



## A letter from the President

There is a new book out that I haven't yet read, but definitely plan to: *Your Call Is (Not That) Important To Us: Customer Service and What it Reveals About Our World and Our Lives*.

The author, Emily Yellin, postures that companies that farm out customer service divorce themselves from their customers. Yellin notes that the rationale for outsourcing is financial, with each customer service call fielded in the U.S. costing a business an average of \$7.50; the same call handled overseas, just \$2.35. (An automated system is only 32 cents.)

CNN Money book reviewer Daniel Ankst summarizes "These cost-saving decisions by big businesses offer a giant advantage to smaller firms. In a world of anonymous call centers halfway around the globe, entrepreneurs have an edge to exploit." Another online reviewer writes "In this time of economic upheaval I believe quality service may make the difference in a company's survival."

I want to find out more.

Customer service drives all of our organizations and is certainly the foundation of our offerings at the Kitchi Gammi Club. We aim to please, which is why we surveyed Club members to find out what they like about the Club and what improvements we might be able to make to enhance their membership experience.

In February 2009, Praxis Strategy Group distributed a survey to all Kitchi Gammi Club members. Nearly 290 people responded to some or all of the survey questions.

Two-hundred-forty-three respondents are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the services/amenities offered by the Club. Based on survey results, "meal service" is the service/amenity used most, as 56 respondents use this service at least once a week. The majority of respondents – 199 of 239 – indicated they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with "food quality," but open-ended responses reflect there is always room for improvement.

A number of respondents commented they are pleased with the recent physical improvements made inside the Club, and they'd like to see further upgrades made. Coincidentally, we recently installed privacy walls in the Signature Room and remodeled the lighting and added booths in the Tap Room. Plus we completed the elevator upgrade (thanks for your patience) and are advancing plans to modernize the front desk area.

Survey respondents provided other great suggestions in a number of areas as well as affirmations of what we're doing right. The board of directors has been using the results in strategic planning sessions. We're working to make improvements where we can and will continue to provide those services and amenities members value most.

We thank everyone who participated in the survey, and we encourage you to provide continued feedback via the suggestion box that has been redeployed at the front desk. Your input will help make the Club an even better place to socialize and conduct business. "Continual improvement is an unending journey" state Lloyd Dobyns and Clare Crawford-Mason in their 1994 book *Thinking About Quality*. Although not quite as current as Yellin's new book, we can learn a few things from them too!

I also encourage you to feel free to share your ideas with the Club's Interim General Manager Dean Minardi, who was most recently president and chief operating officer of Anderson Lubricants and general manager of Easy Housing of Duluth. Dean is temporarily filling the position vacated by Mark Tuttle, who completed his work for the Club in early May after more than 36 years of service. We recognize Mark's decades of service to the organization and



Todd Johnson



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# Foundation Footnote

BY JOHN KILLEN,  
KITCHI GAMMI CLUB FOUNDATION

I know we were all hoping to see at least a dim light at the end of the dark recession tunnel by now, but it not yet to be -at least based on the current activity at the Foundation. We get a few contributions, mostly memorials and special gifts, for which we are grateful.

It is much like Duluth

weather: we can't understand why we can't seem to shake the chill. But better days must be ahead both for the weather and the economy.

Until then we feel we will be content with reminding our donees that the needs of the Club continue. We hope you will keep the Foundation in your thoughts as you evaluate requests for support.

# News from the Cucina

BY CHEF TAL  
THE KITCHI CUCINA

The ol' axiom; change is good. For those of us here, who live with only glimpses of seasons other than cold and damp, there is a definite appreciation to the greening of our landscape. The winds of change have swept in an exciting, refreshing new season. And with a wink of an eye and a tip of the cap, a simple bittersweet goodbye. A farewell to a season that, like a friend, has left us with only the fond memories, a romantic reminiscence. But this is no end, we will see that friend again and as before when I, saying my good-byes to the garden for the winter, knew that soon the new growth would start, and tended with care, would take root and thrive with health.

Now the grandeur of spring, the temperatures say in the mid 60's with a soft westerly breeze. We now are the envy of those in the southerly direction, their tulips and lilacs have all but come and gone. We do have some catching up to do in the springtime enjoyment department, but no fear, here at the Club we can start by trading in the overcoat for some linen and an iced tea, perhaps a recipe from Long Island. Perusing the menu and specials that will get us downright in the springtime and, should I say summertime mood. Relaxing on the Terrace and watching nary an icebreaker out past the rolling surf.

We have some great events indoors and out planned for the "catching" up months ahead. Stay tuned for some great new offerings here as well, changes yes, but for the best. Look for new emails to update these and look to the Club's web site for lightspeed excuses for spontaneity, beckoning us to come quick and savor the easy, al fresco dining of the sunny, slow, hammock season.

Please check out "Chef's Corner" at [kitchigammiclub.com](http://kitchigammiclub.com) for weekly specials.

