

Volunteer EMTs needed in RLF

The Red Lake Falls Volunteer Ambulance is looking for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certified personnel to staff their service or someone that would be interested in becoming an EMT.

Contact Theresa at 218-253-2763 or Wayne at 218-253-2453 for more information.

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\$1.00 per copy

VOLUME 126 – NO. 41

RED LAKE FALLS, RED LAKE COUNTY, MINNESOTA 56750-0370

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2009

Farm Rescue helps cancer survivor Kevin Vettleson with spring planting

By Stacy Kleinwachter

Late last fall, Kevin Vettleson of Trail went in for a check-up because he thought that he had pneumonia. The doctor found something suspicious and conducted further tests and discovered that Vettleson had stage three lung cancer through a surgery biopsy.

Vettleson went to the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis for surgery to open his airways.

Then Vettleson began his treatment of radiation and chemotherapy. While going through cancer treatment, Vettleson spent two months at Hope Lodge on University Avenue in Minneapolis. He stayed there free of charge, since the facility is sponsored by the American Cancer Society and is operated with volunteers and donations.

Supporting Vettleson through his treatments were his wife Kim and children Kyle, who is attending Northland Community and Technical College, East Grand Forks for radiology and Hannah, a junior at Red Lake County Central High School in Oklee.

Vettleson had heard of an organization called Farm Rescue that helps farmers in need before he was diagnosed with lung cancer. After he began his battle against cancer, Vettleson applied for help from Farm Rescue.

Farm Rescue is recognized as a reputable and vital non-profit organization that farm families can turn to for help during an unexpected crisis. Farm Rescue, with its office located in Jamestown, N.D., will plant or harvest crops free of charge for families who experience a major injury, illness or natural disaster.

The mission statement for the organization is, "Farm Rescue is a nonprofit organization that helps family farmers bridge crises so they may have an opportunity to continue viable operations."

Bill Gross, founder and president of Farm Rescue, came up with the concept. A chaplain friend told Gross that he needed to think bigger and get more people, businesses and organizations involved in his

idea. Since then, the organization has grown bigger and quicker than Gross thought it would.

By the end of 2009, Farm Res-

"Kevin is better now, then when he first applied," Gross said.

"We are glad to be here helping the Vettleson family," stated Gross and volunteer Smokey Wright.



Bill Gross, left, president of Farm Rescue and Kevin Vettleson stand by one of the Farm Rescue trucks before checking on the crops.

cue will have helped over 100 family farms. This spring, they have helped 22 farms and are, as of now, planning to harvest for a dozen or more farms. Last year, Farm Rescue helped 36 farm families. Gross stated that he would like to see Farm Rescue helping 50 farm families a year by 2010 and beyond.

"Farm families should not hesitate to apply," said Gross. "Half of all the cases are the neighbors calling in on behalf of the family."

Gross helps farmers through Farm Rescue during his vacation time from his day job as a Boeing 747 pilot for UPS. He went to college and flight training at the University of North Dakota.

Gross explained that Farm Rescue attempts to help the as many farmers as possible in the least amount of time and travel. They plan ahead to ensure they are maximizing their resources to the best of their abilities.

Farm Rescue helped Vettleson plant 700 acres of soybeans May 20 through 22, which was about half of the crop. Vettleson will be able to plant the rest of the crop on his own.

Farm Rescue volunteers come from all over the U.S. to help family farmers in need. Some of the volunteers are retired farmers, local people in the area or people that grew up on a farm and left. Gross believes that families helped by Farm Rescue will volunteer in the future.

Wright is a retired farmer from Minot and a three-year Farm Rescue volunteer. He read about the organization and saw that they were in need of volunteers, so he sent in an application, never expecting to be called. "I love to help people and those in need. I enjoy having my fingers dirty and being around machinery," stated Wright.

Farm Rescue is able to help farm families in need through the contributions of individuals and businesses that sponsor the organization. Farm Rescue currently has 100 sponsors that support them through seven different levels of sponsorship. The top contributors, called diamond sponsors, include RDO Equipment Co., Bremer and Walmart.

All of the John Deere equipment that Farm Rescue uses is supplied exclusively through RDO Equipment, Co., a John Deere dealership.

For more information on Farm Rescue, visit their Web site at www.farmrescue.org or call 701-252-2017.



