

LOCALNEWS

Reader warns of possible scam

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

A reader brought this week a post card he received through the mail to the attention of the Minnesota Attorney General's Office and The Journal. The post card offers "exciting news about your unclaimed reward" and further states that the sender is "holding \$100 in gift cards for you, good at" two stores that do not have a presence in International Falls. The post card provides a claim number and urges the receiver to call toll-free today to receive the reward. Ben Woglsand, spokes-

man with the AG's office, said the post card is likely a scam. A Google search of "Minnesota post card scam" reveals stories written in newspapers about similar offers, and as well as an alert by the Cloquet Police Department in April 2012 about a similar post card offer that was found to be a scam. "No. 1, we warn people to be careful of free trial offers and gifts, because usually there are strings attached," Woglsand said Monday. He said often when people respond online or through postal solicitations, they are asked to give personal

identifying information, such as bank account numbers, where a "reward" or "gift" would be deposited. "Then," he said, "they can be victims of identity theft or the account can be drained." And while that may be the extreme, Woglsand said by returning calls or post cards people may be unknowingly signing up for a product or service they don't realize they are agreeing to receive. He said the respondent may get a freebie, but without affirmative action to cancel or discontinue the service or product, they may be billed into the future.

Woglsand urged people to take care when responding to an offer of a free certificate or gift card and encouraged people to visit the AG's website for more information about scams. He offered the following websites to assist Minnesotans in avoiding being the target of scams: ■ Gift Cards —There's No Such Thing As a Free Lunch: <https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Brochures/pubGiftCardsFreeLunch.pdf> ■ Free Trial Offers Usually Have Strings Attached: <https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Brochures/pubFreeTrialOffers.pdf>

COMING DOWN



STAFF PHOTOS BY LAUREL BEAGER

Crews hung between two huge cranes last week as they dismantled a radio tower located on County Highway 155. The tower, previously owned by Boise Inc., was purchased this spring by the state of Minnesota for the Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response, known as ARMER, Minnesota's shared public safety radio communication system. Shane Chatleain, of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, said the tower will be rebuilt in the next 30 to 60 days as a 270-foot high self-supporting tower, with no guide wires, and will look a lot different than the previous tower. He said several parties have indicated interest in siting their services on the tower.

State agencies to conduct tourism assessment

DVNP to host Oct. 3 community meeting to assist effort

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

State agencies will conduct an assessment of the area's tourism assets and opportunities next week. A gateway communities meeting, hosted by Destination Voyageurs National Park, will be held at 6 p.m. Oct. 3 at the American Legion building in Orr where all area residents may provide input to the tourism assessment. Information collected at the meeting will be added to a final

report and will help frame recommendations and community discussion of actions to be taken. State agencies will conduct the tourism assessment for the Voyageurs National Park gateway communities of International Falls, Ranier, Kabetogama Lake, Ash River, Crane Lake, Orr and Pelican Lake Oct. 3 and 4. The assessment will be conducted by the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, University of Minnesota Tourism Center, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality and Explore Minnesota Tourism. A news release about the assessment states that each

of the gateway communities has a unique combination of physical and cultural assets, history, organization and skills and knowledge among its residents. "These resources can be beneficial in developing sustainable tourism," according to the release. "Community culture is shaped by how these assets interact and treat each other. The inventories organized through the Tourism Assessment Program will help each community evaluate those assets and determine where opportunities exist, individually and collectively." The news release goes on to say that tourism is about creating positive experiences for the visitor

and the community. "The tourism assessment will consider the existing and the yet-to-be-developed opportunities across this region," according to the release. "Visitors ask, 'What is there to do around here?' How will each of these communities — and you — answer?" Destination Voyageurs National Park is an effort to connect people to Voyageurs National Park via an ongoing, comprehensive marketing and public relations campaign that will effectively encourage awareness and result in increased visitation, economic growth and sustainable communities. Visit the website online at www.dvnpmn.com.

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