

## Summer 2015

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# Northland News

...Staying in Touch

## Upcoming Events

Thursday, November 19, 2015

### Turkey Bingo

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Remember to bring a non-perishable food item or \$1 for the Salvation Army Food Shelf. Bingo starts at 1:00 p.m. and runs to about 3:00 p.m. in the Fire-side Room of the funeral home

Mark Your Calendars for  
Next Year!

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

### Ham Bingo

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Remember to bring a non-perishable food item or \$1 for the Salvation Army Food Shelf. Bingo starts at 1:00 p.m. and runs to about 3:00 p.m. in the Fire-side Room of the funeral home

Second Saturday of  
Each Month

### Spaghetti Dinner

4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Fireside Room of the funeral home  
(More information inside)

## Retirement Comes for Some, More Than Once.

Yes, many people work their entire adult life looking forward to the day they can retire and hopefully enjoy the fruit of their labors. Then there are some who do that only to find retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and because they have been around people during their working years, retirement can be a little bit lonely. I'm not sure if that was the case with Arlin, but none the less, he came out of retirement after operating his own radiator repair business for more than 20 years and for the past 13 years has been a vital part of Atkins Northland Funeral Home.



After recovering from two broken hips, each a year apart, Arlin has decided to retire once again. So to Arlin we do say "Happy Retirement". But most of all we say thank you for the many years you gave of yourself to serve families that were going through their life altering journey called grief. Arlin you walked through this journey yourself on more than one occasion and you were there when your friends had to take that walk as well. You have been a rock when we needed one and we appreciate your compassion and caring when that too was needed. Enjoy your retirement. We do and will miss you.

## Staff of Northland Funeral Home

Perhaps now is a good time to introduce you to some of the faces at Atkins Northland Funeral Home.



Bob and Karen Atkins, Owner/Directors - Bob and Karen have been funeral directors at Northland Funeral Home since 1993. In 2009 they purchased the funeral home from the cooperative. Bob has been a funeral director since 1987, serving communities of Greeley and Aurora, Colorado, St. Paul and Burnsville, Minnesota before coming to Cloquet. Karen has been in the funeral/cemetery industry since 1988 and has served communities of Norman, Oklahoma, Aurora, Colorado, and Burnsville, Minnesota before coming to Cloquet.



Sheila Quiram, Office Manager – Sheila’s degree is in geology (in other words she loves rocks). After exploring the limited number of rocks in northern Minnesota, she took a job with Potlatch in the research and development department. After restructuring and the sale to

Sappi, that department was eliminated. In 2005 Sheila started as office manager at the funeral home. She is an invaluable member of the team.



Dale Carlson, Custodian/ Directors’ Assistant – When we ask him to put on a suit and help on funerals, he does, but for the most part, Dale keeps the entire funeral home clean and in good repair. We rarely see him because he comes in after we have gone home, but come morning we can

always tell that Dale has been here. Dale also

worked at Potlatch for more than 36 years and during the restructuring of Sappi, decided to take early retirement. We were fortunate enough to get ahold of him before anyone else could and have been blessed with his hard work and commitment.



Emily Debele, Directors’ Assistant – After they each lost their spouses, long-time friends Emily Boeke and Arlin Debele went for an occasional dinner. Even though they both professed to never remarry, cupid had other plans for these two. She was the secretary at Queen of Peace

Catholic Church for 14 years. After her retirement from the church she, too, was not content to sit around and get old. She came to work back in 2002 along with Arlin. Emily will assist on visitations and funerals and she totally manages the kitchen staff and supplies. When she sees we have a funeral she goes into action arranging for staff and coordinating the details for the luncheon. As I mentioned “when she sees we have a funeral”, we actually forget to call her after we make funeral arrangements because we know she is watching daily what’s happening so she usually calls us to find out the lunch menu and how many people will be served. You can’t beat commitment like that in an employee. Unfortunately Emily has experienced the death of a spouse and a child which has definitely contributed to her compassionate and caring personality.



Sandy Green, Directors’ Assistant – If you haven’t figured out by now everyone has had a career before retiring. Lucky for us each one has come out of retirement to become part of a team here at Atkins Northland Funeral Home. So too, the story is no

different with Sandy. Having been a beautician for

## Staff of Atkins Northland Funeral Home

26 years before going to work at the Cloquet Coop Credit Union and later Members Coop Credit Union for 17 years, Sandy truly is a people person. Sandy understands a journey a family must go through as she has experienced the loss of two husbands and facilitates a small local grief support group. Sandy assists with visitations and funerals, but for the majority of her time she is Emily's right hand in the kitchen.



