

# International Falls Journal

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## What they don't know can hurt them

### Students hear about dangers of Juuling

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

At first, not many hands were raised when a local officer with the International Falls Police Department asked a classroom of sophomores if they'd ever tried Juuling.

But when Jill Elsberry assured the group it was just a discussion and nobody was in trouble, at least half a dozen hands went in the air.

"What are the favorite flavors?" she asked, referring to JUUL pods.

Blue raspberry and mango were the most popular responses.

A JUUL pod looks like a USB flash drive, but is actually an e-cigarette brand that is quickly growing in popularity in Borderland and across the nation. School officials are aware of the trend (see a previous story), but admit students probably know more than they do.

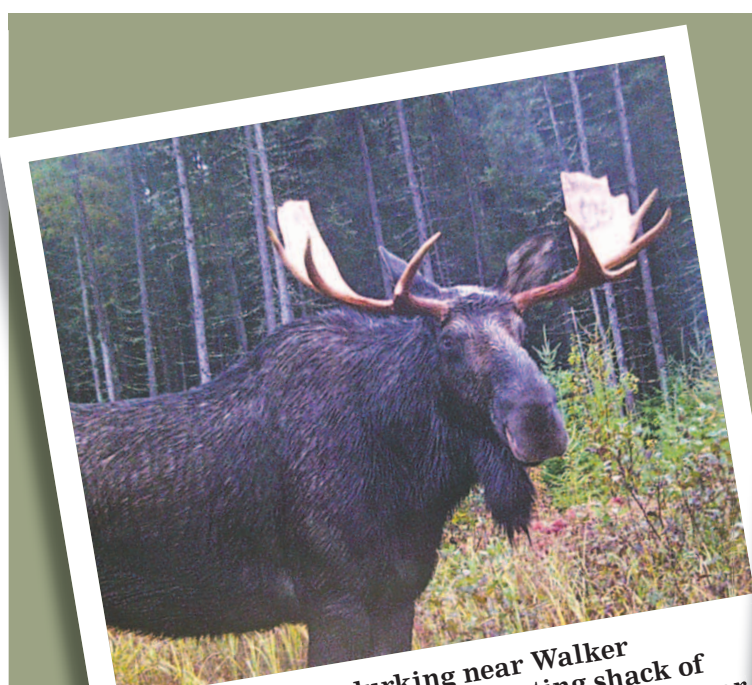
Elsberry's presentation at Falls High School to the 10th grade classes last week proved that might be the case. When students were asked if they'd at least heard of the trend, the response was nearly unanimous: Everyone had.

"You kids probably know more than us adults about it," she said. "That's just the truth about it... It's become a huge, popular trend with teens."

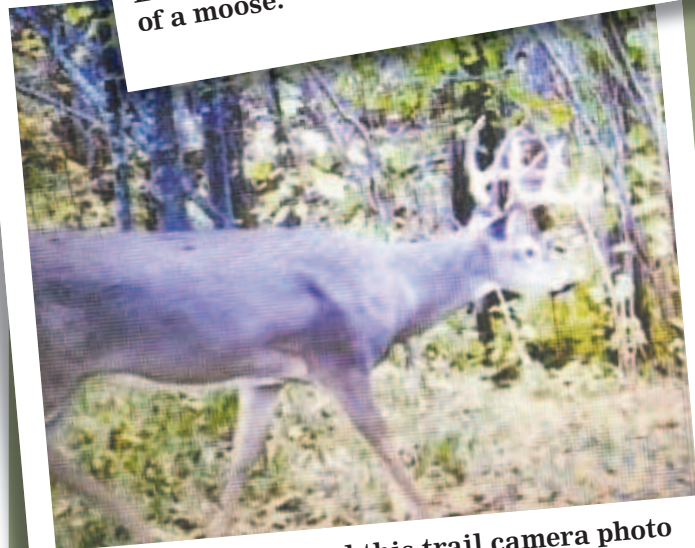
Elsberry recently took over the local D.A.R.E program and will teach the elementary curriculum to the sixth grade students and the middle school curriculum to the eighth graders. In addition, she will make weekly visits to the sophomore class to discuss various topics of concern to youth. Juuling was her first presentation.

