

December 2025 /
January 2026

MINNESOTA
LICA NEWS
LAND IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA • MINNESOTA CHAPTER

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WINTER CONVENTION 2026 January 14-16

Wednesday Jan. 14
Competent Person/Trench
Safety and CPR/AED/First Aid
Bean Bag Tournament

Thursday, Jan. 15
Speakers, Trade Show, Awards
Banquet, Auction

Friday, Jan. 16
Annual Meeting and Speakers

Complete details Pgs. 8-9



GREETINGS From Your PRESIDENT

As we push late into the fall, the sunlight hours diminish rapidly. One could say we are coming around the last corner in the race to the inevitable frost and snowy season.

I would like to take this opportunity to talk a little MN LICA business. The Annual Convention will be coming up in early January. I hope all of you have time to attend and be available to talk with our associates on Thursday.

MN LICA is always looking to push our connections through our members. We are on the constant look for new members to join MN LICA. Some of us may not be comfortable approaching potential new members to MN LICA. Some of us look at this as not a challenge but as an opportunity to help others. The MN LICA Board is here to talk to these potential members if only we can have your help. Just like any of our customers we deal with, it's all about building a relationship with someone.

Interested in being on the MN LICA board? We are looking for a few members to be on the MN LICA board. If you would like to serve on the board please reach out to Jenny, myself or any other board members. We are looking for YOU!!!

Hope all take the time to enjoy the holiday season that approaches ever so fast. Time with our friends and family.

Sincerely,
Dallas Loken
MN LICA President



MN LICA ANNUAL MEETING
FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2026
8:30 AM
BEST WESTERN PLUS,
NEW ULM, MN

FEATURES

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**MNLICA Web-Site; www.mnlca.org
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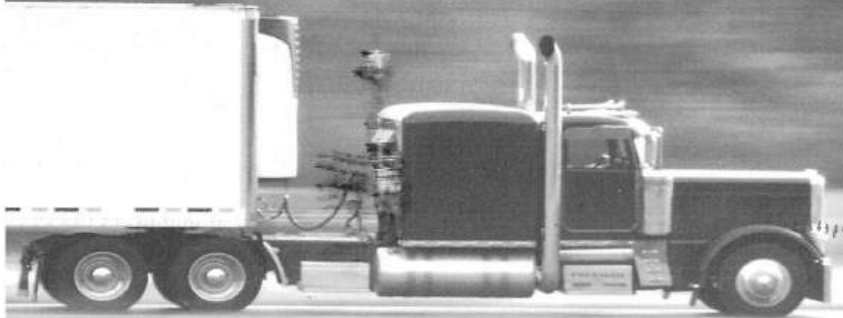
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Executive Director's Report

Hello Everyone!

I can't believe we are closing in on another year end and winter is upon us. Although the weather may not be cooperating to get the work done, you still need to be out there in all types of weather. Your work never ends and neither should safety, now more than ever, slow down, don't rush and stay safe. Now that December is upon us, you need to make plans to attend the MN LICA Convention, January 14-16, 2026. After some discussion with the board it was decided to change up the Convention a little and this year we are offering a full day of Safety Training on Wednesday. I have contracted with Cory from South Central College. The class will cover Excavation Competent Person/Trench Safety, First Aid, CPR and AED. Please see page 8 for the Agenda and page 9 has the registration. You will also be receiving this in the mail shortly.

