



*Proudly serving Morrison County since 1888*



# 2010 Annual Report

The Mission  
of the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce  
is to promote its members and the  
greater community through innovative partnerships and  
accountable leadership.



March 2011



*Dear Chamber Members,*

*Thank you for the privilege of serving as the Chairperson of the Board of Directors during this reporting period. I am proud to present the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce's 2010 Annual Report.*

*The Chamber ended its membership year with 366 members, which is up 8 members over last year. This is impressive, especially in this economy. Thank you to all the businesses for valuing the work of the Chamber in and for the greater community.*

*The Chamber's Business Plan outlined the mission to promote our members and the greater community. Our financial contributions to the greater community in 2010 included the Veterans Art Project at the Minnesota State Veteran's Cemetery, the Little Falls Dam Festival, the Little Falls Business Association and the Camp Ripley/State Veterans Trail study.*

*Morrison County was the host site for the Governor's Deer Hunting Opener the weekend of November 5 & 6. Working with the Governor's staff, the Minnesota and Morrison County Deer Hunters Associations, Explore Minnesota Tourism, and representatives from Camp Ripley, Chamber staff worked to facilitate a great weekend for all attendees. Unfortunately, Governor Tim Pawlenty was not able to bring home the big one.*

*Building on the success of the past Business Insights, Business Insights 2010 was held with the co-sponsorship of Pine Country Bank, the Morrison County Record, Little Falls Business Association and Little Falls Radio. The program reached out to business owners throughout the service area for this half-day educational session. Highlights of the program are included in this report.*

*Besides Business Insights, our educational programming included a 4-part series on marketing held in conjunction with Central Lakes College and the Department of Employment and Economic Development; an Administrative Assistant's Day Luncheon with a customer service message; and legislative session preview and updates. Numerous candidate forums were held during this election year.*

*In 2010 the Chamber continued the 'Welcome to Little Falls' sign project started in 2009. A third welcome sign was installed at the corner of County Roads 238 and 27. This sign was funded in part by the West Side Improvement Association. The new granite signs are an impressive introduction to visitors arriving in Little Falls.*

*The Chamber's strength comes not only from the number of members, but also from their active participation in the community. Thank you for your continued membership.*

*Doug Veillette, Chair  
The Dairy Queen*

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## The History of the Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce was organized on May 15, 1888 with the filing of the Articles of Incorporation, constitution and bylaws for the stated purpose of “advancing the commercial, mercantile and manufacturing interests of Little Falls and the surrounding country”. Listed on the initial membership roster were 42 businesses.

For the past 122 years, the Chamber has been instrumental in the development and expansion of business in Morrison County. The foresightedness of the founding fathers of the area laid the foundation for the Chamber as we know it today.

There is little recorded history for the Chamber from the years 1888 to 1954. The Chamber’s first paid staff came in the form of administrative support by Mrs. W. J. Bellefeuille from 1954-1960 and Lorrie Virnig from 1960 - 1961.

G. Harmon Klemme was the first paid administrator serving 1960 - 1962. Following Klemme was W. J. Vondrashek from 1963 to 1967. The Glen Kraywinkle tenure was from 1967 - 1984; Dave Hochhalter from 1984 - 1995; Elaine Westerdahl-Delaney from 1996 - 2003. Starting in 2004, Debora K. Boelz has been the President/CEO for the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce.

In 1972, the Chamber took over the planning and implementation of the Little Falls Arts & Crafts Fair. This event has grown to include hundreds of vendors from 25 states. It annually attracts crowds of shoppers numbering over 140,000. Proceeds from the Arts & Crafts Fair enable the Chamber to keep its membership dues at very reasonable rates and is able to support community projects and improvements.

In 1984, the Chamber of Commerce changed its name to Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce to demonstrate the importance of developing an area wide approach to attract new commercial and industrial businesses.

In 1989, the annual golf outing was started.

In 1991, the Chamber moved into its current offices located in the historic Cass Gilbert Depot. The results of a community-wide effort saved the historic train depot from demolition and it is now used not only to house the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, but contains a community room that is enjoyed by many people on an annual basis.

In 2004, Friday Morning Coffees were started.

In 2006, the tag line “Proudly serving Morrison County since 1888” was added and the logo revised.

In 2006, Sporting Clays networking event was started. In 2007, an expanded, full-color membership directory was published. In 2008, the Chamber website was redesigned and the City of Lights retro fit with energy efficient LED bulbs.