## New Members & Sponsors

Denise Hamsher

Richard Quigley  
Eric Norberg

Dr. Thomas Patnoe

Dr. Peter Person  
Dr. Carl Heltne

S. Charles Spencer

Gilbert Harries  
Robert Unzen



## Mark your calendar

Kitchi Gammi Club Thank You  
Buffet

Friday, June 26

Kitchi Gammi Club Family  
Picnic

Thursday, July 30

# The Membership Committee

BY BARB ELLIOTT,  
CHAIR, MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Thank you again for participating in the every-member survey!! We have been reviewing the information you gave us and are beginning to plan how we can incorporate your suggestions and wisdom into our Club's program and facilities. There are many wide-ranging suggestions (including adding social events, changing the décor in several rooms, and creating a welcoming 'drop in' area) that will keep the Board busy improving the Club in the years to come.

The Executive Summary of the survey's findings will be posted on the Members Only part of the website (name: first initial and last name; password: your member number) very soon. The Executive Summary is also printed in this Newsletter.

Our Prospective Member Event on April 21 was well attended and enjoyed by all. We continue to attract new members. If you know others who would be good Club members, invite them to join you for a lunch or dinner (at no cost to you) so they can be introduced to the KGC. When you make your reservation for the meal, let the desk know of your guests' interest; there will be a folder of information for them about membership in the Club. Just a reminder: any new member who joins before they become 40 years of age pays only half of the Initiation Fee.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of KGC membership.



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wish him well in his new endeavors.

The Club has formed a general manager search committee and will be assisted by Jeff Thompson, a management consultant and Club member. The board of directors is committed to having a new general manager in place by the Club's next annual meeting in October.

Meanwhile, we are pleased Dean has accepted this interim position. He may be reached at [manager@kitchigammiclub.com](mailto:manager@kitchigammiclub.com), (212) 724-8589. Please introduce yourself and welcome Dean to the Club.

In fact, there are many new faces at the Club after a very successful membership campaign in 2008. We welcome all of you and hope those of us who have been around for awhile can help make your first year a good one.

We tapped one of our new members to construct and install the new privacy walls in the Signature Room. Paul Peterson's company Rob's Custom Cabinetry did a remarkable job on these wonderful additions. I hope you've had a chance to check them out. Paul is a Notre Dame graduate who returned to Duluth to run his father's business. I applaud his decision and am pleased to welcome a fellow family business entrepreneur to our midst!

We at the Kitchi Gammi Club are proud of our past and optimistic about our future. We are blessed with a remarkable Club that together we can make even better.

I encourage you to plan to hold your next major event at the Club. And you'll definitely want to dine on the Club's patio, leveraging the summer's warmth and sunshine. The view can't be beat. And neither can our members. We thank you for your support.

All the best,  
Todd Johnson, Club President  
(715) 394-0125, [tjohnson@rjs5300.com](mailto:tjohnson@rjs5300.com)

# Spring and Summer "Fresco" Fare

## *Coriander and Chili Crusted*

### *Ahi Tuna* -

Pan-Seared Rare and Served with an Asian Rice Paper Spring Roll of Tofu, Basmati Rice, Fresh Herbs, Napa Cabbage and Carrots

## *Club Tenderloin Steak Sandwich* -

6 Ounces of Butterflied Tenderloin, Grilled to Order and Served on Toast Points

## *Lake Superior Herring*

### *Fish n' "Chips"* -

A Northland Favorite Fish, Delicate and Flaky, Lightly Seasoned and Broiled, Served with a Stuffed Egg Roll of Whipped Potatoes, Pancetta, Smoked Jack Cheese, Chopped Chives and a Hint of Apple Cider Vinegar. Wrapped in a Crispy Egg Roll Skin and Finished with a Smoky Pickled Onion Ketchup

## *Harrisa Spiced Crab Linguine* -

Lump Crab Meat Spiked with Tunisian Harrisa (a North Africa condiment somewhat like pesto), Tossed with Chick-peas, Broccoli Rabe and Moroccan Preserved Lemons, Finished with a Cool Mint Yogurt

## *Lobster Bisque "Cappuccino"* -

Huge Amounts of Lobster Bathed in a Subtle Broth and Topped with Frothed Caviar Cream and a Petite Lobster Tail

## *BLT+ Tamale* -

Slow Braised and Shredded Pork Belly Folded into Buttermilk Masa Harina Corn Husks, Steamed and Finished with a Heirloom Tomato Jam, Velvety Spinach and Avocado Mayonnaise

*For more information and menus visit [www.kitchigammiclub.com](http://www.kitchigammiclub.com).*

# Wine Wednesday

Members have been enjoying the Club's great new offering of Wine Wednesday which features one-half off for all bottles of wine ordered off the Club's Wine List. Where else can you get a bottle of Chimney Rock Cabernet Sauvignon from the Stag Leaps District for only \$40 a bottle? Make a dinner reservation now to enjoy this special offering!



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