

# EAGLE

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Valentine moved with his parents shortly after he was born to Ham Lake, where he grew up. His parents returned to International Falls in retirement.

Also attending Thursday's presentation was VNP biologist Lee Grim, who has for decades led the eagle banding program, and park Superintendent Mike Ward.

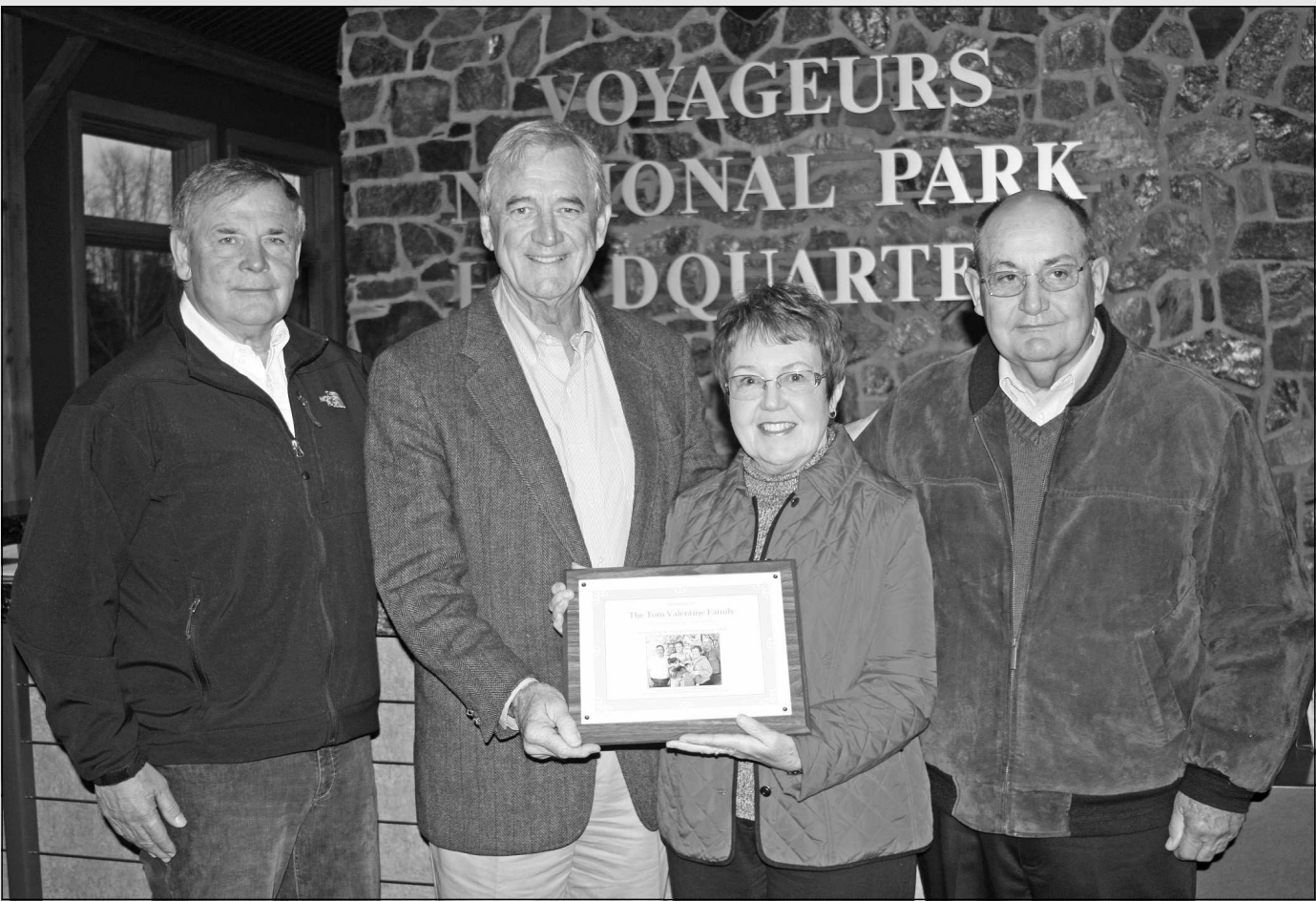
The idea for banding an eaglet in recognition of Valentine's service came from Ranier Mayor Dennis Wagner, who grew emotional while talking about the banding and presentation.

