

## New name carries on pizza tradition Local boys take over

BY MONICA ISLEY

Do North Pizzeria is just what Two Harbors would like to see happen more often.

There has been a lot of talk in development circles about enticing young people to stay in or return to their hometown and set up business here.

On Jan. 1, three brothers-in-law became the owners of the former Dick's Pizza. Two of them, Mike Kasell and Jason Komarek, were born and raised here. Bryan Gray is Kasell's cousin from Duluth. Komarek is a former Dick's Pizza employee.

And for all of them, their new venture is a dream-come-true.

"I've wanted to own a restaurant since I was in high school, and Jason has always wanted to own THIS one," Kasell said.

"And I'm tired of working for someone else. I'm ready to be my own boss," Gray added.

The men, all in their early 30s, were scattered in chairs in the main--and only--room in the Waterfront Drive restaurant. Their ready laughter and easy camaraderie supported their promise that this is going to be a fun venture, for themselves and for their customers.

At the same time, they're very aware that they're carrying on a Two Harbors tradition and they don't intend to mess with success.

Tweak the place a bit, invest it with some of their personality, sure. But it will still be the made-from-scratch, down-home kind of place locals and visitors have come to expect.

Even the name change is part of tradition. Way back when, Lloyd "Cudda" Johnson started the business that existed in several different locations around town, it was called "Cudda's." It was eventually bought by Dick and Rita Svir, who did not want to be interviewed for this story, and became, appropriately, Dick's Pizza.

When the three brothers-in-law took over, they wanted a name that would fit the area, but that wasn't overdone. Do North seemed logical, along with its original logo, a flannel-shirted logger bravely riding a bucking moose.

It's well known around town that although the Svirs changed the name, they kept Cudda's recipe and the friendly atmosphere. Over the years, they gave a lot of young people their first jobs.

Komarek was one of them. He started a six-year stint when he was 16, left for four months, and came back for two more years while he was in college. While the other two didn't work there, they ate plenty of the pizzas.

Until recently, Kasell was service advisor at Two Harbors Ford. Komarek was a tax analyst and

Gray was a supervisor and computer programmer, both for Minnesota Power and Light.

The three have all quit those jobs to make this "new" business their only source of income, proof that they believe it a leap of faith worth taking.

It's a leap they've planning for for a long time. Two years ago the three of them began talking about taking over the business, and brought the idea up to the Svirs. After that, about twice a month, Kasell stopped in to assure the Svirs they were still interested.

Eventually, the time was right. Now, the plans the brothers-in-law made during that waiting period are being put into place.

Once again, although the name is changed, the pizza recipe will stay the same, with all the ingredients cooked and prepared right on the premises.

"We buy, trim and grind our own meat," Kasell said. A restaurant supply salesman tried to persuade them to buy his already-prepared ingredients, but the trio is having none of that.

"This isn't a chain," Komarek said. "It's comfortable and unique, and our made-from-scratch recipes are part of that."

Komarek said the pizzas may even be more original than in recent years. He still remembers the "little tips and secrets" shared



Photo by Monica Isley  
Brothers-in-law, friends and now partners in the newly-named Do North Pizzeria are Mike Kasell (left), Jason Komarek and Bryan Gray.

with him by Cudda, who still helped out a bit when the Svirs took over and when Komarek first began working there.

"We'll be using some of those (original) ideas, too," Komarek said.

Although the pizzas will maintain tradition, they intend to add sandwiches, salads, spaghetti, soup and chili, and even a lunch buffet. They'll be opening earlier, too, at 11 a.m.

By February or so, they'd like

to add beer and wine to the beverage list, as well as a couple of televisions, new upholstery to the booths and some fresh paint. They'll keep the retro look, but "that carpet on the wall has to go," according to Gray. The Svirs' collection of historic photos will stay and even be added to.

By Jan. 19 the new owners will add home delivery, making their menu accessible to just about everyone.

They've already discovered

that locals and faithful out-of-towners are happy that the new owners are home-grown.

"Last Saturday a couple with two kids were here from the Cities," Kasell said. "When they heard that we were the new owners, and that we were from here, they were really excited."