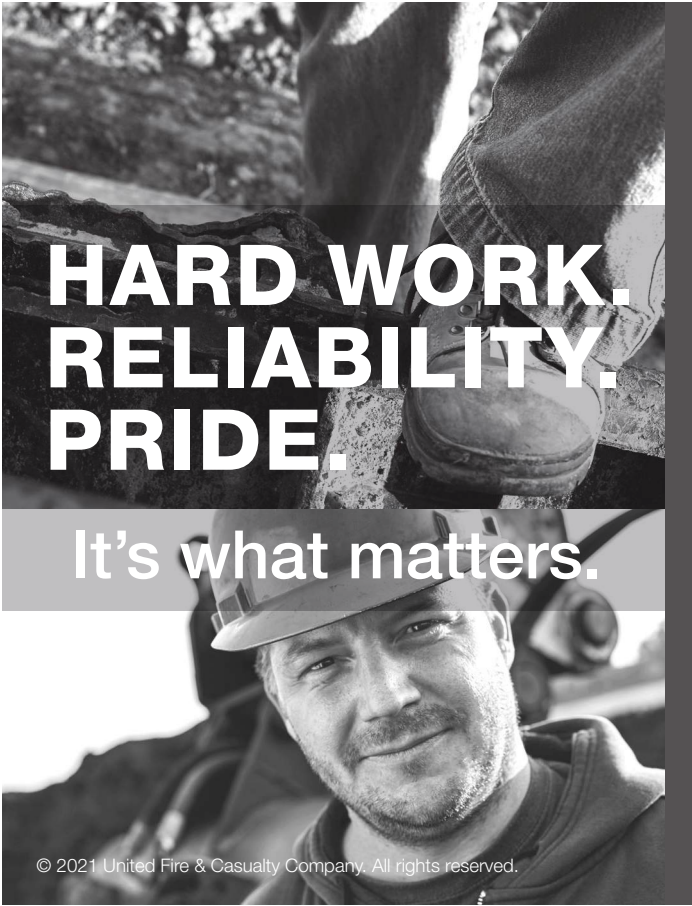
As President Loken said, we are looking for members to be part of the Board of Directors, please reach out to any board members or myself if you are interested. We meet 4 times per year. This is your organization so think about joining the board of directors.

Also, its never to early to talk to your High School Seniors about applying for the \$1,000 Scholarship from MN LICA. Information can be found on the website or just email me.

As we approach the holiday season I want to wish everyone a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope to see you at the Winter Convention!

Jennifer Breberg, Executive Director MN LICA





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2026 WINTER CONVENTION AGENDA - January 14-16, 2026**All Presentations and Educational session will be in Galleries 1 & 2****Wednesday, January 14th, 2026 – NEW THIS YEAR!**

8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Excavation Competent Person/Trench Safety: This covers everything that OSHA requires.
First Aid/CPR/AED: Covering topics from AHA's most up to date information, including the major update from October. (First Aid Certificate available talk with Instructor)
Presented by: Cory Weston, Workplace Safety & Health Consultant, South Central College.

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Hospitality Room #205 Opens

7:00 PM - Bean Bag Tournament in Pre-Function Area – Sign up your teams with Mark Morreim or Jenny.

Thursday, January 15th, 2026

Women's Program – TBD.

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM - Prins Insurance, presented by Bruce Mosier

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM – SmartCrew – Software Developer Andrew Drish – “How to Leverage Tech to Save \$50K-\$100K/ year. Simplest All-in-One Construction Software, built for 5-50 person Companies.

11:00 AM to 11:45 – ADMC - Presentation by Keegan Kult, Executive Director of ADMC.

11:45 AM – 12:30 PM Lunch with Members and Associates!

After Lunch – 4:30 PM - TRADE SHOW - Pre-Function Area

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM - Banquet - Gallery 1, 2, & 3

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Live Auction, Funds raised help support the Scholarship Program and Legislative efforts.

7:30 PM – 8:30 – “Comedian Jody Fuller” Jody is a father, comic, speaker, writer and soldier who served three tours of duty in Iraq. Jody's performance has been described as entertaining, thought provoking, inspiring, unique and most of all incredibly humorous.

Hospitality Room #205 will open after Banquet

Friday, January 16th, 2026

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM - Devotions

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM **MNLICA Annual Meeting** - All business to come before the board and election of officers.

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – TBD.

11:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Attorney John Kolb, Rinke Noonan Law Firm.
Everything and more affecting LICA Contractors!

12: 00 – 1:00 PM Lunch - Gallery 3

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM – Attorney John Kolb, will continue his presentation.

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM – DOT Regulations, load securement and much more; State Patrol Officer Patrick Fay.