The park's banding project involves banding recently hatched eaglets in and around the park in an effort to monitor the population. One of the nests included in the program is on Wagner's Rainy River property. He had recently seen Jack and Katie Valentine and wondered if they would think banding an eagle in celebration of their son's life would be appropriate.

"I thought about this nation's servicemen and women, with the nation's symbol being the bald eagle, and representing the nation's forces," he said.

He contacted the Valentines, who agreed the idea was a good one, and then he contacted Grim and Ward, who worked to make the idea a reality.

Wagner said he hopes



STAFF PHOTO BY LAUREL BEAGER

Katie and Jack Valentine were presented a plaque Thursday recognizing the banding of an eagle in memory of their son, Tom.

this is just the first of many eagles that will be banded in memory of fallen soldiers from Koochiching County.

Tom Valentine's family and Wagner were at the scene when the eagle was banded.

"It was a very emotional thing," Wagner said. "This was a pretty somber, very spiritual thing."

The nest near Wagner's property was empty at the

time, so instead, an eaglet was banded from a nest that can be seen across a Rainy Lake bay from a cabin owned by Tom's sister.

The Valentines said they hope this is the start of a program to recognize fallen soldiers.

"We feel very honored to be selected to be the first of these," Jack Valentine said.

He said his son downplayed the 18 years he served as a Navy SEAL, as

they all do.

"He never discussed his work and we didn't know what he was doing at any particular time, but we always wondered when he was off to Somalia, Afghanistan or Iraq what he faced," Jack said. "He's been gone six years, but it seems like yesterday. We lose the memory, but it comes back in very nice ways. We want him remembered as much as we

possibly can."

The Valentines said many people have given them comfort with comments about Tom and the way he touched their lives.

"And he was just our little boy," an emotional Katie said. "From the time he was little until he died, he was a quiet patriot."

She said the day the eaglet was banded was a beautiful one.

"I held the eagle's hand

while they put the band on it," she said. It was comforting that the eaglet was retrieved from the nest high atop a huge pine tree by Terry Grubb, a former Navy SEAL himself. "We had a great conversation," she said. "It was a wonderful day."

Grim said the bald eagle represents freedom and banding one to commemorate Tom Valentine's service is appropriate.

"The park service is happy to share what we have with them," Grim said. "There is a bird out there with a band on it that makes a family feel really good. Eagles are wonderful things. It's a good thing for the government to do."

Nolan, a veteran, said he's proud of the Valentine family who gave the people of the nation so much and of Tom, who made the ultimate sacrifice. He quoted Abraham Lincoln in saying how a nation remembers its fallen soldiers reflects in the way future generations volunteer to serve to protect the nation's freedoms. He said this recognition is an honorable one.

Wagner showed a card given out at Tom's funeral. It features a photo of the man with an entry he made at the summit of Mt. McKinley. Wagner said seems appropriate for someone who has an eagle soaring in his memory: "The summit of Denali is clear and a light wind is blowing. This sight is as majestic as the mind could imagine."

# COUNTY

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The largest concentration was near Rainy Lake on County Road 46, adjacent to the City Beach Road. There are about 150-195 cubic yards of sand to be removed on properties in this area. The winning bidder, Leinum Farms, will remove those sandbags at a cost of \$51 per yard, county Administration Director Teresa Briggs said.

There were two homes on the Rainy River near Pelland Junction which also required sandbag removal, estimated at 44 cubic yards. Leinum Farms will remove those sandbags at a cost of \$48 per yard, Briggs said.

The remaining sandbags near Loman are being cleaned up by a local resident, Olson said.

