



Proudly Serving Morrison County Since 1888

CHAMBER

OF COMMERCE

NEWS

200 1 St NW

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Newsletter

October 2011

Minnesota Manufacturer's Week to be celebrated October 23 – 29



In honor of Minnesota Manufacturer's Week, Mayor Cathy VanRisseghem signed a proclamation declaring the week of October 23-29, 2011 manufacturers week in the City of Little Falls. Pictured above are Chamber President / CEO, Deb Boelz, left and Mayor Cathy VanRisseghem.

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce sends congratulations and thanks to the local manufacturers who call Morrison County home during Minnesota Manufacturer's Week October 23 -29. This week is designed to showcase Minnesota's diverse manufacturing industry and to increase legislative and public awareness of the importance in providing high-wage, high-skilled jobs in our communities.

The manufacturing industry is a dynamic part of Minnesota's economy, ranking 2nd largest in total payroll, \$16.1 billion in 2011, among the business sectors in Minnesota. Manufacturing produces \$33.7 billion from state economy and is the largest share, 13% of our gross domestic product. Manufactured exports brought over \$17.2 billion into the Minnesota economy in 2011. The top manufactured exports are computers and electronic products with Canada being the top country Minnesota products are exported to.

Our Chamber member manufacturers include: Anderson Custom Processing, Central MN Ethanol Co-op, DJ Products, Fallsburg Woodworking, Larson Boats, Little Falls Granite Works, Little Falls Machine and Precision Tool Technologies.

Membership has its benefits

Here is just one of many:

Referrals

When the staff at the Chamber are asked for a list of local merchants. Chamber Members are always first on the list!

Business After Hours

Thursday, October 6
4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

West Side Bar

115 W Broadway, Little Falls

Sponsored by:



Join us for this informal networking event. Come and see all the new changes at the West Side Bar, while enjoying some hors d'oeuvres, refreshments and great networking. All Chamber Members, employees and guests are welcome!

From the Desk of the CEO

- Debora K. Boelz

Greeting from the desk of the CEO!



The 39th annual Arts & Crafts Fair is now in the history books. Thank you to the entire community for helping to welcome our vendors and shoppers! Those little acts of kindness leave a lasting impression with our visitors and go a long way in helping the Chamber retain and attract new vendors and shoppers!

The 2011 event hosted only 13 less vendors than in 2010. The Fair looked smaller, again, because vendors are buying fewer booth spaces. In this economy, we are happy to have them with us! We had 125 new vendors. We had great crowds, great weather and few problems!

The Chamber staff works hard to promote the Arts & Crafts Fair at every opportunity all year long. Yes, in the 1990's the Fair was huge - 1,000 vendors! It is disheartening to hear the harsh criticism of the Fair as it exists in this economy. Fair and shows across the nation are down in vendors; it is not just in Little Falls.

The challenge back to those critics is what do you think the Chamber should be doing to increase the number of vendors and what are you personally doing to help make this happen?

Here are a couple of things that you can do to keep this incredible event in our community and in cash registers across the entire area:

Be positive when you speak of the Fair! There are many businesses in the area that rely on the income from this weekend to sustain their business the balance of the year. Service organizations raise dollars that are reinvested in the community. Do you think we would have the parks and playground equipment we enjoy all year long if not for the Fair? Nonprofits are able to provide more for our community due to the influx of cash they generate in these 2 days. And these dollars are primarily from outside of their service areas. How many fundraisers can make that claim!

Seeing the big picture of what this weekend means to Little Falls. Learn as much as you can about the economic impact the Fair has on the entire area. I have some fact sheets on what the Chamber spends in the community to make this event happen.

This message has been written before in my column, and is important enough to rerun again.

What will the Chamber staffing pattern look like after January 1st? When a position at the Chamber opens up, that is big news because it doesn't happen very often. To have 2 positions, the Financial Coordinator and Office Coordinators both in transition, it's an opportunity! In the short term Riitters & Thompson is handling the accounting function. Sylvia will be with us until December 31st.

The nature of how we do business changed drastically in the past few years with the implementation of a new data base software program specifically designed for Chambers, and simply called ChamberMaster. This software is compatible with QuickBooks we use for accounting. This software has simplified all the basic registration functions to the point where with a few clicks of the mouse, not only is a member registered, but the invoice is generated and emailed. Changes on contact information are done in one central place for all staff to have at their fingertips. To this end, we are working smarter and using the tools we have available.

My plans are to combine the 2 positions as the Financial Coordinator position was 20 hours a week and included data entry that is now streamlined. The days of making hard copies of monthly meeting agendas, mailing out mass quantities of tourism packets and this newsletter are things of the past. The Arts & Crafts Fair which is 50% of Sylvia's current job description, is not as labor intensive as it once was. Hiring for this newly combined position will be done in December.

In closing, enjoy these beautiful fall days . . . we know what is coming!

Make the most of your Chamber membership get involved!