MNLICA CONVENTION REGISTRATION JANUARY 14-16, 2026

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Company: _____

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REGISTRATION			
Discount Registration - Must be Postmarked by Dec. 29, 2024		After Dec. 29th	TOTALS
Wednesday Training Only	\$150.00	\$160.00	
Wednesday Training w/Convention Registration	\$140.00	\$145.00	
Members & Others Thursday & Friday	\$175.00	\$200.00	
Member's Spouse Thurs/Fri	\$125.00	\$150.00	
Non-Members	\$250.00	\$275.00	
Childred under 16 years of age	Free	Free	

**Names of Attendees: (Please print legibly) If more spaces needed print on separate sheet.
Please mark all days that individual will be attending. Names are required for Badges.**

NAME	W	TH/ FR	NAME	W	TH/ FR

Also, join us Wednesday evening for a VERY friendly Bean Bag Tournament at 7:00PM Pre-function area. Hospitality Room opens at 5:30 in Room #205 Sign up your teams with Mark Morreim or Jenny Breberg.

MNLICA'S Annual Auction will be held on Thursday Evening, for our Political Action Fund and Scholarship Fund, please provide an auction item that has a suggested minimum value of \$25.00 or more or a cash donation if you wish.

Hotel Rooms under MN LICA Block Room Rates - \$107.00 + Tax / By: 1/9/26 Best Western Plus Hotel 2101 S. Broadway St., New Ulm, MN Phone: 507-359-2941	Mail Registration and Check to: MNLICA Check Payable to MNLICA 2570 130 th Str. Dawson, MN 56232 Phone: 320-226-6398 E-mail: mnlica2@gmail.com
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Registration Policy: Only individuals registered and with a badge may attend convention events. The spouse/guest of a registered member need not register to share hotel accommodations but must register to participate in convention programs or functions. No registration will be processed without payment. A \$30.00 processing fee will be incurred on cancellations postmarked before December 29th, 2025. Cancellations postmarked after December 29th, 2025 will be subject to a 50% reduction in refund. All requests must be in writing. Meals will be on an "availability basis" for on-site registration.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National LICA Welcomes Dennis Mikula, Jr. as New Chief Executive Officer

Seasoned industry leader and business executive to begin January 1, 2026

Lisle, Illinois — November 18, 2025— The National Land Improvement Contractors of America (LICA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dennis Mikula, Jr., as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective January 1, 2026.

Mikula joins National LICA with nearly three decades of leadership experience in the land improvement, construction, and business sectors. As President of Mikula Contracting, Inc., a third-generation, family-owned excavation, demolition, and environmental services company established in 1946, he has guided the organization through consistent growth while modernizing operations with technology and best practices. Mikula will assume the role of Chairman of Mikula Contracting as he commences his duties as CEO of National LICA.



Under his leadership, Mikula Contracting has earned multiple honors, including being named New Jersey Family Business of the Year (2020) by Fairleigh Dickinson University's Rothman Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The company has also received numerous NJLICA Safety Awards and Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey (CIANJ) "Companies That Care" Awards for community outreach.

Currently serving as President of the New Jersey Land Improvement Contractors of America (NJLICA), Mikula has been a vocal advocate for contractors and the broader construction industry. He also has an extensive history of civic and business leadership through his roles on the Executive Boards of the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey, Meadowlands Chamber of Commerce, Bergen New Bridge Medical Center Foundation, and the New Jersey Policy Research Organization (NJPRO). Beyond his professional accomplishments, Mikula is deeply committed to community service and mentorship. He helps coordinate the Meadowlands Chamber Basket Brigade Program, providing Thanksgiving meals to over 300 families each year. He also continues to mentor young professionals, a passion shaped by more than 20 years of coaching high school and college football.

"I'm honored to serve as CEO of National LICA at such a pivotal moment for our industry and our association," said Mikula. "We have an opportunity to modernize our structure, strengthen national-state alignment, and deliver even greater value to our members nationwide. I'm committed to leading with transparency, collaboration, and a bold vision that positions LICA as the nation's top voice for land improvement and conservation."

National LICA President Jeff Schell said, "Dennis brings a rare blend of operational excellence, industry leadership, and community spirit. His experience leading a family-owned contracting business and his deep roots in the LICA network make him uniquely qualified to guide our organization into its next chapter."


Mikula lives in New Jersey with his wife, Diana, and their daughter, Lucy.