Meet Me @ the Chamber was new programming started in 2009. This entails Chamber members being interviewed for programs aired on Central Minnesota Access Television. Two members were interviewed each month by Debora K. Boelz, Chamber President/CEO. The third component of the ½ hour program is an on-location interview with the Employee of the Month.

## 2010 Board of Directors & Staff

### Officers

**Chair**

Doug Veillette  
Dairy Queen

**Treasurer**

Julie Zupko  
Bieganeck & Randall State Insurance

**Vice Chair**

Bridget Britz  
Horizon Health

**Secretary**

Lori Kush  
Kush State Farm Insurance

**Immediate Past Chair**

Sandy Smith  
GoldSmith Jewelers

### Directors

Jim Birchem  
St. Otto's Care Center

Roxanne Matsen  
Larson Abstract Company

Shane Cole  
Dominos Pizza

Carl Vaagenes  
St. Gabriel's Hospital

Paul Kapsner  
Royalton Lumber

Tom West  
Morrison County Record

Barb Lyons  
Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union

### Staff

**President/CEO**

Debora K. Boelz

**Financial Coordinator**

Rachel Czech

**Office Coordinator**

Sylvia Ryden

**Projects & Volunteer Coordinator**

Gina Vetter

## Membership Services Division

The goal of the Membership Services Division is to maintain a membership that finds value in their Chamber through effective communication of member benefits and development and maintenance of member only activities and services.

In 2010, the Chamber had 366 members in good standing, which is up 8 members from 2009.

### **Membership Development Committee**

**Chair: Katie Kapus - Jackson, Pine Country Bank**

**Board Liaison: Shane Cole, Domino's Pizza**

Objectives:

- ~ to continue implementation of the plan to communicate membership benefits to the members and potential members;
- ~ to maintain a membership investment schedule that is equitable for all membership categories;
- ~ to identify methods for ensuring that all members' investments are made in a fair and timely fashion and to monitor/supervise member benefits.

### **Member Networking**

**Board Liaison: Carl Vaagenes, St. Gabriel's Hospital**

Objective:

- ~ to provide a varied offering of networking events to provide all members an opportunity to develop business relationships with each other.

### **Business After Hours**

Business After Hours provides not only a networking opportunity for the membership, but also the opportunity for a Chamber member to showcase their business by holding the event at their location. In 2010, 10 Business After Hours were held:

- January 21 sponsored by Nextera Communications
- February 16 sponsored by Camp Ripley with the Norwegian Home Guard
- March 11 sponsored by Bieganek Insurance
- April 20 sponsored by Integra Telecom
- May 18 sponsored by Eddy's Lake Mille Lacs Resort/Grand Casino
- September 30 sponsored by MN Fishing Museum
- October 28 sponsored by St. Gabriel's Hospital
- November 9 sponsored by CarCo Automotive Inc.
- December 9 sponsored by Gold Cross Ambulance

### **Friday Morning Coffee**

Friday Morning Coffees are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at either the Cass Gilbert Depot or at the sponsoring business. In 2010, the following Friday Morning Coffees were held:

- January 15 sponsored by Friends of Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
- February 19 sponsored by Shelley Funeral Chapels
- March 19 sponsored by Mississippi Connections
- April 16 sponsored by Diamond Willow Assisted Living
- May 21 sponsored by Atomic Learning
- June 18 sponsored by Kush State Farm Insurance, Century 21New Horizon's Realty

July 16 sponsored by Faust Photography  
August 20 sponsored by US Bank  
September 17 sponsored by Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union  
October 22 sponsored by Franciscan Sisters  
November 19 sponsored by Bieganek Insurance  
December 17 sponsored by Dominos Pizza

## Chamber Golf Outing

**Chair: Michelle Carlson, Pine Country Bank**

**Board Liaison: Barb Lyons, Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union**

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce sponsored its 21<sup>st</sup> annual Golf Outing on August 2 at Pine Ridge Golf Course with 116 golfers facing the challenges of this beautiful course.

