



# *Hoist the Cup!*

*From Jeff Smith  
President, Midwest Division*

I have painstakingly researched the current state of the economy, read many expert opinions and carefully weighed the data. I have come to the following conclusion: The economy stinks, but it's getting better.

Now that we have that out of the way, let's talk hockey. On June 9, the Chicago Blackhawks won their fourth game in Philadelphia to clinch the Stanley Cup. This is nothing new to Chicago fans, since we just won it in 1961!

I watched the team as they fought their way to the finals and they reminded me of the Twins in 1987. They were out there living in the moment, doing what they loved and putting everything into their passion. When they scored the winning goal, their faces showed a mixture of jubilation and disappointment that the season was over.

Each of them lifted Lord Stanley's cup and the entire city of Chicago felt lifted too. The celebration was like none I've witnessed.

I suspect a few people still party when the Yankees win the World Series, but Chicago went wild. The team came back from Philly and literally paraded the cup from bar to restaurant to radio station for the next week, offering sips of beer to fans. The estimates topped two million people at the parade and celebration downtown. For a while, life's problems and the economy took a back seat to pure joy and celebration.

Let's hope this drought in business doesn't last 49 years, but as we come out of it stronger and a little smarter, take some time to raise the cup and enjoy.