Land Improvement Contractors of America



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ADMC Meets with NRCS Chief Bettencourt to Discuss Priorities to Improve Practice Delivery for Farmers

The Agricultural Drainage Management Coalition (ADMC) met with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Aubrey Bettencourt on Friday, September 26th to discuss strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of the recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organizations. ADMC, which works to advance sustainable drainage solutions in agriculture, emphasized the importance of forming an NRCS/ADMC working group to address conservation drainage needs, identify opportunities, and develop implementation solutions that remove adoption barriers and prioritize the interests of producers. Chief Bettencourt agreed to appoint staff to serve as the NRCS lead for this working group.

During the meeting, Chief Bettencourt outlined her overarching priority for NRCS: putting farmers first by streamlining the delivery of technical and financial assistance. She stressed the need for conservation systems that make farmers more efficient and deliver strong environmental benefits. The Chief also highlighted the agency's commitment to updating conservation practice standards to keep pace with technological advancements. Additionally, the discussion addressed the need to improve the Technical Service Provider (TSP) program, recognizing that the increasing demand for technical assistance among farmers could exceed NRCS's current capacity.

ADMC is well-positioned to help NRCS achieve these priorities, as reflected in the signed MOU. For example, the turn-key approach in Minnesota and the Iowa batch and builds has enabled multiple conservation drainage projects to be packaged and completed efficiently, streamlining both financial and technical assistance delivery. These alternative practice delivery models exemplify how ADMC's innovative strategies can directly benefit farmers by accelerating access to support and conservation resources. The MOU also underscores ADMC's role in providing critical feedback to NRCS, improving the accuracy of practice scenarios and payment schedules to ensure they reflect current market conditions. Furthermore, ADMC is committed to advancing the use of TSPs, believing that strong public/private partnerships are essential for scaling up conservation practice delivery.

By closely aligning its initiatives with NRCS's farmer-first philosophy and goals for improved assistance, ADMC's efforts are poised to deliver measurable benefits for producers and drive meaningful progress in agricultural conservation.

ADMC President Chuck Brandel, Chairman Charlie Schafer, and Executive Director Keegan Kult meet with NRCS Chief Bettencourt to discuss the memorandum of understanding.



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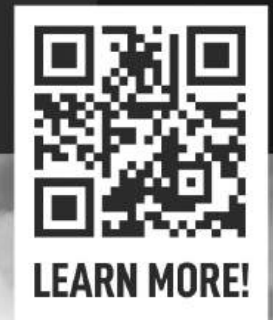
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Retired Member	\$ 50.00

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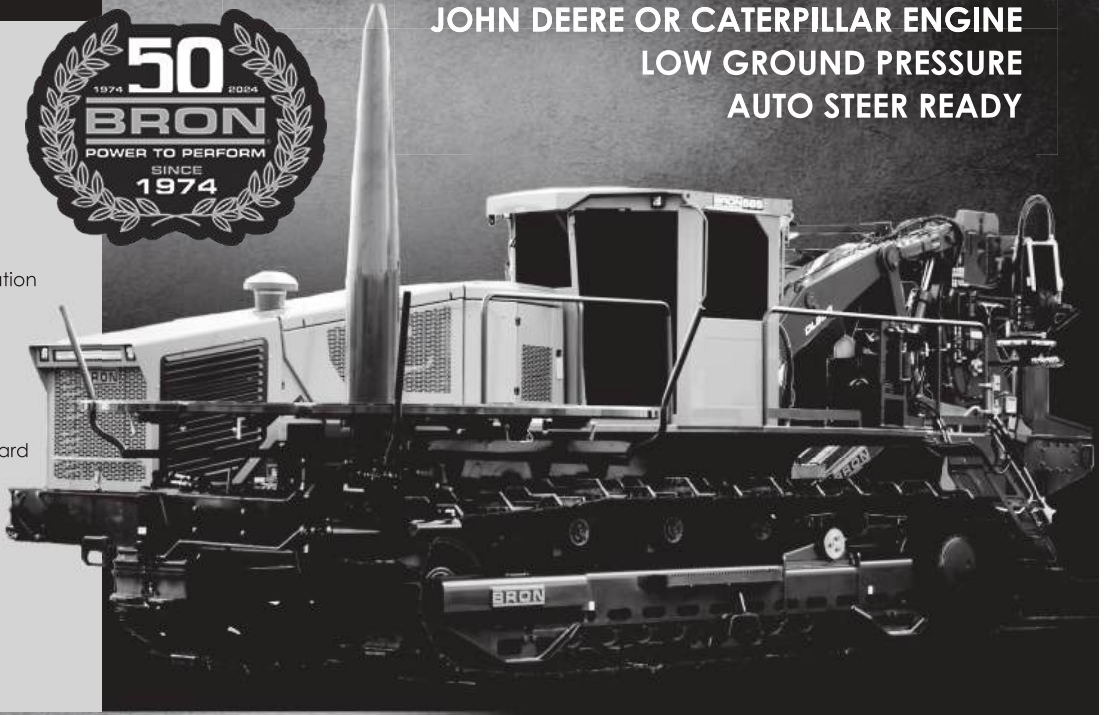
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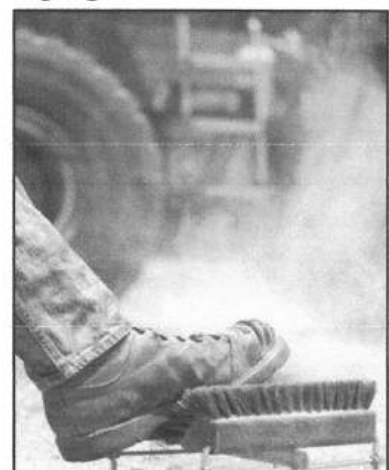
HEALTH ALERT



