

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE 2018 HENRY HAVIG AWARD RECIPIENT**

### **THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF GRAND FORKS AND EAST GRAND FORKS**

**JANUARY 18, 2018**

**It was quite a year. Gas was 25 cents a gallon; the average house sold for \$2,390; the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas to integrate; Mao Zedong started the “Great Leap Forward” movement in China; and the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 3 which resulted in the United States reciprocating by launching Explorer I. These last two sky-rocketing occasions were simply indications of the launching our recipient was to make when born this same year, 1958. Born into a family that cared about each other, our awardee developed a special attachment and love for parents who showed both tolerance and love in abundance. From an early age it was clear our recipient was special. This was especially evident to a student in his kindergarten class who was later to become his spouse – a marriage that has lasted 36 years. This “specialness” on occasion caused him to risk a bit, like the time he decided to ride his trail bike up the stairs of his high school when he thought no one was around. As he came barreling down the stairs to leave the school he was met by Mrs. Trangsrud a teacher who happened to be in the building and showed an obvious lack of appreciation for his riding skills. One can only assume his in-school detention was completed by the time he was married. It wouldn’t be the last time he embraced risk, his love for motorcycles continues to this day. His father was a Standard Oil bulk dealer in their home town and from him and his mother he developed a commitment to integrity and passion for North Dakota. From this parental environment, he also learned that there was a direct connection between working hard and success; and success he has had. Our awardee was a good student in high school, a star basketball player, and a Boy Scout whose first merit badge was in architecture. Upon entering North Dakota State University, he intended to be an Engineer but when he encountered a course in Calculus, the experience discouraged Engineering and precipitated a switch to architecture. We are all fortunate that change took place. After graduation and career stops in Iowa, Grand Forks, Fargo, and then Grand Forks again, our recipient and his family**

found a home in our great city. Since then he and his partners founded JLG and has led it to become one of the premier architectural firms in a wide region of the country. Today the firm has 120 employees in ten offices in North Dakota, Minnesota, and South Dakota. With over 100 design awards, the firm is now the largest and most awarded architecture firm in the region. In true Henry Havig spirit, our awardee has accomplished all this while giving back to his profession and community. He has served as President of the North Dakota American Association of Architects, Director of the North Dakota Intern Development Program, and the NDSU Architecture Advisory Board. In our community, his service list is long and includes: past Chairman of the Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce Board; the Downtown Leadership Group; the Reimagine Downtown Design Committee, and currently the boards of Altru Health Systems and the Grand Forks Special Assessment Commission. In his "spare time," he serves as a State Senator for Grand Forks District 43, where his commitment to honesty and doing the right thing are on display. One person remarked, "You can always count on him having a positive attitude and a sense of humor, both of which are very helpful in doing work of the state." In all, he has been a leader or participant in at least 36 significant and separate acts of service as Senator, businessman, or community leader. This is an astonishing number of accomplishments while leading one of North Dakota's most successful business enterprises. In addition, he has become the unofficial architecture tour guide for downtown Grand Forks. Hundreds of persons have benefited from these tours and have been impressed by his obvious pride in our community. A friend of our awardee recently offered this comment, "He has a passion for, and an interest in, the promotion and long-term viability of Grand Forks." Further evidence of this commitment occurred when he recently said to his wife, "I love my town." When not with family, hunting, riding motorcycles, and playing golf are his recreational pastimes. In addition to his wife Pam, our awardee has three sons: Jesse, who lives in Indianapolis, Indiana; Ryan, of Austin, Texas; and Chris, who lives in Fargo. I am indeed honored to announce the recipient of the 2018 Henry Havig Award is Lonnie Laffen. Lonnie, please come forward.