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More Than 10,100 Homes
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Proudly Serving Rathdrum, Spirit Lake, Blanchard, Athol and Hauser Lake.



Construction continues on the new, \$2 million Northern Lakes Fire Station on Highway 53. Barring inclement weather, the building is expected to be finished by December.

Fire Districts Plan Uses for \$11,000 in Grant Money

Nearly \$11,000 in grant funding was received last week to be shared by the Northern Lakes and Timberlake Fire Districts with the money being earmarked for new and better equipment.

Timberlake will benefit with the purchase of what resembles or is similar to a "mini Jaws of Life" tool – worth \$9,280 – with its grant from the Office of Highway Safety through the Idaho Department of Transportation. The tool, described as "small, compact and self-contained, allows for an initial ambulance crew to gain access into a damaged vehicle to tend to patients while waiting for ad-

Thanksgiving Assistance Available at Food Bank

Those seeking a little help putting a Thanksgiving Dinner on the table and plan turning to the Rathdrum Food Bank for assistance may register before Nov. 15 at the Food Bank on Main Street.

Dinners of a turkey, potatoes, box of dressing mix and veggies will be available for pick-up between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Nov. 16 and 17 and 21.

"I have to comment on the honesty of those visiting the food bank this year," said Manager Sharon Dillon. "There have been a number of examples where a person will tell us they already have, say, a turkey and that giving theirs to someone else would be okay with them.

"They don't feel right taking advantage of our food bank; you know, not being greedy. This is certainly appreciated by us as well as those coming to our food bank," Dillon said.

Last year, the local food bank assisted some 150 families at Thanksgiving, she said.

The food shelves at the Food Bank, she said, "are in pretty good shape - at least for this time of year.

"Yes, after Thanksgiving, we may be in short supply of a few items, not anything serious.

"And, we have Christmas right around the corner."

ditional assistance."

In an unrelated grant, Timberlake also was awarded \$808 for photography equipment to "record and distribute training and public information.

At the same time, Northern Lakes was granted \$550 toward a video camera for use in training and education efforts, reported fire inspector Jim Lyon.

The two lesser grants were through the Idaho Fire

Chief's Association from funds it collects from the Firefighter's License Plate program. The program, in its 11th year, has distributed some \$500,000 throughout fire districts across Idaho. This year, \$50,000 was awarded the nearly 70 districts, Lyon said.

A tribute to firefighters is one of the many "vanity" license plate options available to Idaho residents – for an extra fee.

City - So Far - Escapes House Burglary Spree

While house burglaries appear on the increase through northern Kootenai Country and points north, the city of Rathdrum has escaped the "trend," reported Police Chief Kevin Fuhr late last week.

"We've been lucky; rap on wood," the chief said, adding, "however, we've had more than our share of vehicle burglaries, like 12 just this month."

And those, he said, are of the routine nature; unlocked cars parked in the street with valuables in plain sight.

"We've not had many reports of damage to the vehicle," Fuhr said, noting "losses" generally include assorted change in an ashtray, CDs, occasionally an item of a more measurable value.

"People simply have to learn to, first, lock their vehicle and if that's not possible, take anything valuable with them inside the house."

Hart's Tax Problems Appear to Worsen

State Rep. Phil Hart's problems appeared to deepen last week when the U.S. Government filed suit against the Athol legislator alleging he owes \$549,703.48 in unpaid taxes.

Further, the government is seeking to foreclose on his Athol residence, contending his 1997 transfer of its title to a trust established in his daughter's name was "fraudulent" and the subject of an eventual courtroom challenge. At that time, the complaint alleges, Hart knew the IRS was seeking his unpaid income taxes. The trust, it contends, amounted to a "sham entity."

"The United States has valid and subsisting federal tax liens on all property and rights belong to Hart, whether real or personal, wherever located...including the Athol home," alleges the lawsuit, filed last Thursday in U.S.

District Court.

Hart, according to the complaint, is personally liable for unpaid taxes, interest and penalties owed through Oct. 1.

Hart's rural home on 10 wooded acres just outside Athol is to be sold, the complaint contends, with "proceeds be distributed in accordance with the court's findings." The lawsuit also seeks the cost of bringing the suit.

The Republican legislator's tax problems started in 1996 when he quit filling federal and state income taxes, contending both were unconstitutional. A lawsuit based on his belief was unsuccessful.

Following the lawsuit, he claimed to have started filing tax returns. However, both state and federal authorities contend his payments fell short of what was owed.

Elections Push Council Meetings Ahead

Due to Tuesday, Nov. 8 being municipal elections day, the city councils of both Rathdrum and Spirit Lake were moved a week ahead, to Nov. 15. The Rathdrum Council meets at 6 p.m., Spirit Lake at 6:30 p.m.

After the election week, both councils return to their normal, second Tuesday of the month general meetings.

No other municipal meetings are affected by Election Day.

City Settles Ownership of Long Standing Creek Issue

Some 20 years spent in negotiations, amid stacks of documents, letters and correspondence, have answered the long-debated question of exactly who maintains Rathdrum Creek and who answers the call should it flood.

For years, the question of who responds in the case of an emergency, using whose equipment and manpower, and who pays for the work, has plagued the city and has been a question among those living alongside the fast moving creek.

Over the years, the city of Rathdrum has monitored the creek and used its equipment to keep large accumu-

Rathdrum Joins 'Reverse 9-1-1' Emergency System

By TOM BURNETT
Of The Star

Rathdrum has joined – and is offering – a potentially life saving feature to its network

All it takes is registering a cell phone number, email address or pager. A home-based telephone landline already is in the system.

"No, don't panic!" Rathdrum Police Chief Kevin Fuhr said. "We are not, neither our department nor the (Kootenai) county sheriff's department, seeking a way of keeping track of people. We're not giving out anyone's personal number; not soliciting for magazine subscription offers or anything of the sort."

The new "system," the chief explained, "termed 'reverse 911', is solely designed to warn people in the event of an extreme emergency – a big fire, flood, a potentially lethal chemical spill. It's a way of contacting the public in the event of a potentially serious problem.

"Maybe, we'd have to use this system, oh, perhaps once or twice a year. But it's there if we need it and that's the

important issue," he said.

For instance, he explained, if a train were to derail in downtown Rathdrum, emitting dangerous chlorine gas from a damaged tanker car.

"Our officer-in-charge would arrive on scene and quickly determine the perceived extent of the emergency. He or she could, with a single call to our dispatch center, relay the information, and advise who or what part of town to take action. Action might be to 'remain inside,' 'evacuate immediately' or something like 'this or that has occurred in your neighborhood, wait for further instructions'.

The reverse 9-1-1 system forwards the message to a single homeowner, a specific neighborhood, a group of neighborhoods, a section of town or the entire town, he said.



CHIEF FUHR

"Now, suppose a message is being sent and the homeowner is at work or otherwise not at his home. He wouldn't get the message as immediately as we'd like, so...

"We're asking everyone to register. It's free and just takes a moment," Fuhr said. Go to www.kcsheriff.com which brings up the sheriff's website. Open it and at the lower right, locate the blue box indicating, "Mass Emergency Notification Citizen Registry." Open that and fill in the blanks, the chief explained.

"You will be notified of the successful registration by return email," he said.

"That's it, you're done!" The system only allows you to register two items...a pager, a cell phone or an email address

Good Ol' Fall!!!



Rathdrum's Larch McWatters launches his annual fall assault against a yard full of fallen leaves.