### Corporate Sponsors for the Golf Outing

**Atomic Learning    Brandl Motors    Coborn's Superstore    Evergreen Equipment**  
**GoldSmith Jewelers    Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union    Minnesota Power**  
**Precision Tool Technologies    RadioShack/Design Electronics    St. Gabriel's Hospital**

### Holes Sponsors for the Golf Outing

<b>Dr. Allison Zak, D.C. LLC</b>	<b>Lost Lake Design</b>
<b>AmericInn of Little Falls</b>	<b>Minnesota Flying Aces</b>
<b>Bank of the West</b>	<b>Mississippi Connections</b>
<b>Cans 'R' Us</b>	<b>Morrison County Record</b>
<b>CTC Consolidated Telecommunications</b>	<b>NAPA Auto Parts</b>
<b>D &amp; D Beer Co.</b>	<b>Nextera Communications</b>
<b>Falls Court Dentists</b>	<b>Norwood State Farm Insurance Agency</b>
<b>Family Medical Center</b>	<b>Perkins Restaurant &amp; Bakery</b>
<b>Grand Casino Mille Lacs</b>	<b>Pine Country Bank</b>
<b>Highland Senior Living</b>	<b>Precision Tool Technologies</b>
<b>Hilmerson Collision Center /</b>	<b>RA Randall Agency</b>
<b>Captain Ron's Hot Tub Rental</b>	<b>St. Gabriel's Hospital</b>
<b>Horizon Health</b>	<b>Schlenner Wenner &amp; Co.</b>
<b>Kush State Farm Insurance</b>	<b>Trobec's Bus Service</b>
<b>Larson Abstract Company, Inc.</b>	<b>Walmart</b>

Special thanks to **Century 21New Horizon's Realty** for providing the Blue Bunny ice cream cart and to **Subway** for providing the boxed lunches.

Chamber's 2010 Golf Outing winning team, pictured right, was from **Schlenner Wenner & Co.** Team members were Brian Mackinac, Dick Knopik, Eric Knopik and Steve Schueller.



The two random drawing team winners were **Precision Tool Technologies** with team members Jeff Fink, Darren Heldman, Chad Kulus, and Pete Olson and **Bank of the West** with team members Terry Barrett, Ryan Barrett, Todd Guennigsmann and Perry Rassler.

Men's Longest Drive was Eric Svor and the Women's Longest Drive was won by Carmen Meyer, **Morrison County Record**. The drawing for Buy A Drive was won by the **St. Otto's Care Center** team.

## Sporting Clays

**Chair: Mark Gerbi, RA Randall Agency**

**Board Liaison: Paul Kapsner, Royalton Lumber**

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce sponsored its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Sporting Clays Outing on September 21 at **LeBlanc's Rice Creek Hunting & Recreation**. A record 96 participants faced the challenges of trap shooting, sporting clays and ended with a flurry.

### Corporate sponsors for Sporting Clays included:

Deml Insurance  
Family Medical Center  
GoldSmith Jewelers  
Little Falls Orthopedics  
Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union  
Minnesota Power  
Pine Country Bank

Schlenner Wenner & Co.  
Spectrum Marketing Services  
St. Gabriel's Hospital  
Thielen Meats  
Trobec's Bus Service  
West Side Bar

### Station sponsors for Sporting Clays included:

D & D Beer      Grand Casino Mille Lacs



Pictured at left is the 1<sup>st</sup> place team with a score of 211 is **GoldSmith Jewelers** with members John LeMieur, Tar Smith and Jonathon LeMieur. Bill Backowski not pictured.

Taking home 2nd place was the **RA Randall Agency** Team with members Steve LeMieur, Luke Faufau, Mark Gerbi and Dwayne Marzolf.

There was a tie for the flurry shoot with both teams breaking 40 targets. Congratulations to the **RA Randall Agency** team and the **Pine Country Bank** team, on this accomplishment.

The **Family Medical Center** team won the trivia contest and took home \$40 in Chamber Bucks. **GoldSmith Jewelers** scored 31 of the possible 32 points on the "Longest Shot" game.

## Member Recognition

### Objectives:

- ~ to recognize members of the Chamber for their membership and support of the community;
- ~ to recognize member's major anniversaries in the community;
- ~ to recognize new businesses in the service area for their choice of location and grow a prosperous business;
- ~ to recognize the importance of outstanding employees from the membership.

### Sub-committees:

#### Lindy Greeters

**Chair: Steve Andres, RadioShack/Design Electronics**

**Board Liaison: Lori Kush, Kush State Farm Insurance**

Lindy Greeters visited 22 new businesses in the service area in 2010. Regular member calls, which are made on a 3-year cycle, were made to 44 Chamber member businesses.

Thank you to the **Morrison County Record** for publishing, free of charge, the Lindy Greeter visit photos to new businesses in the service area. This truly demonstrates the paper's commitment to supporting area growth and development.

