



Sylvia Ryden

I'm finally retiring - Yeah!

It's hard to believe it's been over 47 years for me here at the Chamber. Little did I know when I started back in 1964 that it would be my lifetime job. I never had any reason to want to leave. I've always enjoyed it very much, always interesting, always challenging.

From a small cubby hole for an office on East Broadway, where PrimeLending is located now (that office area has been expanded since the Chamber was there) to several more moves until landing in the remodeled Depot building in 1991, we just kept getting bigger, with more room, and more advanced.

From working with an old crank mimeograph machine, an address plate cutter, typewriters, and right on up to all the new technology in office equipment such as computers, copiers, email, etc., I managed to continue right along with it.

I can't even begin to note all the changes in the Chamber, in the community, all the Chamber Board chairpersons and Board members, committee members I have worked with. It would be too many. The Chamber was almost an organization in name only, having just gone full-time, when I started, with Manager Bill Vondrashek, and then as each new Chamber Executive came in, Glen Kraywinkle, Dave Hochhalter, Elaine Westerdahl-Delaney, and presently Deb Boelz, it just kept on enlarging and progressing.

It's been interesting and fun working with all my co-workers, some full-time, some part-time, over the years - Judy Meyer, Cathy VanRisseghem, Stephannie Kathrein, Tammy Virnig, Donna Schirmers, RaeLynn Jones, Jodi Winzenburg, Rachel Czech. Who am I missing?! Ah yes, Gina Vetter, who was a Vetsch when she started with us part-time back in 1990, and who actually came and left several times, finally landing here for good in 2000. It's been so much fun working with her. Deb turned out to finally be my last boss, and she has been so nice to work for. As with some of our staff people, Chamber Executives seem to have had long tenures here. That must say something for the organization.

As for the Arts & Crafts Fair, this has been a large part of my job, and probably the most rewarding. It's amazing to see how it has grown, helping to put Little Falls on the map, and becoming one of the largest and finest craft fairs around, even being lauded by Sunshine Artists Magazine and Minnesota Tourism Group Tours. From around 75 vendors back in 1972, and reaching a peak of 1,000 in the late 1990's, it has settled down to a more manageable event, now going into its 40th year. Working with all the different crafters, it's been enjoyable, and sometimes a little frustrating. There are a lot of different personalities to work with. But all in all, it's been fun and challenging.

I'm sure I will miss the office (maybe for a while), and my co-workers, but I won't miss that long walk back and forth to work every day, especially in the winter. So, as of December 31, it's time to enjoy the freedom and relax for a while, and maybe have time to do some volunteering or whatever may come along.

Good luck to the new staff person. I hope she likes it here as much as I have

Thanks to everyone for everything.

Sylvia Ryden

From the Desk of the CEO

- Debora K. Boelz

Greeting from the desk of the CEO!



Happy Holidays! Initial indications point towards renewed consumer confidence in making purchases this holiday season. Let's hope that national trend holds true for our local retailers as well.

Internet purchases account for a large portion of this up tick in spending. Free shipping right to your front door is enticing, but please remember to support the brick and mortar stores that line our main streets. Those businesses are here for you all year long paying taxes and employing our residents. This is a great time of year to support the concept of the 3/50 Project where you commit to supporting 3 local businesses with \$50 in purchases each month.

I encourage you to think outside the traditional gift giving box this holiday season to support our local economy. Of course, Chamber Bucks is a wonderful gift that spends like cash all over town. With clever wrapping, a gift certificate can be a festive item under the tree! Our local merchants have gift certificates as well. Here is where the cleverness on your part comes in.

As we have tightened our belts, we have often cut out the simple pleasures in life. Gift giving can bring some of that back. A gift certificate for auto detailing, a spa package, fresh cut flowers every month for a year, restaurant certificates, or house cleaning may be a great option.

For those people you want to remember this holiday season that don't need more "stuff", there are many groups and organizations that rely on paid memberships to support their missions. Start with the phrase "Friends of" adding in the wildlife bird or animal of your choice or a local service organization.

