

## Propane prices are increasing

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Several states in the upper Midwest are dealing with significantly higher prices for propane because of a supply problem caused by a late harvest, persistent very cold temperatures and the temporary shutdown of a major supply pipeline. The problem began in October and November when farmers across the Midwest took to the fields to harvest the late devel-

oping corn crop before the cold weather set in. Much of the crop was still wet and needed to be run through propane powered dryers to avoid spoilage, creating a surge in demand for the fuel.

And as colder than usual temperatures arrived early in the Upper Midwest, demand for propane increased.

The liquefied petroleum gas is used to heat homes in rural Midwestern areas where there are no natural gas lines. About 15 per-

cent of Iowa households rely on propane for warmth.

"We came out of a crop drying season that really took a toll on the amount of volumes available in the industry," said Drew Combs, vice president of propane for Minnesota-based CHS Inc., one of the nation's largest wholesalers. "Now we're looking at a situation where we have a very large demand because of the extremely cold weather ... and it is looking to last into January."

## Wind chills plummet in western Minnesota

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesotans are dealing with arctic cold heading into Christmas Eve.

The National Weather Service has issued a wind chill warning for west-central Minnesota through noon Tuesday. The rest of the state is under a wind chill advisory.

The Morris airport in western Minnesota recorded a wind chill of 45 below zero

Monday morning. Glenwood had a 44-below wind chill.

In Fergus Falls, the temperature reached a low of 20 below Monday morning.

The forecast called for bitter cold Monday night, with lows ranging from 25 to 35 below in northern Minnesota to 15 to 25 below in the south. The lowest wind chills will bottom out at 30 to 50 below.

Snow is expected today, with 1 to 2 inches in the Fergus Falls area, with a high of 13.



Heather Rule/Daily Journal

Creating more appropriate space for the children's area at the Fergus Falls Public Library was one of the most commented on aspects in surveys and focus groups as part of the Library Renewal Project.

## Tots space gets plenty of use

**Area was second most-commented on in community survey**

By Heather Rule  
Daily Journal

Summer is generally the busiest time for the Fergus Falls Public Library, but that doesn't mean it doesn't see lots of visitors during the school year, and days like this week when kids are on break from school.

The children's area was a buzz of activity Monday.

"There's families here just hanging out and playing," said Arielle Krohn, youth librarian.

A need for more space at the Fergus Falls Public Library was identified earlier this year.

Specifically, focus groups, community surveys and staff interviews pointed to a need for a separate,

larger children's area.

This particular space was the second-most commented-on area in community survey results. A majority of comments indicated the need for a separate or larger children's area so kids can safely enjoy the library.

About 130 survey comments cited a need for an improved children's area.

"The library has outgrown its space and although the open floor plan is needed at this time, it also contributes to the problem," according to one survey respondent. "Many a day I have come to the library with my children and leave embarrassed, as I know they are too loud and disturb older readers."

The children's area is a busy place, where it's not unusual for 40 to 50 to be in the space after a Storytime.

The children's area, and the need for more space in general the

library, is just one of the factors being looked at in the Library Renewal Project, which is in phase two.

The Library Needs Assessment, a summary of needs identified during the community engagement process, concluded phase one earlier this fall.

The selection committee will meet starting in January and conduct the Request for Qualification process and decide who should be part of the project team.

One concern among members of the focus group for families with young children was that the library is not conducive to segregating the noise that can sometimes accompany young children.

The layout of the children's area has even been a discouraging factor for parents to visit the library with children in tow.

See **Library** — Page 3

## ON THE ROAD: ROTHSAY



Chris Reinos/Daily Journal

Rothsay School Superintendent Warren Schmidt said working on this building project has been the most enjoyable experience of the many he has had with new buildings during his tenure.

## Superintendent: Crews will break ground on new school in the spring

By Chris Reinos  
Daily Journal

Warren Schmidt has been through his share of building projects.

Schmidt, the Rothsay School District Superintendent, has retired eight times but has been repeatedly brought back to the job. In his time in the district, there have been a handful of these kinds of projects.

For Schmidt, this has been one of the more pleasant building experiences of his tenure.

"It's not new to me, but every one is different," he said. "This one has been pretty enjoyable."

The district will be ready to break ground on its new, \$19 million facility next spring. They have been working with Wold Architects and Engineers out of St. Paul during the planning phase and will open up the project construction contract to a statewide bid in early February.

The project narrowly passed a referendum in May and some district residents are still displeased with the project cost. But Schmidt believes many of these residents will come around once they see construction begin.

In the meantime, Schmidt has been having countless meetings each week, going over all facets of the new building. With help from the board of education and input from many community members and students, this planning stage has been thorough.

See **School** — Page 9

## LRH challenges residents to 'Walk to Waikiki' for health

**3,829 miles can be done in Fergus Falls; campaign aims to promote healthy living**

For The Journal

Lake Region Healthcare is challenging the Fergus Falls community to walk a collective 3,829 miles, the distance to Waikiki, Hawaii, in six weeks. The Walk to Waikiki challenge launches Jan. 1, and will commence Feb. 13 with a special event at the Lake

Region Healthcare Health Expo.

If the community achieves the mileage goal, a trip for two to Waikiki will be given away at the end of the challenge.

Individuals can earn milestone rewards throughout the walk once they reach 25 miles, 50 miles, 75 miles and 100 miles.

"Walk to Waikiki is part of the Lake Region wellness and preventative care initiative. We wanted to create an exciting event that takes an active role in

overall health, and creates good habits that we hope people will continue after the walk is done," Larry Schulz, CEO of LRH, said. "The trip giveaway and milestone rewards are both a way for Lake Region to encourage more mileage and to thank the community for living healthy."

Participants will be able to register, record mileage, view walking maps and more at www.lrh.org/waikiki.

Mileage forms and drop-off

boxes will also be available to the public at LRH, YMCA and WestRidge Mall.

"When it's cold outside, it's easy to have excuses not to exercise and move our bodies. This is our way to motivate the community and create a healthy support system," Schulz said. "Fergus Falls is an incredibly tight-knit and caring community and I know we will easily be able to get to Waikiki and beyond."

The final mileage totals and

grand prize winner will be announced at the Health Expo which will be held at M State on Thursday, Feb. 13. Registrants must be present at the Expo to win the trip to Waikiki.

Registration is now open. LRH is encouraging the community to register for the walk online at www.lrh.org/waikiki. For more information on Walk to Waikiki, please visit www.lrh.org/waikiki or www.facebook.com/lakeregionhealthcare

MAILING LABEL

**TOMORROW:**



**HIGH: 13 LOW: -7**

**SUNRISE TOMORROW: 8:06 am  
SUNSET TOMORROW: 4:43 pm**

**YESTERDAY:**

**HIGH: -13 LOW: -20  
PRECIPITATION: .0**

### OBITUARIES

In today's Journal, **Page 2**

- Jerome Cichosz, 73, Fergus Falls
- Tom Sawyer, 90, Fergus Falls
- David Harles Sr., 75, Fergus Falls
- Rebecca Rennie, 57, Perham



*Wishing you a quiet place and a peace to know the glory and wonder of Christmas.*

**Thank You**  
*for allowing us to share in your lives. We are blessed by your trust and friendship.*

*~The Olson family & staff*

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