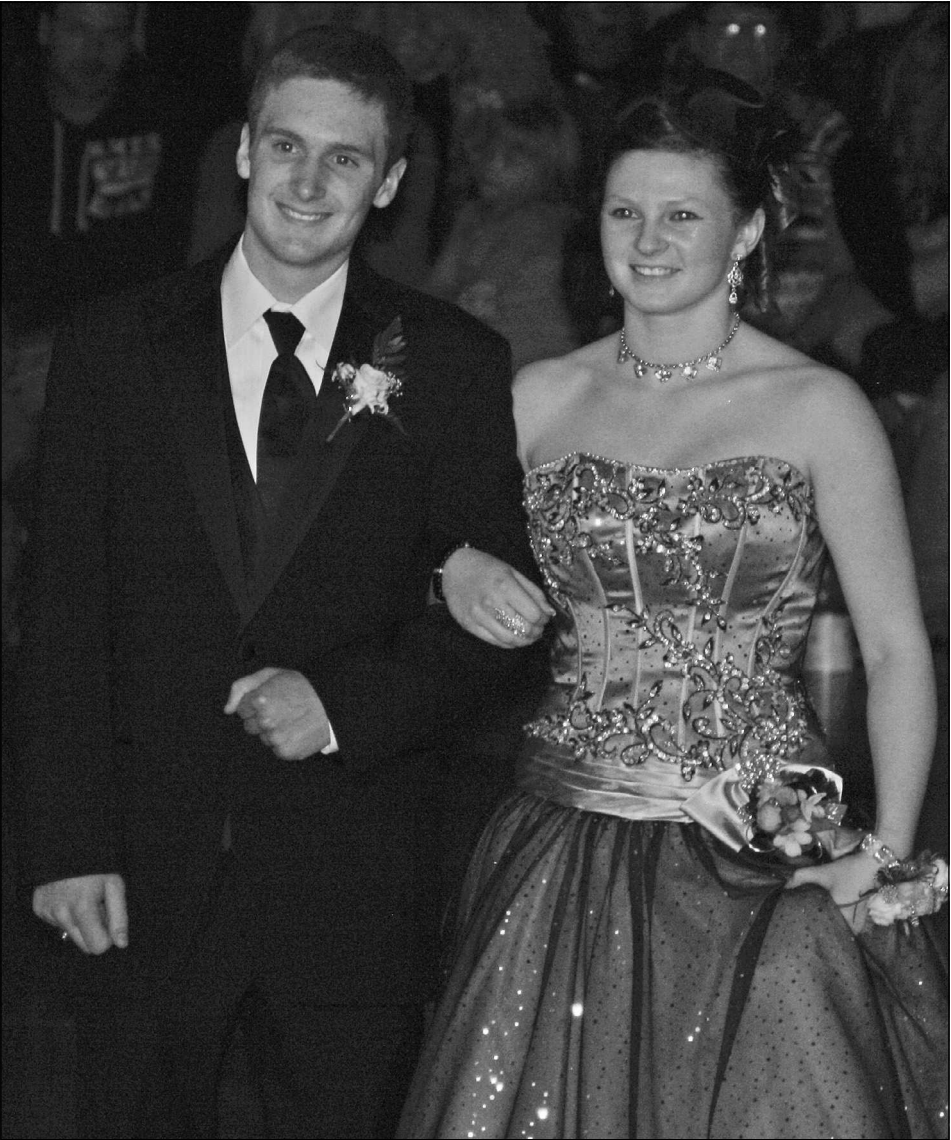


FHS PROM



Trent Brand and Alexandria Owen stop under the arch Saturday.

COUNTY

► continued from A1

“Basically what we have needs to be fork lifted and taken out, and starting over from scratch,” Anderson said.

The system needs to be upgraded so the filing of electronic medical records complies with federal standards, and also so Wi-Fi could be installed in the future. Anderson said the company he consulted with said it were surprised employees were entering records by hand, and not automatically.

“They said all of our business office staff and a lot of the people who work there definitely have a good path to Heaven,” Anderson said. “They manually key all journal entries from the doctor’s visits and all the skilled days which they’re doing right now. In many other organizations it’s automatically done.”

A committee of county, Littlefork, and LMC Board members tried all the options they could to secure funding for capital improvements, Fort said, but didn’t

get a strong response. The committee considered securing state bonding funds, Briggs added, but was unsuccessful. The plan for the LMC now has two phases to first make these critical capital improvements and then move forward with a long-term plan, she said.

The loan would be interest-free, Briggs said, and under a 10-year repayment plan, with payments of \$100,000 per year. For a residential homestead in the district assessed at \$50,000, this would be an annual tax increase of \$24. For a residential homestead assessed at \$100,000, this would be an annual tax increase of \$57, and for a residential homestead assessed at \$150,000, this would be an annual tax increase of \$100.

Keeping the LMC open and viable is critical to the county, Littlefork City Councilor Loren Lehman said. The LMC’s in-treatment chemical dependency facility is the only one in the county, and if patients have to be sent outside the county for treatment, it results in a higher cost for taxpayers.

The accelerated time line for this issue is the result of

needing to form the district by July 1 to be eligible to levy for it in 2015, Briggs said.

