
Sharing SBLA Success Stories

Rabbit Lake Success Story

Rabbit Lake Hotel – Joan Dzialo, Owner

In December 2000, Joan Dzialo bought the existing hotel business in Rabbit Lake and decided to make some renovations and purchase equipment and furniture to upgrade the facility. The financing for the upgrades to the business came from the Small Business Loans Association (SBLA) program administered by the Rabbit Lake and District Board of Trade Inc.

Joan was a member of the local Board of Trade, and it was from this source that she became aware that funding was available through the SBLA program. After learning that the banks had no financing available for small businesses, and entrepreneurs in order to secure funding for the hotel purchase, Joan arranged for personal financing using her home as security. The SBLA program, administered by the Rabbit Lake and District Board of Trade Inc, provided the balance of funds to complete the upgrades and renovations.

As a result of the renovations, a number of changes were made to the overall layout of the hotel including increasing the size of the bar. A new space was developed for the licensed vendor sales. Other major changes saw a smoke free lounge area and outdoor patio area being developed that is very popular. Upgrades were made to the carpets along with new lounge and patio chairs, umbrellas and tables being purchased. The purchase of a karaoke machine has been well received; and provides entertainment in the winter evenings and the rental of the machine helps to generate revenue.

Although Rabbit Lake is a small community, it attracts many tourist customers during the summer and snowmobile customers in the winter; and the hotel is a meeting place for the local community. Joan operates the hotel business and also works part-time for an insurance company. Joan states, "that without the SBLA loan, the upgrades and changes to hotel business would have taken a few years to do." Joan is very appreciative of the support of the local SBLA and how the program has allowed a small business to achieve their goal.