While Chamber membership provides many benefits, individuals involved with the activities of the Chamber know that involvement is one of the best business builders. Your Chamber has worked hard to develop a structure that allows volunteers to get maximum benefit from the time dedicated. Meetings are productive, fun and time-limited. Time outside of meetings is devoted to specific and time-limited tasks. Best of all – a volunteer is not making a lifetime commitment when getting involved in a task force, committee, council or event.

Do you want to grow your business while having an impact on our community? Contact Gina at the Chamber. We will help you to find the best “fit” for your involvement in your Chamber. Contact info: phone 632-5155; e-mail Gina at ginav@littlefallsmnchamber.com



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

Strategies for Smart Giving – When to Say "Yes" and How to Say "No"

Business Gives Seminar

Wednesday, November 9

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Chamber of Commerce (Depot)

200 1 St NW, Little Falls



Mark your calendar for the next educational programming sponsored by your Chamber of Commerce!

*Presenter: Jackie Ries,
Director of Minnesota Gives*

Strategies for Smart Giving: When to Say “Yes” and How to Say “No” will be held on Wednesday, November 9 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce (Depot). This seminar is for business owners and those making donation decisions for their businesses, *not for non profits asking for donations.*

Jackie Ries, director of Minnesota Business Gives, will present this 2 hour seminar in a workbook format.

Businesses are asked on a daily basis to support an array of worthy causes and benefits. No one can say yes to everything. This seminar will help you create a giving plan by identifying what you want your business to be aligned with and gives you the tools to say no when a request does not fit into your plan.

Since the late 1960's, Minnesota businesses have been recognized nationally for their corporate giving. This leadership continues today and the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to join more than 45 other Minnesota communities in a program to support and recognize local businesses for their efforts to build strong communities through their charitable contributions and community involvement.

Minnesota Business Gives is a program managed by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce in partnership with local chambers. The program grew out of a statewide project called Building Business Investment in Community (BBIC).

BBIC researchers interviewed close to 600 businesses of all sizes and types throughout Minnesota. That research confirmed that, regardless of size, there is a strong support by businesses for charitable giving and community involvement. Businesses give back to their local communities in many ways in addition to leadership for community causes.

Minnesota Business Gives recognizes there is a strong foundation of businesses committed to making their communities good places to live and work. The challenge is to find ways to build on that foundation - to assist businesses in being strategic in their giving and to recognize them for their efforts.

RSVP to Deb, dboelz@littlefallsmnchamber.com by November 4 to reserve your seat.

**Congratulation's to our October
Employee of the Month**

Debra Cermak,
St. Otto's Care Center



Debra has been an RN at St. Otto's Care Center for 25 years. Debra states "St. Otto's has been a wonderful place to work, and a special thank you to the residents for all the special moments they provide each day". Her supervisor, Jeneva Bellefeuille, states "St. Otto's is fortunate to have had Deb provide our residents and staff with her knowledge and experience for the last 25 years. She contributes willingly each day with the residents' interest at the forefront. Debra demonstrates a dedicated work ethic and strong leadership".

Debra and her husband, George, have three children. She enjoys tennis, cross-country skiing, racquet ball, biking, and hiking. She is a member of the Zion Lutheran Church choir. She also raises African Violets.

Thank you to the following members for renewing their investment in the Chamber for the fiscal year 2011-2012, since our last newsletter. We appreciate you!

Budget Lawn & Care
Dr Robert Miller Dental Clinic
Education MN - Little Falls
Fyten Marketing & Promotions
Gamradt, Leonard
North Star Drilling
Subway
Taste of Greece Concession

**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
Bieganeck 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 August 24 & September 20, 2011. Greeters present the member with a Chamber mug filled with sweets, and thank them for their support of the Chamber and community.



Lutheran Care Center

Lindy Greeter *Patrick Watercott*, **Vernon Sales Promotion**, right, and *Carmen Meyer*, **Morrison County Record**, with *Scot Allen*, Administrator at the **Lutheran Care Center**. Lutheran Care Center is a 65-bed skilled nursing facility that has been serving Little Falls area since 1964. Short-term rehabilitation to long-term care, with on-site therapy is available. 24-hour licensed nursing staff, private rooms, and other quality services, activities, and events are available. Call 320-632-9211 for more information, or their website is <http://www.lutherancarecenter.com/>



Ripley 1 Stop

Lindy Greeter *Tom Scherling*, **Century 21 New Horizons Realty**, middle, with *Sheila Smith* and *Don Dreiling* at **Ripley 1 Stop**. **Ripley 1 Stop** is a full service gas station and convenience store, with extras including off-sale liquor and Mean Gene's grille, which serves pizza, burgers, and other deli items.



Randall State Insurance

Lindy Greeter *Tom Scherling*, **Century 21 New Horizons Realty**, with *Julie Zupko*, *Melissa Gerads*, and *Becky Gaffke* at **Randall State Insurance**. **Randall State Insurance** is an independent agency serving Randall and the lakes area needs for personal and commercial insurance.