#### Outstanding Service Committee

**Chair: Deanna Boone, Franciscan Sisters**

**Board Liaison: Roxanne Matsen, Larson Abstract Company**

The Outstanding Service Committee works to identify and reward those Chamber members and their employees who go above and beyond the job description in their daily jobs and seeks nominations from the general public as well as other Chamber members for Employee of the Month designation, Large and Small Business of the Year and the Volunteer of the Year awards.

The Employee of the Month program recognizes a Chamber member employee who has been nominated by a customer or employer. In 2010, the 12 Employees of the Month were:

January - Katy Smith, **Falls Ballroom**

February - Judy Herman, **Pine Country Bank**

March - Becky McClain, **Lin Furniture**

April - Lucy Welle, **Little Falls Radio**

May - Wendy Rutz, **Little Falls Community Schools, Kid's Hideout**

June - Janelle Staab, **Edward Jones Investments**, Teri Hoggarth

July - Linda Paycer, **Bank of the West**

August - Louise Block, **Randall Lakes Area Clinic**

September - Jan Korzeniowski, **St. Gabriel's Hospital**

October - Brenda Borash, **Deml Insurance**

November - Eileen Holtberg, **Morrison County Recorders Office**

December - Judy Fisher, **Employment Enterprises Inc**

The Employee of the Month is treated to lunch by the Chamber with members of the Outstanding Service Committee. In addition, the recipient is presented with a cut flower arrangement provided on a rotating basis from **Coborn's Floral, The Flower Dell or Falls Floral**. **Broadway Stylists** provide a certificate for a hair cut and tanning session and **Silker Studio** provides the professional headshot that is displayed on the Employee of the Month board.

The **Morrison County Record** supports the Employee of the Month program by running monthly articles and photos of each recipient. The Employee of the Month is also presented with gift

certificates to one of the following restaurants: Dairy Queen, Domino's Pizza, Perkins Restaurant & Bakery, or Taco John's.

The Employees of the Month are included in the Chamber's weekly public access television programming, Meet Me @ the Chamber. Chamber President/CEO Debora K. Boelz filmed on location at the EOM's place of work. This program airs on Fridays at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. on channel 6 in Little Falls.

## Small and Large Businesses of Year Winners

### 2010 Small Business of the Year D & D Beer Company

D & D Beer Co. is owned by Gregg & Mike Dick and Joe & Greg Dahlheimer. D & D Beer Co. has gone above and beyond in giving to the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, area nonprofits and the various community organizations. As small business owners, they take their personal commitment to their employees and their role in the community very seriously, striving to make the community better because of their presence.



Pictured are Tammy Jopp, Horizon Health, Gregg and Mike Dick, D & D Beer and Robbin Keehr, Schlenner Wenner & Co



### 2010 Large Business of the Year St. Gabriel's Hospital

St. Gabriel's Hospital continues to provide outstanding community support by setting a shining example of community involvement, serving on Chamber and nonprofit boards and committees, and promoting the betterment of the community.

Pictured is Robbin Keehr, Schlenner Wenner & Co, Carl Vaagenes and Paul Cameron, St. Gabriel's Hospital, Tammy Jopp, Horizon Health

# Volunteer of the Year Winner

## 2010 Volunteer of the Year was Doug Dahlberg, Spectrum Marketing Services

Doug has been a volunteer for the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce for the past 8 years and is a Leadership LindyLand graduate, currently serving on the LindyLand Steering Committee and continues to give of his time to that program by day chairing many sessions. Doug volunteers for the Arts & Crafts Fair in conjunction with the Flyer Athletic Boosters (FAB), who provide the night security for the event. He has been a community reader in the classroom at Lindbergh Elementary for the past 4 years. Besides the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, Doug shares his time and talents with many other community organizations.



Pictured is Doug Dahlberg, Tammy Jopp, Horizon Health and Robbin Keehr, Schlenner Wenner & Co

Awardees met established criteria for nomination, were nominated by their peers with the final determination made by the Chamber's Outstanding Service Committee. Winners received a plaque noting their award and are included on permanent wall plaques in the Chamber office.

## Communications Division

The goals of the Communications Division were:

~ to further enhance the various communication channels of the Chamber including the Chamber newsletter, the Chamber's website, [www.littlefallsmnchamber.com](http://www.littlefallsmnchamber.com), direct mail, FAX, and a quarterly column written by the President/CEO in the **Morrison County Record**;

~ to cultivate relationships within the community generally, and specifically with Members, by increasing awareness of Chamber activities and the services and activities of its members.