"Personally, I feel a lot of the parents and the teachers are unaware of what it is,"

Juuling to A9 >



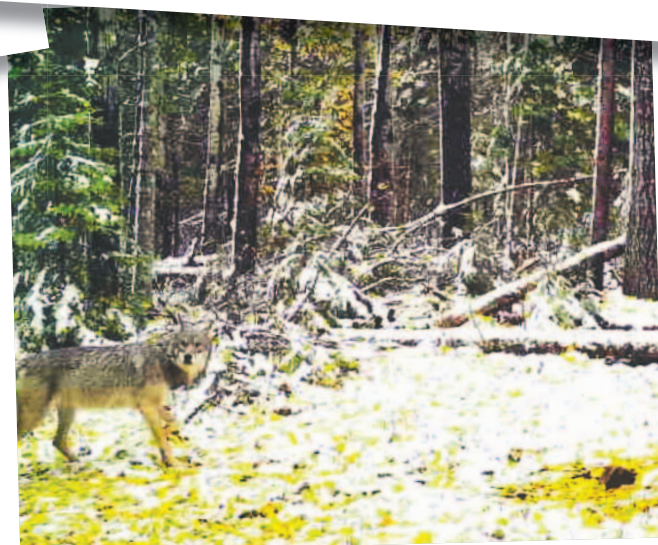
Look what's been lurking near Walker Wegner's deer stand at the hunting shack of his grandparents, Teresa and Bruce Ness, near Loman. Bruce's trail camera caught this photo of a moose.



Noah Melhorn shared this trail camera photo of a buck walking through the woods in Littlefork.



Tony Jackson shared this photo of a timberwolf walking in front of his trail camera near Canada.



Shaver Briggs shared this photo from his trail camera of a wolf in the woods by his shack near Birchdale.



Tony Jackson shared this photo his trail camera captured of a ruffed grouse this fall. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

## Captured on camera

Area residents this week shared with The Journal their most recent trail camera pictures, which included visuals of a variety of Borderland wildlife.

## Board could seek city, county ordinances

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

The Falls School Board may request local city and county officials to adopt an ordinance that would lay out consequences of littering toilet paper on school or personal property.

Last week, Falls Superintendent Kevin Grover and board Chairperson Michelle Hebner met with Koochiching County Attorney Jeff Naglosky, International Falls Police Chief

Rich Mastin, and Koochiching County Sheriff Perryn Hedlund about the school being toilet papered last month.

The main concern, the superintendent said, is having students out well past designated curfew hours, in addition to toilet



Kevin Grover

paper littering school grounds.

Grover said taking a civil — rather than criminal — route, and requiring violators pay restitution, with the hope that the students would be diverted to community service to match the number of hours school employees spent cleaning up, and then asking city and county officials to adopt ordinances that deal with toilet papering.

"(An ordinance) would be much clearer and easier to en-

force," Grover said. "It doesn't matter if you don't care if it happens, or if you do care — it'd be against the ordinance... (Naglosky) would like that brought to the city (of International Falls), possibly the city of Ranier and also the county and see if they would all support this. That way everyone is on a level playing field... Whether any of them support it or if none of them support it is yet to be seen."

After the incident occurred

during the early-morning hours of Sept. 17, Grover told the board at its meeting later that day it was time to discuss repercussions for the action. The Journal's story on the meeting sparked debate on social media, with some saying toilet papering is a harmless tradition and a rite of passage, while others said it was disrespectful and sided with board members' concerns.

Board to A9 >



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# Back at it

## Mary Casanova releases new picture book, mysteries

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

Mary Casanova has had a busy year.

The local author of more than 35 titles recently released a new picture book and two more titles with the American Girl series.

"I've been busy," Casanova said last week, adding she has no intention of slowing down anytime soon.

Her new picture book, "Hush Hush, Forest," with woodcuts by Nick Wroblewski, is a companion to the 2016 title, "Wake Up, Island," which was awarded honorable mention in the children's category of the 2016 National Outdoor Book Awards.

Casanova reflected on writing Wake Up, Island, which is about waking up on a summer morning and seeing nature come to life. When thinking about inspiration for a companion book, she created the idea of the opposite setting — night falling as winter approaches.

"Just like us, nature, in so many ways, is preparing for the winter season," Casanova. "I think this book is more dramatic."

Wroblewski, whose work using woodcuts fascinates Casanova, took more risks in this book, she said. Working with him again helped bring the project full circle.

"I think Nick did a fabulous job," she said. "I feel my words are a solid foundation to really highlight his exquisite craft...Each image takes him three weeks."

Casanova was noticeably proud of her new piece and said she was excited to share it with readers — both those who have loyally followed her since her first novel was released in 1995, and those who are new to her work.

### American Girl series

The author was approached about writing a mystery for an established historical character. She had the option of writing about "Kit" during the depression or "Rebecca" in New York in 1914.

