



Proudly Serving Morrison County Since 1888

CHAMBER

OF COMMERCE

NEWS

200 1 St NW

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Volume 28 Number 3

Newsletter

April 2011

Chamber Annual Report & Financial Review

The Chamber's Business Plan results luncheon was held on March 31 at the Falls Ballroom. President/CEO Debora K. Boelz gave a presentation on the 6 divisions of the Chamber's Business Plan with accomplishments from 2010.

The 6 divisions that form the Business Plan are Membership Services, Communications, Community Partnerships, Community Pride, Development Services and Governance.

Major Accomplishments in 2010

- Sponsored the 38th 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 County Record and the Little Falls Business Association to sponsor Business Insights 2010.
- Added an additional "Welcome to Little Falls" sign on West Highway 27 in collaboration with the West Side Improvement Association.
- 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.

Community donation made by the Chamber in 2010 included

- \$5,000 to the Veteran's Art Project
- \$2,150 to the Little Falls Business Association
- \$1,500 to the Camp Ripley/Veteran's Trail study
- \$1,000 to the Initiative Foundation
- \$1,000 to Community Development of Morrison County
- \$500 to the Governor's Deer Hunting Opener
- \$500 in support of the Little Falls Dam Festival

Schlenner Wenner & Co. completed the annual financial review for 2010. Copies of the financial review are available by request at the Chamber office. The complete 2010 Annual Report is available online on the Chamber's website or in hard copy by request.

Membership has its benefits

A benefit of your Chamber Membership..... **FREE** listing on the Chamber's website with a **FREE** active link to **YOUR** website!

Administrative Professional's Day Celebrated April 27th

You appreciate them, but don't often say it. You rely on them to keep your business running. They are the first and last person that many of your customers and potential customers have contact with. They often juggle your business and your personal life and speak to your children as much as you do. Say thank you and celebrate Administrative Professional's Day, Wednesday, April 27th

This year the Chamber is not sponsoring the traditional luncheon with a speaker. Administrative Assistants are not a 'one size fits all' kind of group. Combined this with many businesses running on a bare bones staff, taking time out for a 2 hour lunch is not feasible.

What does your assistant like? Check out the Hot Deals section on the Chamber's website at www.littlefallsmnchamber.com Click on the Hot Deals icon to see special deals just for Administrative Professional's Day! You will find flower specials, lodging, restaurant gift certificates and much more! What a great way to support the local business community!

From the Desk of the CEO

- Debora K. Boelz



Greeting from the desk of the CEO! April showers bring May flowers and flooding! And soon green grass – at this point I would welcome the weeds that grow in the sidewalk cracks around the Depot as a sign that spring has finally arrived!

I'll save my annual soap box speech for next month. You know the one – let's get our public areas all cleaned up after the long winter.

The WOW factor! I've never been in the Cass Gilbert Depot; I've never been to Linden Hill. I've lived here all my life and didn't know that was in Morrison County. I can speak in front of a group of strangers. WOW!

This is a pitch for your participation in Leadership LindyLand for 2011- 2012! Change your view of the world by spending 8 days over 8 months honing your leadership skills and expanding your knowledge of the communities in Morrison County. Leadership LindyLand is as cost effective way for you to expand your leadership skills, grow as a person, gain confidence in your job, personal life and network with other participants, community leaders and business owners. You can not afford to not participate in this programming.

This programming is beneficial for business owners and employees at all levels of your business. Know someone who is currently under employed or unemployed; maybe a college student who could use another line on their resume? All good candidates for Leadership LindyLand! Non Chamber members pay a slightly higher fee to attend this programming.

As the Chamber holds networking events in the coming months, I will be asking for a show of hands of graduates of Leadership LindyLand. These people will be able to give you a first hand account of what they gained from participating. Contact Gina for more information and application materials.

The highlights from the 2010 Annual Report are on the opening page of this newsletter. Please contact me if you have questions on any of the items. The Chamber's Annual Report is based on the Business Plan, which is updated annually by June to correspond to the membership year of July 1 – June 30. If you have suggestions on programming, especially topics for educational programming, let me know. The Annual Report is posted on the website for easy reference. This year I added photos from many of the events!

In closing, it was time! I finally updated my 8 year old professional photo to more accurately reflect the natural aging process! See above. Under the category of a second opinion is a good thing, I have been struggling with bifocals for over a year not able to adjust to this "new norm" for me. I changed doctors and was told that my bifocals were unnecessary and causing more problems than helping. The aging process is being kinder to me than I thought!