In 2010, 12 issues of the Chamber newsletter were published. Weekly Updates are sent electronically on Fridays, previewing the up-coming week's activities.

ChamberMaster, a software company that specializes in providing services to chambers of commerce, integrated the Chamber's membership data base with the website software, streamlining many of the day-to-day activities of the staff. This new software enables the Chamber to accept payment via credit cards.

Press releases were done on networking opportunities and Chamber sponsored events such as legislative updates, educational sessions and the Arts & Crafts Fair. Press releases are sent to the Brainerd Dispatch, St. Cloud Times, **Morrison County Record**, **Little Falls Radio**, **Central MN Access Television**, **Lakeland Public Access Television**, and KSAX in Alexandria.

The Chamber website, [www.littlefallsmnchamber.com](http://www.littlefallsmnchamber.com), provides members and the greater community with information on upcoming events and membership listings with links to each individual business website, where available.

Programming started in 2009 titled “Meet Me @ the Chamber” continues to grow an audience. This program airs on **Central Minnesota Access Television** with two Chamber members being interviewed each month by Debora K. Boelz, Chamber President/CEO. The third component of the ½ hour program was an on location interview with the Employee of the Month.

Chamber member guests on Meet Me @ the Chamber in 2010 included:

January - St. Gabriel’s Hospital & Habitat For Humanity  
February - Edward Jones, Kyle Hoggarth & Lind Realty  
March - Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge & Perkins Family Restaurant  
April - Ambiance @53 & BW Insurance  
May - Lin Furniture & Central Lakes College  
June - Lost Lake Design & Dr. Allison Zak, DC  
July - AB Upholstery & Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls  
August - Highland Senior Living & Trobec’s Bus Service  
September - Randall Insurance & MN Fishing Museum  
October - Little Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau & The Royal  
November - PrimeLending & Falls Floral  
December - Morrison County Humane Society & the West Side Improvement Association

### Community Partnerships Division

**The goals of the Community Partnership Division were:**

- ~ to work in partnership with a variety of community entities (governmental, nonprofit, and private) to address community issues and opportunities;
- ~ to provide support to Chamber members through advocacy and liaison with government, taxing entities (including city, county, townships, and school districts) on a case by case basis as determined by the Board.

### Legislative Updates

Pre-session briefing was held on January 27 with 50 attendees. Representative Al Doty and Senator Paul Koering addressed the concerns of the attendees that ranged from school funding to alternative energy resources. The post-session debriefing was held on May 26 with 44 attending.

### Business Insights 2010

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, Pine Country Bank, Little Falls Radio, Morrison County Record and the Little Falls Business Association collaborated to provide a free business seminar on Wednesday, October 6 at the Initiative Foundation.

Featured speakers were Rod Miley, management consultant and former president of Totino’s and Golden Valley Microwave Foods; Lloyd Sigel, founder of Lloyd’s Barbeque; and Tom Lyons of the Faelon Business Brokers and host of “Today’s Business” on WCCO Radio.

House of Representative’s Commerce & Labor Committee was in Little Falls on January 29 to hear from the local business community on issues that will impact their businesses. Commerce & Labor Committee Chair Joe Atkins, whose committee has 229 bills before the 2010 legislative session, heard comment on a variety of topics including business tax rates, workers comp insurance, and sales tax issues.

**Election Year Candidate Forums** were sponsored by the Chamber for the public benefit to assist in educating the voting public. Forums were held for Representative 12B, Senate 12, County Commissioner, City Council and Mayor of Little Falls. All forums were recorded for rebroadcast by **Central MN Access Television** for viewing in Pierz and/or Little Falls.

**Minnesota State Veteran's Art Project** received funds in the amount of \$5,000 from the Chamber in 2010. This project will result in the creation of 5, 8' by 10' oil paintings that will be hung in the Committal Hall at the MN Veterans Cemetery adjacent to Camp Ripley. Each painting represents one branch of the service highlighting changes over time. Local artist Charles G. Kapsner has been commissioned to complete this project as a cost of \$500,000. The Initiative Foundation is the fiscal agent for the project.

**Governor's Deer Hunting Opener** was sponsored by the Minnesota and Morrison County Deer Hunters Associations, Explore MN Tourism, Governor Tim Pawlenty's staff, the City of Little Falls through Restaurant & Lodging Tax funds and the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce. This was the 8<sup>th</sup> annual event Governor Tim Pawlenty has participated in to raise awareness of recreational opportunities in the State. Media from 5 states were in Morrison County. The Chamber sponsored a night at the **Minnesota Flying Aces** and funded the Saturday luncheon at **Cabin Fever**. The Ron Nagel family hosted the Governor on his hunt; he was not successful.