***Congratulations to the newly elected Board of Directors** Bridget Britz, Horizon Health and Julie Zupko, Bieganek Insurance and Randall State Insurance were elected to serve a second 3 year term. Joining the Board for the first time is Roxanne Thompson, Riitters & Thompson, PA. Chris Kruschek, ReMax Central Minnesota, has been appointed to complete the one year term left open by Barb Lyons' resignation as she left her employment with Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union.*

***Thank you to Paul Kapsner, Royaltan Lumber,** for his service on the Board for the past 3 years. I (we) appreciate your willingness to serve!*

***Sylvia Ryden, Office Coordinator,** will have her last day of work with the Chamber on December 29th. We thank her for her years of dedicated service to the Chamber and wish her well as she enters the next phase of her life.*

***In closing,** the holiday season is not about draining your pockets; it's about caring for your family, friends and neighbors. It's about pausing to count your blessings and to take stock of what is really important in your life. On behalf of the Chamber staff, we extend our warmest wishes for a safe Holiday Season!*

Membership has its benefits

Here is just one of many:

**FREE Educational
Seminars**

Leadership LindyLand visits Camp Ripley



Pictured: 2011-2012 LindyLand Participants
at Camp Ripley

The November 9 Leadership LindyLand session took the participants to Camp Ripley for the afternoon, where they had a briefing from Camp Commander Col. Scott St. Sauver, tour of the grounds, heard from Jay Brezinka, MN DNR and even had the opportunity to use the tank simulators. The morning was spent learning about communication between genders and generations.

Thank you to our session sponsor **Minnesota Power** and to **Century 21 New Horizons Realty** for the use of their van. This day would not have been possible without the help of our day chairs *Amy Kelash*, **Morrison County Technology Services** and *Doris Illies*, **Productive Alternatives**. The next LindyLand session will be Wednesday, December 14. We are in need of volunteers to help with our poverty simulation, December 14 from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. If you are interested in participating contact Gina at (320) 632-5155 or ginav@littlefallsmnchamber.com

Save the Date

Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting

February 23, 2012

Falls Ballroom
15879 Hwy 27, Little Falls

5:30 p.m. Social 6:00 p.m. Dinner
6:45 p.m. Program (to be determined)

Holiday Promotions

Your Chamber of Commerce will again be working to make the holidays special for our community. Doing business locally is a great gift you can easily give! Enticing all area residents to shop Little Falls during this holiday season will strengthen our local economy by recycling dollars again and again through the business community. See the list below for specific Chamber planned promotions and events.

City of Lights

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to again flip the switch on the City of Lights in downtown Little Falls. The City of Lights will run from November 25, 2011 thru January 2, 2012.

Holiday Matinee Movie

Give yourself time to leisurely shop locally while your children enjoy a free movie at the Falls Cinema, located at 115 1st Street SE in Little Falls, on Saturday, December 3, 2011. Show times are noon and 2:00 p.m. The movie being shown is *Monte Carlo*, a family friendly film. This movie is free due to the generous sponsorship provided by **Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union**.

Chamber Bucks

Are you too busy to shop? Have a person on your gift list that is tough to buy for? Does your child's teacher have enough "World's Best Teacher" mugs? Chamber Bucks are a great option for all your gift giving occasions. Bucks are available in \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50; spend like cash all over town and are easy to wrap! Stop by the Chamber for your supply today. For large orders, please call ahead and we will have your items waiting for you!

Recent Board Action

~ Set the booth fees for the 2012 Little Falls Arts & Crafts Fair at the same rate as in past years. That amount is \$195 per booth space for the first 2 spaces, \$100 for any additional spaces.

~ Ratified the results of the Board of Directors election, declaring the top three vote-getters, *Bridget Britz*, **Horizon Health**, *Roxanne Thompson*, *Riitters & Thompson, PA*, and *Julie Zupko*, **Bieganek Insurance** and **Randall State Insurance**, as seated for the term years 2012 – 2014.

