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PCA CEO Kowlzan plans for success

After spending time in mills, CEO says he's even more convinced
acquisition of Boise Inc. is great decision, opportunity for all

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

"All I have is my credibility and that means everything to me. Without that I have nothing."

With that said, Mark Kowlzan, chief executive officer and director of Packaging Corporation of America since 2010, recently discussed the company's plans and his commitment to success at the International Falls paper mill with the Oct. 25 closure of the purchase by PCA of the facilities

of Boise Inc.

Kowlzan spent some time this week at the International Falls paper mill, and other Boise mills it acquired, getting to know the mill and its employees.

"All of the Boise mills are seeing us, personally, out in the operations, helping them make decisions and giving them the freedom to do the right thing, to take care of the mills in a more in depth, thorough manner. Immediate recapitalization of the assets to improve the quality and effi-

ciency — that effort has begun."

He said people in the Falls should get familiar with his face as he plans to be a presence in the community and at the mill. He met Tuesday with the local newspaper after discussing PCA's intentions for the mill and community with local leaders and mill employees.

"It's important to know we have a partner in the community that wants to see us as successful as I do," he said. "I take a lot of personal pride in seeing success in

our operations and knowing what that means to a community — it really drives me."

Kowlzan said he takes making mills successful personally. "As time goes on, the work force will see the improvements taking place day-by-day and the enthusiasm and personal commitment I place on this facility. I take a lot of pride in being part of the community."

Kowlzan said he sees the acquisition of Boise as an opportunity.

"People thought 'Why is a packaging company buying a paper company?'" Kowlzan told



Mark Kowlzan

PCA to A7 ➤

County adds dispatcher/ jailer in 2014

Move still leaves
jail/911 call center
short for four hours

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Koochiching County's jail is closer to compliance with a new law that requires additional coverage of inmates and the 911 call dispatch center at the Law Enforcement Center.

With action taken by the county board this week, two jailer/dispatchers will cover the call center and jail inmates until 3 a.m., when just one jailer/dispatcher will be on duty until 7 a.m.

The addition of staff was prompted by a change in Minnesota Department of Corrections rules intended to improve safety. Previously, jails were required to have a minimum of one jailer/dispatcher to cover up to 15 inmates. That ratio was recently reduced to one jailer/dispatcher for every five inmates.

Sheriff Brian Jespersen said the board's action brings the county jail one step closer to compliance with the new rule, which he said went into effect late in October. He said he expects the DOC to allow a grace period to get fully into compliance.

"It's long overdue," said Jespersen. "It's a safety issue in the jail."

The sheriff said there is usually not a lot of activity during the time period when just one staff member will oversee the 911 calls and inmates, but the county will likely be required to add another jailer/dispatcher to work that time period probably by the start of 2015.

The issue for Jespersen and the state is that a 911 call may come in when the single staff member is checking inmates, which is required every 25 minutes.

"Having just one person up there is not good," he said. "But having it just be four hours is good compared to what it was."

The addition of the jailer/dispatcher added about \$70,000 in wage and benefits to the 2014 budget, said Teresa Briggs, county administrative director.

Jail to A7 ➤



STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE

At left, volunteers Pam Hanson and Colleen Boyum unpack boxes of frozen vegetables Thursday at the Falls Hunger Coalition.

As holiday season nears, local food shelf seeks donations to stock shelves

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Volunteers at the Falls Hunger Coalition sat around Thursday morning sipping coffee and swapping stories until someone yelled, "The truck is here."

And immediately everyone got to work unloading the monthly delivery of 3,000 to 8,000 pounds of food.

Pam Hanson, who volunteers on a regular basis, opened box after box of frozen vegetables and filled an upright freezer until the door barely shut.

"It seems like so much," she said, "but it won't last for very long."

As the holiday season approaches, the local food shelf sees bare shelves more fre-

FOR MORE PHOTOS, TURN TO
PAGE C6.

quently with an increase in customers.

"Our clients are spending more of their money to buy Christmas gifts and we see them using our services more," said Brittany Rognrud, assistant director of the Falls Hunger Coalition. "We especially see clients who only use our services during this time of year for turkey vouchers."

Every year, the Falls Hunger Coalition supplies its clients with turkey vouchers to purchase the main dish of their Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner.

Food shelf to A7 ➤



Pat Kjellgren, volunteer and Falls Hunger Coalition board member, stocks a freezer with ground beef.