Business After Hours

Tuesday, April 12
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Lin Furniture

32 E Broadway, Little Falls

Join us for this informal networking event. Lin Furniture has lots to offer and here is an opportunity to see all the new happenings, while enjoying some hors d'oeuvres, refreshments and great networking.

Sponsored by:



Friday Morning Coffee

Friday, April 15
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

Chamber of Commerce

200 1 St NW, Little Falls

Kick off your weekend by joining us for a cup or two of coffee and a donut while making business connections. All Chamber members and their employees are invited to attend. Friday Morning Coffees are the third Friday of each month from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. Introductions are made around the room starting at 8:15 a.m. A new component has been added to Friday Morning Coffee. After announcements, up to 4 people will have the opportunity to give a 30 second testimonial.

Sponsored by:



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Budget Lawn and Snow

James Hoffman, *Owner*

23652 153 St

Pierz, MN 56364

320-360-4517

320-468-2776 Fax

hoffmanjames@hotmail.com

Lawn care and snow plowing.

Northern Image Landscaping LLC

Willie Isder & Joan Kempenich, *Owners*

17748 Heron Rd

Little Falls, MN 56345

320-632-1986

320-632-1986 Fax

support@northern-image.com

www.northern-image.com

Full service nursery, landscaping, sod/grass seed, mulch/rock, retaining walls, fertilizing, plantings. Fully licensed and insured. Hours M-F 8:30 to 5:30; Sat 9:00 to 5:00; Sun 9:00 to 4:00. Extended hours during May and June.

Start Planning for Leadership LindyLand 2011-12!

We are looking forward to our 10th Leadership LindyLand Class to begin October 2011. Detailed information will be coming out soon, with curriculum outline, meeting dates and some new exciting program components. Watch your mail for more information.

Chamber Annual Meeting Thank You

Special thank you to *Little Falls Dairy Queen* for providing all the dessert for the Chamber Annual Meeting, February 24 and to *Sister Doretta Meier, Franciscan Sisters* for giving the invocation.

**Congratulation's to our April
Employee of the Month
Linda Johnson, St. Gabriel's Hospital**



Pictured: Carl Vaagenes, St. Gabriel's CEO
and Linda Johnson

Linda Johnson, St. Gabriel's Manager of Volunteer Services and Life Line at St. Gabriel's Hospital. Linda has been Manager of Volunteer Services and Lifeline for 22 years. Carl Vaagenes, CEO at St. Gabriel's Hospital, states that the volunteer program at St. Gabriel's Hospital is one of the best among hospitals in the state, and attributes this in large part to Linda's enthusiastic energy and love for people. She has the gift of being able to inspire people through her passion for volunteerism. Last year, 325 volunteers provided over 23,000 hours of service throughout St. Gabriel's Hospital. Linda states that she has a lot of great people and volunteers to work with who really make her job more meaningful and enjoyable. Linda and her husband, Terry, have three grown children. She enjoys quilting, crafts, cross-country skiing, and outdoor activities.

Looking ahead . . .

Chamber Golf Outing

Monday, August 1, 2011
Little Falls Country Club
Noon Shotgun Start

Sporting Clays

Tuesday, September 20, 2011
Rice Creek Hunting & Recreation
4:30 p.m. Shotgun Start

Little Falls Arts & Crafts Fair

Saturday, September 10
8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 11

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Electronic Recycling Opportunities

Morrison County will be sponsoring an electronic recycling event on Friday, April 15th from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. at the Public Works building behind Larson Boats off of 9th Avenue NW.

Three day prior registration of items is necessary. Pricing for computer monitor, CPU, printer, scanner, fax machine, power supplies, televisions, etc is \$10.00 per item. Large photocopiers and console televisions is \$15.00 per item

Morrison County will be billing these charges and a Certificate of Recycling and Media Destruction will be provided with your billing which the electronic recycler furnishes.

For more information and needed forms, please contact Amy Kowalzek, Environmental & Administrative Services Supervisor at 320.631.2862

The County will be sponsoring another recycling event on Friday, October 14, 2011.

