Minnesota Snapshot

Hospitality veterans buy rustic lodge 3

Editor's note: Minnesota Snapshot reports interesting sales and development projects happening throughout Minnesota. The transactions are based on the certificates of real estate value filed with the state Department of Revenue, copies of which are available with the story at finance-commerce.com. Other items may

BY ANNE BRETTS

Special to Finance & Commerce

4442 Birch Forest Road, OrrUtah native Adam Van Tassel

came to northern Minnesota as a teen, working summers as a dock boy. He continued working summers with outfitters and resorts while he finished a degree in hotel and restaurant manage-

ment and met his wife, Kasey.

They traveled and built careers in the industry, so when it came time to invest in a business of their own, they had a lot of options.

Birch Forest Lodge at 4442 Birch Forest Road in Orr, Minnesota. Van Tassell Enterprises LLC bought the family resort July 6 for \$1 million from Marc and Lisa Thiery, who now live in Cottage Grove. The Thierys had bought it for cope on in 2007 \$925,000 in 2007. They chose the II rustic cabins at

wanted to do this for the rest of our Adam very, v very much a lifestyle Van Tassell said. "We

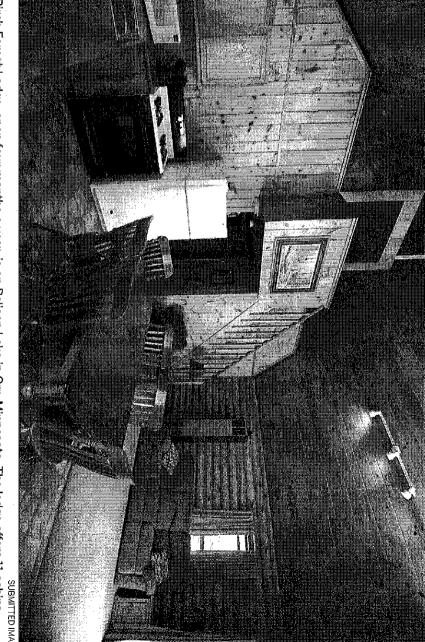
They also wanted to keep their kids, res 8 and 5, from being overwhelmed

The resort, open only four months a year, is on Pelican Lake in Orr, a town so small it makes Ely feel like a big city. There's no water park or arcade. The list of amenities includes a sandy beach, volleyball net, playground, canoes, kayaks and sunsets.

The kids can see their parents work d learn how to help, he said.

"There's a pleasure and a joy in teaching my kids, 'Here's how you fix said.

living at it. That's why he still works as a consultant for LeisureLink, a Utah company that works with large hotels in revenue management and specifically to help maximize their presence online. "I help them get their rooms on Exdream, but know they can't TheVan Tassells are living their make



The Birch Forest Lodge, open four months a year, is on Pelican Lake in Orr, Minnesota. The lodge offers 11 cabins

Twin Cities (0

put the situation in perspective pedia," he said. He can work with clients remotely from the resort, but also travels. He declined to share revenues for the lodge or his consulting work, but

"I can make more money when I'm not at the lodge," he said candidly.

For now, the plan is to use his own expertise to grow the resort's business, grow the consulting business by finding new clients in northern Minnesota and still find time to enjoy life on

the lake. "You have to have balance," he said.

1641 20th Ave., International Falls

nia Commercial Investment Group Inc. into a company specializing in the ac-quisition, ownership and management During the past decade, real estate veteran Gary Collett has built Califor

affordable senior apartment properties, creating a portfolio of about 6,000 units in 60 properties throughout 30 states. In his company's latest acquisition, West Falls Apartments LLC has paid Mesa, Arizona-based Roberts Properties \$3.55 million for the 80-unit West at 1641 20th Ave. in International Falls. The Westlake Village, California, buyer closed June 25 on the deal, which included an \$888,000 down payment and Falls Falls Apartments. The nine-building complex, which includes townhomes, The nine-building

ies metro area is \$99,282, according to the Finance & Commerce Apartment Sales Tracker at finance-commerce. com. The tracker has recorded the sale of 23,565 apartment units since Aug. 31, a new mortgage.

The price works out to \$44,875 per unit, a bargain compared to prices in bigger markets. The average sales price per unit for apartments in the Twin Cit-

Collett said. He was impressed with the property, with the maintenance man who had been there 20 years and the manager who had been there since it opened 34 years ago.

What drew a southern California ex-"I was over there a week ago, an this was just in wonderful condition,

sitions St. Paul for years, so he had some experience in Minnesota. And with properties in 30 states, he is used to relying on his staff to handle individual acquiecutive to the Canadian border town?

A broker in Detroit who knew about brought the property to his attention, Collett said. He had owned the 58-unit Heritage House interest in affordable senior apartments

In this case, Collett, a native of Canada, heard about the property while working at his summer office, a vacation house in Lake of the Woods.

"I said, 'I can just drive right over

"I said, 'I can just drive right over there and take a look at that," he said.

Orline

estate value are available with the story at finance-commerce.com. Copies of the certificates of rea

Fed holds steady on rates, seeks further growth

BY MARTIN CRUTSINGER

appears on track to raise interest rates later this year but signaled Wednesday that it wants to see further economic gains and WASHINGTON-The Federal Reserve

higher inflation before doing so.
A statement from the Fed after its latthe latest economic data stressed that any increase will be driven by Many analysts foresee the first hike in Sep-tember, though Fed Chair Janet Yellen has est policy meeting provided no timetable

rise gradually toward its 2 percent target housing and consumer spending have all improved. The Fed still expects inflation to The statement noted that the job market

slight changes in the wording of the previous statement in June. But the few modifications suggested a healthier economy.

Describing the job market, the Fed for the first time pointed to "solid" job gains and declining unemployment. The unem-

ployment rate has reached a seven-year low of 5.3 percent.

it said last time In addition, the Fed said it needs to see aly "some further" improvement in hirger rather than the "further" improvement said last time — a hint that the job mar-

ket is nearing full health.

Michael Hanson, an economist at Bank
of America Merrill Lynch, said the Fed's more upbeat language on the job market suggests that policymakers are nearing the point where they will raise rates.

borrowing rates resulting from the Fed's policies. She has suggested that raising rates in ually. The idea is to avoid weakening begins to raise rates, it will do so only grad Yellen has stressed that when the Fed She has suggested that rais small increments, followed that's still benefiting from

pauses, will let the Fed assess the effects of slightly higher borrowing costs.

The Fed has kept its key short-term rate at a record low near zero since 2008. Once it raises it, other rates — for mortgages, auto loans and corporate borrowing —

During Yellen's testimony to Congress this month, some Democrats urged her to consider delaying a rate hike given that inflation remains below the Fed's 2 percent target. The Fed has typically raised rates when it perceives a need to prevent inflation for the fed has typically raised rates.

"In my mind, the Fed is very comfortable with a slow, deliberate pace," said Brian Bethune, an economics professor at Tufts University in Boston. "The Fed doesn't want to upset the apple cart with any type of market shock that could cause further problems in the global economy whether that is in China or in Europe."

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Kathleen Geherin
222 South Ninth St. Ste 3060
Minneapolis, MN. 55402
geherink@ctt.com
612-799-8200
www.mn.ctic.com