

Grand Superior Lodge Hosts Chamber of Commerce Gathering

By Rick Evans

The Lake County Chamber of Commerce held its annual membership luncheon on January 17th at Grand Superior Lodge. The event was well attended and featured a presentation by Doug Loon and Vicki Stute, President and Vice President, respectively, of the Minnesota Chamber.

The Minnesota Chamber represents 6,300 businesses from across the State. 75% of these are small businesses. The Chamber's goal is to work with business leaders at the local and state level to build consensus so that local economies and job markets meet local challenges and needs. To accomplish this, both State and local Chambers are involved in a number of initiatives on a regular basis including, advocacy at the State Capitol to promote pro-growth policies, connecting business leaders to each other for the purpose of planning, sharing ideas and problem solving at the local level, and seeking growth opportunities that will advance the private sector's efforts to help build strong economies and provide good jobs.

In his presentation, Doug Loon indicated that Minnesota ranks in the bottom 20 states across a number of economic growth indicators including a decline in the state's GDP and workforce migration to other states. Additionally, Loon stated that Minnesota's tax rate for both individuals and businesses is among the highest in the country.

To address these concerns, the Chamber will be working to advance individual and corporate tax reform so that Minnesota moves away from being one of the top taxed states in the country.

Growing the workforce will also be a focal point. Legislative priorities for the Chamber include strengthening alignments between education systems, workforce programs and the needs of employers to have access to a more streamlined approach to get prospective workers trained and certified so that jobs can be filled more rapidly. Other Chamber goals include promoting sensible environmental regulation while improving speed and transparency in the process of environmental review and permitting. The Chamber is looking to have the process take months, not years. A lengthy permitting system can cause businesses to locate to other states that have a permitting is more efficient. Finally, the Chamber will be working to ensure, among other things, that more opportunities for affordable housing and child care are available to meet the needs of both employers and working families.


The issue of paid family leave was mentioned during Tuesday's presentation. This issue is currently being debated in the State legislature and Loon indicated that it is likely to pass in the Senate. The Chamber's concern about this is that mandating paid family leave will be costly to employers. This will likely be a thorny issue due to the fact that with an aging population, the decline in elder care fa-

cilities and the high cost of childcare, there is an increasing need for workers to have access to paid leave so that they can care for sick family members and not be thrown into financial chaos. It will be necessary for the Chamber and State legislators to work together to design an approach that will address the needs of both workers and employers.

Vicki Stute gave a presentation on an initiative by the State Chamber to provide affordable health insurance for small and mid-sized employers who have between 2 and 300 employees. ChamberHealth by Medica is a fully funded plan designed exclusively for Chamber members. Because it is a statewide plan, it offers features and benefits that are typically available only to large companies. Interested business owners can get more information by contacting the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

The following members of the Lake County Chamber will be filling vacancies on the Board of Directors; Billy Wilson, from LaBounty, Michael Cavallin, from Cavallin Plumbing, Amy Jordahl, from State Farm Insurance, Daniel Fuentes from Daniel Perry Voiceovers

and Sara Zeleznikar, from Odyssey Resorts. Each will each be serving three year terms on the Board. Michael Cavallin will also serve a one year term as Board Chairperson.



DAVID THIE
SALES MANAGER

Cell: 715-699-6383
Office: 218-226-3335
davidthie@cheqnet.net

northshorejournal@gmail.com
www.northshorejournalmn.com

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Obituaries & Memorials



CAROL FOSSE

Carol Fosse passed away January 15, 2023, Sunday morning. She was 94 yrs. She passed peacefully and she is dancing in heaven today.



Carol and her husband, Bill Sr., were happily married for many years until his death. They had four children: Katherine, Barbara, Bill and Bob. Grandchildren: Tiffany, Jesse, Chris, Gene, Tammy, Billy, Jenna. Great grandchildren: Jackson, Jorga, William, Wesley, Elliot, Murphy, Calahan, Kyra, Bodhi, Nick, Emma, Grace, Matt, and Trista.

She is survived by her sister Gertie, brothers Joe, John, Ray, and brother-in-law James Fosse.

Carol was well loved by her many nieces and nephews and was a treasured friend to many.

Carol was more than a housewife. We thought of her as an environmental engineer in the home and the garden. Carol and Bill came to this area about 70 yrs ago and made it their home. She was an accomplished cook, baker, sewer, canner and her table always had room for a hungry person.

She loved gardening and growing flowers. She had flower beds all over the place and loved beautiful things. While wintering in Florida she was the head of her neighborhood watch and was so proud of keeping her community safe.

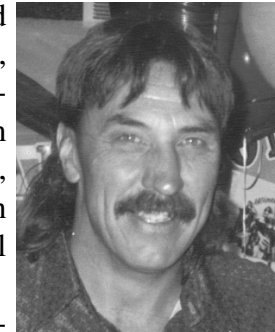
When her children were young she helped organize the local 4-H Club and was instrumental in coming up with their name: The North Shore Happy Hearts Club. Her home was the setting for many club meetings, taffy pulls, contests, and sledding parties.

She was loved by so many including her caregivers.

A Celebration of Life will be planned for this spring. Watch your Northshore Journal for the date.

DOUGLAS DONALD LILLBACK

Douglas Donald Lillback, 66, Finland, received his wings, surrounded by family on Thursday, January 19, 2023 at Essentia Health St. Mary's Medical Center.



Doug was born December 4, 1956 to Donald and Betty (Lindholm) Lillback in Duluth and grew up in Finland, graduating from William Kelley High School in Silver Bay in 1975. Doug worked at Reserve Mining, Holden Logging, Carpenters Local 361, VanHouse Construction, and Ernest Logging. He married the love of his life Lori Houle in 1978.

Doug was an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting, fishing, trapping, and the cabin on McDougal Lake. But what he loved most was family! He was a very loveable, caring person and loved to tease everyone, especially his wife and grandkids. Doug took pride in his girls and sons-in-law and all their accomplishments, and loved being a grandpa/papa and would brag about them any chance he got.

Doug was preceded in death by his father, Donald; father and mother-in-law, John and Luella Houle; grandparents, Anslem and Agnes Lillback and Gus and Isabel Lindholm; great-niece and goddaughter, Jamie Lynn Tikkanen; and infant brother, David.

He is survived by his wife, Lori, daughters, Jennifer (Derek) VanHouse and Ashley (David) Klemmer; grandchildren, Anna Klemmer, Gavin VanHouse, Jordan Klemmer, and Madisyn VanHouse; his mother, Betty Lillback; sisters, Terri Lillback and Kim (Bob) Adams; brothers-in-law, Steve (Patty) Houle, Bob (Susan Koschak) Houle, and Rick (Rebecca) Houle; and many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and his sweet sidekick, his dog, Rayna.

Please join us for a Celebration of Life at 11 AM on Friday, January 27th, 2023 at the Clair Nelson Community Center in Finland. Lunch will follow. A private family burial will take place in the spring.

To share your memories or condolences online please visit www.cavallinfuneralhome.com.



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4431 E. Superior St. | 1420 Belknap St.
Duluth, MN | Superior, WI

218.464.1002 | 715.718.8050

www.sutherlandcbd.com