There isn't a date on when the sandbags will be removed, Briggs said, but with the temperature starting to drop, she said it'll probably happen sooner than later.

In other business, the board also approved an ongoing agreement between the county's Public Health and Human Services Department and Independent School District 361 in International Falls.

Briggs said the non-financial agreement allows for shared resources between county and school social workers, and allows them to discuss the needs of students.

# TAX

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Anderson suggested implementing a lodging tax to help promote tourism. The tax was adopted by International Falls and submitted to the International Falls Area Chamber of Commerce.

The CVB was first formed as part of the local chamber. In May 2000 the CVB was established and adopted its own nonprofit status, removing it from the chamber's direction.

"And we've been promoting tourism since," said Schultz.


After the city adopted the tax, Koochiching County established a local lodging tax followed by Ranier, which began collecting and remitting the tax in the spring of 2003.

In August, the CVB Board discussed the timely remittance of lodging tax.

It notified International

"There are benefits that are tangible in collecting and remitting the tax."

**Pete Schultz**  
CVB Director



Falls City Attorney Steve Shermoen in September a property within the city limits had not provided the tax and that after six months penalties would be applied.

Shermoen told The Journal that he sent a letter to a local lodging establishment asking them to pay the tax. "They've not paid and indicated it would be a while before they can pay," he said.

Shermoen has asked the establishment to provide the city its records to calculate the amount of tax owed. Then, he said, the establishment will be billed.

"If it's not paid, we add it to their taxes," he said. "There are significant penalties applied for overdue taxes."

The CVB Board also notified Ranier City Administrator Sherril Gautreaux of a property in the city that claims to rent for 30 days or more but appears to only lodge guests for a week or two and thereby is subject to the tax. Gautreaux notified the owner of the establishment.

She also reported to the CVB the city would institute practices for collecting and remitting the tax according to the city's

ordinance, which includes a process for collection and assessment of a penalty for the late filing.

Lack of collection of the tax by the establishments and the governments has been an education issue: It needs to be enforced within the district and the tax should be collected, said Schultz.

"It has not been a mindful 'I refuse to cooperate,'" he said. "People just need to be informed."

More and more people are trying to offset the costs of owning lake cabins or vacation homes by renting them out on a short-term basis and may be unaware of all the steps needed to do that, he said.

The ordinance allowing the collection of a local lodging tax requires it to be used for tourism promotion of the area, said Schultz. "That generally means spending outside the area to draw people to spend the night," he said.

Schultz said the CVB attempts to spend the money on promotions of which the results can be measured to allow the board to consider whether to repeat that promotion or appeal to different markets.

A study of its records shows a majority of visitors to Borderland come from Minnesota, he said. In the past, most of the money was spent on markets outside the state.


"Over the past couple years, we've been spending in the Duluth, Minneapolis, Rochester TV markets and some web advertising," he said. That's in addition to attracting visitors from nearby states within driving distance of Borderland, he added.

The benefits of collecting the lodging tax and being a part of the CVB includes being listed in the CVB's promotions and website.

"There are benefits that are tangible in collecting and remitting the tax," he said.


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**TONI KORPI**  
Write-In Candidate  
School Board #361

Clip to ensure correct spelling during election



Toni Korpi (FHS '97) is the wife of Colin (FHS '92) and Mother of Karsen (8), Kaden (7) & Kelsie (3). She is the daughter of (the late) Jack & Loral Lee Everett. Toni is currently a local childcare provider (14 yrs), an Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) Advisory Board Member (6 yrs), Vice President of Partners In Education - PIE (2 yrs), a Girl Scout Leader (4 yrs), & a Gizzard Girl (2 yrs). Toni would like to partner with the school board, staff, students, parents & community to ensure the continued success of keeping our children first; while maintaining their safety, education and health as a top priority. She would like to share her innovative ideas and fresh energy with the districts successes, challenges and opportunities.

Paid for by the Candidate on her own behalf.  
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