Housekeeping

Good housekeeping practices can greatly reduce miners' exposures to respirable dust and silica.

- Dusty work clothes are a significant source of secondary exposures
 - Regularly wash work clothes including jackets and sweatshirts
 - Install and use solutions such as cleaning stations and booths
 - Compressed air cannot be used to clean clothes!
- Dirt and dust can be carried into work areas on miners' boots
 - Install boot washing stations near production areas
 - Install boot brushes outside of equipment cabs, control rooms, and offices
- Cloth seats can collect and release dust every time they are used
 - Use leather and vinyl chairs in equipment, break rooms, and offices
 - Wipe down chairs regularly
- Wash equipment and floors on a regular basis
 - Start by slowly wetting the area with a wide spray nozzle, then move the wetted material with a more forceful nozzle
 - Use floor sweeping units and HEPA vacuums in high-traffic areas
 - Use a sweeping compound to reduce dust when dry sweeping



Photos by NIOSH

**SAVE THE DATE: MSHA Part 46 Refresher - Tuesday, January 27, 2026,
VFW Owatonna, MN, 8:00 - 4:30**

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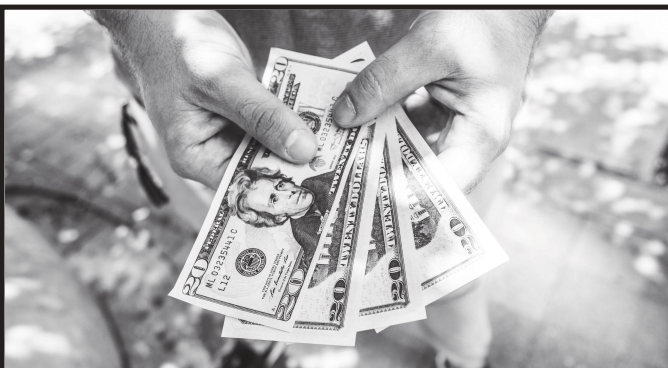
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RECIPE

Submitted by: Nordis Estrem

BEEF SLIDERS

- Precooked shredded Chuck Roast
- 1 package Hawaiian rolls
- 1 package shredded Cheddar Cheese
- Mayonnaise
- 1 can French’s Crispy Fried Onions

Topping:

- 1/4 stick butter
- 1-1/2 Tablespoons Brown Sugar
- 1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 1 Teaspoon Poppy Seeds (optional)

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Slice buns in half, leave them attached at the side.
- Spread the Mayo on the top half.

Layer the bottom half of the roll with shredded beef, cheddar cheese and crispy fried onions. Fold buns over and arrange them on a rimmed pan or on an aluminum 9”x13” baking pan.

Topping:

In a small saucepan, melt butter and brown sugar, until all are melted together. Stir in Worcestershire sauce, mustard and poppy seeds.

Turn to medium heat and boil about 1 minute or until it thickens a bit.

Pour evenly over the rolls.

Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes or until tops are brown.

ENJOY!!!