"I said, 'How about if I do them both?'" she said.

The deal was made and she set out to write.

For the story about Kit, research brought Casanova from one national park to another. She traveled from her home near Voyageurs National Park in Borderland to Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky.

"I tried to find a story during the depression that I could relate to," she said.

Kit was from Ohio,

but had a brother who worked for the The Civilian Conservation Corps, or CCC Corp, which was a public work relief program that operated from 1933 to 1942 in the United States for unemployed, unmarried men.

"I realized they had CCC workers at a lot of national parks that were just forming, including Mammoth Cave National Park," Casanova said. "What I found really interesting was they had issues about a park starting there in the same way we had issues here at Voyageurs National Park... In this case, there were 600 families that had to be moved or evicted out of the park and that job largely went to CCC workers."

Kit has to save her brother from trouble, but also learns to understand the meaning and value of national parks. "Good stories often happen when conflict and divergent interests merge," Casanova said. "And I could relate to it."

For Rebecca's story, Casanova traveled to New York City, looking for a story to fit the character who loves to act and enjoys theater.

"The challenge here is she's a Jewish character," Casanova said. "That meant leaning on other experts and people who come from a Jewish background to get my facts right."

Fortunately, she had an editor who is Jewish and was able to help with details relating to Hanukkah and other traditions.

The writer immersed herself into the country's biggest city, searching for the story.

"The last day of my week, I ended up doing a Broadway tour of old Broadway and the Broadway district," she said. "Turns out, my son also at the time was working on Broadway and I was able to get into his offices...and some of the behind-the-scenes things."

During that, she learned information from more than 100 years ago that inspired the story of Rebecca developing a friendship with a young starlight, whose life is in danger.

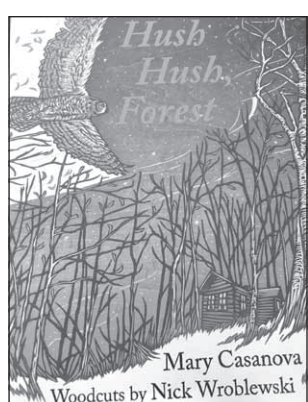
The two stories are Casanova's 10th and 11th with American Girl and future projects are in the works.

"Stay tuned," she said.

Woodcuts by Nick Wroblewski

Mary Casanova

"Hush Hush, Forest" by Mary Casanova is available locally at the Coffee Landing, City Drug and Ronnings.



Mary Casanova

## JUULING

► continued from A1

she said prior to last Thursday's visit to the classroom. "I've showed photos to different faculty and they had no idea what it is."

Students, unfortunately, have likely already had some kind of exposure to the sleek, odorless and discreet JUUL devices.

"Kids are doing it in class," she said.

Thursday, Elsberry told students one JUUL pod contained the same amount of nicotine found in a pack of cigarettes. While Juuling may seem cool to youth, it isn't the safe alternative to smoking that the company markets.

"A lot of arguments out there say Juuling and vaping is safer than actual cigarettes," she said. "Does everybody know they contain nicotine?"

Again, nearly everyone in the classroom had. In fact, the students knew nicotine is addictive and consumption of it at a young age can interfere with brain development.

"The health stuff is

so new, there aren't a lot of statistics out there on what the harmful effects are," Elsberry said.

What about the legal effects?

According to International Falls' city ordinance on tobacco, users over 18 can be charged with misdemeanors which can include fines and jail time for providing tobacco or devices to any minor.

"It doesn't matter if it's on school grounds or not," Elsberry said. "It's an automatic misdemeanor."

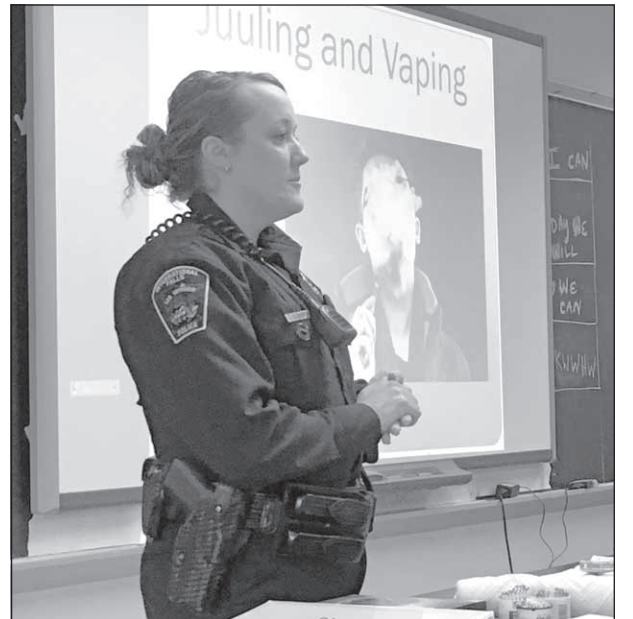
In addition, any minor who has tobacco in their possession or is using it can also be facing legal repercussions.

