

Changing channels

Medium uses abilities to heal

A3



Series kicks off

Abrams Brothers to perform Oct. 22

A9



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\$1

Event still rocks

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Scott Gerlach settled into a recliner in the window of Ballan Furniture last week and began to rock.

And while spending an hour in a comfortable chair may be relaxing, Gerlach was rocking for much more.

"My wife, Mary Jo, passed away July 12 of this year," he said. "She died of breast cancer."

Gerlach was one of about 67 rockers at Thursday's eighth annual Rockin' for a Reason event which raised about \$4,500 for the local fight against breast cancer. Gerlach raised \$900 himself in memory of his wife, said organizer Suzie Best.

"The total amount raised is right about even with what has been raised the past few years," Best said. "I think that is pretty good considering the hard times our community is going through."

To date, about \$46,000 has been raised by the event and organizers said the money is being saved to purchase a tomosynthesis machine for Rainy Lake Medical Center. Breast tomosynthesis provides a clearer, more accurate view of the breast and allows doctors to more effectively pinpoint the size, shape and location of any abnormalities. This can lead to better detection, fewer call backs and greater peace of mind for patients.

"Everyone is really pleased with this year's turnout," Best said. "It really was an awesome event."

Not far from Gerlach, rocked



Members of the Falls High School Student Council participate in last week's eighth annual Rockin' for a Reason event at Ballan Furniture.

STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE



Bella Amerud, left, and Hayden Foss, were among the youngest rockers at Thursday's event.

FOR MORE PHOTOS, SEE A10



Scott Gerlach rocks in memory of his wife, Mary Jo, who lost her battle with breast cancer in July. Gerlach raised about \$900 for the event, all of which will be kept locally at Rainy Lake Medical Center.

Maryann Mann. While she was there for the same reasons as Gerlach, Mann wasn't rocking in support of someone who lost their battle with the disease — she was rocking to celebrate her own victory.

Diagnosed in 2009, Mann is in her fourth year of being cancer free and was surrounded by her family, Team Mann, last Thursday for the event.

"This event brings family and friends together," Best said. "The community support is amazing. As always, there are tears because people are remembering lost loved ones."

New this year was a Rockin' After Party at The Spot on 53 and Best said she was overwhelmed with the turnout.

"It is definitely something we can grow on," she said of the after party. "It was a blast. There were so many people, it was just amazing. Everything about this year made (the event) the best one yet."

Invisible scars

Walk a Mile is an effort to raise awareness

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

The image is still clear in her mind: Her crying child's hands pressed against the window watching his father drag his mother out of the house by the hair.

"(He) kept telling (my child) to say goodbye to me because he was going to kill me," she recalled. "I really thought he was."

The International Falls woman said the incident, which happened several years ago, was one of many she endured during her more than a decade-long physically and mentally abusive relationship with her child's father. Even though that time in her life has passed, she says she lives in fear of her ex-boyfriend everyday.

"I never truly feel safe," she said.

While her kids were in school, the woman spent a Wednesday afternoon sharing her story with The Journal, which has agreed to keep her name confidential to protect her family and future in this community.

Many tears and tissues later,

If you go

What: Walk a Mile in Her Shoes — International Men's March to Stop Rape, Gender Violence, Sexual Assault

When: 4-6 p.m. Oct. 23

Where: Backus Community Center

More info: www.walkamileinher shoes.com

she admitted pouring out the details of such a dark time in her life to a stranger was almost refreshing.

"If I can help someone else get out of a harmful situation, I will do what I can," she said. "It's important people know things like this happen right here in this small town."

The staff at Friends Against Abuse, the local crisis prevention center, agree. To help raise awareness, the agency next Wednesday is bringing back Walk a Mile in Her Shoes — The International Men's March to Stop Rape, Gender Violence and Sexual Assault. The event is an effort to let people know that men, and women, have a responsibility to seek the tools they need to stop themselves as well

Abuse to A7 ►

City commits funding for animal shelter

County board expected to act Tuesday

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

At this time next year, abandoned and rescued pets could have a new shelter in International Falls.

The Falls City Council Thursday agreed to fund a new animal shelter by committing from the 2014 budget \$80,000 toward a new building, with \$30,000 of that to be provided in a low, and potentially forgivable, interest loan to the Borderland Humane Society.

The council met in special session Thursday. Councilor Paul Eklund was absent.

The council agreed to seek bids for the project, contingent on all partners in the project approving financial investments. The Koochiching County Board, a partner with the city and BHS in the project, is expected to consider committing the same amount of funding in a similar flexible, forgivable loan when it meets next week.

In addition to the city and county funding, BHS is expected to provide \$50,000, and North Koochiching Area Sanitation District \$10,000, toward construction of the 40-foot by 48-foot building that will be owned by the city, with BHS providing the shelter services under a contract with the city. Tax forfeited property deeded to the city by the county on the west side of Menards is now being prepared for the structure.

Kelly Meyers, city building

inspector, Thursday presented designs for the facility, which will be a bit larger than first anticipated in order to meet Americans with Disabilities Act and state shelter requirements.

Designs and other specifications for the building were donated by Lucachick Architecture Inc., with other design work donated by Martin Mechanical Design Inc., Fargo, N.D., Jones A.E., Clearbrook, and J.B. Electrical Design, Coon Rapids.

Meyers said he anticipates awarding a bid in December, with construction completed in August.

The city, county and BHS had expected to fund the shelter at \$50,000 each, but meeting requirements drove the cost up by an additional \$60,000.

City Attorney Steve Shermoen suggested the city consider a loan for the \$30,000. He said BHS has indicated it will raise money to pay its portion of the building and has agreed to furnish the interior of the building on its own. The city pays the all-volunteer BHS \$2,250 per month to operate the shelter, instead of making it a part of the Falls Police Department functions.

Shermoen said he anticipates BHS to be the recipient of donations, some in the form of provisions in wills and estates, that may allow the society to pay the city back at some point.

"Some people really, really care about animals, and some don't," he said. "This may be a way to allow those people to get involved and to recover a portion of the assistance."

County Administration Director Teresa Briggs said that

Shelter to A7 ►

INDUS ROYALTY



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Indus royalty from left are, Jonah Fuller, Chanaya Wheelock, Sofia Olesen, William Hawkins, Alexandra Knoff and Gosha (Georgii) Kolesnikov.

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