~ Approved the appointment of *Chris Kruscek*, **ReMax Realty Central Minnesota**, to fill the one year

Congratulation's to our December Employee of the Month

Jane Binger,

Little Falls Community Schools – Lincoln Elementary



Jane Binger

Little Falls Community Schools ~ Lincoln Elementary

Jane has been employed by the Little Falls School District for 34 years. She is an EBD Special Education Teacher at Lincoln Elementary. Jane enjoys her work with children and values the skills and commitment of her co-workers across the Little Falls District. Each day brings learning opportunities for herself and the students. She feels it is a privilege to live and work in the Little Falls Community.

Jane's supervisor, Dr. Maxine Strege, states "Jane is very deserving of the award. The children love her. She shares much wisdom from her 34 years of experience. She spends long hours working with the children and families. Her dedication is wonderful. She can perform 'miracles' helping students gain high achievement levels. I am blessed to have her as a teacher at Lincoln Elementary".

Jane and her husband, David, have three children, who have all graduated from Little Falls High School. The Lincoln Elementary Mentorship Program is one of her interests. She also enjoys reading, boating, walking, travel, and spending time with family and friends.



Halloween Trick or Treating

Thank you to our many Chamber Members who, once again provided a safe trick or treating environment for the youngsters of our community. Over 1,000 children enjoyed this special event.

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

Randall State Insurance

2010-2012

Jim Birchem

St. Otto's Care Center

Lori Kush

secretary

Kush State Farm Insurance

Roxanne Matsen

Larson Abstract Co, Inc.

2011-2013

Kyle Hoggarth

Edward Jones Investments

Doug Veillette

2011 Past Chair of the Board

Dairy Queen

Jodi Weaver

The Gumdrop Tree

Tom West

treasurer

Morrison County Record

Chamber Staff

Debora K. Boelz,

President/CEO

dboelz@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 November 22, 2011. Greeters present the member with a Chamber mug filled with sweets, and thank them for their support of the Chamber and community.



City Sanitary / Commercial Service

Lindy Greeter *Tom Scherling, Century 21 New Horizons Realty*, second from right, with *Gregg Burgardt*, left, and *Chris Burgardt*, right, owners of **City Sanitary Commercial Service**. Call City Sanitary Service, 632-8234, for all of your refuse removal needs. And call Burgy's Aluminum Can Recycling, 360-9877, for all your recycling needs. They buy aluminum cans at 1009 Lindbergh Drive N.



Morrison County Food Shelf

Lindy Greeter *Jon Vetter, Pine Country Bank*, with *Gloria Thomes* at the **Morrison County Food Shelf**. The Food Shelf provides for the basic need for food to the citizens of Morrison County.



Little Falls Radio

Lindy Greeter *Tom Scherling, Century 21 New Horizons Realty*, middle, with *Rod and Chris Grams* at **Little Falls Radio**. The Grams' thank the Morrison County business community for your loyal support. They look forward to providing news, information, opinions and "the recipe" for many more years.



Spectrum Marketing Services

Lindy Greeter *Jon Vetter, Pine Country Bank*, middle, with *Tom Cotton*, left, and *Bill Andringa*, right, at **Spectrum Marketing Services**. Spectrum is a local, regional, and national supplier of commercial sheeted paper print. Custom apparel, screen printing, embroidery and ad specialties. They have 35 full time employees and have several on-call employees.

Business After Hours

Tuesday, December 6

4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

at Linden Hill Historic Event Center

(white house) 608 Highland Ave, Little Falls

Sponsored by:



Join us for this informal networking event. Come and see the beautifully decorated Musser Mansion (white house) while enjoying some hors d'oeuvres, refreshments and great networking.

All Chamber Members, employees and guests are welcome!

Friday Morning Coffee

Friday, December 16

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

at the Chamber of Commerce

200 1 St NW, Little Falls

Sponsored by:



Morning Coffee. After announcements, up to 4 people will have the opportunity to give a 30 second testimonial for another Chamber member business. Word of mouth is a powerful marketing tool! Announcements begin at 8:15 a.m.