National Volunteer Week

April 10-16, 2011

Volunteers of the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce have given over 2,200 hours to the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and the Little Falls community in 2010. Thank you to all 137 business professionals, youth and seniors who unselfishly give of their time and talents throughout the year to make The Chamber of Commerce and the community in which we live great! **Thank you!!**

April Guests on Meet Me @ The Chamber

Watch Meet Me @ The Chamber every Friday at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. on channel 6 in Little Falls. April guests are **Mary Marana**, *Crisis Line & Referral Service* and **Jodie Czech**, *AgStar Home Mortgage Services*. The Employee of the Month is **Linda Johnson**, Manager of Volunteer Services and Life Line for *St. Gabriel's Hospital*.

The Meet Me @ the Chamber programming is an added value to your Chamber membership. Each month 2 members are highlighted in a 10 minute segment free of charge! Completing the program is an interview with the Employee of the Month. If you are interested in this FREE opportunity to promote your business to the greater community, please contact Deb.



Chamber member businesses are encouraged to take advantage of this great FREE advertising opportunity on the Chamber's website. Hot Deals are long or short term specials, sales or coupon opportunities. Hot Deals can be for the general public, tourists to our area or for Chamber members only. Coupons are printed off of the website and are easily coded for tracking purposes. Contact Deb to get your Hot Deal listed!

Recent board action for March

Recent Board Action:

- ~ Approved the 2010 Annual Report major accomplishments
- ~ Approved a request from the Golf Committee to raise fees for the 2011 Golf Outing to be held August 1st.
- ~ Denied a funding request from Camp Ripley for costs incurred during the Norwegian Home Guard visit in February

Your 2011 Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

2009-2011

Bridget Britz

2011 Chair of the Board

Horizon Health

Paul Kapsner

Royalton Lumber

Julie Zupko

2011 Vice Chair of the Board

Bieganek Insurance Agency

2010-2012

Jim Birchem

St. Otto's Care Center

Lori Kush

Kush State Farm Insurance

Barb Lyons

**Mid Minnesota Federal
Credit Union**

Roxanne Matsen

Larson Abstract Co, Inc.

2011-2013

Kyle Hogarth

Edward Jones Investments

Doug Veillette

2011 Past Chair of the Board

Dairy Queen

Jodi Weaver

The Gumdrop Tree

Tom West

Morrison County Record

Chamber Staff

Debora K. Boelz,

President/CEO

dboelz@littlefallsmnchamber.com

Rachel Czech,

Financial Coordinator

rachelc@littlefallsmnchamber.com

Sylvia Ryden,

Office Coordinator

sylviar@littlefallsmnchamber.com

Gina Vetter,

Projects & Volunteer Coordinator

ginav@littlefallsmnchamber.com

LINDY GREETER MEMBER VISITS

Thank you for your membership. Photos are from Member Visits made March 22, 2011. Greeters present the member with a Chamber mug filled with sweets, and thank them for their support of the Chamber and community.



FALLS COURT DENTISTS

Lindy Greeters Brian Gapinski, **Rural MinnCEP**, left, and Greg Zylka, **Coborn's**, right, with Bernie Gross (38 yrs employed), from Accounting; Sharon Mrozik (44 yrs employed), Dental Assistant; and Kathy Erickson (45 yrs employed), Laboratory Technician. The Falls Court Dentists very much appreciate their employees and patients.



MORRISON COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY (Fairgrounds)

Lindy Greeter Brian Gapinski, **Rural MinnCEP**, with Fairgrounds Manager Norma Hudson, middle, and Board Member Gigi Dambow, at the **Morrison County Fairgrounds**. They are excited for the 2011 season at the Fairgrounds. They would like you to come and join them for the fun.



SILKER STUDIO

Lindy Greeter Brian Gapinski, **Rural MinnCEP**, with Mary Beth Zea, Owner of **Silker Studio**. Silker Studio prides itself on serving the individual needs of all its clients. The Studio does professional commercial, portrait, and wedding photography. Its fine reputation for service and outstanding artistic work sets it apart from others in the profession.



THE OFFICE SHOP INC.

Lindy Greeters Brian Gapinski, **Rural MinnCEP**, second from left, and Greg Zylka, **Coborn's**, right, with Dave Anderson, Equipment Sales; Sheila Avenson, Supply Sales; Greg Horejsi, Service Technician of **The Office Shop Inc.** The Office Shop Inc. is a full service office products dealer. They are very excited to be part of the Little Falls community. Locally owned by Scott and Jodie Johnson since 1983. Visit their website at www.theofficeshopinc.com or call at 1-800-450-9000 to learn more about them.

