



Iron County's Wings



The Robert H. Loo Vocational Building  
dedicated January 28th, 2005

# **ROBERT H. LOO VOCATIONAL BUILDING DEDICATION**

**January 28, 2005  
1:00 P.M.**

## **PROGRAM**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Welcome**

**Timothy Peruzzi, Superintendent  
West Iron County Public Schools**

**Speakers**

**Chris Thomson, Principal  
West Iron County High School**

**Paul Bonsall, Director  
Vocational - Technical Education  
Dickinson - Iron Intermediate  
School District**

**Tom Karvala, Deputy Director for  
Support Operations  
West Iron County Public Schools**

**Jim Hammill, Biologist  
Michigan Department of Natural  
Resources**

**Presentation of Plaque**

**Don Autio, President  
West Iron County Board of  
Education**

**Acceptance of Plaque**

**Sue Berger, The Family of Bob Loo**



Bob Loo, a native of Ironwood, MI, spent his childhood as a rebel and a fun-loving child who always had a twinkle in his eye. The twinkle he harbored as a child grew brighter, though, after serving in World War II; for during the war he fell in love with flying. Throughout World War II, Loo "served in the Pacific Theater as a P-51 Mustang fighter pilot." Upon Loo's return he attended, and later graduated from, the General Motors Institute in Flint, MI. After graduation, he moved to Iron River where he "operated an Oldsmobile and Cadillac dealership up until about 1980."



In the 1970s', Loo began his partnership with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Loo played a vital role in the documentation of eagle, osprey, and loon counts in addition to monitoring deer herds. Loo was instrumental in bridging the gap between air and land. By using his radio to contact a ground crew composed of biologists, Loo was able to direct them towards a tree with a nested eagle or osprey. This allowed them to monitor, test and band these birds. By the mid 1990s', Loo accepted a contract with Michigan Technological University, providing his flying expertise in the surveillance and tracking the wolf population.



In addition to the tracking of these animals, Loo performed fire surveys for the D.N.R. Upon the discovery of a fire, Loo was able to contact a ground crew from the fire service, enabling the fire to be combated and extinguished, saving both property and human life.



As a member of the Gogebic Community College board and working closely with the Iron County Board of Commissioners, Loo also became an integral part of the Stambaugh Airport. As airport manager; beginning in 1996, Loo always made sure the airport runways were plowed in the winter, allowing numerous flights to take off and return safely.



Loo's servitude extended throughout Iron County. He started Iron County Air, an air ambulance service and provider of private charter flights. As Dr. Robert Han stated at the Wildlife Unlimited Banquet, in memory of Bob, "the only question Bob ever asked was, 'Do you think the patient really needs to go?'" Loo would leave day or night, rain or shine. If someone needed to be flown out, he was ready to go in twenty minutes. Han went on to say, "There was no fanfare ever involved...Lots of money never got collected, but Bob didn't care." Loo's loving, selfless heart touched a myriad of people. "There's absolutely no question that he saved lives."



Loo lived a life of dedicated servitude, helping anyone in need, near or far, impacting the lives of countless people. Even after Loo's life was "tragically ended" in June, 2002, his legacy was far from over. Loo's legacy will surely live on for generations to come. In his spirit of selfless giving, and perhaps in his wish to help just one more time, he generously willed to the West Iron County Schools nearly \$200,000 for educational purposes. His vision has culminated in the Robert H. Loo Vocational Building which was dedicated on January 28, 2005. His legacy will allow both present and future students to share his love and enjoyment of education for years to come.

## *Contributing Sources:*

past issues of *The Daily News*  
Iron Mountain-Kingsford, Michigan

past issues of the *Reporter*  
Iron River, MI

Iron County Museum, where the Bob Loo exhibit is in place

interview with Ed Erickson

interview with Sue Berger

Clarice Arnell

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West Iron County High School senior