Welcome to our newest members

Nominations Being Accepted for Small Business of the Year, Large Business of the Year and Chamber Volunteer of the Year!

In an effort to celebrate our members and the numerous individual volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to the Chamber, the Outstanding Service Committee is again rolling out our nominations for Volunteer of the Year, Small and Large Business of the Year. Each award has specific criteria to assist you in the nomination process.

Nomination forms are due in the Chamber office by Friday, January 20, 2012. Awards will be bestowed at the Annual Meeting, Thursday, February 23.

Please consider making a nomination in one or more categories. Recipients will receive public recognition and a plaque noting their honor. The names will also be displayed on permanent plaques in the Chamber office.

Nomination forms are available on our website at <http://www.littlefallsmnchamber.com> under the nominations link. For more information or to submit a nomination contact the Chamber by calling (320) 632-5155 or e-mail Gina at ginav@littlefallsmnchamber.com

Emerald Island Publishing

Blaine MacNeil, *Owner*

17021 203 St, Little Falls, MN 56345

phone 320-249-7801

blainemacneil@hotmail.com

www.emeraldislandpublishing.com

Printing and selling refreshingly new and meaningful stationery (memorial folders, thank yous, service bulletins) for the funeral home industry.

Leighton Broadcasting

Brent Bagley, *Sales Executive*

619 W St. Germain St, St. Cloud, MN 56301

phone 320-761-4078

bbagley@leightonbroadcasting.com

Leighton Broadcasting is a marketing company specializing in on-air advertising and social media.

Tractor Supply Co

Tom Schreiber, *Manager*

1800 1 Ave NE, Ste 101, Little Falls, MN 56345

phone 320-632-0742

Str1548@tractorsupply.com

www.tractorsupply.com

Retail farm and ranch store. Hours are:
Monday – Saturday 8:00 am to 8:00 pm;
and Sunday 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

Employee of the Month Thank You

The Outstanding Service Committee would like to thank the following businesses for their generosity in 2011 for providing gift certificates, product or services to our 2011 Employee's of the Month.

Boomerang Bar
Broadway Stylists
Coborn's Floral
Dairy Queen
Domino's Pizza
Falls Floral
The Flower Dell
Perkins Restaurant & Bakery
Pizza Ranch
St. Gabriel's Hospital
Hospice Program
Silker Studio
Taco Johns



Employee of the Month Gift Certificates needed

As a way of rewarding Chamber member employees for great customer service, the Chamber designates monthly Employees of the Month. Individuals are selected by the Outstanding Service Committee based on nominations for the public, co-workers and employers. Any Chamber member can add their own congratulations by providing gift certificates for our honorees. However, it doesn't need to be a gift certificate every month. For example, our member florists rotate a donation of fresh flowers each month for the recipients. In the past, we have had cookbooks to bestow upon the winners. Would you consider doing something similar? This is a great opportunity to connect with another group of customers. If you are interested contact Gina at ginav@littlefallsmnchamber.com or call the Chamber office (320) 632-5155.

Minnesota losing its edge in energy costs

By David C. Olson

The Minnesota Chamber supports diversified technology for electricity generation. At the same time, ratepayers should know the costs of each technology. To that end, residential, industrial and commercial customers for the first time have information on the rate impact of Minnesota's renewable energy mandates.

A 2007 state law – one of the most aggressive in the nation – requires that utilities generate 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025; Xcel Energy must produce 30 percent by 2020. The Minnesota Chamber subsequently lobbied for, and the Legislature passed and Governor Dayton signed in 2011, a requirement that utilities calculate the cost of compliance. Fourteen utilities filed their first reports in October and will provide updates every two years as part of their integrated resource plans.

The analysis showed a mixed impact. At one end, Xcel Energy reported wind energy to be cost-competitive with other generation. At the other extreme, utilities locked into long-term purchase agreements for wind power reported higher ratepayer costs due to current low natural gas rates. For example, the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency reported it is spending between \$10 million and \$11 million more per year, which equals about 5 percent of the agency's annual revenue.

