

LOCALNEWS

Staying busy over winter break by staying active



Two girls glide across the ice at family open skating Sunday at Bronco Arena. There is an hour of open skating on Sundays during the winter, check the schedule for exact times and locations.

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

Winter break for Borderland schools started Monday, and for those already wondering what to do to stay busy over the next week, there are a number of outdoor options available.

For the hockey player or figure skater looking to get out on the ice, there are two outdoor rinks in International Falls and one in Ranier. The Ranier rink, on Lake Avenue, is open 10 a.m.-9 p.m. during winter break, and tends to be busy all the time, city Administrator Kim Nuthak said. Regular winter hours for the rink are 4-9 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m.-9 p.m. on weekends.

In the Falls, the Kerry Park outdoor rink, normally open until 10 p.m., was closed Monday until further notice, according to Street Commissioner Dennis Jonson. An issue with equipment there has posed a safety concern. The ice must be cleaned, he said, before the outdoor rink can be reopened.

However, the Eighth Street rink, located one block south of Cine 5 movie theater, has a hockey rink and a general open skate rink without boards, and is open until 10 p.m. as well.

A winter angler looking to get out to the fish house and drop a line can head to Voyageurs National Park. Place your fish house more than 50 feet from the center of snowmobile trails and the ice road, check ice conditions, make sure to have a fishing license and fish house registration, and you're good to go.

For those who would rather get out and explore the park in wintertime, there are multiple snowshoe and cross-country ski trails available. VNP has three packed snowshoe trails, and has different snowshoe sizes and shapes available to rent for free at Rainy Lake Visitor Center during operating hours. The center is open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. during the week, and is closed Sundays and Mondays.

Cross-country skiers can

trek out on the four different ski trails at VNP. Those without equipment looking to try it for the first time can rent adult-sized skis, poles, and boots from Rainy Lake Visitors Center for \$5 a day. Children's skis, boots, and poles are available for rent free-of-charge.

There are 110 miles of staked and groomed snowmobile trails at VNP for snowmobilers. Make sure to check the trail report before heading out, as trails may not be open due to the conditions. Riders are encouraged to carry a trail map, keep to the right on trails, leave a route plan with someone, and avoid slush and open water by sticking to staked and groomed trails. The speed limit for snowmobiles in VNP is 45 mph on frozen lake surfaces and 25 mph on all overland portages.

Staying indoors for two weeks off of school can make the break seem longer than it is. By getting out and staying active, the time will fly by, and classes will be starting again before you know it.

Grant continues after-school youth programs

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

After-school youth programs throughout Koochiching County will continue to offer enrichment opportunities thanks to a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation.

The \$141,163 grant will assist Backus Community Center and Koochiching County 4-H, MN Extension to continue to provide after-school youth programs throughout the county.

The Koochiching County after-school enrichment

project helps provide the 4-H after-school club programming in International Falls, Indus, Littlefork and Northome. Building on a history of more than 100 years, 4-H youth learn by doing while engaged in a multitude of projects, said a news release.

In addition to traditional and animal science projects, 4-Hers take part in technology projects such as robotics, GPS, GIS, video production, environmental projects and community service projects.

Backus Community Center projects funded through

the grant include after school and summer art programs, Backus Kids Club, the Summer Food Service Program, open gyms, the all school music workshop, activities and arts outreach to all Koochiching County schools. Backus Kids Club offers a summer session which includes field trips, swimming and learning activities. Art outreach programs have brought visiting artists, bands and plays to students throughout the county.

Jan Derdowski, University of Minnesota Extension educator, said she's pleased the foundation recognizes the value of the programs.


"Youth in Koochiching County have a rich assortment of enriching out-of-school time activities to choose from because of the ongoing partnerships and financial assistance from the Bremer Foundation," she said in the release.

The Otto Bremer Foundation since 2008 has not only invested in Backus capital improvement projects, such as the \$275,000 roof replacement


and the \$185,000 kitchen project, but has continued to support youth programs in the community center, said Ward Merrill, executive director at Backus.

"This consistent level of support demonstrates the foundation's commitment to International Falls and its citizens of all ages," he said. "We continue to appreciate the support of the Otto Bremer Foundation."


Created in 1944, the Otto Bremer Foundation assists people in achieving full economic, civic and social participation in and for the betterment of their communities. The foundation strives to help build healthy, vibrant communities in the places that are homes and neighbors to Bremer banks. The Otto Bremer Foundation owns 92 percent of Bremer Bank and receives an equivalent share of the bank profits that are paid out as dividends, meaning a large portion of bank profit are invested back in local communities through grants and program-related investments.



PLEASE CELEBRATE WITH US
THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY
OF OUR PARENTS
Jack and Joeleen Kennedy
Open House
Saturday, December 28, 2013 • 2-6 P.M. • Littlefork Community Building, Littlefork, MN
No Gifts, Only Good Wishes



Happy 6th Birthday
Jayden David Ginter
We Love You
Grandmas, Grandpas,
Aunties, Uncles and Cousins
XOXOXO



Open House
To celebrate
Violet Johnson's 90th Birthday
Saturday December 28th
2:00-4:00 in the Family Life Center at
Evangelical Covenant Church
Short program at 3:00, no gifts please

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is upon us and we at Renaissance Hearing Centers wish you a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

We have been proud to be able to provide the Borderland with professional hearing services and quality hearing aids for the last 15 years and we look forward to serving your hearing needs in the coming year.

We also have hope that the New Year will bring new opportunities to the unemployed, continued business to mainstreet and a better life for all.

Our holiday schedule is as follows:

January 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

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We appreciate your continued donations.

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Thank You

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(click on the 'Data' link)
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