Judy Wiles, Directors' Assistant – Well if Sandy is Emily's right hand in the kitchen, then Judy is definitely her left hand. After 41 years of working as an LPN at Miller Dwan Burn Unit, Judy retired and without much nudging we were lucky enough to get her to help at the funeral home. She

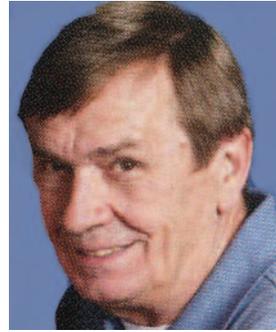
primarily works in the kitchen but is not afraid to assist on visitations and funerals. When not at the funeral home she is still a care giver to other family members and close friends.



Phill Powers, Directors' Assistant – Phill grew up in Ohio and after high school he joined the Air Force and was stationed in Duluth where he also attended college. He worked for 30 years as a probation officer but he's happy to be working at the

funeral home now. Phill's compassion and ability to genuinely care makes him a perfect fit. He strives for perfection and is there to do whatever he can to help a family. After his wife, Bunny, passed away, Phill actually came to Karen and Bob and asked if he could be part of our team.

He wanted to be a part of what had helped him through his grief.



Gary Stevens, Directors' Assistant – Retired after 25 years as a maintenance supervisor for US Banks, Gary definitely is not going to let any grass grow under his feet. Before that he worked 20 years at the grain elevators. He also recently retired from

the Air National Guard after 31 years. Gary started helping out doing custodial work but offered to learn as much as he could and help out in all areas. Put a suit on him and he looks pretty darn good. Gary helps with visitations and funerals and still helps with all other areas at the funeral home. As with all of the employees, Gary is here to serve the families and to help as they walk through this difficult journey.



Ron Stahl, Director's Assistant – Recently retired from the US Postal Service after 35 years, Ron was happy to accept our invitation to join our team. He enjoys fishing in the summer but is not much of an ice fisherman so working at the funeral home is something he could do in the

winter. Well winter is gone for a while but Ron is still here. He has jumped in with both feet and really enjoys working with families. We may need to work around his occasional fishing trip, but are grateful for his compassion and attention to detail. We are blessed to have you Ron.



## Karen's Corner

Several years ago, Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman starred in the movie "The Bucket List". While the movie was quite entertaining, it was also very thought provoking. For many people I think it may have brought their own mortality to light but for others, perhaps it just gave a name to their list of things they want to accomplish. If you were to ask me about my "bucket list" I don't know that I could tell you that I have a list of any great length. However, one thing I have wanted to do was to be able to see many of the African wild animals in their own element before some of them become extinct.

So, last September for my 60th birthday, Bob and I traveled to Africa so that we could go on safari and see these magnificent creatures in their natural habitat. Our flights took us from Minneapolis to Cape Town, South Africa where our adventure began. After much research, I had found a safari outfitter, Rothchild Safaris, that arranged and customized our trip so that we could maximize our time and yet be able to see everything we wanted to see. They did a **SPLENDID** job! Our first three nights were spent in Cape Town and though the weather was cold and rainy we were able to see many of the area highlights. From Cape Town, we flew and then had a two hour car ride to our first safari camp located in Sabi Sand Private Game Reserve

near Kruger National Reserve. We had just entered the gates of Kruger and our driver pointed out a young bull elephant on the right side and just beyond him was a giraffe.



Our first camp was called Leopard Hills and upon our arrival we were greeted with hot towels to freshen up and hot cocoa to wash away the dust from our throats. Oh, did I mention our car ride was not on interstate? Quite the contrary, to get to our camp, we used a dusty two track trail – after all, we were now officially in the bush. We then received the camp orientation, which told us we would be going on two safaris each day. Our guide would wake us at 5:00 AM and we would be ready to leave the camp around 5:30 AM. Back to the camp for breakfast at 9:00 and then the day was our own until 4:00 High Tea and evening safari at 4:30 PM and back to the camp for 9:00 dinner. Not usually my vacation schedule, but OK! Then we were told for our protection we must keep our cabins locked at all times because the baboons knew how to get in, where the refrigerator

was located and they were quite adept at emptying them. We needed to use the mosquito netting around the bed at night since we were in a malaria zone. We were only to use the walking trails around the camp during the day and after dark we must NEVER go anywhere without being accompanied by our guide.

With the high tea hour approaching, we made our way to the reception area to meet our guide and the three other couples that were assigned to our safari buggy. After everyone was loaded and our guide had retrieved his rifle and secured it into the buggy, we were on our first safari. We bounced over trails, rocks, and creek beds and were more than delighted when we came upon four female lion sisters that just finished a big meal. Lounging around near the creek with their bellies full for a few days, they didn't seem to care at all that our safari buggy was just across the riverbed from them. We were lucky enough to see a cheetah, one of only 200 in all of Kruger reserve. Our guide treated us to fabulous "sundowners", fluorescent



worms that only come out at night, beautiful views of the constellations, and gave us a new appreciation of the efforts taken to protect the animals against poaching.