The excitement also shows on the faces of the three men, brothers-in-law, friends, and now business partners.

## Business Year In Review, cont.

### MARCH

Northshore Mining won the Cleveland Cliffs' 2003 President's Award for Safety and was certified as ISO 14001-1996 compliant, the international standard for incorporating environmental aspects into operations and product standards.

The City of Silver Bay received a \$268,437 state grant for its business park project. The improvements will help to attract new tenants to the business park.

A public rezoning hearing will consider two rezoning requests. Sam Cave is asking his property on Port City Hill to be rezoned Commercial Urban and Tom Boettcher of Beaver Bay is requesting his 80-acre tract to be changed from 10-acres to five-acre building sites.

The Silver Bay Mesabi Nugget

project is on course to build its 1.5-million-ton plant at Silver Bay. The project would eventually create 200 full-time jobs at Silver Bay, after permitting is done and funding for the \$240-million plant is finalized.

The Two Harbors Area Fund elected Chanda Alseth, Mary Turnquist and Bob Olund to join their advisory board. Other members are Gordy Anderson, Anna Bradley, Dean Croft, Barbara Hamilton, Terry B. Johnson, Ross LeRoy, Deanna (Dani) Rafn and Joe Zastera.

Future land use issues drew a crowd to the county courthouse over rezoning requests for parcels located near Beaver Bay and Two Harbors. Most of those who spoke favored stronger zoning controls and planning to be done. The planning com-

mission voted to deny Tom Boettcher's proposal for rezoning of an 80-acre parcel in Beaver Bay Township. Sam Cave's request that his 157-acre Port City Hill property be rezoned to Commercial Urban was approved unanimously by the planning commission and the county board. Cave indicated that he'd like to develop single family homes and condominiums on the property, though no specific plans have been made public.

Two Harbors Ambulance has an open house to celebrate their new home.

### APRIL

Plans for the Silver Bay iron nugget plant are moving ahead. "The Silver Bay project is going forward, no matter what," said Larry Lehtinen, Mesabi Nugget president. The issue whether the first plant is built in Indiana or Minnesota has raised hackles. "Looking at the long view, a plant (in Silver Bay) will run for 50 years," said Lehtinen.

North Shore Dog Care opens home-style boarding in the Clover Valley area. Owner Laura Kaminski offers a kennel, outside play yard, dog massage, walks and home-made treats to the visiting dogs.

The Beaver Bay city attorney Wayne Johnson asked the county to allow an 80-acre parcel to go to the city for a nominal fee. The city would then sell the property to developers and the money from the sale would be used to help with infrastructure problems and the \$4,000-a-month mortgage payment

on the community center. However, county attorney Russ Conrow found that state statute says tax-forfeit land can't be sold for a nominal fee unless the land was used for a public purpose and the deed stipulated that if the property ceased being used for public use, it would revert back to the state. The issue came before the county board as they manage tax-forfeit land for the county.

The recently opened St. Luke's Fitness Center at William Kelley High School in Silver Bay has been a hub of activity for the surrounding community and the center is fast becoming one of the more popular places in town.

A fire burned in a six-unit townhouse at Grand Superior Lodge early Sunday morning. The fire did an estimated \$500,000 worth of structural damage to four of the units and the cause is believed to be related to a wood-burning fireplace. All occupants got out safely.

Kevin Glazen has been named the new clinic manager at Superior-Health Medical Group-Two Harbors.

Peter Jeronimus was named president of The Lake Bank NA.

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board has approved Canadian National Railway Company's acquisition of the DM&IR. The \$380-million deal includes the Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway,

the Great Lakes Fleet, ore docks and other assets, The Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad and the Pittsburgh and Conneaut Dock Company. DM&IR operates 212 miles of track and has about 498 employees in Northeast Minnesota.

North Shore Horizons hires Deb Scott, an experienced advocate for victims of sexual assault and sexual abuse, as new director.

