

BusinessNorth®

The Region's Source for Business News

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In plain sight:

By Ed Newman

Homelessness in Duluth impacts everyone, even entrepreneurs. Here, businesses join the difficult conversation.

After spending days attempting to subdue profane shouting matches among customers, managers of a popular downtown Duluth cafe put away their tables and chairs for three weeks last month and only served takeout. It's one of many downtown firms struggling to address a problem that business owners believe has been downplayed by local government and law enforcement leaders.

Homelessness has impacted the Twin Ports region for decades and remains a pressing issue for a number of social, humanitarian and economic reasons. In this article, BusinessNorth will focus on how homelessness in our region impacts the business community. To be clear, the majority of downtown offenses such as vandalism, panhandling and public intoxication are not necessarily started by people experiencing homelessness. Neither do the great majority of people experiencing

HOMELESS continues on page 12



Photo by Ed Newman

Duluth Pack breaks new trail

From canoe country identity to lifestyle brand

By Angelo Gentile

Dave Zentner still uses a weathered, olive-drab #2 Duluth Pack he bought in the 1960s that hangs from the rafters in his garage.

The long-time Duluth angler, hunter and outdoor adventurer said the oversize, canoe-pack model has been with him through countless Boundary Waters portages, fly-fishing trips to local and far-flung streams, and duck hunting outings to western prairies and backwater hideaways. His pack is usually jammed with everything from waders and fishing vests to duck decoys and a thermos.



Noted outdoors writer and wilderness guide Cliff Jacobson has taken canoes and Duluth Packs to the far north, leading dozens of expeditions over the years to various Canadian provinces, Hudson Bay and even the Arctic Ocean. He especially sings the praises of the packs' riveted straps and tumpline, an optional strap that attaches at both ends of the pack and is placed over the top of one's head for especially heavy loads. The feature

PACK continues on page 24

Superior's Cutting Edge Metals predicts major growth

By Felicia Schneiderhan

Folks walking into the Cutting Edge Metals shop in Superior are greeted by a table full of snacks beneath a sign:

Hey You! Yeah You! You work hard! Take a snack and get an energy boost for your day! Thank you!

"The mail guys love it," owner Mike Miller said.

It's the first sign of many pointing to the level of service Miller and his team of 10 employees extend to each other and their customers of specially-made timber frame brackets, railings, gates, fencing and more.

The 12-year-old company received the first annual BusinessNorth Small Business of the Year award in Dec. 2021 – and for good reason.

Cutting Edge Metals has cultivated a niche market serving clients both local and worldwide since 2010, when Miller launched the shop out of his garage. Today he maintains two locations in Superior – one shop and a second space acquired last year currently under renovation. The second space will allow the company to expand its finishing processes and manufacturing, and Miller plans to hire eight to 10 more people in the next two years.

CUTTING EDGE continues on page 8

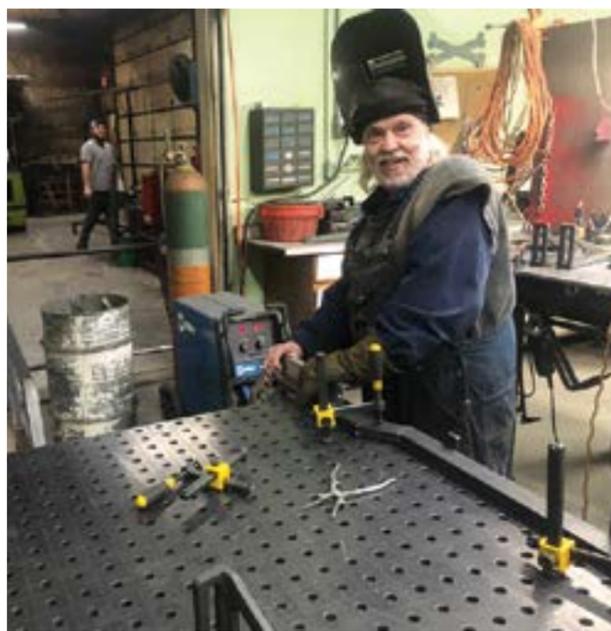


Photo by Felicia Schneiderhan

Welder Rex Bruner, above, started with Owner Mike Miller and Cutting Edge Metals in Miller's Duluth garage.

April Special Focus Sections

Doing Business in Twin Ports



Cirrus announces expansion - 5
BIPOC business owners - 6
Industry thrives in West Duluth - 10
New Superior businesses - 16

Marketing/PR



Marketing to build the workforce - 20

SME Conference



Mining pros dig new event site - 18

Regular Features

Around the Region.....	2	Editorial.....	4	Marketing.....	28
Business Law.....	27	Inside Wisconsin.....	26	Newsmakers.....	30
Business Services Guide.....	29				

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