Charlie Hardy of Fargo, a Farm Rescue volunteer that helped plant soybeans at the Kevin Vettleson farm May 20-22, operates one of the John Deere tractors that was provided by RDO Equipment Co. All equipment operated through Farm Rescue is adorned with their signage and flags.

More than \$2.3 million of Garden Valley capital credits to be paid

More than 17,400 checks, totaling more than \$1.7 million, were issued May 14 to Garden Valley Telephone Company members who had service with the cooperative in 1999 and/or 2008, including over \$206,000 for members with Red Lake Falls, Brooks, Plummer and St. Hilaire addresses.

Second Distribution in June

A second capital credit distribution of \$500,000 will be made in June. Based on the cooperative's \$5 million gain on the sale of RCC Stock in 2008, Garden Valley Telephone Company recently made a special allocation to members who had service from 1999 through 2008. Due to this special allocation, a separate capital credit check will

be issued by the end of June to members who had Garden Valley service from 1999 through 2008.

Advantages of a Cooperative

More than \$19 million of capital credits have been authorized by the Board of Directors for payment to Garden Valley members since 2000.

Article VII of the cooperative's by-laws provides that capital credited to members may be retired and paid if the financial condition of the cooperative will not be impaired.

104th Annual Meeting

Garden Valley's 104th annual membership meeting will be held in the auditorium of the Win-E-Mac Public School near Erskine Tuesday, June 9, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Red Lake County Relay For Life is June 5 and 6

By Bonny Cote and Mary Lynn Bachand, Oklee Herald

The 11th annual Relay For Life in Red Lake County kicks-off at the Oklee Football Field Friday, June 5 beginning at 5 p.m. with music and food vendors and the opening ceremony at 6 p.m. The event concludes Saturday morning, June 6.

The evening begins with musical entertainment while the luminaries are placed on the field by volunteers. Anyone interested in getting involved in this phase of the Relay are asked to come to the bus garage anytime after 2 p.m. Friday.

This year, 18 teams will be participating in the 12-hour walk to raise money for cancer services, research, education and advocacy.

The honorary chairperson of the Relay For Life is Orlan Stolaas, a cancer survivor from north of Oklee. He will be recognized as the event begins.

The first lap around the field will feature all cancer survivors as honored guests. Anyone with cancer is invited to take part and is asked to register at the North end of the field under the white tent to receive a gift, but registration is not required. There will be golf carts available for anyone unable to walk the course. Caregivers, those people who provide hours of physical and emotional support to cancer patients, are invited to take part in the second lap as they are applauded for their care and concern for those with cancer. Teams will then be introduced and will take part in the next lap with more than 200 team members.

This year's entertainment again features Lois and Lois and the Mickelson Family Band who have been a part of this event for many years. In addition, John and Tanya Kimball, Katie Hammess and Sue Lee will be added to the musical entertainment.

The silent auction will begin at 6 p.m. and will be located just north of the stage.

Locks of Love will again be part of the Relay as Char Lee and her daughter Shelly Flatgard cut hair to be donated for those who have lost their hair due to cancer or other medical conditions.

Many of the campsites will offer additional food and games. A complete listing of those activities will be found in the program at the event.

At dusk, the impact of the luminary lighting ceremony will be felt as more than 4,000 candles in bags will be lit, remembering and honor-

ing those who have been affected by cancer. Lowell and Ross Arlt will lead in the singing of "Angels

closed to anyone who is not a registered Relay For Life team member. Join family and friends at the



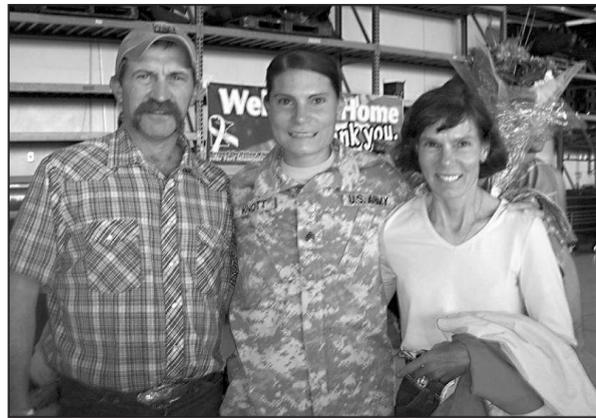
Oklee Mayor Clay Haugen signed a proclamation of support for the annual Relay For Life rally that will be held Friday, June 5 with Sue Smith and Bobbie Olson, team members involved in the Relay.