Cornerstone Up North, a Christian book and gift store, opened on 7th Avenue. The store features Christian books, records, cards, candles, furniture and framed wall art. Owner Gloria Plaistead, and her husband Rick, also own the Dairy Queen store across the street. Over the years, they estimate they've employed 25,000 teens at their Dairy Queen store.

Maple Ridge Landscape Contractors, Inc., a Two Harbors-based operation has increased seven-fold in the seven years they've been in business. About 60 percent of their work occurs between Encampment and Knife River, but they travel as far as Grand Marais and Cloquet.

### MAY

Now unless there's an emergency, women are having their babies in Duluth instead of at Lake View Memorial Hospital. According to Dr. Shawn McMahon, medical director, the change is due to patient

choice, the availability of pain control, the number of specialists in case of emergency and practice guidelines.

Mark Rafn will serve as chair of the Two Harbors Area Chamber of Commerce. Reni Ehlen joined the chamber staff.

Cooperative Light & Power hosted its annual GreenTouch Day at Gooseberry Falls State Park.

Knife River's j pepper inn closes its doors to their gallery and bed and breakfast this weekend.

Two hazardous waste sites on former Reserve Mining Co. properties near Silver Bay have been targeted for cleanup by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. At one location, MPCA regulators found more than 3,600 barrels of gear lube on a 4.5-acre site that may be leaching high levels of lead into the nearby environment and possibly even Lake Superior. The MPCA is proposing a \$2.2-million cleanup at the first drum burial pit site.

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## NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS



Jaime Rasmussen and Patty Wick accept a new member certificate from Two Harbors Area Chamber of Commerce ambassadors recently. The two represent Krist Oil-Citgo, a new convenience store and gas station located at 1321 7th Ave. in Two Harbors. The store opened on Aug. 4, 2004.

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## TWO HARBORS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

We wish to thank these individuals and businesses for their continued support and investment in the Two Harbors Area Chamber of Commerce:

Sunrise on Superior Assisted Living, Waterfront Custom Framing, Beaver Bay Agate Shop, Memorial Blood Centers, Quilt Corner, Carr TV & Satellite, Arrowhead Insurance Agency and Arrowhead Real Estate & Land Co., The Cedar Chest, Mariner Motel, Rustic Creek Townhomes, West Star Accounting, Steve's Plumbing & Heating, Rohde's Tree Service, W.A. Fisher Company, Russ Kendall's Smoke House, Harbor Insurance Agency, North Star Custom Framing, Two Harbors Machine Shop, Thomas Chiropractic Clinic, Dr. Tim Erickson, Green Door, Minnesota Power, Blazer's Auto Repair, Northshore Mining Co., Co-op Light & Power Ass'n., Service Master Clean, Lake Superior School District #381, B.E. Nelson Design, Frontier Telephone, North Shore Rotary, Baptism River Inn B&B, Maher Trucking, Lakeview Castle, State Farm Insurance, Ojard Well Drilling, Lake View Memorial Hospital, North Shore Scenic Railroad, Anderson's Greenhouse and Florist, Daryl Johnson, Dr. Iverson, and Wood Haven.



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On Nov. 18th the Two Harbors Area Chamber of Commerce and many business sponsors recognized our local first responders and law enforcement groups. A breakfast was served and enjoyed by all. This year we included the Silver Bay area emergency response organizations and we had the mayor say a few kind (no pun intended) words. The Two Harbors mayor and Lake County commissioner's chairman also offered their rewarding thoughts. The one thing that came to me during the presentations was, during that hour, everyone in that room was "on the same page". Everyone was positive, gracious, willing and understanding. I can only think what things we could do as North Shore communities if we would all get "on the same page" more often. So many times we see "we and they," I feel that this is a great way to get nothing done. Working together is so much easier than denying, delaying, discouraging and even disrespecting each other. Our chamber has now expanded our area up and down the shore, we see so much to be done, so much to be improved, so much to be repaired. If we can all get "on the same page" more often, these things that need to be addressed will move forward. Our mission is to create and enhance a business climate in which all area businesses can prosper.



We live in such a great area, lets make it even better.  
Gordy Anderson  
Chamber President