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The Daily Journal

www.fergusfallsjournal.com

Thursday

December 26, 2013
Vol. 140, No. 304
Fergus Falls, Minn.

CHURCH

National event gives women a chance to come together

By Chris Reinos
Daily Journal

Nicole Rostad and Tami Vigasaa didn't know each other before October. But with how similar their ideas were, it was only a matter of time before they met.

Both women had been trying to put together a place for local women to bond and worship together. A few months ago, they found their way: the national religious women's group IF.

Rostad and Vigasaa have been coordinating a simulcast of the IF Gathering event set for Feb. 7 and 8, 2014 in Austin, Texas.

The two have rented out the Kennedy Secondary School auditorium for the



Chris Reinos/Daily Journal

Tami Vigasaa, left, and Nicole Rostad both had similar ideas on putting together a place for women to bond and worship together. The IF Gathering simulcast provides such an opportunity.

two-day event.

IF:Gathering is a meeting for those interested in IF, whose stated goal is

to "gather, equip and unleash the next

See **Church** — Page 3

Former FF wrestler charged

Aho, others allegedly assault homeowner

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

A 20-year-old Fergus Falls man and a former Fergus Falls High School wrestler who was one of three men to allegedly kick in the door of a Fergus Falls apartment in July and assault a man was charged in Otter Tail County District Court with four felonies.

Abbot William Aho was charged with first-degree burglary of an occupied dwelling, first-degree burglary-possession of a dangerous weapon, first-degree burglary-assault of a person and second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon, all felonies. His first court appearance was Tuesday.

According to the criminal complaint, police responded to an assault in progress call at 11:21 p.m. July 9 at an apartment in the 800 block of East Cavour Avenue. A man in the apartment was sleeping when three men he did not know, one of whom was allegedly Aho, kicked the apartment door open brandishing knives, the report says. The men allegedly hit the victim in the head while he was still in bed, causing lacerations to his face.

Two of the men allegedly had knives with six-inch blades. The men also rummaged through the victim's dresser drawers asking for marijuana and about another man, who was an acquaintance of the victim. They pulled the victim to the ground, pointed knives at him and one said, "hurry up and tell us where it is or I'll kill you," the report says.

The victim reportedly told them the acquaintance was in another apartment and the men left.

The victim was reportedly fearful for his life during the assault and was taken to Lake Region Hospital for his injuries.

Evidence collected from the scene and analyzed by the Minnesota Criminal Bureau of Apprehension identified the suspects through fingerprints, according to the report. Warrants were issued for the arrests of the suspects.

Fergus Falls police arrested Aho Monday night in the 400 block of North Burlington Avenue. The location of the other suspects is unknown at this time.

Aho was possibly attending school in the greater Chicago area and was arrested in September with another man in the Hoffman Estates, Ill., area for allegedly breaking into a residence armed with a knife or knives and stealing cash and a small amount of marijuana.

Aho was a three-sport athlete at Fergus Falls High School, competing in football, wrestling and baseball. In March 2013, he placed second in the State High School Wrestling Tournament.

Aho's next court appearance is scheduled for Jan. 6.



Aho



Rian Bosse/Daily Journal

Steve Millard displays a plaque he received after he was named the Thomas Sadler Roberts Memorial Award winner earlier this month. The award is the highest honor presented by the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union and was in recognition of Millard's 40-year dedication to local birding.

Millard receives highest ornithology award

Honor recognizes outstanding and lifelong contributions

By Rian Bosse
Daily Journal

In early November, Steve Millard drove two and a half hours west of Fergus Falls to the little town of Roosevelt. A local resident had reported the sighting of a Lewis's Woodpecker on a yard feeder.

The small bird may not seem like much, but for Millard, the long trip and the rare sighting embodies the excitement birding has brought his life for 40 years.

"It's the joy of it," he said. "I love nature and there's always something new to find. It's the thrill of going out and finding something. Even common stuff is still a lot of fun."

Millard, a resident of Fergus Falls, is the 2013 recipient of the Thomas Sadler Roberts Memorial Award, presented by the Minnesota Ornithologists Union for his outstanding and lifelong contributions to ornithology and birding in Minnesota. The award is the highest honor recognized by the MOU.

While Millard admitted the recognition came as a surprise, to those who know him, the award is well deserved.

In their nomination for the award, Battle Lake residents Sandy and Dan

Thimgan described Millard as a "birding icon" in west-central Minnesota, and highlighted his efforts organizing birding field trips, numerous bird talks, more than 30 years of seasonal reports to the MOU and documentation of many first-county records and numerous rarities.

Millard also lays claim to more than 75 sightings of the Prairie Falcon, which has helped put the species on Minnesota's regular list. He is a member of the MOU's Roberts Club, having seen 384 species in the state, and is also held in high esteem by a number of authors, photographers and avid birders, including other recipients of the award.

Despite his many achievements, See **Birder** — Page 3

Suicide rates more than triple in 2013

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

Otter Tail County has seen 13 suicide deaths in 2013, more than three times the number of suicides in 2012, which was four. There were five in 2011 and four in 2010.

"To see 13 of them this year is alarming," said Otter Tail County Sheriff's Lieutenant Matt McGuire. "It's just such a high number for our area. Suicides are preventable."

Nine of the deaths this year involved firearms, three were by hanging and one was a poisoning/drug overdose. Three of the suicides were committed by women. The age range went from 20 to 82. There's really no way to point to a certain age or gender group for who commits suicide, McGuire said, though "statisti-

See **Suicide** — Page 3

MAILING LABEL

TOMORROW:
HIGH: 34 LOW: 16
SUNRISE TOMORROW: 8:07 am
SUNSET TOMORROW: 4:44 pm

YESTERDAY:
HIGH: 21 LOW: 9
PRECIPITATION: .0

OBITUARIES
In today's Journal, Page 2

- Stuart Anderson, 73
- David Harles Sr. 75
- Alice Johnson, 96
- Russell Johnson, 65
- Helen Kreiser, 99
- Nora Kugler, 82
- Eva Severson, 94
- Lisa Tommerdahl, 53
- Esther Ugstad, 93



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