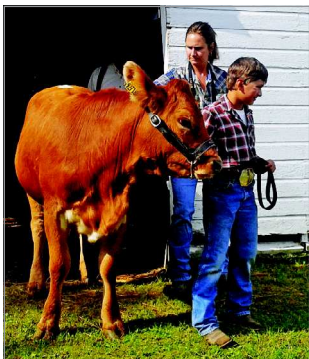


County 4-H'ers show off

Winners take home top honors

B5



Festival is a hit

Music brings countries together

A9



Find us on Twitter



Find us on Facebook



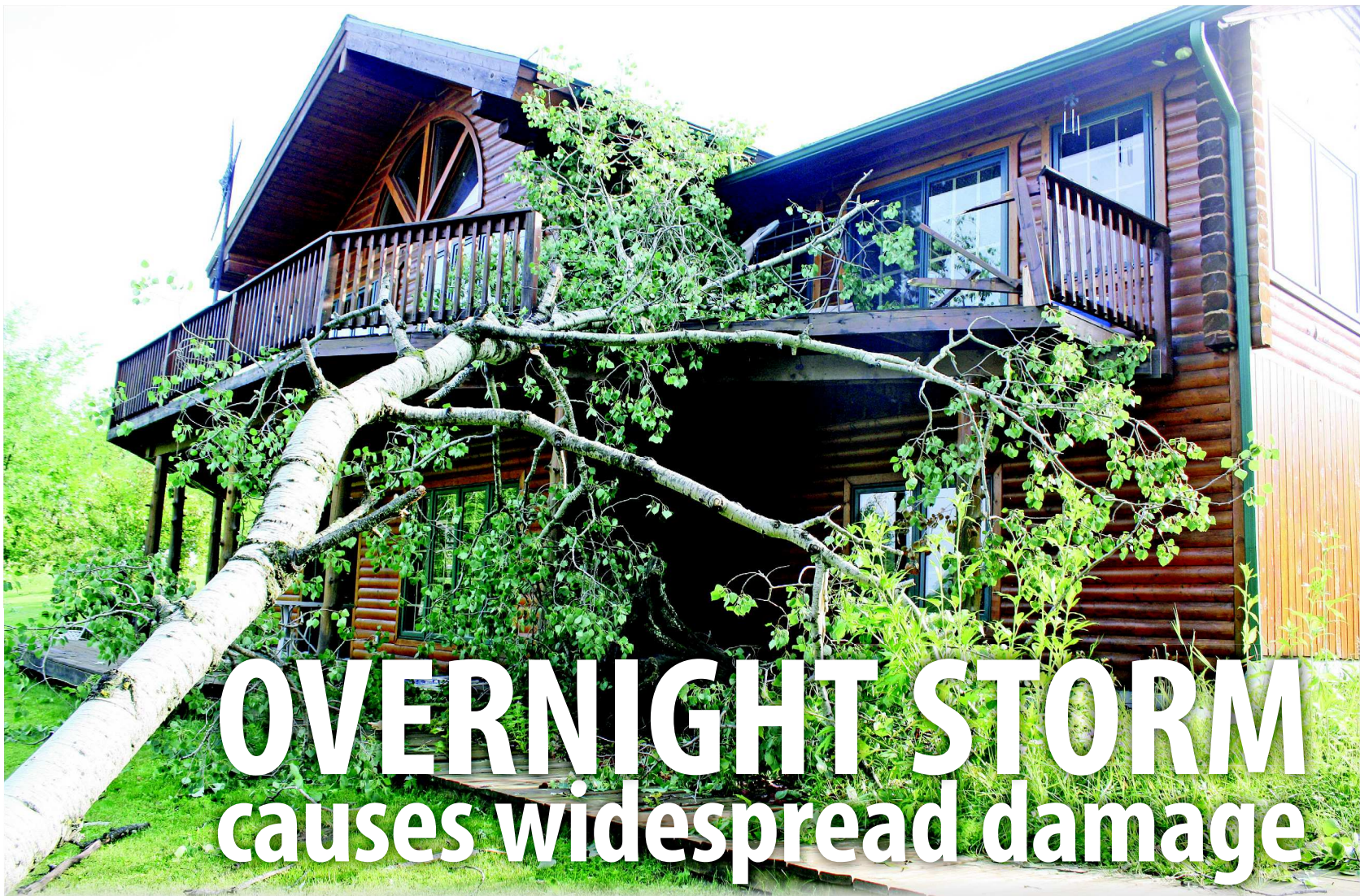
Scan for The Journal online

Wednesday, July 23, 2014

International Falls, Minnesota

www.ifallsjournal.com

\$1



OVERNIGHT STORM causes widespread damage

STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

A tree found a resting spot on Sharon Little's deck Tuesday morning after an overnight storm uprooted or snapped in half more than 50 trees on her Highway 11 property.