**In the Chamber's on-going commitment to education of our members, the following Lunch & Learns were held:**

Marketing NOW! 4 part series with Central Lakes College and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development on January 28, February 4, 11, and 18 at Camp Ripley.

Bulk Mailing Permit - June 22 at the Depot

Health Care Reform with **Primary Benefit Services** sponsoring on October 28 at the Initiative Foundation.

**Administrative Professional's Day Luncheon** featured Mark Fyten of **Your ADvocate Marketing & Promotions**, giving tips on great customer service. In recognition of Administrative Professional's Day, a special luncheon designed for the front line employees was held April 21 at the Cass Gilbert Depot.

<b>Community Pride Division</b>
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The goals of the Community Pride Division were:

- ~ to generate income to support the activities of the Chamber which are unable to generate income;
- ~ to fund a large community beautification project;
- ~ to make a donation to local projects and programs;
- ~ to provide information, marketing, and promotion to area residents and potential visitors in order to increase the dollars spent in the community.

**Activity:** Heritage Preservation Commission, City of Lights, new teacher breakfast, Halloween Trick or Treating, hosts a Santa Parade reception, Santa at the Depot, Chamber Bucks, and Holiday Movie matinee.

The City of Lights was lit in conjunction with the Dam Festival, Arts & Crafts Fair weekend and lit for the season for the Santa Parade through the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. The Chamber proudly sponsors the City of Lights for the enjoyment of the community as well as the numerous visitors to Little

Falls during the holiday season. From November - January, the City of Lights not only outlines the downtown buildings with lights, but includes the historic streetlights with pole wraps and wreaths that the Chamber also funds.

The long-standing tradition of welcoming new teachers to the school district at the beginning of the school year now has a two-fold approach. **Education Minnesota, Little Falls**, co-sponsors a new teacher/administrator breakfast with the Chamber for teachers in the Little Falls school district, public and parochial. The new educators are encouraged to utilize local businesses for goods and services as often as possible.

A new "Welcome to Little Falls" sign was added at the intersection of Highways 27 and 238 West of Little Falls. The mahogany granite sign is a smaller version of the welcome signs on highway 10 north and south of Little Falls. Spearheaded by the Chamber of Commerce, with funding from the **West Side Improvement Association**, this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 5 signs that will be installed as funding allows. Completion of the landscaping around the new sign will be completed in 2011 as the weather permits.

Another long-standing tradition of the Chamber is Halloween Trick or Treating with the business community. Annually around October 31, the Chamber coordinates with local businesses to provide the opportunity for safe trick or treating in daylight hours. The community welcomed about 800 children in 2010 for this event.

In 2010 the Santa Parade Reception was held on November 26. Thank you to the **West Side Improvement Association**, who sponsored the Santa Parade and **Perkins Restaurant & Bakery**, who provided cookies and hot chocolate in the Depot prior to the parade for the enjoyment of the crowd, which numbered about 100 this year.

In collaboration with **Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union**, the annual matinee movie was provided on December 4 at the Falls Cinema. The showing of "Nanny McPhee" was presented on 3 screens at noon and 2:00 p.m. The Chamber sponsors this event in support of the retail community as a means of bringing shoppers to the community.

### **Arts & Crafts Fair Council**

**Chair: Susan Paulson, Ambiance@53**

**Board Liaison: Roxanne Matsen, Larson Abstract Company**

The Little Falls Arts & Crafts Fair continues to be a quality event which includes a cross section of handcrafted merchandise in a comfortable and safe setting for shoppers. It is how many people know Little Falls. The 38<sup>th</sup> annual Arts & Crafts Fair was held September 11 & 12 in the historic downtown area on both sides of the Mississippi River.

The Fair is a source of financial support to the community through significant contributions to the operations and projects of the Chamber. A portion of the proceeds from the Fair are reinvested in the community by the Chamber on items such as the historic streetlights, downtown redevelopment, maintenance and upkeep of the entry signs into Little Falls, in the sponsorship of the Leadership LindyLand program, and through financial contributions to the Dam Festival (\$500), Community Development of Morrison County (\$1,000), the Initiative Foundation (\$1,000) and in 2010, the Veterans Arts History Memorial at the MN Veteran's Cemetery (\$5,000) and to the Camp Ripley/Veteran's Trail study (\$1,500).

