

# Business North<sup>®</sup>

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## inside info

### aroundtherregion

#### Multi-county effort scores

- Six northwest Wisconsin counties win tech zone status, tax credits . . . **2A**
- Its parent is selling off and closing plants. Is Twist Drill next? . . . . . **8A**

### Construction

- Developers propose Duluth's first housing/office-retail project . . . . . **20A**

### special focus

#### Doing Business in Northeastern Minnesota

- Missing in the IRRRB debate: a vision . . . . . **11A**
- The northeast region's Top 50 private firms . . . . . **12A**

### fast track



Diane Paradice, RN, a nurse at St. Luke's, wonders whether younger nurses will stay in the field with patients becoming even more demanding and a continuing high incidence of work-related nursing injuries.

photo by Pamela Rust

## Nurses are in demand but it's a thankless job

By Pamela Rust

**D**iane Paradice, RN, has been a nurse at St. Luke's in Duluth for 22 years. She works in a float pool, assigned wherever she is needed most on any given day. She'd wanted to be a nurse since high school when she worked as a nurse's aide.

Paradice still enjoys taking care of patients, but finds her work less rewarding than ever.

"There's always been a nursing shortage," she says. "The future for nursing is bleak. New graduates may not stay in the field because there's too much fatigue and stress, and patients are more demanding."

Nurses are in high demand in the Northland, the Twin Cities, and around the world. Yet very few work in the field until retirement age, Paradice says. "The job is physically demanding, causing knee, back, and neck problems."

Lifting and turning patients take its toll. She's already had carpal tunnel surgery on one hand from overexertion at work, and she's worried about her other hand.

Nurses continues on page 6A