**REMINDER: MN LICA DUES ARE DUE NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2026
THANK YOU!**




2026 National LICA
Winter Convention
February 28 - March 2 | Harrah’s Casino Hotel | Las Vegas

GO TO LICANATIONAL.COM, CLICK THE EVENTS TAB AND REGISTER FOR THE NATIONAL WINTER CONVENTION AND REGISTER FOR CONEXPO. USE SPECIAL CODE AND RECEIVE 40% OFF CONEXPO TICKETS!!!



Las Vegas, NV
March 3 - 7, 2026




Walk like a Penguin!

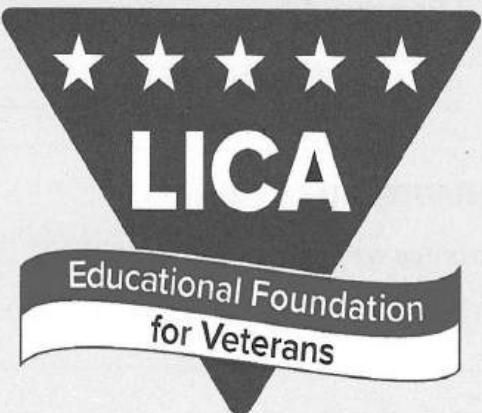
When things get cold and icy,
And your path looks kind of dicey,
Waddle on!

Keep your toes all pointed out-y,
Keep your knees all loosey-goosey,
Waddle on!

Keep your hands outside your pockets,
Take short steps so you won't rocket,
Waddle on!

Take it slowly. Holey-moley,
So you won't fall down and roll-y,
Waddle on!





OUR MISSION

To train military veterans to become highly-skilled heavy equipment operators and assist them in finding employment opportunities throughout the U.S.

2025 Board Member Meeting Attendance
A = Absent P = Present C = Cancelled

Board Member	Jan	Mar	June	Aug	Nov
Pres Dallas Loken	P	A	P	P	P
VP Jesse James	P	P	P	P	P
Tres Mark Olsen	P	P	P	A	A
Chrmn Stu Frazier	P	P	P	P	P
Mark Morreim	P	P	P	P	P
Karlen Nelson	P	P	P	P	P
Everett Garlisch	P	P	P	P	P
Brad Herickhoff	P	A	P	A	A
Mike Lehmann	P	P	P	A	P
Doug Breberg	P	A	P	P	A
Dee Ann Larson	P	P	P	P	A
Debra Olsen	P	P	P	A	A
Don Loken	P	P	P	A	A
Assoc. Mike Kluck	A	A	A	A	A
Ex Dir J. Breberg	P	P	P	P	P

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Dallas Loken

Loken Excavating & Drainage
3695 Hoffman Dr. NW
Owatonna, MN 55060

VICE PRESIDENT

Jesse James

Steve James Excavating
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Owatonna, MN 55060

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Mark Olsen

Big Woods Excavating LLC
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Nerstrand, MN 55053

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Stu Frazier Tiling
Canby, MN 56220

MNLICA Executive Director

Jennifer Breberg

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mnlica2@gmail.com
Phone: 320-226-6398

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Albert Lea, MN

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Northfield, MN 55057

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Associates

Mike Kluck - USI

NATIONAL LICA

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Phone: 630-548-1984

2025-2026 UPCOMING EVENTS

Web-site: www.mnlica.org

January 14-16, 2026, MN LICA Winter Convention, New Ulm, MN

MN LICA Annual Meeting, 8:30 am, January 16, 2026

Best Western Plus, New Ulm, MN

January 27, 2026, MSHA, VFW, Owatonna, MN, 8:00 - 4:30

February 28 - March 2, 2026, National LICA Winter Convention

March 3-7, 2026, CON/EXPO, Las Vegas, NV



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2570 130th Street
Dawson, MN 56232

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THE LICA CREED

*Land, the foundation of the nation,
the basis of all wealth,
the heritage of the wise, the thrifty and prudent,
the poor man's joy and comfort,
the silent partner of man,
the producer of food, fiber and fuel,
the basis of factories,
the foundation of banks.*

*All that man builds is from the land.
We often take it for granted, or even abuse it,
and yet many unthinkingly and unknowingly pass the land by.
What man finally does with the land
will be the deciding factor in his survival.*