We stayed in four different camps, three of which were safari camps.

As our camps became more remote, the planes that flew us to them became smaller, but all of the pilots, guides and trackers were fabulous. Some of the animals we saw included lion, leopard, the nearly extinct rhino, elephant, cape buffalo, zebra, wildebeest, hippo, giraffe, wart hog, hyena, cheetah, gazelle, honey badger, impala, and two packs of the painted wild dogs, that are also close to extinction.

The first night in our third camp, we were awakened by the sounds of the hippos chomping on the grass just outside our tent. The next night an elephant was eating the leaves off a tree so close to our tent that she was moving the side of the tent. During the day Bob and I could sit on our deck and watch the hippos and

elephants cool themselves in the river.

I was going to celebrate my birthday in our fourth and last camp and upon our arrival we were greeted by the camp staff singing African "greeting" songs. The night of my actual birthday, the entire camp was treated to dinner out in the bush complete with lanterns that were hung in the tree and surrounding the perimeter. Then after dinner, the staff started singing and presented me with a chocolate birthday cake. The next evening, our last night in Africa, we were treated to our own private "lantern light" dinner on the deck of our tent and a farewell message on our bed made with leaves that bid us "Go Well".



Some of the other highlights included a trip to Victoria Falls,

a tour of a village and school, a boat ride through the Okavango Delta, and an elephant safari where Bob and I rode a rescued elephant, named Danny.

Our friend, Tom Brinkley has always said that if you ever go to Africa, you will want to return. I never really understood what he meant until I was there. His statement is so true! I fell in love with the people and that beautiful wild untamed country. When we left our last camp I had a big lump in my throat as the staff stood singing a song of farewell and waving goodbye. Our guide, A.K., took us to the landing strip and there were big hugs before we climbed into the plane. It was with many tears that I waved goodbye to him as our plane took off.

As the trip began, we had no idea what to expect and although we've been home for nine months, I still am at a loss to find the words to adequately describe what this trip meant. WONDERFUL! FANTASTIC! But probably the most accurate would be "THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME"!!!!!!!





*Female Leopard*



*Two brother Lions watching us*



*Karen Feeding Danny*



*Hippos*



*Hippos*



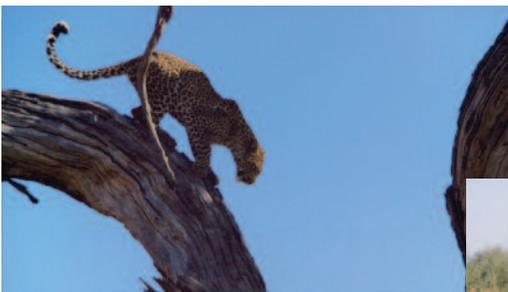
*Lone Vulture at sunset*



*"Beware Elephant Crossing"*



*(Lion) Our Last Safari "Go Well"*



*Leopard on the move*



*Female Rhino with her calf*



*Mama with her calf*



*Zebra*



*Wildebeests*

## Spaghetti Dinners

November 14th will be our final spaghetti dinner. We have been doing it for over three years and will take a break and at the same time give caterers, Sue and Scott Johnson from Chef's Marketplace Catering a rest as well. We would like to thank Sue and Scott for their generous donation for all of the spaghetti dinners we have served. You are both a blessing to this community.

In addition we would like to thank our entire staff for their countless hours of volunteering for these events. Staff members and their families include Emily and Arlin Debele, Sandy Green, Judy Wiles, Sheila and Mark Quiram, and Dale Carlson. Thank you.

To the many groups that have benefited from one of our spaghetti dinners, we also say thank you. Your volunteers helped make each night special for those who attended. Combined the groups' efforts helped raise over \$65,000 for these local non profit groups. Job well done.

**August 8, 2015** – Boy Scout Troop 168

**September 12, 2015** – Bethel Lutheran Church

**October 10, 2015** – Alano Club

**October 30, 2015** – Friends of Animals (this is a special event and will be on a Friday)

**November 14, 2015** – Queen of Peace School



**Atkins-Northland Funeral Home**

801 14th Street  
Cloquet, MN 55720

*"Where Service Matters Most"*  
Return Service Requested

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## Ham Bingo Winners

Ham Bingo Winners, in no particular order  
Barbara Hill, Sharon Quiram, Mike Merrill, Lavonne Larson, Ann Bleibaum, Helen Ross, Terry Arthur, Donna Juntunen, Bill Wise, Carol Johnson, Ramona Steffer, Sharon Strohmeier, Rose Presthang, Debby Beck, Deb Borin, Lauryn Hilton, Deanna Sanvig, Jerry Gryskiewicz, Violet Johnson, Ken Beck



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