In 2010, the Arts & Crafts Fair welcomed 617 food and craft vendors. Attendance for this event was estimated at 130,000 people. Locally, 21 nonprofit agencies earned money for their programs through the Fair by working the event for the Chamber, by sponsoring a food booth or staffing a parking lot.

New in 2010 was the addition of the “Let’s Go Fishing” group with pontoon rides between Kiwanis Park and LeBourget Park. Riders were taken on a loop ride from the dam to the railroad trestle. Shoppers at both the Antiques & Collectibles Fair and the Arts & Crafts Fair enjoyed the leisurely break in their day.

## Development Services Division

The goal of the Development Services Division was:

~ to provide development services to assist in the areas of leadership and business.

### Leadership LindyLand

**Chair: Barb Lyons, Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union**

**Board Liaison: Jim Birchem, St. Otto’s Care Center**

In its 9<sup>th</sup> year, the Leadership LindyLand: Dynamic Development of Community Leaders continues to provide a training ground for the next generation of community leaders.



Seated: Sgt. Daniel Bednarek and Phil McCoy    Standing: Jane Eliason, Theresa Sweeney, Jennifer Drill, Jesse Raad, Mavis Buker, Kristen Nelson, Lisa Thielman, Amy Kelash, Cathy Tryggestad and Nancy Henderson

### **Participants in 2009 - 2010 included:**

Sgt. Daniel Bednarek, **Camp Ripley**  
Mavis Buker, **Minnesota Fishing Museum**  
Jenifer Drill, **Morrison County Public Health**  
Jane Eliason, **Bieganek Insurance**  
Nancy Henderson, **Little Falls Community Schools**  
Doris Illies, **Productive Alternatives**  
Amy Kelash, **Morrison County Technology Services**

Phil McCoy, **Minnesota Power**  
Kristen Nelson, **MCICCK**  
Jessica Raad, **St. Otto’s Care Center**  
Theresa Sweeney, **Morrison County Social Services**  
Lisa Thielman, **Unity Family Healthcare**  
Cathy Tryggestad, **Mid State Education District**

Leadership LindyLand provides the opportunity for businesses to speak to the participants by being a session sponsor or graduation sponsor. Sponsors were: **Domino's Pizza, Horizon Health, Larson Abstract, Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union, Pine Country Bank, Rural AIDS Action Network and St. Gabriel's Hospital**

Program content for Leadership LindyLand is broken down into 10 days over the course of the year.

September

Retreat - Personal Leadership Development and K-12 Education

February

Business, Economics and tours of Manufacturing Facilities

October

Personal Development and Community Heritage

March

Business Day at the Capitol Sponsored by the MN Chamber of Commerce

November

Health and Human Services

April

Tourism and Camp Ripley

December

Team Building

May

Personal Leadership Development and Graduation

January

Media Education

A Community Service project is incorporated into this leadership development training. The project chosen by the participants was titled "Empty Bowls Fundraiser" in support of the local food shelves. The project was twofold with a soup fundraiser at the **Little Falls Community Schools Commons**. With donation from the business community, 3 kinds of soup, bread and dessert were served. The second component of the event was a silent auction of bowls made and donated by local artists. Bowls made by local high school students were available for sale as well.

Leadership LindyLand participants joined nearly 600 business leaders from across the state in St. Paul on March 10 to participate in the 17th annual Business Day at the Capitol, which has become the largest lobbying day in Minnesota! Chambers from dozens of communities across the state brought their members and leadership classes to help deliver the message face to face with legislators on key business issues for their community. Our attendance demonstrated our commitment to protecting the priorities of Minnesota's business community.

Major General Richard Nash, Commanding General of the 34th Infantry Red Bull Division, Minnesota, addressed Business Day at the Capitol participants on the importance of supporting local service men and women by being a part of the yellow ribbon campaign. Governor Tim Pawlenty also addressed the group during the afternoon luncheon.

The Leadership LindyLand participants spent a day in St. Paul hearing from the House and Senate leadership on pressing issues facing the State. An update on current lobbying efforts on behalf of businesses throughout Minnesota was heard from the Chamber staff. Individual meetings with Representative Al Doty and Senator Paul Koering completed the day, including a personal tour of the State Capitol.

Thank you to **Century 21/New Horizons Realty** and **Camp Ripley** for the use of their vans as the Leadership LindyLand participants toured the county and traveled to St. Paul.

