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The Daily Journal

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Tuesday

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Snowmelt expected to bring water levels up

By Rian Bosse
Daily Journal

Fall drought conditions left many lawns brown and lakes lower than usual. But with this winter's snowfall, lower lake levels may return to previous normal levels or higher.

"Lake levels dropped late last summer and fall due to low precipitation and evaporation," said DNR Hydrologist Julie Aadland. "Lake levels will rebound this spring with runoff. Some landlocked lakes, those without outlets, may experience water levels that are higher than desirable again this spring."

Aadland, who has been with the DNR for 22 years, said the reversal from last summer will mean plenty of water entering the Otter Tail River Watershed. With residents in the Fargo-Moorhead area preparing for flooding, Aadland said that any flooding in Otter Tail County and the surrounding area should be under control.

"There is a considerable amount of water in the snowpack," said Aadland. "We are fortunate in the Otter Tail River Watershed to have many lakes and wetlands that provide storage for runoff water. The storage attenuates flow and reduces peak flows. Flooding in the Otter Tail River watershed upstream of Orwell Reservoir should be localized and related primarily to overland runoff during the spring snow melt."

While Aadland and the DNR can determine water levels by gauging the amount of snow on the ground, any high water after the spring will come as a result of the summer's weather conditions.

"The extent of flooding will depend on the rate of melt and the amount of precipitation we receive during the melt," said Aadland. "Lake levels are directly related to precipitation patterns. Future lake level conditions will largely depend on rainfall amounts, but it appears that drought conditions are expected to lessen this spring."

The DNR keeps track of water levels on many of the lakes in the area. With an extensive record dating back several decades, Aadland said some of the information that the DNR collects is available to residents and lake property owners online.

"We have an extensive database of water levels going back to the 1930s on some lakes," said Aadland. "Some of this information can be found on our website under the 'LakeFinder' application. We use the information to evaluate current lake conditions in the context of historical lake levels. The information can be used to better understand the hydrologic cycle and hydrology of a watershed."

Bond vote today



Rian Bosse/Daily Journal

Fergus Falls resident Pamela Johnson signs in with election judge, Desta Hunt, at the Hillcrest Academy gym for today's referendum. Polling places include the fire station (Ward 1), Armory (Ward 2), M State (Ward 3) and Hillcrest (Ward 4). Polls will be open until 8 p.m.

ON THE ROAD: ELBOW LAKE

Students building support for Elbow Lake community

By Rian Bosse
Daily Journal

At West Central Area High School, students are getting the chance to hone their skills in carpentry and shop work while making an impact on their local community.

In John Kreft's Community Projects class, the school has sent students to work on area projects, including updates at Thorson Memorial Library in Elbow Lake and the remodeling of the Barrett Pavilion.

"There are no losers with this, everyone is a winner and it's a great deal," said Kreft. "There are projects we've done that wouldn't have been if it wasn't for the students."

With free and high quality labor going to the community, the school has found another outlet to orient its students' focus on the community and to engage kids in the world around them.

In his 20th year as a teacher, Kreft said that the class goes beyond just giving a students that opportunity to better their skills with carpentry, woodwork and other construction skills, but instills the idea of community involvement for the students with each project.

"It goes beyond a grade," said Kreft. "I always tell people it's intuitive to students. You're born with this innate idea that you want to help others and students get that through these projects. It's a real connection that unfortunately has been lost in educa-

INSIDE:
For another story from On The Road, see Page 8.



Rian Bosse/Daily Journal

West Central Area Student Charlie Grenson works with a sander in the school's Community Projects class. Students provide work for area projects as part of an outreach effort to the community.

tion." Residents, too, not only see the benefits from their tax dollars at work, but what students are able to contribute to their community as well.

"The citizenry sees that we're doing good things and is helpful with spotting projects and lining things up," Kreft said.

Kreft's favorite project over the years has been the complete remodeling of the Barret Pavilion, what he considers as a "rags to riches" story. After organizers planned to flip the pavilion from its rundown state for the community to use again, Kreft had six years of classes working on the update of the cherished landmark.

"It was really on its last leg

See **Giving** — Page 3



Rian Bosse/Daily Journal

West Central Area student Alex Anderson works on a project in the school's Community Projects class. Students work on area projects to better the community.

Council considers quartet of issues

Spends an hour in discussion for counter proposal to organizer

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

Cost, insurance, safety and security during the planned Project Kirkbride photography shoot at the Regional Treatment Center seemed to be the big items at issue for the Fergus Falls City Council Monday.

Following nearly an hour of discussion, the council unanimously approved a motion for City Administrator Mark Sievert to present a list of issues to Project Kirkbride organizer Christian VanAntwerpen.

The idea behind Project Kirkbride is to preserve the RTC by photographing every square inch of it. The project has yet to receive official approval from the city council.

However, the list of requirements Sievert will present to VanAntwerpen include: The project needs to provide insurance covering all photographers, a list of names for all the people part of the project and which designated areas they will be in the RTC; no security from Project Kirkbride will be needed (Instead, the city will provide people from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 4.); photographers need to provide their own safety equipment for the areas of the RTC deemed unsafe; the East wing of the RTC will be available but not the tunnels; people will log in and log out of the RTC and they must be there for a purpose; a \$1,500 deposit will be required; everyone with the project will need to sign waivers.

"I just want to get him communicating

See **Project** — Page 3

City OK's preliminary Vernon pavement project

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

The Fergus Falls City Council approved the preliminary engineering report from Moore Engineering Inc. Monday for the Vernon Avenue improvement project.

The city is looking to address the pavement surface issues on Vernon Avenue from Court Street to Arlington Street in addition to a section of Court Street between Lincoln Avenue and the bridge located about 350 feet to the south.

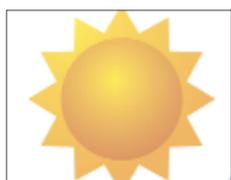
It's anticipated that the engineering report will be finalized and submitted to the city by May 10.

The report will evaluate the existing pavement sections of the area and make recommendations with estimated construction costs related to rehabilitation of the roadway; the storm sewer will be evaluated to identify problematic areas and make recommendations for improvements. Existing utilities will also be evaluated.

The water distribution system will be evaluated with recommendations coming for looping, hydrant and valve placement and changing the water main size from 6-inch to 10-inch pipe. Construction phasing with cost alternatives will also be looked at, including a timeline for construction.

MAILING LABEL

TOMORROW:



HIGH: 46 LOW: 26

SUNRISE TOMORROW: 7:00 a.m.
SUNSET TOMORROW: 7:56 p.m.

YESTERDAY:

HIGH: 25 LOW: 7
PRECIPITATION: 0

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- Vivian Ratliff, 89, formerly of Battle Lake
- Richard Smith, 91, Breckenridge

Wake up Wednesday
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