Among Us", as they have done since the Relay For Life started in Red Lake County, while the candles are lit. This phase of the Relay For Life is the most significant part of the event and everyone is encouraged to stay to take part in this ceremony.

At midnight, the field will be

Oklee Football Field Friday, June 5 to celebrate those surviving cancer and to remember those who have lost the battle. Pledges may be given that night and luminary bags may still be purchased for \$5 a bag.

The alternate location in the event of bad weather is the high school gymnasium in Oklee.



Sgt. Kristin Knott welcomed home

Mike and Karen Knott of Red Lake Falls greeted their daughter, Sgt. Kristin Knott, center, in Minneapolis May 22. Sgt. Knott returned from her second tour in Iraq. Sgt. Knott is a member of the 834th Aviation Support Battalion headquartered in St. Paul that provides logistics, transportation, medical, maintenance and communications support for the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade.

Commissioner Strand attends AMC Futures on criminal correction

By Destiny Harmoning

The Red Lake County Board of Commissioners met May 26 for their regular meeting for a light agenda consisting of mostly committee reports.

Commissioner Brent Strand recently attended an Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Futures meeting in St. Paul where they discussed opportunities for improvement in correctional operations.

The purpose of the AMC Futures group is to take a different topic each meeting and discuss it in a "think-outside-the-box" scenario. The group then makes recommendations to AMC who passes it onto legislators.

One of the items discussed during the meeting was shifting resources from prison to community intervention to help people to not become repeat offenders.

The group looked to Stearns County as a model for moving in the right direction with corrections. In Stearns, they have programs available to help former inmates to keep them from committing other crimes. One such program uses the faith-based community to give the former inmates volunteer opportunities. In these programs, background checks and other monitoring are conducted to ensure the

safety of citizens working with the inmates.

Also in Stearns County, they work with employers to help former inmates get jobs and help them get a place to live. These two factors alone help these prisoners stay out of the jails and live productive, crime-free lives.

At the Futures meeting, Bob Johnson, Anoka County Prosecuting Attorney, spoke to the group about the role of electing prosecuting attorneys, which he said isn't necessarily a good thing. The U.S. is the only country in the world that follows this practice. It can be detrimental to justice when a prosecuting attorney is looking for reelection.

Also discussed at the Futures meeting was the increasing of harsh penalties for crimes. It was noted that sometimes it is not always best to enforce strongly upon someone who may have an addiction or need other help that can't be found in a prison.

In 2007, one in 26 people in Minnesota were under some type of criminal supervision. Minnesota has 9,600 people in prison and 140,000 on probation.

Another topic brought up was applying the same punishment to all people with a similar crime and not considering whether the offend-

er has a high or low risk of a repeat offense. It should be considered that crimes can be a "one time thing" and want to work with individuals to punish them appropriately based on their level of repeat

risk. Placing low risk offenders in prison can actually increase their risk of repeat crimes.

Continued on page 12.

City council receives bids for water facility improvements

Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting held

By Destiny Harmoning

The Red Lake Falls City Council met May 26 for their regular meeting.

Before the start of the council meeting, the Board of Appeal and Equalization met. It was noted that the taxable property in the city equates to \$36 million. Of this number, \$675,000 is new construction just added to the tax base.

County Assessor Nancy Ambersson explained to the council the value of homeowners to apply for property tax refunds if they qualify.

During council reports, Cheryl Matzke discussed the recent Planning and Zoning meeting that was held. At that meeting they discussed possible housing incentives other than a straight \$3,000. Other communities offer incentives on utilities as well as other community

related incentives. These ideas are still being looked into and nothing has been implemented in Red Lake Falls at this time.

The Red Lake Falls Municipal Pool will open June 8.

The council discussed the city's insurance deductible and considered lowering it from \$2,500 to \$500. They tabled the decision until it is closer to their renewal date in September.

The city received bids for the water facility improvement project, which were needed to receive grant dollars. The low bidder was Magney Construction of Chanhassen at \$1,719,650.

The bids have been turned into the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority and now the city will wait to see how much grant funding will come through for the project.