**The Chamber works to encourage continued business growth in the area** through collaborative efforts with Community Development of Morrison County, Initiative Foundation, the City of Little Falls, Little Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau, Morrison County and others which are consistent with the purpose of the Chamber.

**Minnesota Manufacturer's Week was celebrated with Lindy Greeter visits to our member manufacturers.** Representatives from the Lindy Greeter Committee and general Chamber membership presented certificates signed by Governor Tim Pawlenty acknowledging this week that is celebrated statewide. Photos of the visits can be found on the Chamber's website.

**Liaison activities:** Community Development of Morrison County, City of Little Falls and the Little Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Other Community Outreach:** Chamber staff serve on the Healthy Communities Collaborative and United Way Board of Directors, are the business representative on the Statewide Health Improvement Grant Program, Stand Up 4 Youth, City of Little Falls Heritage Preservation Commission, Morrison County Emergency Preparedness Council, Morrison County Volunteer Service Council, Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, Citizens Committee at Camp Ripley and St. Gabriel's Hospital, and regularly attend the Little Falls Business Association meetings.

## Governance

**Chair:** Doug Veillette, Dairy Queen

**Vice Chair:** Bridget Britz, Horizon Health

**Committee:** Executive Committee

### **Board Strategic Planning Session**

The Chamber Board of Directors participated in a strategic planning session lead by Jean Mershon of Central Lakes College in June. The purpose of the planning session was to assess the current status of the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and set direction going forward.

### **Annual Meeting**

The 122<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce was held on February 25 at the Falls Ballroom with 280 guests in attendance. Past board members Jacki DeVine, Tom Chatfield, **Fallsburg Woodworking**, and Col. Richard Weaver, **Camp Ripley**, were honored for their years of service to the Chamber.

The featured speaker was Mike Max, WCCO News Anchor, with a message of hope and perseverance with his presentation on 5 reasons people are successful.



**Corporate sponsors for the 2010 Annual Meeting included:**

Bank of the West  
Bieganek Insurance Agency  
Brandl Motors  
Coborn's Superstore  
Franciscan Sisters  
Grand Casino Mille Lacs  
Horizon Health

Initiative Foundation  
Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union  
Pine Country Bank  
RadioShack  
St. Gabriel's Hospital  
Schlenner Wenner & Co.  
West Side Liquor & Smoke Shop

**Table sponsors for the 2010 Annual Meeting included:**

Central Minnesota Ethanol Co-op  
R.A. Randall Agency

Pine Country Bank  
St. Otto's Care Center

**Major Accomplishments in 2010**

- ~ Sponsored the 38<sup>th</sup> annual Little Falls Arts & Crafts Fair with 559 merchandise vendors and 53 food vendors. Revenues for this event grossed \$179,955.
- ~ Collaboration with Pine Country Bank, Little Falls Radio, Morrison Country Record and the Little Falls Business Association to sponsor Business Insights 2010.
- ~ Added an additional "Welcome to Little Falls" sign on West Highway 27.
- ~ Completed the membership year with 366 members.
- ~ Assisted the MN Deer Hunters Association, Explore MN Tourism, Morrison County Deer Hunters Association and the Governor's staff in sponsoring the Governor's Deer Hunting Opener in Morrison County November 4 - 6.

## 2010 Financial Recap

With comparisons to 2008 & 2009

		2010	2009	2008
<b>Receipts</b>				
	Membership Dues	\$ 63,216	\$ 65,205	\$ 71,017
	Arts & Crafts Fair	180,000	188,395	197,720
	Donations	18,171	21,330	42,491
	Ticket Sales	5,619	3,644	1,906
	Registrations	7,152	6,791	10,517
	Interest	4,023	6,455	8,737
	Other	5,280	12,443	9,318
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$283,461</b>	<b>\$304,263</b>	<b>\$341,706</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>				
	Communications	\$ 18,117	\$ 14,257	\$ 19,826
	Community Partnerships	25,320	22,504	20,747
	Membership Services	44,428	38,496	39,976
	Development Services	8,061	8,508	9,644
	Community Pride	84,030	97,472	125,477
	General Operations	142,725	131,566	120,731
	Other	3,215	3,139	5,437
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$325,896</b>	<b>\$315,942</b>	<b>\$341,838</b>
	Excess/Deficiency	<\$42,435>	<\$11,679>	\$132
<b>Chamber Bucks</b>	Sold	\$16,745	\$14,914	\$17,866
	Redeemed	\$16,395	\$15,324	\$17,878

For more information or membership materials, please contact us at:

**The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce**

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