"Just keep this in mind," Elsberry said. "If you think you're not going to get caught or it won't come out — it

does. Maybe not that day, but people talk. They talk to each other. It gets out... Think about that."

The officer reminded the group the presentation wasn't intended to scare them, but to get them thinking about the possibilities and consequences beyond trying something they think is

"It doesn't matter if it's on school grounds or not. It's an automatic misdemeanor." Jill Elsberry, Falls D.A.R.E. officer



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

International Falls Police Officer Jill Elsberry, who also teaches the local D.A.R.E program, gives a presentation on Juuling and vaping to a Falls High School 10th grade class last week.

cool. Overall, Elsberry thought students were receptive, and is hopeful visiting the classrooms for the next 10 weeks will help build a positive relationship between students and law enforcement.

"(Students) probably hadn't been thinking about the health effects and legal ramifications as much as they are now," she said following her presentation. "A common statement written down on the worksheet handed out beforehand was that they didn't realize one pod has as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes.

### Editor's note

This story is the second in a series about Juuling and vaping in the Borderland communities. The Journal will also talk to local medical professionals for their input on the issue. Watch for that story in an upcoming edition.

One student also talked about the flavor juices leaking out and feeling a burning sensation in their mouth. I hope for those that haven't tried it — they won't; and those that have — they quit."

## BOARD

► continued from A1

Monday, Grover said whether people thought it was right or wrong, future action could result in violating a city ordinance with punishment clearly defined.

Board member Roxanne Skogstad-Ditsch, who was absent from September's board meeting, asked if it's understood by students that they are not to toilet paper school property.

"Should we make it clear in some way?" she said, suggesting it be included in the student handbook. "Some people think it's more positive than negative, so all I'm saying is communication is always something that is good... It's always nice to give one good warning."

Hebner said she believes it has been made clear to students, but believes there are some people who didn't know it was against the rules. "I believe that, that

is what some people think," she said.

Board member Mike Holden said filling the trees at the school with toilet paper has become a trend in the past four to five years as opposed to only toilet-papering community households before that.

"It's just going to continue if something isn't done," he said.

### Other action

In other business Monday, the board agreed to allow Commercial Refrigeration to replace the chiller in Bronco Arena at a cost not to exceed \$100,000.

When the company was re-installing the pumps at the facility, it was discovered the chiller — which was not part of the current project to replace the piping system, cement slab and boards — was leaking.

"They did a pressure test on it," Grover said of the 51-year-old piece of equipment. "If they would have known it was leaking, it would have been

fixed at the beginning of the summer."

Because Commercial Refrigeration has been the general contractor on the arena project since May, Grover thought establishing an agreement with the company would expedite the process.

"It's probably going to be a week and a half or so into November," Grover said. "We need to focus on making sure people have practice time."

In related discussion, the board will determine details of an upcoming open house for the arena in the near future.

"The idea would be to thank the community," Grover said. "Come see what your bond did."

Details on the event will be announced at a later date.

The board also agreed Monday to accept the resignation of two paraprofessionals — Ashley Goff and Ashley Larson — adding to a shortage in the position.

Grover said advertisements have been

posted and there is a group of candidates to interview, however, the district is short-staffed in that area.

"We're moving as quick as we can," he said, thanking those leaving the district for their service.

Also Monday, the board agreed to:

- Approve the proposal from Up North Builders for Bronco Arena drainage and damp proofing project.

- Approve the hire of Kathleen Tompkins as the hourly choir instructor.

- Approve the hire of Michele McDonald as girls varsity hockey coach, contingent upon getting a head coach certification.

- Approve the hire of Paul Fearing as an hourly bus driver.

- Accept the resignation due to retirement from Brenda Rasmussen, assistant cook.

- Recognize Jeremy Mann as a volunteer wrestling coach.

- Recognize Alicia Hendrickson as a volunteer cross country coach.

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### Meet Mary

Readers can purchase a copy of Mary Casanova's books at upcoming signing events. The first is scheduled for Nov. 8 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at City Drug.

Another one is set for Nov. 28 at Rainy Lake Atelier, located at Corrin's building — 445 Fourth Street, from 6-7:30 p.m.