“What’s more critical to this whole plan is the passage of the subordinate taxing district, because the county’s in no situation to provide any kind of loan if they don’t have the payback system in place,” she said.

With the recent string of business closures or cutbacks in Northome, Ranier, International Falls, and even in Fort Frances, county Commissioner Wade Pavleck said it’s critical to keep the LMC open and operating smoothly.

“We cannot afford to lose any more jobs in this county,” he said. “It’s that simple.”

In other business, the board:

- Approved the purchase of a laptop computer for the jail administrator.
- Approved the purchase of replacement computers and Microsoft Office licenses for the social services department.
- Approved County Sheriff Brian Jespersen’s request to hire a part-time correctional officer.

ART

► continued from A1

their works, as well as the society’s supplies. The room also contains a slab roller which rolls out slabs of clay in an even thickness, the glass and clay kilns and several containers of assorted brushes.

“All of this free access with your \$60 membership per year,” Kangas said.

While the society provides a place for members to create, it also serves as a connection to others with similar interests and life experiences.

“There is amazing support from the group,” Kangas said. “There is camaraderie and we learn from each other.”

Kangas joined the society about two years ago after retiring and moving from Toronto back to Fort Frances, where she grew up. She said she was pleased to find the society and its art room at Backus.

“I am honored to be here and be mentored,” she said. “And now I am at the point I am mentoring others.”

She recalled an elderly member’s excitement at her first fused-glass work. “She had sparkles in her eyes,” Kangas said. “I am not a mom, but that must be the feeling mothers have.”

“Look at Diana,” O’Brien said, as Kangas walked among the members working on projects. “She never gets anything done for herself because she’s helping others.”

O’Brien said everyone in the society is ready to help others in their field of knowledge.

Kangas said she comes from a stained glass background and taught classes in the art. She said she worked with patterns, while Kulig has a fine arts degree “and comes from great imagination.” The women said patterns are available, which help to eventually foster imagination.

“For people just starting to do glass, I have been giving them something to look at and they can cut it out, draw it onto the glass and cut that form out,” Kangas said. “From there, your mind expands and you start coming up with your own ideas.”

If you go

NAS will conduct a fundraiser dinner at 6 p.m. April 26, with drawings for art and prize baskets, at the local Moose Club. Cost is \$10 for a roast pork dinner.

History

The society is a non-profit charitable operation, with the majority of its income coming from membership dues, Kangas said.

Kocinski is a founding member of the society and joined in 1953.

“I paint, I do stained glass, I am doing clay now because of my hands and this is a good thing for people whose fingers are sticking together,” she said. “I’ve helped organize this and am back at it.”

Kocinski said she and long-time member Phyllis Kuluvar have attended more than 100 art workshops together. Kocinski wiped her hands on her apron as the two women posed for a photo to mark the occasion. Kuluvar said the society was a great gathering place in the mid-1950s.

The two women cited area artists Ray Berg and Jim West, who they said helped advance the society, as well as others, such as Gene Ritchie Monahan, who offered workshops.

“When we were first starting, we needed a little help so the Federated Women’s Club supported us and we would exhibit in a part of the library that was once an auditorium,” Kocinski said.

Shows were judged and ribbons awarded at that time. “We were not allowed to exhibit or paint nudes,” she said with a smile, recalling other interesting and fun experiences at workshops.

Kocinski and Kuluvar recall taking the train to art workshops in Minnesota and Ontario, where they learned and gained inspiration from some of the great regional and state artists while at the same time enjoying adventures.

‘I can do that’

“Look at all this,” Kocinski said gesturing toward the people and art within the work room. “Isn’t this something?”

Kuluvar started in

oils, went to watercolor and then acrylics. “I am a painter, but am trying (fused glass),” she said of the art form new to the society.

O’Brien said she’s been a photographer and found great camaraderie among the members as she experienced different art forms.

Joyce Grover was cutting brightly colored glass into shapes to resemble the popular Jolly Rancher hard candies. “I saw the candy and thought ‘I could do that,’” she said, explaining the process she was using.

The phrase “I can do that” is used often and encouraged by members. Many began in one form and have tried many different forms.

Grover began with watercolor painting and then took a stained glass class with Kangas. She said her next glass project will involve creating a bowl in which to place the “candies.”

Michael Pomeroy leaned toward the desk as he cut colorful pieces of glass to create pendants.

“I do a lot of different types of art, but recently came in here and started working on fused glass, since a lot people here were doing that,” he said.

Pomeroy, who recently moved to International Falls from Colorado Springs, is an artist who draws and paints with oils. Pomeroy said he’s done art for some time, but has enjoyed the opportunity to try fused glass, which is new to him.

He said it was a bit surprising to find the Backus Community Center and the NAS artroom.

“The building is really nice and to have a community building that people can work in is big,” he said. “Everybody is very supportive. It’s a lot of fun just hanging out and working on things.”

Albert worked from a photograph as she added color to a painting. “I just started it,” she said. “When I get the contrast of the pink, it will be better.”

Joyce Rasmussen said the society continues to evolve and add new things. The more members, the better, she said.

“We’ve got pottery, we’ve got glass, the jewelry, the water color,” she said. “We’ve got it all.”

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