Effective teachers matter for Minnesota's future

By David C. Olson

The quality of teachers, second to parents, is the top predictor of student success. The new alternative teacher licensure law represents one piece of the puzzle to ensure we have effective teachers in every classroom. More must be done. The next logical step is passage of "Effectiveness Matters" – HF 945/SF 636, a bill aimed at protecting the most effective teachers.

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and its network of local chambers were part of a broad-based, bipartisan group that helped pass the alternative licensure law. A similar coalition is at the forefront of this legislation. Simply put, employers of all types and sizes depend on a world-class workforce to compete in our increasingly complex and global economy.

Minnesota is facing a convergence of disturbing trends:

- Nearly 70 percent of all jobs in Minnesota by 2018 will require postsecondary training that will require a high school diploma. Today it's 40 percent.
- Minnesota has one of the widest gaps in the United States in achievement among racially diverse and low-income students.
- The only growth in Minnesota's student population is among racially diverse students.

Effective teachers can play a vital role in helping Minnesota to avert these colliding dynamics.

Minnesota is far from alone in advancing such legislation. President Obama and U.S. Education Arne Duncan are four-square behind strengthening measures to improve teacher quality and protect effective teachers. Laws in Colorado, Arizona, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C. require that teacher effectiveness is the primary factor when schools make layoff decisions. Similar legislation is pending in Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, New York and Washington.

In contrast, Minnesota recently received Ds from three organizations for its teacher evaluation system – the National Council on Teacher Quality, Center for American Progress and American Enterprise Institute.

Let me be very clear that Minnesota has many amazing teachers – and yet many are not protected appropriately during layoffs. From my perspective, thousands of highly effective teachers have been laid off early in their careers simply due to the seniority system. The ideas advanced in this bill are reasonable and practical. For example, rising stars who are deemed "highly effective" could be protected by their superintendents during layoffs. In essence, this would eliminate the "last in, first out" approach that has cost us far too many effective teachers.

We are sensitive to the arguments that teachers cannot be held accountable for the numerous influences in a student's personal life. Teachers are likely wary of the subjective nature of evaluations including the use of student data. It is for these reasons that student achievement will be measured on academic growth, not level of achievement.

The bill also underscores that student success is a team effort. Everyone from teachers to the superintendent to parents must be focused on student progress. This legislation ensures that our schools have the necessary information to build the strongest and most effective instructional teams at every school – and to help districts hold school leaders accountable for supporting each teacher's development.

Minnesota has established the momentum to help every child succeed. Let's take the next step.

David C. Olson is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. For more information, visit the Web at www.mnchamber.com.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS & CHAMBER MEETINGS

Chamber events and meetings are in bold. For an expanded list of community events visit our website at www.littlefallsmnchamber.com

April

April 1 ~ EntreLeadership – 8:45 – 4:00 p.m. – Morrison County Government Center, *Meeting Room 1*

April 2 ~ Habitat for Humanity Seeds of Kindness Luncheon - 10:00 a.m. - Noon - St. Francis Hall on the Franciscan Sisters Campus

April 5 ~ **Lindy Greeters Committee** - Noon - Pizza Ranch

April 6 ~ Little Falls Business Association- Noon - Chamber of Commerce

April 7-9 ~ Used Book Sale, Little Falls Carnegie Library

April 8 ~ Fishing with the Pro's - 5:00 p.m., Falls Ballroom

April 11 – 15 ~ National Volunteer Week

April 12 ~ **Business After Hours** - 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. - Lin Furniture *Sponsored by: Lin Furniture*

April 14 ~ **Chamber Board of Directors** - 11:00 a.m. - Chamber of Commerce

April 15 ~ **Friday Morning Coffee** - 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. - Chamber of Commerce *Sponsored by: Lakeland Public*

TV

April 15 ~ Lindbergh Lions Fish Fry – 3:30 – 7:30 p.m. – Little Falls VFW Club

April 16 ~ Lions RibFest – 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Little Falls Country Club

April 21 ~ **Membership Development Committee** – 7:45 a.m. – Chamber of Commerce

April 27 ~ Administrative Professionals Day

April 30 ~ Franciscan Sister Spaghetti Supper - 4:30 - 7:00 p.m. - St. Francis Convent

April 30 ~ Great River Arts Association Party for the Arts - 7:00 p.m. - Great River Arts Association



Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce

200 First Street NW

Little Falls, MN 56345

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