Utilities used very different methodologies for measuring the rate impact. That could also explain the big differences in estimated impact. One goal of the discussion triggered by these reports – and in turn the Public Utilities Commission consideration of them – should be to agree on a methodology for use by all utilities.

The reports will generate a long overdue debate on the net cost or net saving from the renewable energy standard. The dialogue would have been productive had it occurred before the legislation became law. That said, it's better we have the conversation now than later.

To view the filings, go to <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/edockets/searchDocuments.do?method=showeDocketsSearch&showEdocket=true&userType=public>. Then choose the year 11 and number 852, which will show the full list of filings.

The discussion cannot end here, however. Energy policy must be inclusive of all generation technologies including the two biggest sources. Coal plants today generate about 60 percent of the electricity that supplies Minnesota businesses and homes. Nuclear power supplies another approximately 25 percent.

Yet, under existing law, Minnesota cannot even consider additional nuclear- or coal-powered generation. Removing those bans is at the forefront of the Minnesota Chamber's energy initiatives for the 2012 Legislature. It's impractical – indeed, shortsighted – for policy-makers to believe that renewable energy sources such as wind and solar can stand equal to the capacity of round-the-clock operations of nuclear and coal plants.

Policy-makers must not lose sight of the critical role of energy in the development and growth of Minnesota's economy. The goal must be reliable electricity at competitive rates and with renewable technologies. If the current policy can't deliver, then we must find a new path.

David Olson is the 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

December

1-4 ~ Christmas Tree Lane, Minnesota Fishing Museum

1-4 ~ Christmas at the Mansions, Linden Hill Historic Event Center

3 ~ **FREE Holiday Movie Matinee**, show times: Noon & 2:00 p.m., showing: Monte Carlo at Falls Cinema,
sponsored by: Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union

3 ~ Carousel of Crafts, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Little Falls Community Middle School

3 ~ Heartland Symphony Orchestra Winter Concert, 7:30 p.m., Charles D. Martin Auditorium Little Falls High School

4 ~ Madrigal Dinner, 5:30 p.m., Fall Ballroom

6 ~ **Lindy Greeter Committee Meeting**, Noon, Chamber of Commerce

6 ~ **Business After Hours**, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m., Linden Hill Historic Event Center

6 ~ Lutefisk Supper, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m., Bethel Lutheran Church

8 ~ **Chamber Board of Directors**, 11:00 a.m., Chamber of Commerce

9 ~ Con Brio & Sforzando String Orchestras Christmas Concert, 7:00 p.m., St. Francis Chapel Franciscan Sisters Campus

10 ~ Cookies with Santa, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Lindbergh Lions Complex

10 ~ Wreaths Across America, 11:00 a.m., Minnesota Veteran's Cemetery

11 ~ Community Chorale Christmas Concert, 7 p.m., Sacred Heart Chapel on the Franciscan Sisters Campus

12 ~ **Outstanding Service Committee**, Noon, Chamber of Commerce

14 ~ **Leadership LindyLand Session**, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Morrison County Government Center

14 ~ Little Falls Business Association, 6:00 p.m., Zylka's Red Bull Bar

15 ~ **Membership Development Committee**, 7:45 a.m., Chamber of Commerce

16 ~ **Friday Morning Coffee**, 7:30 - 9:00 a.m., Chamber of Commerce, *sponsored by: Comfort Keepers*

16 ~ From Age to Age Choral Music Ensemble Christmas Concert, 7:30 p.m., Sacred Heart Chapel on the Franciscan Sisters Campus

17 ~ Santa, Sleigh Rides & Bon Fire, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., Morrison County Fairgrounds

18 ~ Zion Lutheran Choir Concert, 4:00 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church

19 ~ Little Falls Business Association Scrooge Night, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m., participating businesses

25 ~ **Merry Christmas**



Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce

200 First Street NW

Little Falls, MN 56345

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