BY LAUREL BEAGER AND EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writers

A quick glance around Sharon Little's property Tuesday morning looked like Mother Nature played quite the game of dominoes overnight.

Strong, damaging winds swept through Little's Highway 11 property Monday night and uprooted or snapped in half more than 50 trees, launched a trailer several hundred feet from its original location and knocked out a large section of her deck.

"It's pretty devastating," she said as she weaved her way through the destruction. "I've lived here since 2001 and have never seen anything like this."

Storm to A7 >

FOR MORE PHOTOS, TURN TO PAGE A4.



STAFF PHOTO BY LAUREL BEAGER

Tom O'Connell stops on a tour of the Falls Country Club Tuesday for a look at a portion of the roof from the deck near the clubhouse found near trees about one-quarter mile away.

Board in favor of early entrance to kindergarten

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

Jim Yount believes his daughter Linnaea, who turns 5 Nov. 26, is advanced for her age, and that starting kindergarten now would help her reach her potential.

Traditionally, children who turn five after Sept. 1 would need to wait another year to enter kindergarten.

The Falls School Board Monday, however, agreed to a new policy that will allow children, who turn age 5 between Sept. 1 or thereafter through Oct. 31, to be considered for early entrance into their first official year of elementary school.

And while Linnaea's birthday doesn't coincide with the designated dates, she and others have the option to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

"The district needs some kind of policy," said board Chairman Gordy Dault. "But I don't want to see a policy that's totally inflexible. Things happen."

In Linnaea's case, Superintendent Kevin Grover will have the final say.

"(Students) will have to have a test done to show they're academically ready," he said.

And that will hold true for any child who turns five between the new Sept. 1 to Oct. 31 policy.

Across the state, Grover said data shows a multitude of different cutoff dates set by districts for children entering kindergarten early. Some, he said, even reach until Dec. 31.

"Somewhere we have to have a date," he said. "Oct. 31 seemed to be the most common day."

But still, exceptions can – and most likely will – be made.

Grover said each student in question for early entrance to kindergarten will be evaluated through standardized testing to make sure they are academically ready. Administration will also contact the child's preschool teachers, daycare providers and/or parents to ensure the child is socially fit to start their school days.

"There are social consequences of being young your whole life,"

School to A7 >

Farming clearly all in the family

Rellers selected as a 2014 Farm Family of the Year

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

When Neil and Jody Reller got married in 2003, they moved to the farm between Ericsburg and Ray where Neil grew up and where his parents still live.

Both had grown up on farms; Jody on a farm in central Minnesota.

"We had horses and we were given one heifer for our wedding present and that's kind of how it started," Jody said, while Neil was out haying.

Since then, the couple has added two children, Colter, 9, and Cody, 7, a dog, pheasants, chicken, cats and more horses.

From that one heifer, they have grown into a commercial operation of mixed-breed cattle, and they specialize in grass-fattened beef, Jody explained. The best steers every fall are kept to be sold at age 1 1/2 to local people for meat. The Rellers also raise and sell, or keep, horses.

The Rellers are among 74 families from throughout Minnesota honored as a 2014 Farm Family of the Year by the University of Minnesota. The farm families will be recognized in ceremonies Aug. 7 at the annual Minnesota Farmfest on the Gilfillan Estate near Redwood Falls.

On Tuesday, the family was recognized by the Koochiching

County Board.

The Rellers were chosen by local University of Minnesota Extension committees based on their demonstrated commitment to enhancing and supporting agriculture.

"The farm families receiving this year's honors exemplify what makes Minnesota agriculture strong," Bev Durgan, dean of Extension, said. "They bring innovation, science and hard work to farming. They care greatly about the land and animals and delivering quality products to consumers worldwide."

"I am excited we're doing this," she said of the Farm Family recognition. "When I see the statistics that show 100 years ago, 92 percent of families were farmers."

Family to A7 >



STAFF PHOTO BY LAUREL BEAGER

The Rellers were recognized this week as the 2014 Koochiching County Farm Family of the Year. From the left are Jody, Cody, 7, Colter, 9, and Neil.

INSIDE  
TO REACH US

OBITUARIES/A6  
PHONE: (218) 285-7411

OPINION/A8  
FAX: (218) 285-7206

LEISURE/A9  
SPORTS/B1  
CLASSIFIEDS/B3  
COMICS/B6  
ONLINE: IFALLSJOURNAL.COM OR FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

VOLUME 5  
NUMBER 59