SweetWater Resort

Lindy Greeter *Lori Kush*, **Kush State Farm Insurance**, left, with *Cindy Brey* at **SweetWater Resort**. **SweetWater Resort** is a small, family-oriented and pet friendly resort on Fish Trap Lake. They welcome family reunions, holiday gatherings and are open year round.

Chamber Sporting Clays



2011 Sporting Clays top scoring team
Pine Country Bank.

Pictured from left to right: *Gary Groskruetz, Tony Osborn, Tom Bukowski and Ross Hamann.*

80 Chamber members participated in the Chamber's Sporting Clays event, Tuesday, September 20 at LeBlanc's Rice Creek Hunting & Recreation. Thank you to all who participated, our station and corporate sponsors. Corporate sponsors included **Deml Insurance, Family Medical Center, GoldSmith Jewelers, Grand Casino Mille Lacs, Little Falls Orthopedics, Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union, Pine Country Bank, R. A. Randall Agency, Schlenner Wenner & Co., St. Gabriel's Hospital,** and the **West Side Bar**. Our stations sponsors include: **AmericInn of Little Falls, D & D Beer Co. and Employment Enterprises**. Beverage sponsors included: **D & D Beer Co., Viking Coke** and the **West Side Bar**.

This event is made possible because of our dedicated Sporting Clays committee. We'd like to thank them and recognize them for a job well done. Committee members are: *Mark Gerbi, R.A. Randall Agency* – Chair; *Andy Galston, Andy's Charter Service; Paul Kapsner, Royalton Lumber* – Board Liaison; *Robbin Keehr, Schlenner Wenner & Co; Jack Faufau, Subway; Gregg LeBlanc, LeBlanc's Rice Creek Hunting & Recreation; Joe LeBlanc, LeBlanc's Rice Creek Hunting & Recreation; Rob Ronning, Pine Country Bank; Steve Shelley, Shelley Funeral Chapels; Tar Smith, GoldSmith Jewelers;* and *Jeff Tschida, West Side Bar*. Thank you to event day volunteers: *Robbin Keehr, Schlenner Wenner & Co.* and the **Minnesota Flying Aces team**.

The results are: the team with the best score of 194 was **Pine Country Bank**. Team members included: *Gary Groskruetz, Tony Osborn, Tom Bukowski and Ross Hamann*. Taking home 2nd place was the **R.A. Randall Agency** team. Team members included: *Steve LeMieur, Luke Faufau, Mark Gerbi and Dwayne Marzolf*. There was a tie for the flurry shoot with both teams breaking 34 targets. Congratulations to the **R.A. Randall Agency** team and the **GoldSmith Jewelers** team, on this accomplishment. **St. Gabriel's Hospital** and the **GoldSmith Jewelers** team knew the most trivia contest questions and took home \$40 in Chamber Bucks from the trivia contest. Congratulations to all our winners and thank you to everyone who took part in this fun event!

Join us for the 7th Annual Sporting Clays event, Tuesday, September 18.

Friday Morning Coffee

Friday, October 14

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

Chamber of Commerce

200 1 St NW, Little Falls

Sponsored by:



and



Kick off your weekend by joining us for a cup or two of coffee 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.

Business Trick or Treating Monday, October 31 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

The annual trick or treat event is back! In continuing with this popular tradition, the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce will again be coordinating the Halloween tricks or treats promotion on Monday, October 31. The hours for tricks or treats will be 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

If you would like to be listed as a participating business in the ad to run in the **October 23** Morrison County

Record, e-mail

ginav@littlefallsmnchamber.com or call the Chamber at (320) 632-5155, **no later than Monday, October 17**. Flyers can be mailed or emailed.

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

October

- 5 ~ **Business Insights**, 8:00 a.m. – Noon, Initiative Foundation
6 ~ **Leadership LindyLand Steering Committee**, 12:30 p.m., St. Gabriel's Hospital - Ripley Room
6 ~ **Business After Hours**, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., West Side Bar
8 ~ Heartland Symphony Concert, 7:30 p.m., Little Falls Community High School
12 ~ Little Falls Business Association, Noon, Chamber of Commerce
13 ~ **Board of Directors Meeting**, 11:00 a.m., Chamber of Commerce
13-14 ~ **Leadership LindyLand Kick-Off**, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Emblom Brenny Community Room & Retreat Center
13-15 ~ Minnesota Fishing Museum Garage Sale
14 ~ **Friday Morning Coffee**, 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., Chamber of Commerce, sponsored by: *Minnesota Copy Systems & SweetWater Resort*
20 – 21 ~ MEA
20 ~ **Membership Development Committee**, 7:45 a.m., Chamber of Commerce
20 ~ Wine Tasting & Silent Auction, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., Employment Enterprises Inc.
27 ~ Pumpkin Carving, 5:00 p.m., Pine Grove Zoo
29 ~ Zoo Boo, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m., Pine Grove Zoo
31 ~ **Business Trick or Treating**, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m., participating businesses
31 ~ The Great Pumpkin Party, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., Little Falls Community Middle School



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